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JULY 1953·35¢

IN THIS ISSUE...

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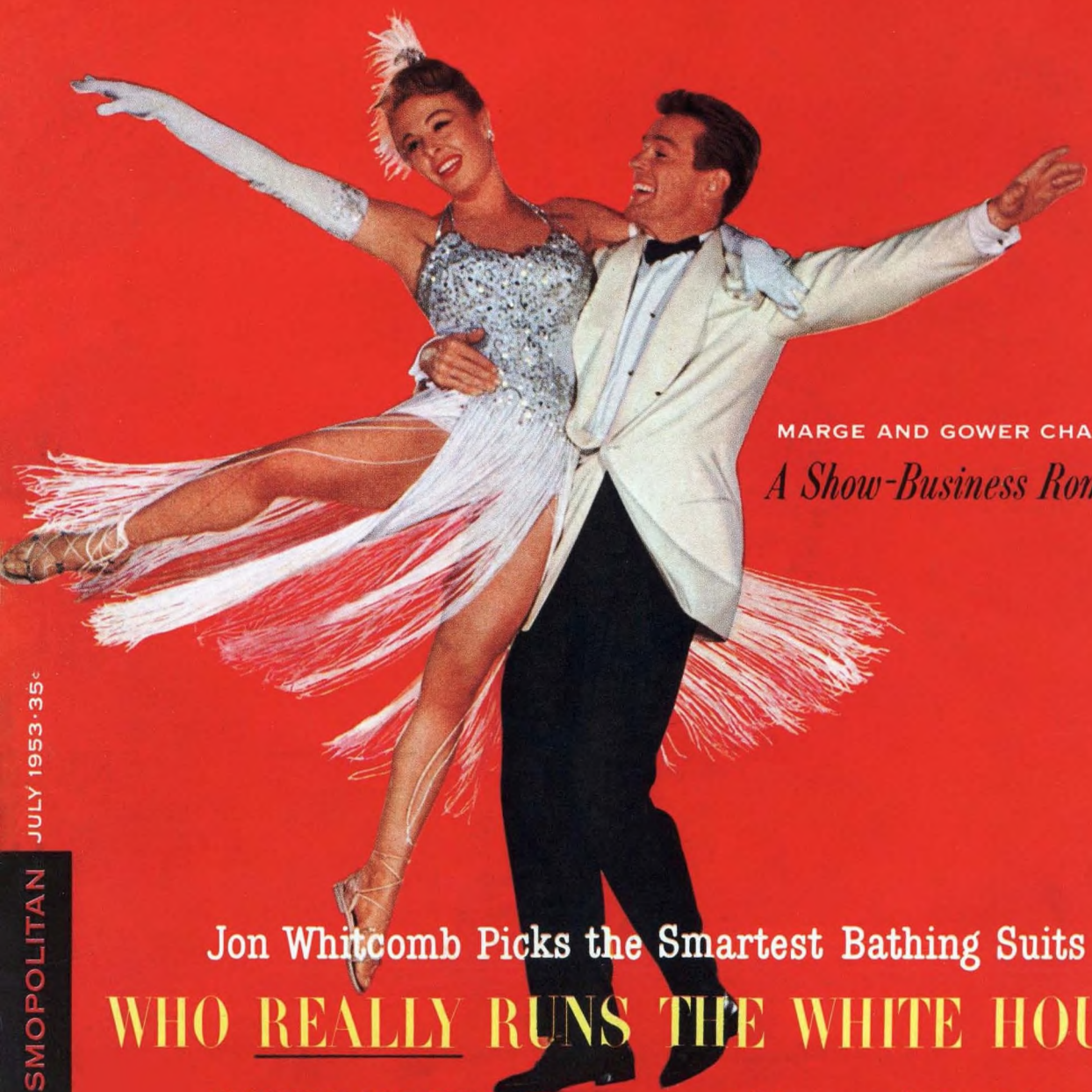

MARGE AND GOWER CHAMPION

A Show-Business Romance

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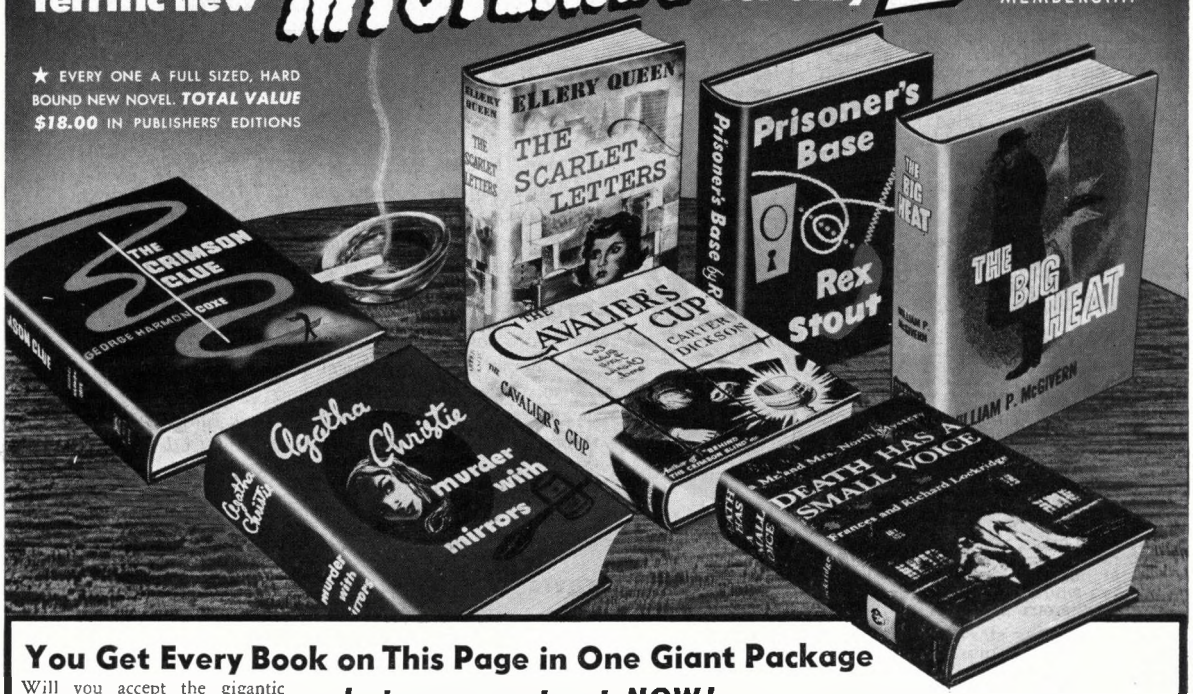

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Picture of the Month

Esther Williams, that million dollar mermaid, is merrily in the swim again with her new melody-splashed M-G-M musical romance that shimmers with Technicolor and is provocatively titled "Dangerous When Wet".

And this time Esther is not the only mermaid! She's the No. 1 member of a Channel-swimming family and together they transform a contest into a fun-fest. And, of course, since their destination is France — Esther also plunges into love's whirlpool.

Fernando Lamas, whose romantic voice is as persuasive as his strong masculine arms and handsome appearance, is the Frenchman who finds Esther fascinating — and "Dangerous When Wet".

There's a splashy star-parade, too, including curvaceous Denise Darcel, who fits her role and swim suit perfectly. Jack Carson as the hearty and hilarious promoter of the Channel swim yields Esther to Fernando but Denise's caresses help him forget.

Enlivened with melody, "Dangerous When Wet" has such hit tunes as "Morning Song", "I Like Men" and "Ain't Nature Grand". Famed composer Arthur Schwartz and lyricist Johnny Mercer wrote the songs that put you in the mood for love.

Long-missed, long-legged Charlotte Greenwood, as Esther's mother, dances away with new laurels. William Demarest, as daddy of the brood, adds his droll touch to the proceedings. And pert moppet Donna Corcoran is seen as one of the water-disporting daughters.

Gay as summer sunshine, "Dangerous When Wet" offers the perfect seasonal blend of merriment... the breezy wooing and Paris rendezvous-ing... the love duets and dance specialties... the enchantment of Esther Williams' dream-swim with those cartoon captivators, Tom and Jerry, who appear for the first time in a feature-length film in a wonderful rhythmic water-revel with the star!

From the first splash to the last midnight kiss, "Dangerous When Wet" is rollicking and refreshing every eye-filling minute of the way!

★ ★ ★

M-G-M presents "DANGEROUS WHEN WET" starring ESTHER WILLIAMS, FERNANDO LAMAS, JACK CARSON, CHARLOTTE GREENWOOD and DENISE DARCEL with William Demarest and Donna Corcoran. Color by Technicolor. Written by Dorothy Kingsley. Music by Arthur Schwartz. Lyrics by Johnny Mercer. Directed by Charles Walters. Produced by George Wells.

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JULY, 1953

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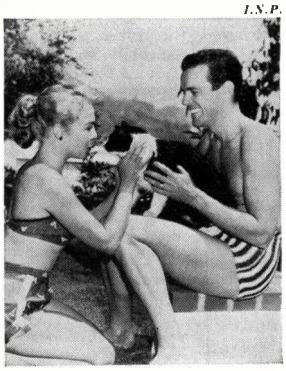

Vol. 135, No. 1

COVER *The cat-crazy dance duo of Marge and Gower Champion have discovered how to keep their five felines in salmon, and their overflow of guests in barbecued hamburgers. "Give a Girl a Break," latest of the champion Champion flickers, is the fifth star on this couple's film escutcheon—delightful proof that if you start dancing in the playpen, you can reach the top still looking just like a teen-ager. The cover photo is by M-G-M.*

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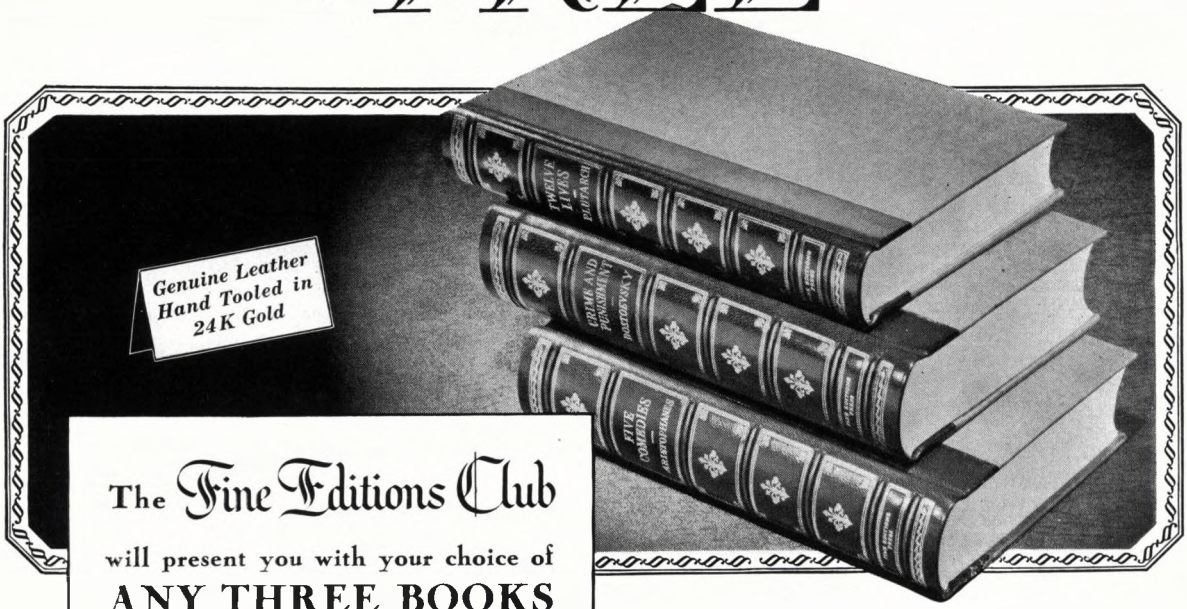

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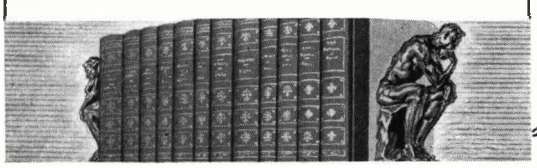

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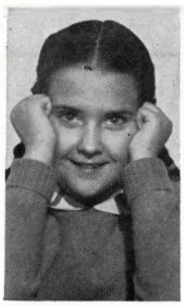
What Goes On at Cosmopolitan

A BAREBACK RIDER, SAILING, A COINCIDENCE

Seldom does an illustration spring full-blown from an artist's brow. Once he gets a hazy idea of what he wants, he usually has to ransack his town for the right model and props. But two of this month's artists had an amazing bit of luck.

In her search for one small pig-tailed



Carolyn "Sweetie" Thompson

Corcaita Cristiani Budd

child and one large policeman for "Stowaway," artist Barbara Schwinn found nine-year-old Carolyn (Sweetie) Thompson right in her own apartment elevator. Young Miss Thompson was charmed breathless. She personally aided in finding one of New York's finest (who posed for both policemen in the illustration) and promptly fell wildly in love with him, a condition that made her highly cooperative. She also turned out to be a budding artist. On page 57 is Sweetie's own illustration of the French ship *Liberté*.

Artist Thornton Utz had an even sweeter setup for his page-49 illustration of "The Lion." Where else but in Sarasota, Florida, where he lives, would you find circus winter quarters teeming with lions and fearless young ladies?

Utz's girl model is bareback rider Corcaita Cristiani Budd, of the famous Cristiani bareback riders. She had no trouble holding a pose, either. She's married to an artist.

The Blessed Boatman

The whooshing sound emanating from CBS at five o'clock on Fridays is the backwash of Garry Moore rushing out to Westchester to spend the weekend on his forty-foot yawl with his wife and two sons.

Greater love hath no man for boats. And happier is no man than Garry Moore's boat guest. Every time a boat owner invites us to go sailing, we're handed a scraper and put to work on the boat bottom. We get to swab decks, polish brass, and shine the galley. We seldom get to sail. But Garry Moore swabs his own deck and asks folks along just for the ride.

Beginning on page 26, Richard Gehman gives some remarkable facts about Garry Moore. But we raise our blistered hand in a salute to Moore's amazing version of boat-hostmanship.

How to Sell a Story

Twenty-three-year-old author Ira Levin, it seems, has stumbled across a freak way to get a story published. After Levin spent eight months writing "A Kiss Before Dying," a stunning first mystery novelette, he despairingly turned the manuscript over to his agent and combed publishers' row for two weeks in search of a job. He dropped in on COSMOPOLITAN, Simon & Schuster, and Signet Books, among others, only to get the brush. Meantime, his manuscript hit the editorial desks. Beginning on page 94, COSMOPOLITAN presents "A Kiss Before

Ira Levin

Dying." Simon & Schuster will publish the book this fall. Signet has it slated for 1954.

When we got word that a German publisher had lined up to get first crack at publishing a translation, we phoned Levin. Our boy sounded surprised. "I don't get it," he told us. "I didn't ask *him* for a job." **H. La B.**

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—M. L., *New Cumberland, Pa.*

"I think the idea of bringing the crafts of the world's artists and artisans to us who do not have the opportunity to seek them out for ourselves, is one offering great advantage to all concerned, and with, perhaps, unexpected and indirect results that will make for the accomplishment of decidedly better understanding and relationship between ourselves and our world neighbors."
—Mrs. T. J. McA., *Marblehead, Mass.*

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(Note: All original letters are on file in our office)

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NEW DISCOVERY, nineteen-year-old Pat Crowley, brings brash young freshness to "Forever Female."

Ambitious Cinderella

COSMOPOLITAN MOVIE CITATIONS ★ BY LOUELLA O. PARSONS

Pat Crowley—who is a mere nineteen, five feet four in height, and 109 pounds of burning ambition—is Hollywood's newest Cinderella. She lives alone and loathes it, reads voluminously, talks constantly, and is almost exactly like the brash young Broadway hopeful she portrays in her first film, "Forever Female," a sophisticated comedy starring Ginger Rogers, Paul Douglas, and William Holden.

Paul Douglas is distinctive as a Broadway manager, and William Holden plays a callow Broadway playwright. He complicates things by falling in love with Ginger Rogers, an aging star who is Douglas' ex-wife and still under contract to him. The lead in Holden's newest play, produced by Douglas, calls for a young star. Miss Rogers is set to play her—but then Miss Crowley walks in.

Ginger is glamorously gowned, exquisitely photographed, and acts excellently—whenever she gets the chance. This is seldom, because all the footage has been given to Miss Crowley. The reason for this is a quandary facing today's producers. They've got to have new talent simply because they can't afford the old. The big problem is, How can you be sure a discovery will make good money at the box office?

Many have, recently, like Tony Curtis, who was brought to Hollywood for a whole $100 a week—which left him $22 after taxes, fees, and contributions.

Pat Crowley is in the same class. Ginger Rogers got better than $150,000 for "Forever Female," but the only gold Pat got was her golden opportunity.

Pat is a girl who has always known what she wanted. At eleven, she was a Conover model. Before she was through high school, she had made a series of teen-age TV shows. Three years ago, the summer of her graduation, she got into her first Broadway production. It died. That was in July. By December, she was in another play that soon closed, though not before talent scouts spotted her.

With two other young girls, she was brought to Hollywood last winter to test for "Forever Female." With characteristic movie callousness, the young rivals were housed together, then tested together the day after their arrival, a Friday. They were told the lucky one would be chosen Monday. It was a long weekend before Pat learned she was the lucky one.

Pat lives in Hollywood almost exactly as any nice nineteen-year-old who is on her own lives anywhere in America. Her apartment is tiny, and she can't afford a car. She takes the six A.M. bus to Paramount every morning.

Hollywood is generally regarded as a manless town, but Pat hasn't noticed it. She has three "steadies," though she is too busy and too poor to hit the night-club circuit now.

Before she was through with "Forever Female," Paramount had her in "Money from Home," with Martin and Lewis. Her next is "Red Garters," with Rosemary Clooney, Joanne Gilbert, and a male Cinderella, Guy Mitchell. "I'm playing a Spanish girl—and me with this map-of-Ireland face. I hope I can get away with it," she says.

I don't believe she's very worried about it. I know I'm not.

(continued)

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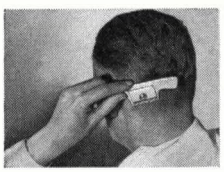

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C-7

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THE END

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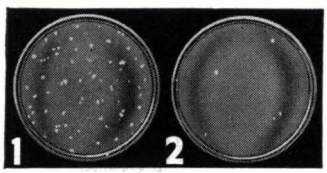
PHOTOMICROS PROVE RESULTS



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Mild, fragrant DIAL Soap keeps complexions clearer by keeping skin cleaner

MARGE AND GOWER CHAMPION

"Dance me a love story," a Hollywood producer begs. And Marge and Gower Champion drift into the magic that last year netted them $135,000. Yet only six years ago they had to borrow $30 for train fare to keep their first dancing engagement

BY ELEANOR HARRIS

A little over six years ago, a pair of young dancers borrowed $30 from a friend, and carrying two suitcases full of homemade costumes, went to Montreal to dance as a team for the first time.

Now Marge and Gower Champion, Hollywood's newest full-fledged stars, are the highest-paid dance team in the world (their 1952 income was an estimated $135,000).

Yet when a stranger in Hollywood asks, "How did all this happen in just six years?" he gets a variety of answers. Say dance experts, "It's because of the magic of their dancing—they seem to float rather than move." Say dramatic directors, "It's because of the wonderful flavor of young naturalness that comes through in their acting." Say toughened Hollywood veterans, "Maybe this sounds corny, but their real appeal is this: the kids love each other, and it shows in everything they do."

Away from the camera, the Champions don't look remotely like the popular conception of professional dancers. They lack the sophistication of the De Marcos, the glamour of Rita Hayworth, the elegance of Fred Astaire. Instead, they look like a pair of fresh-scrubbed teen-agers. Gower stands a bony six feet tall, his boyish face topped by a cinnamon-colored crewcut. He usually wears a faintly sour expression, and this, plus an air of authority that is an unconscious part of his personality, strikes surprising awe into people. "Strangers start to kid him—and then suddenly stop. For no reason, they get scared," says a friend, producer Michael Sloane. "Then they start throwing the word 'genius' around."

Gower Does Their Choreography

Gower has often been called a genius. He invents all of his and Marge's dances for night clubs and television shows, as well as many of their movie numbers. In 1947, after doing the complete choreography for the Broadway musical "Lend an Ear," he won the highly prized Donaldson and Antoinette Perry awards.

Yet when he is with people he knows well, he becomes absurdly exuberant. Crowded streets inspire him to mild practical jokes; he will suddenly shout "*There's* the fellow!" at an innocent passerby, thus giving a severe jolt to both the bewildered stranger and his own companions.

Marge, who is a mere five feet two and doesn't come up to his shoulder, is his gentle partner. "But don't misinterpret that gentleness—she's no marshmallow," warns a friend. "Gower creates; she edits." Her enormously wistful brown eyes look out of a plain face that becomes radiant when she smiles. When asked for an opinion, she gives a definite one, though delivered in her soft voice, it never sounds harsh. Says one husband, whose teetering marriage was saved by Marge's advice, "She always gives you the truth right between the eyes—but it feels like a kiss instead of a kick." She is capable of giving her quiet-spoken advice in the middle of such backbreaking physical work that the average truck driver would buckle under it.

When Gower is creating a new dance number, they both don sweaters and slacks and perform in a barnlike studio rehearsal hall. Working with quiet intentness, they try numberless patterns of steps to the same sixteen bars of piano music. "See how this looks," Gower will murmur. Marge stands motionless, watching his feet as he whirls up to a bench, leaps on it, spins atop it, and then vaults back to the floor in a breathtaking arc. To the layman observer, it is as graceful as a blown leaf. But Marge says gently, "A little clumsy." Without a flicker of expression, he tries another variation. "Yes," breathes Marge. These few steps may take two hours to create: they will fill only a few seconds on the screen.

"Gower's a perfectionist who believes in everlasting preparation—and Marge agrees," says their musical director, Dick Pribor. "Their movie 'Everything I Have Is Yours' ran for ninety-two minutes. Yet for five months they worked on it six days a week; sometimes nights and Sundays."

Part of this work was on the frightening new arts of acting and singing. "Not only did we have to learn to act," says Gower, "but we had to eliminate a lot of habits we didn't know we had. For instance, I've spent my life holding my mouth down at the corners, so I had to take mouth exercises to relax my muscles." Marge had to struggle to get over her habit of staring blank-faced through a long speech of Gower's while waiting to say her own lines.

Five Cats Share Their House

Back at their gray hill-side house at the end of a day, they are greeted by their five cats, perhaps a stray house guest, a series of telephone calls from friends, and an excellent dinner prepared by their maid-of-all-work, Bobbie. Dinner is accompanied by candlelight, a glass of wine, and classical music from Gower's record collection. If it were not for telephone calls (cheerfully received by Gower at the table), dinnertime would be completely relaxing. If they are alone, they make no attempt to talk. Instead, Gower reads a book while Marge leafs through magazines. Alone, they usually relax after dinner, Gower editing and splicing his home movies, Marge studying recipes. By ten o'clock, disciplined by Hollywood's early rising hours, they are in bed.

However, they spend few evenings alone. Their cheerful house is a mecca for friends. "People can't stay away," says singer Lisa Kirk. "You feel love and warmth around them the minute you meet them." Miss Kirk, now living three thousand miles away in New York City, chats long-distance with "the kids" at least once a week. Nearly always there's a long-staying house guest; often it is Michael Sloane, out from New York on a four-week business trip. When their musical director, Dick Pribor, couldn't find a satisfactory apartment on arriving in Hollywood, he moved in—for six months. Sundays, all their friends, an assortment of young theatrical people, gather by the Champions' kidney-shaped swimming pool. Closer than members of a family, they help Marge prepare a hamburger Sunday supper to be eaten in front of the television set.

Their friends find it impossible to imagine Gower and Marge apart from each

(continued)

Behind the boy-girl romance: a ten-o'clock bedtime, Gower's amazing genius for choreography, Marge's uncanny instinct for editing Gower

other, nor can they imagine the Champion success story without the Champion love story. "One wouldn't have happened without the other," they say. However, love ran a rough course for the Champions. It cropped up three times in their lives before it took permanent effect.

They Met in Junior High School

They met for the first time when they were fourteen, in the hallways of a Los Angeles junior high school. Their backgrounds were entirely different. Marge was Marjorie Celeste Belcher, and her father owned and operated Hollywood's most famous training ground for talent, the Ernest Belcher School of Dancing. She had already been studying dancing for nine years in her father's classes, learning acrobatic, tap, ballet, and Spanish dancing beside such famous fellow pupils as Betty Grable, Shirley Temple, and Cyd Charisse. She knew she would be a professional dancer—hadn't she already danced in ballets at the Hollywood Bowl?

Gower's background was radically different. His father (divorced from his mother when he was a baby) was a Chicago advertising executive. Born in Illinois, Gower had spent his childhood in Hollywood with his mother and brother, John. At twelve, he had tagged along with John to a class in ballroom dancing and discovered an engrossing hobby: dancing. By the time he met Marge, he was entering junior dancing contests at the Del Mar Beach Club with pretty Jean Tyler, his partner in dancing class. The two youngsters invariably won.

As a fourteen-year-old, Gower developed a wild crush on Marge; for three months, he looked forward to their twice-a-week dates, which were always chaperoned by his mother. But one night when he called for Marge at her home, his pride was sorely hurt. "She had a bunch of older guys hanging around," says Gower, "and she seemed to hate to leave them for a date with me and my mother. I decided I'd never take her out again." Thus ended the first chapter of the Champion romance.

During his senior year at Fairfax High School, in Los Angeles, Gower changed overnight from an amateur dancer to a professional. He and Jean Tyler entered the Veloz and Yolanda Amateur Dancing Contest at the Cocoanut Grove—and won. They never went back to school. For the next eight years, the team of Gower and Jean danced all over America in hotels, night clubs, and even Broadway shows, always chaperoned by Mrs. Champion. Occasionally Gower heard news of Marjorie Bell, as she now called herself. He knew that she had danced in light operas in Hollywood and had been the model for Walt Disney's Snow White. He heard of her marriage to a commercial artist

I.N.P.

IN "SHOW BOAT," the Champions' airy young charm drew sensational applause, boosted the couple from specialty dancers to stardom. A thick slice of their time was invested in drama and singing lessons that eventually paid off in polished acting.

THE CHAMPIONS practice in the rumpus room of their six-room house. When they relax afterward, conversation is ruled out, and they sit absorbed in reading. Legs-up position eases tired muscles. They started out in a one-room New York apartment.

named Art Babbitt; when it ended in divorce two years later, he learned that she had gone to New York to dance in musical comedies.

"But I lost all track of her during the war," says Gower. During his three years in the Coast Guard, his partner, Jean Tyler, married a doctor and retired. At the war's end, he was at loose ends and decided to go to New York. "Once there, I ran into Marge," he says. "She was dancing in 'Dark of the Moon.' Whenever she was away from the theatre, we did everything together—from dancing classes to dinner. We had a marvelous time."

A Movie Contract for Gower

That was the beginning of chapter two of their romance. "Then Gower got wonderful news: M-G-M wanted him for a long-term movie contract," says Marge. "He went back to Hollywood at once, and as soon as I could, I followed to visit my father." In Hollywood, as in New York, she and Gower went out nightly. But something was wrong: "At first, Gower and I loved being together again—and then we hated it," Marge explains. "We just went on and on. Gower wanted no permanent attachments, and I had no initiative, so after two months, I went back to New York again. Before I left, we agreed to forget each other forever."

But five months later, backstage at the Broadway show "Beggar's Holiday," in which she had a dancing role, Marge was doing limbering exercises late one afternoon. She had just reached the rear-end up, head-down position when, peering through her legs, she saw Gower standing a few feet away quietly watching her. She says now, "I got limp all over. I collapsed on the floor, and Gower helped me up. Then we began going together again." M-G-M, it seemed, had dropped Gower.

One day, while they were walking down Fifth Avenue, Marge asked a question. She said, "Paul Godkin, the dancer, has asked me to form a dance team with him. What do you think of the idea?"

Gower shouted. "If you dance with anyone, it's me!" With this outburst, their team was born.

The following weeks were exhausting ones. Gower began inventing his unique dance stories that were to make him and Marge famous. Each dance, built around a single idea, told a complete tale. One dance showed Marge as a French girl and Gower as an American GI meeting after the liberation of Paris. Each, dancing in dreamy abstraction with the other, pretended he was dancing with his own sweetheart.

Grueling eight-hour rehearsals began in a gloomy rehearsal hall on Broadway. For Marge, this meant long days of practicing with Gower followed by nightly appearances in the show "Beggar's Holiday." She says, "I didn't dare give up my job, because I was earning the only money between us." Gower saw that the team of Gower and Bell was booked into hotels where he had danced before the war. Their first engagement was set for the Mount Royal Hotel in Montreal.

Her Hairdo Is Dance-Proof

They had dozens of problems to settle. "We had to decide about our looks," says Marge. "Gower decided to keep his crew-cut, which was then unheard of among dancers, and I was determined to find a becoming new hair style that wouldn't shake down after one dance." She finally invented a dance-proof hairdo: she parted her hair down the middle of her head, from forehead to neck, and twisted rubber bands around each side bunch of hair, wearing each in a cluster of short curls over her ear.

Another problem was her costumes. They had to be dirt cheap. "I finally designed my dresses myself," says Marge. "I bought inexpensive cloth in Greenwich Village, and hired a seamstress to run them up. I did the special trimming myself—with great clumsiness." In the last two desperate days before departure,

(continued)

Penguin

MARGE STARTED DANCING when she was five, Gower when he was twelve. They turn down any Hollywood attempt to run their lives, won't give up their independence.

she got Gower and a writer-friend named Jess Gregg to help her sew hundreds of sequins on a circular skirt. Finally they were ready to leave for Montreal—except for one thing: they were $30 short on ticket money. Borrowing the money from Gregg, they were off. It was April, 1947.

The new team was a smash hit. Two months later, they returned to New York to dance in the Persian Room—and ran into a dilemma. Marge was asked to try out for the coming Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "Allegro."

At Schrafft's Restaurant on Fifty-seventh Street, Gower waited to hear the results. He had been there a half hour before she finally joined him, looking heartbroken. She burst into tears. "I think I have the part," she sobbed, "and it's the break I've been working for all my life."

Gower said quietly, "Well, then, why are you crying?"

"Because it would mean breaking up our team!" she sobbed.

Casually, Gower remarked, "Oh, I can find another partner." Even more casually, he added, "And we can be married just the same."

Marge stared at him for a long moment —and then began laughing. "He had *never* mentioned the word 'marriage,'" she explains. "And it was so like him to do it offhandedly that I just couldn't help laughing."

Marge forgot about the part in "Allegro" instantly. She and Gower danced in New York, in St. Louis, in Chicago, and then flew out to California to be married, on October 5, 1947, in the presence of their families and close friends. The ring Gower put on her finger had three separate bands, one for each of their three romances.

They Danced Across America

From then on, the team of Marge and Gower Champion made show-business history. They danced in hotels and in night clubs around America. With Marge beside him, Gower directed the choreography for Broadway musicals in which they themselves didn't dance: "Lend an Ear" (1947), "Small Wonder" (1948), and "Make a Wish" (1951). They spent most of 1949 dancing on the "Admiral Broadway Revue," a television program that later became "Your Show of Shows." In 1950, they came home to Hollywood to dance in the night club Mocambo, and watched in pleased bewilderment while four studios fought over them. M-G-M signed them to a five-year contract, and they did specialty dances in "Show Boat" and "Lovely to Look At" and then were raised to stardom. Their first $2,000,000 starring movie, "Everything I Have Is Yours," was released last fall, and another, "Give a Girl a Break," will appear next month.

Meanwhile, they remain calm in the midst of the uproar they have created. They own their first home, an old six-room house clinging to a Hollywood hillside above a swimming pool. In the bright yellow kitchen are some of Gower's unusual decorating ideas. Instead of curtains on the window over the sink, two potted ivy vines frame the window. Near the ornate Victorian wicker chairs and table in the breakfast nook stands a six-foot philodendron plant, its big dark leaves forming a semiscreen between the kitchen and the nook. In Gower's study are cabinets, chests, and a desk that he designed, all in tones of gray; above hang Goya etchings and a Picasso lithograph.

Cats are a happy obsession with the Champions. Besides their five live cats, they have a collection of inanimate cats. These include two white china cat lamps, a giant cat vase, and a series of shelves holding Marge's collection of china cats. The petit-point seat on the stool before her dressing table has, of course, a cat design. When friends come over to show home movies of their children, Gower triumphantly shows his home movies—starring their cats.

If Gower is the stronger influence in decoration, Marge has full charge of running the household. She also rules her immense wardrobe. She has definite ideas on clothes: she likes colors instead of black and refuses to own a dress she cannot step into. Her unusual method of dressing makes this necessary: she puts on her hat before her dress. Her wardrobe comes from her mother-in-law, who is a superb designer and seamstress.

Last year, she made Marge seventy-five outfits, sewing from a dummy of Marge's figure given her by the studio. Marge's own designing is limited to her hats.

Once a week, Mrs. Champion joins Marge and Gower for dinner. So does Marge's father, Ernest Belcher. Belcher

sometimes visits their sets and gives them advice. "Keep your arms fluid and alive," he warns them repeatedly. Immensely proud of his son-in-law, he cannot resist telling friends, "Notice that you never seem to see Gower's back when he dances. It's because of his trick of turning his head in the direction he's about to move. His head draws attention instead of his back."

Never Too Busy for Friends

There are always friends dropping in at the Champions' house, often to discuss some personal problem. "They're never too busy to listen and to give honest advice," says writer-actor-director Casey Adams. Lisa Kirk, about to start a new singing engagement, asked the Champions to listen to her rehearse; they not only listened for an entire evening but gave her helpful advice on how to relax while she performed. When Michael Sloane begged them for help on a weak musical show due to open in New York shortly, they arrived by plane and spent ten days directing it. "They wouldn't take a cent for all that time," says Sloane.

How the Champions can give so much time to friendship without stinting on their work is a secret known only to them. When they are making a picture, their routine never varies: Marge gets up at five-thirty A.M. for an early call at the make-up and hairdressing departments. She cooks herself a hearty breakfast and hastily packs a lunch for two. At six-thirty, she awakens Gower and leaves for her twenty-mile drive to the studio in her white Sunbeam-Talbot. Gower starts off a half hour later in his yellow Pontiac, and eats an egg-and-milk breakfast at a restaurant on the way. They have lunch in the quiet of her dressing room, from her wicker hamper. Around seven at night, her car follows his home, with both radios blaring out news broadcasts.

In ten years, their friends agree, the Champions' lives will be completely different. Neither wants to dance forever. "Marge will be a star and also a mother," predict friends, "and Gower will be the greatest play director Broadway has ever seen." Both these predictions will probably come true. When "Lend an Ear" was in crying need of direction before opening in Boston, the entire cast turned spontaneously to dance-director Gower, who pulled the show into shape in one exhausting all-night rehearsal. This past year, he has had to turn down three opportunities to direct Broadway shows.

Their friends assert that the Champions have three distinct talents: for dancing, for teaching, and for living. "But maybe the public doesn't care about all those things," they add. "Maybe the public just likes to watch the kids—and get the message between them!"

THE END

Imaginary Pals, Steadier Males, and Marriage Wreckers

BY AMRAM SCHEINFELD

Where you hurt most. The biggest "Ouch!" a pinch can evoke is in your lower back, according to a pain map worked out by Dr. James D. Hardy, Dr. Harold G. Wolff, and Dr. Helen Goodell (Cornell). Next in order of sensitiveness to pain are the buttocks, thighs, and kneecap; top of the foot and the toes; the groin, calf, upper back, and upper arm; lips and nipples; cheeks, nose, and

chin. Your fingertip-pads are much less sensitive than your fingernails, backs of your hands, or palms. And though the heel may have been the most vulnerable spot for Achilles, it's by far the least sensitive part of the body.

Separate beds. Doctors say that two beds are healthier for a couple than one, while marriage experts prescribe the one-bed-for-two as psychologically better and more likely to strengthen marital ties. For children in a family, though, recent evidence favors separate beds on all counts. Dr. William T. C. Berry (British Ministry of Health) reports that other factors equal, children who sleep with brothers or sisters tend to be underweight—by 2 pounds at the age of six, 12 pounds at fourteen—as compared with those who sleep alone. (Maybe that's why Eskimos, with the whole caboodle under one cover, are such runts!) Psychiatrists warn that sexual problems, often carrying into later years, may develop when children continue to sleep together, whether they're of the same or opposite sex.

How drunks end up. Of every 100 alcoholics, chances are 28 will drink themselves to death, 11 will be suicides, 6 will die insane and 5 as derelicts, concludes psychiatrist Dr. Frederick Lemere (Seattle). Of the rest, 29 will stop drinking during a life-threatening illness, 11 will quit for other reasons (religious conversion, aid of Alcoholics Anonymous, etc.), and 10 will ease up to partial or active control of their drinking. Average longevity of the alcoholics studied was 52 years, but a surprisingly large number (16 per cent) lived to 75 or over. "Once an alcoholic always an alcoholic" does hold true for the great majority, says Dr. Lemere, but exceptions are enough to justify every attempt to get a drinker to stop. However, he warns that no alcoholic should be considered cured if he doesn't drink for months, or even a year or two, because records show many have stopped for three years or more only to relapse.

Junior "Harveys." If your youngster has an imaginary companion with whom he talks (like the huge rabbit pal of the genial sot in the play "Harvey"), don't worry, but try to understand why. Dr. Otto Sperling says about 1 child in 5 invents a fanciful pal—an animal, child, or adult—to fill some unconscious need. The made-up companion may represent a scapegoat on whom to vent anger or frustration: a playmate if the child is lonely; a protector if he feels neglected; or a go-between if he's too shy to talk directly to grown-ups. Also, if a child resents parental discipline and wants to prove his independence, he may have his imaginary companion issue his parents' orders or reprimands.

No dumbbells, gals! Weight-lifting exercises are fine for developing male physiques but all wrong for female figures. London physiologist J. M. Tanner has found that continued exercise with dumbbells or barbells makes the upper arms thicker and more bulging, while the calves become thinner and less shapely. Also, this sort of exercise often enlarges thighs.

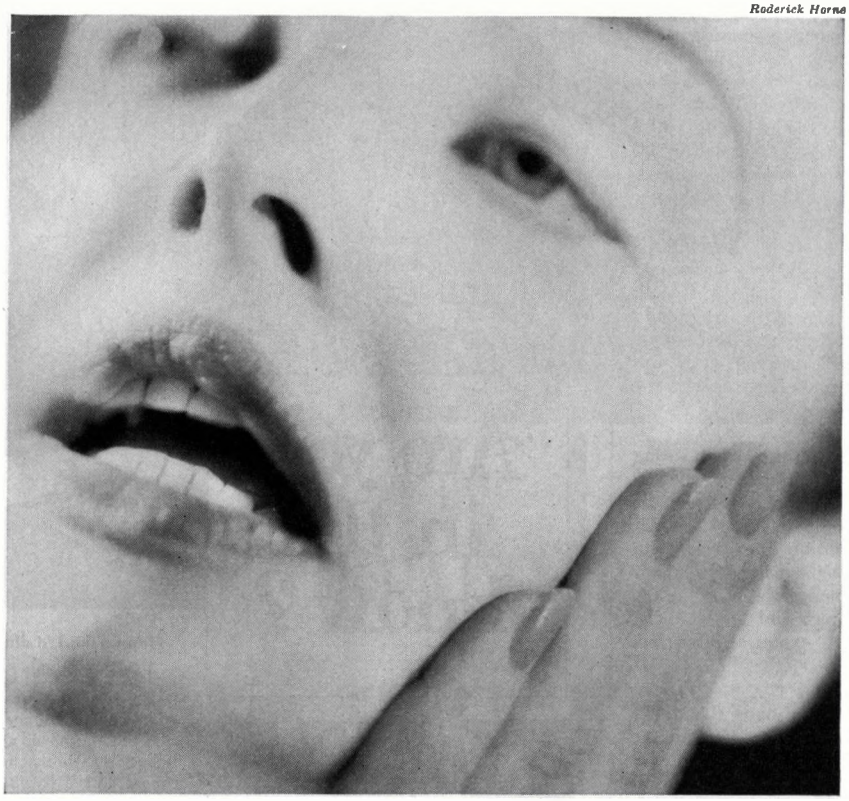
Steadier males. The hand that rocks the cradle is much less steady than the one that guides the plow, according to tests by University of Georgia investi-

Drawings by McKie

gators that show men have far better hand control than women. Most surprising: Smokers have just as steady hands as nonsmokers.

Marriage wreckers. Drink accounts for 30 per cent of Catholic-marriage breakdowns, adultery for 25 per cent, reports Father John L. Thomas, S. J. (St. Louis), after analyzing 7,000 cases in a large Midwestern diocese. Irresponsibility or immaturity figures in 12½ per cent of the cases, clashes in temperament in 12 per cent, while remaining causes are in-laws, sexual maladjustment, mental illness, religion, or money. However, sex and in-law problems are frequent causes only in marriages of short duration, whereas drink and adultery are most to blame in the middle and later years. Father Thomas cautions against assuming that if couples get along well at the start, this automatically insures stability of their marriage thereafter. THE END

Roderick Horne



Certain drugs promise added relief from hay fever, sinusitis, and other allergies.

New Aids for the Allergic

BY LAWRENCE GALTON

Allergy is simple enough to define but difficult to tolerate. It's an exaggerated sensitivity in some people—an estimated 10 per cent of the population—to agents such as foods, dust, pollens, or chemicals that are innocuous for other people. Although rarely dangerous to life, allergy can be lavish with misery. And contrary to a popular belief, allergies, especially asthma, are not outgrown but tend to become more fixed and progressive.

The basic principle of successful treatment is to find the cause and to avoid or immunize against it. When this isn't possible, other measures may be used to control the symptoms. Several new medical developments promise greater relief for many allergic people:

• In hay fever, allergic sinusitis, and other nasal allergies, the mucous membrane of the nose is boggy, pale, and swollen, and among the most common symptoms are obstruction, postnasal and nasal discharge, throat discomfort, headache, stuffiness of the ears, and asthma. With 900 patients, excellent relief was obtained when a 5-per-cent solution of sodium psylliate was injected into swollen areas. Some improvement was noted within two to three weeks after treatment, and within a few months, the mucous membrane became firm, pink, and of ordinary thickness. Relief may last from two to seven years, and re-treatment may then bring further relief. In children, injections can be given under general anesthesia, often at the time of tonsil and adenoid removal. For adults, a local anesthetic is adequate. To decrease discomfort after treatment, the sodium psylliate can be mixed with a small amount of procaine.

• Stubborn hay fever that does not yield to other treatment may be helped by cortisone tablets. Of 51 patients tested in the 1952 pollinating season, 42 benefited. Twenty-five were completely freed of symptoms, while 17 had lesser but still satisfactory relief. The improvement appeared in most cases within one to two days after the first dose of the hormone. All patients tolerated the treatment without evidence of undesirable side effects. Half of those who benefited had trouble again when the drug was discontinued, and some had to be re-treated with cortisone to maintain relief. At present, cortisone is not considered a substitute for conventional treatment and is used only for people in urgent need of relief.

• A new skin cream, Covicone, offers protection for people who break out because of sensitivity to chemicals, oils, paints, or other materials handled at work, and for others with everyday contact skin allergies, such as soap-and-water dermatitis or sensitivity to cosmetics, clothing dyes, and pollens. The cream forms an invisible, plasticlike film that acts as a physical barrier against sensitizing agents. It is not sticky or greasy and is not removed by ordinary washing. After being applied twice daily for ten days to two weeks to build up a protective layer, continued protection can be maintained with a single application every one or two days. The cream can also be used as protection against inflammation from body fluids such as occurs with persistent diarrhea, bed

sores, colostomies, ileostomies, and gallbladder drainage tubes.

- The intense itching of eczema, hives, contact dermatitis, neurodermatitis, and other skin diseases was relieved in all of 233 patients who were given antihistamine repeat-action tablets along with injections of histamine-protein antigen complex. A single antihistamine tablet provided relief from itching for ten to twelve hours.
- An antiasthmatic drug. Phenarsenide, benefited 33 of 45 chronic sufferers. The drug is not a substitute for allergy treatment, but it did produce relief, ranging from dramatic to just fair, when asthma persisted despite other measures. Phenarsenide is not recommended when complications such as bronchiectasis are present, and in some patients who are sensitive to it, it produces rash, headache, or other adverse reactions which disappear when the drug is stopped.

WHAT'S NEW IN MEDICINE

Ulcers and skin trouble associated with varicose veins and inflamed vein conditions (thrombophlebitis) have been helped by injections of adenosine-5-monophosphate (My-B-Den). Improvement occurred in the great majority of patients treated and followed a pattern in which itching first disappeared, followed by disappearance of swelling, redness and warmth, and then pain.

In bursitis, a few ten-minute periods of simple exercise may completely relieve the pain if no complications have developed. The exercises are aimed at moving the arms above shoulder level to stimulate the circulation and relax spasm. Although patients with bursitis typically fear to move their arms to any degree, the simple exercises accomplish movement without pain. They begin with the patient on hands and knees and progress to ball throwing. The treatment is based on the fact that people whose work requires them to use their arms above shoulder level rarely have bursitis. At a Veterans Administration hospital, all symptoms of bursitis were relieved in 70 patients—20 with chronic and 50 with acute bursitis—who did the exercises under supervision.

Abnormal adrenal-gland functioning may cause masculinization of girls, producing sex organs resembling the male. In boys, it may result in precocious sexual development. The hormone cortisone has been found of value. In young children, it checked progressive masculinization of girls and led to normal development in some boys. In older girls, already masculinized, normal female development resulted after cortisone treatment. THE END

I.N.P.

Washington's Mount Rainier National Park, where summer meets winter, is on this month's budget trip.

Cosmopolitan Travel Guide

BY EDWARD R. DOOLING

Barbados, most easterly of the West Indies, has succumbed to inflation. Passengers returning from South America aboard Moore-McCormack ships tell me that the diving boys in Bridgetown harbor now shout, "Throw a silver," and refuse to go overboard for anything less than a dime or shilling. I remember when their slogan was "Throw a copper."

Barbados is sometimes called the "land of the flying fish," because those spectacular little marine denizens are seen by the hundreds as you approach the harbor at Bridgetown. Flying fish is a real delicacy when properly prepared. It is served at the old Marine Hotel in Barbados and topped by a secret sauce.

It's a real item for a gourmet's notebook, but don't make the mistake I did by ordering beer with your fish, for they'll serve it British style—at room temperature. In Barbados, this is lukewarm.

"Special-purpose" travel—combining a vacation with a special interest—is no longer confined to Europe, where it's a major project. In New England, summer theatres are thick as bees in a hive; North Carolina has a whole chain of musical historic dramas, including "The Lost Colony," "Thunderland," and "Unto These Hills"; Central City, Colorado, stages big-time opera and stage-hit revivals in its famous Opera House; Ashland, Oregon, puts on a month-long Shakespearean Festival during August. Ashland's program includes "Coriolanus," "King Henry VI," "The Taming of the Shrew," and "The Merchant of Venice," to be staged nightly in rotation from August 1 to 31.

Traveling and eating, wrote an English author, are the two most satisfying experiences in life. Maine combines them with two major tourist events: the Broiler Festival and Chicken Barbecue at Belfast, July 10 and 11, and the Seafoods Festival at Rockland, July 31 to August 2. All visitors are welcome.

Parades, contests, pageants, music, and dancing are features of both events, but the big attraction is the abundance of Maine foods. Really generous bills of fare are offered at $1.25 and $1.50 respectively. Tip to prospective visitors: dress as you would for a picnic.

THIS MONTH'S BUDGET TRIP

The Pacific Northwest is well within the limits of a two-week vacation by rail. A number of all-expense conducted tours, including all the scenic highlights and places of interest, are available. A typical fifteen-day trip from Chicago costs about $450, including first-class rail transportation, top hotels, meals, sight-seeing, baggage transfers, and tips. Here is a brief summary of one such itinerary:

Your streamlined Pullman train heads west via St. Paul, Minnesota, crosses the wheat fields, the prairies, and the picturesque Bad Lands of the Dakotas. The first stop is Billings, the colorful cattle capital of Montana, where you board a modern motor coach for the scenic trip over the lofty Red Lodge-Cooke City Highway into Yellowstone National Park. Yellowstone Grand Canyon, the boiling springs, paint pots, Yellowstone Lake, the geysers, and, of course, Old Faithful are on the program.

After three days in Yellowstone, you leave the park via the Gardiner Gateway and travel by train through the Bitterroot Mountains, Idaho's Wilderness, and the Cascade Range to Portland, Oregon. Motor-coach tours of the Columbia Valley, the Columbia River Highway, Mount Hood, Mount Rainier National Park, and Paradise Valley are on the route to Seattle, Washington.

A steamer cruise on Puget Sound takes you to the quaint old city of Victoria, capital of British Columbia, and to Vancouver, where you begin your return journey via the Canadian Rockies. Banff and Lake Louise are explored on the way home. THE END

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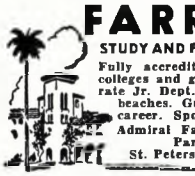

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GARRY MOORE

He shuns hokum, respects I.Q.—and wows 12,000,000 women

BY RICHARD GEHMAN

A thirty-eight-year-old radio and television veteran named Garry Moore, sometimes known as "the housewife's Valentine," has established himself as utterly indispensable to some 12,000,000 women of all ages, shapes, and persuasions. Because of the five-times-a-week "Garry Moore Show" and regular "Talent Scouts" fill-ins for ailing Arthur Godfrey, he is as familiar and useful a part of the average American woman's life as the toothbrush—an object his crew-cut head somewhat resembles.

Moore's following, however, is not exclusively feminine. Babies of both sexes have been known to toddle up and kiss his picture when it appeared on the TV screen. Men, too, are often moved to express their gratitude for the simple fact of Moore's existence, and sometimes they are moved to extraordinary lengths. One fan, aware that Moore is a yachting enthusiast, laboriously cut out, carved, mounted, and painted a tiny sailboat, which he then glued into a matchbox in an appropriate setting, a task that demanded some six weeks of work. On one occasion the widespread passion to give Moore something extended into the animal kingdom. Bobby, a monkey who last year served as summer replacement for Durward Kirby, Moore's announcer and man-of-all-roles on the show, later evinced his profound esteem for Moore by giving him a cocker spaniel purchased with money earned by his own little simian hands.

Moore addicts send a startling array of gifts to their idol. A typical day's receipts included a box of live Maine lobsters, three hand-knit sweaters, four glasses of jelly, five bow ties, a can of fried worms (a delicacy in the Orient), a set of woven place mats, and around five hundred fan letters, which is Moore's daily average. But they are not content to send things only to him. They send them to his vocalists, Denise Lor and

Ken Carson, and to the afore-mentioned Kirby. They send them to his bandleader, Howard Smith, and to Moore's assistant, Shirley Reeser. They send them to the stagehands, cameramen, and electricians, and if Moore ever were to mention the name of the studio janitor, it is highly likely that he would shortly be on the business end of an avalanche of neckties, embroidered wall mottoes, humorously carved coconuts—and poems.

When Moore told his audience that Durward Kirby needed some buttons to make an old-fashioned quilt, buttons began arriving by the tens of thousands, inundating CBS mail clerks. Extra help was called in; still more buttons came, and more and still more. Moore finally begged his obliging fans to lay off.

Besides granting his every whim, his fans fuss over him like 12,000,000 mother hens. If he happens to sneeze, the switchboard is clogged with calls cautioning him to wear rubbers, drink hot toddies, and try remedies ranging from hot petroleum and sugar to aureomycin. One day he wore his spectacles, which he ordinarily uses for close work, all through the show. Hundreds wondered if he hadn't better get his eyes checked. If he happens to appear tired, he gets calls, telegrams, and letters severely importuning him to get more rest. People in his studio audience sometimes shout out health hints during his show; to make certain he has heard, they wait for him at the stage door.

Mass demonstrations of affection are nothing new to this country, and since the emergence of the press agent, they are commonplace, though not always authentic. Garry Moore is an honest-to-God phenomenon. He needs a press agent the way he needs more to do—and nobody currently in television is busier. Besides his five-times-weekly stint, the young man is also putting in one night a week substituting for Arthur Godfrey on the "Talent Scouts" show and another on his own panel show called "I've Got a Secret." Despite his relaxed appearance, he works like a sand hog.

Garry Has a Baffling Charm

To a considerable portion of the citizenry, Garry Moore's charm is a matter of some puzzlement. It is as elusive as his winks, as intangible as his mugs, and as inscrutable as the "family" jokes on the show. (A man with an audience as faithful as his develops a lot of running gags comprehensible only to regular listeners.)

To begin with, Moore is no Errol Flynn. He has a highly mobile face, with a nose that wouldn't look out of place on the hood of an automobile. He is a mere five feet seven and weighs 145 pounds. He has clean, fresh features and a disarming grin; he even looks a bit younger than thirty-eight.

But none of these things explain his knee-weakening ability. Perhaps it can be accounted for by his Puckish expression, the glint in his hazel eyes, or—well, what man can explain the appeal of another? Whatever it is, teen-age girls sleep with his picture under their pillows—and so do their mothers and grandmothers.

There is no other show like Moore's in television. It is now a comedy program, now intensely serious. It sometimes deals with world affairs and sometimes with ways in which to waste time. One day Moore, Kirby, and the two vocalists may do a satire on "Dragnet"; another day they may mock a ballet. Sometimes there are guests, such as Marguerite Higgins, the foreign correspondent; Roger Price, the comic; or Jim Purcell, a general-store keeper who talks about life in the 1870's. There have been dramatic bits—and comedy sketches so broad that they broke up the whole cast. One day Moore simply sat down and read a long section from Joseph Mitchell's book, *Old Mr. Flood.*

"This is an old-style variety show," Moore says. "Today, people think of variety as meaning songs, dancing, and jokes. In old-time vaudeville, it meant that, too, but it meant something more. They'd have, say, a couple of hoofers, then a seal act, and then a dramatic bit with Ethel Barrymore. Why, they'd even have William Jennings Bryan speaking on free silver. That's what we're trying to do. Real variety."

Moore writes much of the show himself, with assistance from two New York

(continued)

CASUAL ATMOSPHERE *of the "Garry Moore Show" stems from a feeling of camaraderie among the cast. Like vocalist Denise Lor, who took time out to have her second baby, most have been with the show since it started.*

GARRY MOORE (continued)

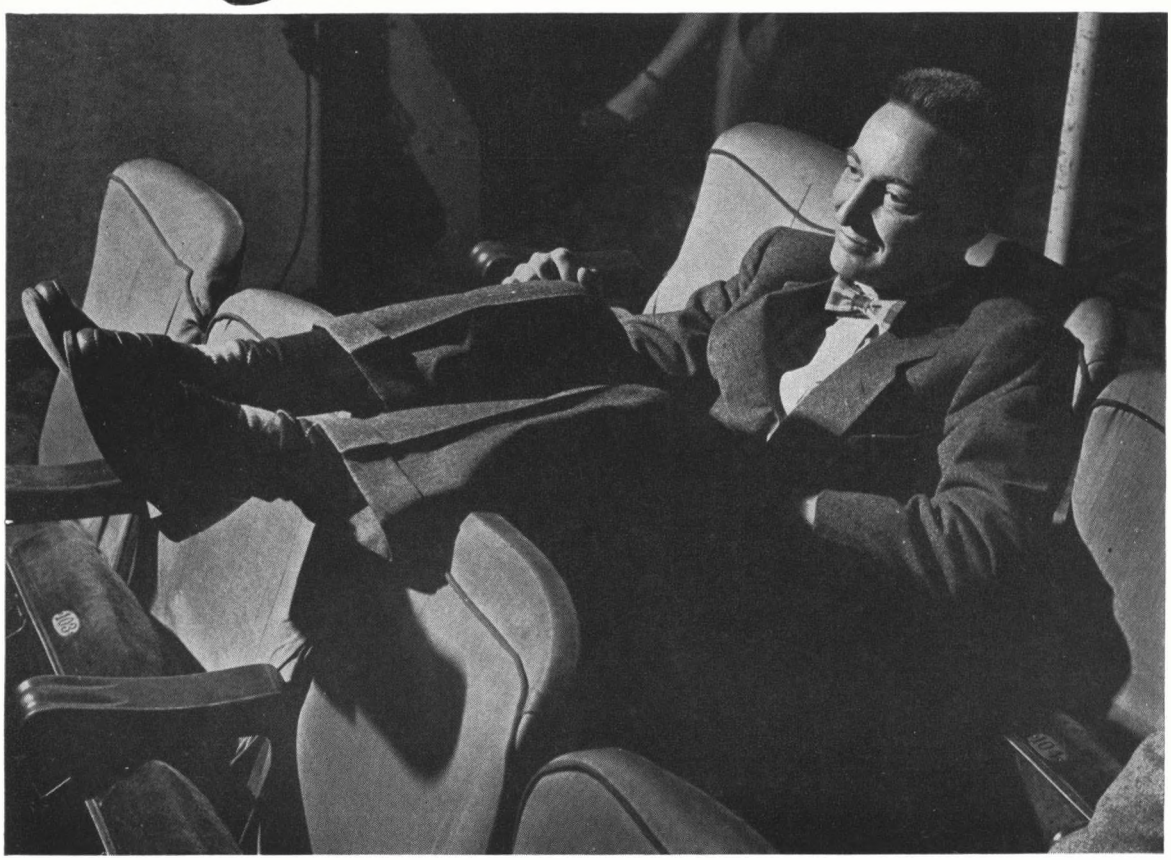
writers, Bill Demling and Vinnie Bogart, and a Michigan writer, Roland Scott, who mails bits in. The show is usually set about two weeks in advance. Quite often, when the day of the performance rolls around, Moore hurls the entire script out the window because he is unhappy with it. On occasion, he has thrown away the script in the middle of a program. Once, noticing that a child in the audience was becoming restive, he invited the mother to hand the baby up on the stage. The little girl sat there throughout the program, having a fine time. At the end, Moore charged the mother fifty cents for baby sitting, but settled for a quarter.

Impromptu Fill-ins by the Cast

If a guest fails to show up or some other catastrophe occurs, Moore has a ready fill-in. He and Durward Kirby take two hand microphones and, followed by the cameras, go out into the audience and hold a panel discussion. Other times when fill-ins are needed, the vocalists come up with a duet or Howard Smith's little band does a number. The band is an exceptional one, consisting entirely of sidemen who are famous in their own right in the *Down Beat* world: Smith on piano, Ernie Caceres on clarinet, Trigger Alpert on bass, and Carl Kress on guitar.

From time to time, Moore brings a guest on the show who proves so popular that he is asked back again and again. For a time, young Ray Malone, the dancer, appeared daily along with the rest of the regular cast. He left eventually to fill other commitments. One day Ivan Sanderson, the naturalist, turned up and chatted so amiably about some animal friends of his that Moore asked him to make it a habit. Sanderson has brought an interesting variety of guests to the program, including a baby elephant, a spider monkey, an ocelot, and a full-grown alligator. One day he brought a stork, a stately creature with a bill like a pair of sharp shears. He assured Moore and the studio audience that the bird was entirely harmless. The bird, apparently taking offense at this, promptly took off into the audience, cruised about wildly, and scared the daylights out of the audience. All Sanderson's guests are now tethered.

The "Garry Moore Show," a pleasant, intelligent, and durable program, is now well into its third year. It has been on the air continuously longer than any other TV feature except Milton Berle and Kukla, Fran, and Ollie. In the hands



BEHIND EVERY PART *of the show is Moore's feeling for good taste. His seven sponsors consider themselves lucky, and wisely let him kill any dull or offensive commercial. His loyal audiences go as much for his pitch as for the show.*

of someone else, the show might well be less ingratiating and less sturdy. The key to the mass appeal is Moore himself. Members of his staff, all of whom worship him as rabidly as his 12,000,000 girlfriends, have ready explanations for his phenomenal hold on his audience. "Garry's just the *nicest*," his secretary, Mrs. Elizabeth Bennett Downey, says. "He's one of those relaxed fellows everybody likes right off," says Shirley Reeser, Moore's number-one girl. "He makes friends easily, and unlike most television personalities, he never gets in a sweat. When guests come on the show, they're always amazed at how smoothly everything goes. We never rehearse more than two hours. Nobody loses his temper. Garry says, 'Temperament is a luxury we can't afford.'"

Herb Sanford, producer of the program, says, "Part of Garry's success is due to the fact that he's not only honestly likable but completely on the level. He doesn't use hokum. He's genuine. He couldn't be otherwise, because, as he says, 'The camera is the greatest lie detector in the world.'"

Moore himself, while somewhat mystified by the extreme faith of his multitudes, has perhaps the best explanation of all. One day he said to a visitor, "We've got one big fetish on this show. We don't talk down to our audience. If we have any loyalty from housewives, it's because we treat them like people. We try to do an intelligent show because we know we're playing to people who are our equals. That must be why we're popular—Lord knows, it ain't sex appeal."

There is yet another explanation. Moore is a pro from his size-nine shoes to his bristling haircut. Despite his relative youth, he has spent twenty years in the entertainment business, and counting the back-yard shows he staged as a boy, he has spent thirty. Born January 31, 1915, in Baltimore, Maryland, the son of a lawyer, he observed at an early age that his English-class compositions often made the windows rattle with the laughter of his classmates. That settled it; he would become a writer. Today he still thinks of himself as one, or, as he says, as "a writer who learned to talk."

He Worked with Scott Fitzgerald

When he was eighteen and a senior in high school, he joined an amateur theatrical group. When they did an original revue, he was assigned to writing the sketches. The songs were contributed by various people, one of whom was Zelda Fitzgerald, wife of the famous novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald. The latter was then in one of his liquid periods, but he pulled himself to the brink of sobriety long enough to see one performance, which impressed him favorably. He sought out Moore, confided that he had long wanted to do something for the stage, and suggested they work together.

If Casey Stengel, watching a sand-lot

(continued)

For $100 and a kiss, he bought the name "Garry Moore"

ball game, were to walk over and tap the pitcher for the Yankees, the boy's emotions could never exceed the frenzy of pride, eagerness, and excitement that rose in Moore's manly little chest.

An Improbable Partnership

The strange Fitzgerald-Moore partnership—on the one hand, a drunken near-genius; on the other, an impressionable boy scarcely out of knickers—will surely go down as one of the most unlikely collaborations in literary history. Fitzgerald could seldom pull himself together enough to work, and Moore was a bit bewildered by it all. Nothing came of the joint effort, but it did give Moore a certain prestige in Baltimore.

This local reputation led to a job as continuity writer with WBAL. One day, when a comic on a variety show failed to report, Moore was sent in to substitute. The station brass decided he was better than the original, and he stayed on the program. This irked him; he had no desire to do anything but write. After a five-year apprenticeship as announcer, comic, and writer, he went to St. Louis as a sports commentator. There, somebody had heard he was funny in Baltimore. "Not true," said Moore. The vile rumor persisted, and before long he found himself on another hated comedy show.

St. Louisians discovered Moore was, indeed, a funny man. Moore knew he was licked. After a decent interval, he went to Chicago to learn more about his unwanted vocation. There a man was making comic history. His name was Ransom Sherman, and he was the first of the literate, intellectual radio comics. He was the cynosure of "Club Matinee," which many consider one of the funniest shows of all time, if not *the*. Sherman was establishing a whole new school of comedy: now broad, now sophisticated, it acknowledged that its audience had a mind and could use it. Sherman spoofed the world at large, most particularly other radio shows. He was a satirist in the truest sense. Other comics who came later—Dave Garroway, Henry Morgan, Bob and Ray—owe their existence to the foundation Sherman constructed. So does Moore, a fact he readily admits.

"Club Matinee" was a rough haul for Moore at first. The show was on five times weekly, and for a time, before the FCC relaxed the laws, every line and every bit of business had to be put on paper. Oddly enough, this delighted Moore. It gave him a chance to sit at a typewriter again. He wrote about half the show. He experimented with routines he later used to advantage on many other programs, and met people who have been his friends and co-workers ever since (Durward Kirby and Ken Carson were both on the show).

It was in Chicago that he changed his name. He had been christened Thomas Garrison Morfit, Jr., but had dropped his first name. He found that Morfit was frequently subjected to indignities of mispronunciation. Sherman suggested they run a contest to find a new name. A woman in Pittsburgh suggested "Garry Moore," and was awarded $100, a trip to Chicago, and a kiss from her godchild. Moore can't remember her name, and neither can anybody else who was connected with "Club Matinee." This is unusual, for Moore has a rare faculty for photographic recollection. Once a woman stepped up to him and said, "You wouldn't remember me, Mr. Moore, but—" Moore glanced at her and said, "Baltimore, eighteen years ago." He performs feats like this as a matter of routine, but although he has wracked his brain, picked at the brains of others, and advertised for the lady who gave him his name, she has not yet been found. (Perhaps if she reads this, she will get in touch with him; there is a chance that she might get another trip and just possibly, another kiss.)

Moore began building a national reputation in Chicago. New York was the next step. He took it in 1942, starting a series called "Everything Goes," similar in format to the Chicago show. CBS put him on its "Comedy Caravan" as a guest, and in 1943 he was hired as Jimmy Durante's partner. Moore's fast, suave diction and educated language made an ideal counterbalance for Durante's roughhouse English-mangling. The team became extremely popular and lasted five years, during which Moore continued to develop. They parted in 1947 because Moore felt he was becoming typed as Durante's foil, but there was no rancor on either side. Today, Durante looks back upon his period with Moore as the best he spent in radio, and Moore says, "To me, he approaches genius. He is the only man I have ever known who is consistently better than his material."

Sponsors Give Him a Free Hand

After the breakup, Moore became M.C. of "Take It or Leave It." Then, when Tom Breneman died, he replaced him on "Breakfast in Hollywood." Finally he began his current daytime show and found himself. Moore loves his work. He has a completely free hand; the sponsors—there are seven now and more waiting in line—interfere with commercials

only, and then they bow to Moore's idea of good taste or find themselves another program to gum up. "It's like having a network of my own," Moore says.

He is happy at home, too. While in St. Louis, in 1939, he married Eleanor Little of Richmond, Virginia, whom he had first met in Baltimore when she was fourteen. The Moores have two sons, Mason, thirteen, and Garry, III, ten. They live in an unpretentious house in Rye, a suburban community outside New York City. Like most of his neighbors, Moore takes the commuters' train to the city each morning and goes back home on it around four or five each afternoon. He is one celebrity who does not flit the idle hours in night clubs; in fact, he prefers daytime television because it gives him more time with his family.

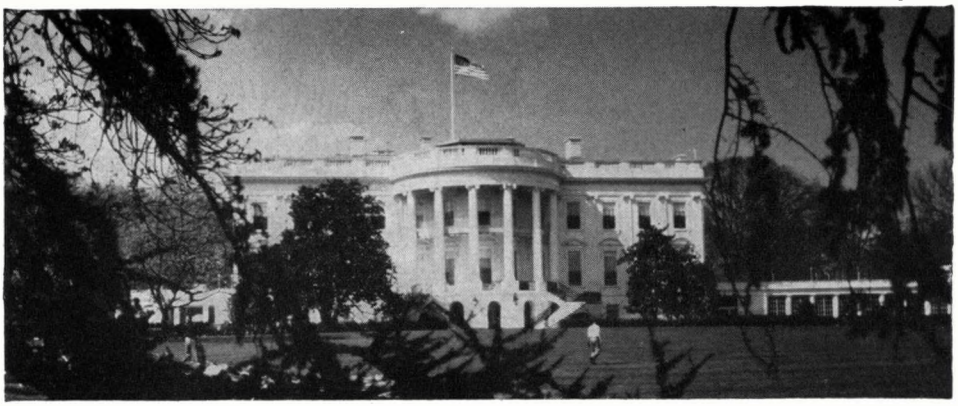
He Loves Family, Boats, People

On weekends, he and his wife and boys golf together or sail their forty-foot yawl, the *Red Wing*, on Long Island Sound. His income is now in six substantial figures, but his wife says he has not changed appreciably since the days when he was earning fifty dollars a week in St. Louis. He has a consistently even temper and the air of a man who thoroughly enjoys life and his fellow humans.

He is a happy, well-adjusted, and genuinely modest man, and much of this gets through to his audience. Moore says, "This is the show I want to do the rest of my life." Twelve million fans fervently hope he gets his wish. THE END

MOORE LIKES VARIETY, *keeps show moving with many moods, from drama to music and even to alligators.*

Photos by I.N.P.



The whole nation feels possessive about the White House, which is half residence and half shrine.

WHO REALLY RUNS THE WHITE HOUSE

It's not the Eisenhowers! For management of the White House is firmly in the hands of its tradition-bound household staff

BY JOHN FLANNERY

On December 1, 1952, Mrs. Dwight Eisenhower arrived at the White House on a special errand. She had accepted the traditional invitation that the wife of the outgoing President extends to the wife of the President-elect. This courtesy is supposed to break the ice of housekeeping for the new First Lady. She is shown around the Executive Mansion, advised about closets and kitchen utensils, introduced to the staff, and, in general, given an idea of what is ahead of her for the next four years.

In the course of time, a good deal of sentiment has grown up around this ceremonial visit. In part, it is entangled in the feeling of Americans that the White House belongs to them.

As Mrs. Eisenhower mounted the White House steps, eighty-year-old John Mays, for forty-four years the White House doorman, swung the bronze doors open and said, "Good morning, Mrs. Eisenhower."

To some, it seemed like an announcement that the flag was still flying. Mays was telling the world that the household hierarchy of the White House, the corps that from chief usher to pot washer has the responsibility of running the place, still had the Executive Mansion under firm and solid control. And a most singular group of persons it is.

Howell Crim heads the roster. Mr. Crim, gray in the service, is chief usher of the White House, supervisor of Executive Mansion social routines, custodian of the Presidential dignity—and the most important White House witness before Congressional appropriations committees.

Mr. Crim's opposite number is Mrs. Mabel Ciarrochi, the housekeeper, who has jurisdiction over the cleaning on all floors of the White House.

Other members of the hierarchy are the White House social secretary (the position is vacant now since the departure of Mrs. James Helm, after more than twenty years of separating the sheep from the goats); the acting personal secretary of Mrs. Eisenhower, Mrs. Mary Jane McCaffree; head of the White House social bureau, Adrian Tolley, who is famed for his extraordinary handwriting, which looks like engraving on formal invitations; the President's medical aide, Major General Howard Snyder (Ret.); the special agent in charge of the White House detail of the Secret Service, James Rowley; the President's military aide, Lieutenant Colonel Robert L. Schulz; the President's Naval aide, Commander Edward Beach, who wrote the best seller *Submarine!*; and the President's Air Force aide, Major William Draper, who is also the President's personal pilot.

The maître d'hôtel is boss of the butlers, and the head cook is in charge of five other cooks. Also, there are numerous housemen, maids, gardeners, chauffeurs, engineers, etc.

The Staff's Power Is Growing

This group has both responsibilities and powers, and it is likely that, under Mrs. Eisenhower's management, their powers will be further strengthened. She may supervise the menus every day and draw the household checks—President Coolidge insisted on doing both chores—but it's the hierarchy who must carry out the orders.

The White House is the American holy place, and only the hierarchy knows how to run it. This is a vast job complicated by the dictates of political and social precedent, national prejudice, and established custom. If the President and his

(continued)

The Eisenhowers must delegate to thirty-one staff members the authority to run the 126-room mansion.

wife are determined upon some point, the hierarchy yields gently, and puts the Executive foible (temporarily) in the manual. But they do not forget.

The household was disturbed when President Harding insisted that toothpicks have a place on the White House dining table. They acquiesced, but when Harding died, the toothpicks disappeared. It was not Franklin Roosevelt who finally banished cuspidors, it was Mrs. Nesbitt, the housekeeper. But Mrs. Nesbitt, in turn, was licked by the determination of the maids to use feather dusters.

In the old days, it was the custom for the outgoing President and his family to leave the White House, bag and baggage, at eleven-thirty on the morning of Inauguration Day. It was up to the incoming President and his family to figure out what they would do.

Pierce Found It Deserted

Often the situation was bewildering. Franklin Pierce and his secretary found themselves all alone in a deserted White House on the evening of Inauguration Day. Rummaging about, they found a pair of candles, lit them, and set out to explore the deserted house. Eventually they discovered some blankets left behind and managed to get bedded down for the night.

Warren Harding ordered toothpicks on the dining table. After he died, the hierarchy got rid of them

It doesn't happen that way anymore. The place is all tidy and dinner ready when the new President arrives.

The current order of things began to jell during the William Howard Taft administration. Before that, the management of the White House had been somewhat on the casual side. Dinners and the receptions were handled from outside by caterers. Andrew Carnegie supplied the White House with whisky free of charge. Life was idyllic but uncertain.

One day, for instance, Mrs. Cleveland came in from a drive to find the furnaceman banging the White House piano for a cotillion that had been organized on the spur of the moment by the help.

Mrs. Taft resolved to end this state of affairs, and gradually a hierarchy was built up.

Members of this hierarchy may vary in rank, position, and pay, but one and all make their presence felt. Mrs. Helm, for instance, was the White House social secretary only because it pleased her to hold the place. A person of independent wealth and social position, she came to the White House in Woodrow Wilson's time, returned with the Roosevelts, and stayed until the departure of the Trumans—more than twenty years. A woman of tact and capacity, she became an institution.

Her influence was very different from that which Arthur Brooks, the valet, used to exert. Brooks was a power below the stairs, because the housekeeper relied upon him as an employment agency. If Brooks gave the nod, you got the job.

The hierarchical influence can produce highly interesting results. The night Woodrow Wilson arrived at the White House, his sister fell and cut her forehead. The Wilsons knew no doctor in Washington. The hierarchy remembered that Dr. Cary Grayson had in the past been a most congenial assistant to other White House physicians. The hierarchy called him, and from that day on he was the White House physician during the Wilson administration. Later, he was made a rear admiral.

Members of the hierarchy are acutely conscious of Presidential weaknesses and shortcomings, and they can be critical. Colonel Starling didn't think much of Margaret Wilson's soprano. "Often," he said, "it flooded the White House with its questionable beauty, creating a strange tension among the members of the staff."

The Hoovers Entertained Freely

The Herbert Hoovers were great entertainers and spent their own money more freely, perhaps, than any other Presidential family. Yet they weren't regarded as being as generous as Woodrow Wilson. Mrs. Coolidge was extremely popular with the hierarchy. She would not give interviews. They approved of such conduct. Mrs. Truman wouldn't give interviews, either. The hierarchy approved of that, too.

However critical they may be, they will cover up for the boss and his wife, no matter what. Ike Hoover carried all sorts of secrets around with him. He arranged for private mailing boxes under assumed names for two Presidents. Ira Smith collaborated in destroying the letters of Nan Britton, the girl who had been Harding's sweetie while he was in the Senate.

Coolidge Swiped Macaroons

Of course, there are occasional jolts and oddities, but none unlike those in any ordinary home. Calvin Coolidge, for example, loved to sneak into the East Room before State receptions and devour ladyfingers and macaroons. Once, when Coolidge was absent from Washington, the Secret Service was dispatched on a wild midnight ride to get bicarbonate of soda.

In time, with political changes, some members of the hierarchy must be sacrificed for political expediency. Take the current case of Louise Hachmeister. Miss Hachmeister was for twenty years the chief switchboard operator at the White House. Franklin Roosevelt found out about her when she was working as a telephone operator at Democratic headquarters during the campaign of 1932. She was born with an extraordinary memory for voices, which made her unusually valuable.

Then, in November, 1952, the Republicans were returned to power. One of their most pressing problems was the demands of party members for jobs.

A beginning had to be made. Miss Hachmeister was due to retire in October, 1953, when she would become sixty-two, but the new administration couldn't wait. She has been placed on sick leave until her retirement becomes effective.

Sometimes the hierarchy succeeds in ousting a functionary. This was what happened with Norton, President Taft's secretary. The help didn't like Norton. He was the first efficiency expert ever to show up at the White House. He kept repeating that the Executive Mansion was going to be run efficiently, or else. The hierarchy had its own ways of fighting back. It is known that they scrutinized his mail, kept tab on everything he did, and never exerted themselves to prevent Norton's appearing in a poor light. He was fired, and the stories have it that the household sang: "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow."

The retirement of Colonel Starling and Michael Reilly was different. These men, in turn, headed the White House Secret Service detail that has the job of guarding the President.

Most Presidents have detested this Secret Service surveillance. But they can't beat the system. Congress set it up, and guarded they must be.

For many years this protection was

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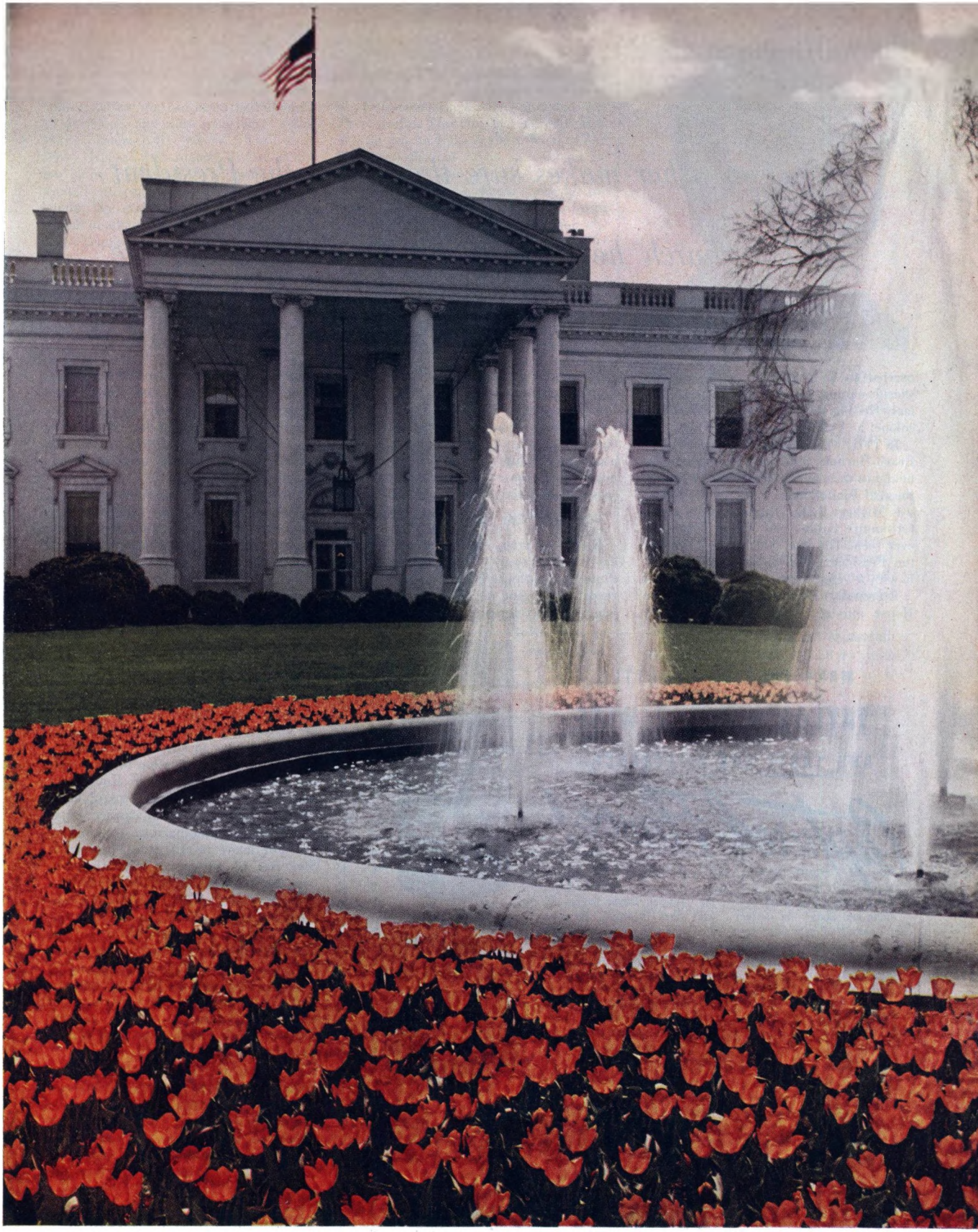

All funds for running the White House, from cooking to gardening, must be approved by Congress.

The chief usher makes sure that when the President goes to church he has $5 for the collection plate

carried on in a sort of genial deputy-sheriff manner. Colonel Starling was typical. He was a Kentucky, not an army, colonel and plainly old school.

In 1941, within twenty-four hours after Pearl Harbor, Starling was ousted. He held his title and place until 1943, but the real White House Secret Service boss was Michael Reilly. Reilly was the greatest empire builder the White House has ever seen. The law said he must protect the President, and he proceeded to do it with a vengeance.

Eventually Reilly turned the White House into an Alcatraz and made the comings and goings of the President resemble those of a respectable Al Capone. (As a matter of fact, he tried to buy what he supposed was Capone's armored automobile for the President's use.) The number of White House Secret Service men was increased from eleven to seventy. Presidential sedans were armored.

Armored Car for the President

Reilly ordered an armored railroad car for the President with window glass three inches thick. He used devices that revealed secrets by flashing, buzzing, whirring, or clanking. He used Geiger counters. He acquired a veritable arsenal of weapons. For a time, the Secret Service contemplated wiring the iron fence that surrounds the White House, but this was given up at last. Someone figured that an innocent taxpayer might get himself electrocuted.

These activities provoke mingled feelings. Even Reilly himself concluded bitterly that perfect protection was impossible to achieve. A terrible way to live, thought Mrs. Nesbitt. But the standard reply of the Secret Service is: Three Presidents were killed before we came on the job; none since.

In the recent uproar over the reconstruction of the White House, the hierarchy remained silent but watchful.

As most people recall, President Truman's alarm about the mansion was roused at a reception one night in 1948. He noticed one of the chandeliers swaying and shaking in a most peculiar manner. A hurried examination of the building showed that the White House was standing up largely from force of habit and that immediate action was necessary.

The task aroused much waspish bickering. For many months, the Washington *Star* was as nervous as a setting hen over the whole problem. Congresswoman Frances P. Bolton of Ohio became agitated about the old White House woodwork. Senator Edward Martin worried that there be the widest possible distribution to schools, libraries, American Legion Posts, and so forth of souvenir units made from discarded fragments of the old structure. B. Altman got the decorating job. Clouds of jealousy swirled around that juicy plum.

At length, the job was done, with the general architectural idea maintained.

Some regrets there were. Senator Clinton P. Anderson of New Mexico felt depressed because the old oak panels in the State Dining Room had been painted green. Senator Martin was disgusted with the incinerator.

Through the three years of turmoil, the hierarchy had been completely self-effacing. Yet presently it became clear that their influence had been at work.

Chief Usher Crim told the House Appropriations Committee with satisfaction that the reconstructed mansion would include among its desirable features "public toilets that we never had enough of when they had state occasions." (Old White House: 82 rooms. Renovated White House: 126 rooms, if you count the baths. Sum total of household help wanted to run the establishment: 77 hands. The staff numbers 31 now.)

Still another miracle had been in progress: acquisition of new equipment of everyday utility, a responsibility of the hierarchy. This has been a trying business. Either the White House was always out of something or they were making do with holdovers. The flat silver bought by the Clevelands was used for years. Coolidge wiped his hands on towels bought for Woodrow Wilson. When Mrs. Nesbitt arrived from Hyde Park to take over as housekeeper, she found that there weren't enough skillets to cook a fair-sized meal. At the present, things are smooth and the White House has adequate supplies of towels, napkins, and cleansing powders.

There was much quiet satisfaction in the hierarchy when the President and Mrs. Eisenhower were prompt in getting their church connection fixed up. On the morning of the Inauguration, Ike and his wife went to prayers at the National Presbyterian Church. A dozen days later, they joined that church.

This was right in the groove. Clerics may despair about the churchgoing habits of the American people, but they don't have to worry about the Presidents. All Presidents of the United States go to church. *All.* And the chief usher and the Secret Service collaborate in getting them there.

The chief usher makes sure that when the President leaves the White House on Sunday mornings, he has in his pocket the five-dollar bill that custom says he must put in the plate.

Hoover Forgot Pocket Money

President Hoover was very forgetful about pocket money. This wasn't any trouble on Sundays, since the plate is not passed at a Friends meeting. Quakers make their religious contributions less ostentatiously. But one Sunday morning, by chance, Mr. and Mrs. Hoover attended a Presbyterian church. The chief usher had not been informed of their destination, and no collection money had been supplied. Presently, with a start, Mr. Hoover saw the ushers coming down the aisle. Frantically he searched his pockets. Not a nickel. In a panic, he turned to Mrs. Hoover, and she emptied her handbag. Two single-dollar bills were all she could find. This catastrophe put steel into the hearts of the hierarchy. It must not happen again!

This Presidential churchgoing sounds like a reasonably simple operation, but sometimes it isn't. St. John's Episcopal Church, directly across Lafayette Park from the White House, calls itself the Church of the Presidents. Often it is nothing of the kind. Woodrow Wilson, of Princeton University, attended the Presbyterian church. The second Mrs. Wilson was an Episcopalian. What to do? The ecclesiastical crisis was solved by having Mrs. Wilson accompany the President one Sunday—a single chore for the Secret Service—and go to her own church the next—double duty for the Secret Service. The Tafts were in a similar fix, for he was a Unitarian, and stood pat, and she attended St. John's.

The Eisenhowers Are Presbyterian

More recently, things have been easier for the White House detail. Mr. and Mrs. Truman were regulars at the First Baptist Church. The Eisenhowers occupy Pew 41 at the National Presbyterian Church, directly behind the one where President Harrison used to sit. There were those who thought it might be a good thing if the Eisenhowers took the old Grant pew on the side aisle, since Grant was both a Republican President and a distinguished general, but the hierarchy didn't meddle with this problem and the President has now settled down comfortably near the center aisle.

Sociologists may claim the middle class is as extinct as the dodo, but the hierarchy's concept of good form is copper-riveted middle class. It derives, in part, from the republic's ancient suspicion foreign upstarts, of the determination that the President should be first among equals and no more. (The practice of addressing the President simply as "Mr. President" was settled long ago. It was observed in the Truman poker games. The phrase was: "Your deal, Mr. President.")

The hierarchy is distrustful of anything pompous, haughty, or finical, but the State Department has had different ideas. A couple of generations back, it began to hanker after the ways of foreign courts. The hierarchy would have none of it. Generally speaking, it can be said that the hierarchy won this battle. The President shakes hands. He does not bow. This is a hierarchical article of faith.

It may be that certain members of the trust might be accused of taking themselves somewhat seriously. But no patriot with a passion for Presidential protocol can deny that theirs is a serious job. That seriousness, bordering on solemnity, guides and drives them.

And if Mrs. Alice Lee Roosevelt Longworth ("Princess Alice" at seventeen; in 1906, the bride at the most gorgeous of all White House weddings) comes to call some afternoon at the Executive Mansion, a glance between her and John Mays, the eighty-year-old doorman, should be enough to tell whether everything is shipshape, with business going on as usual at the old stand. THE END

IN NATURAL CHILDBIRTH, *the mother is consciously aware of her baby throughout its birth.*

The Case for
NATURAL CHILDBIRTH

It's time, say advocates, people realize birth should be a thrilling experience, not an ordeal

BY JACK HARRISON POLLACK

A crime is being committed in America today against millions of expectant mothers under the noble name of "maternity care."

"With our million-dollar maternity hospitals," charges Dr. Nicholson J. Eastman, professor of obstetrics at Johns Hopkins University, "we handle patients with the same assembly-line technique that has proved so efficient in turning out motor cars. It is a sad commentary on our sense of values that we inflict this on sensitive young women going through the supreme emotional experience of their lives."

"From the factory-output standpoint, we have done a pretty good job, but from the humanitarian viewpoint, we have failed miserably," declares Dr. Thomas O. Gamble, chief obstetrician at the Albany (New York) Hospital. Dr. Herbert Thoms, Yale's famed chief of obstetrics and gynecology, adds, "We have made childbirth safe, but now we should make it more satisfactory." The Maternity Center Association, which has sparked natural childbirth in America, concludes, "At its mechanistic worst, the mother is considered just a pregnant uterus, the baby an impersonal fetus, the father a nuisance—and the miracle of new life just another cold-blooded surgical operation."

In the face of this assembly-line technique, natural childbirth was introduced in America several years ago, amid sharp controversy. Since then, it has been under continuous fire. But despite the hostility of many doctors, nurses, and hospital officials, natural childbirth has won increasing recognition as one of the most important milestones in childbearing.

The proof of its merit is that practically every woman who has honestly tried natural childbirth refuses to have her future babies in any other way. Instead of experiencing an ordeal, she derives a tremendous satisfaction from the process of birth. My own wife gave birth the traditional way six years ago and had a natural childbirth last year. She declares, "The old-fashioned method is a nightmare, but natural childbirth is a thrilling experience!"

Confusion over Natural Method

There is, unfortunately, widespread confusion and misinformation about natural childbirth. Many old wives' tales have given way to new ones. Why? In some cases because natural childbirth has been oversimplified, and in other cases because its critics have made untrue charges. There are six mischievous myths that have confused the issue:

1. *The Pain Myth*

Natural childbirth is *not* synonymous with painless childbirth. Recently the father of natural childbirth, Dr. Grantley Dick Read, an English obstetrician, told me, "I never taught or claimed that all women can bear children without discomfort. This serious error has crept into the publicity. The basis of my method is the absence of fear."

In his famed book, *Childbirth Without Fear*, Dr. Read says that from the time they are knee-high, girls are frightened by their mothers—and maiden aunts—with the notion that it is terribly painful to have a baby. This exaggerated fear tenses the muscles of the uterus. Result: pain. The pain multiplies the fear—and a vicious fear-tension-pain cycle begins.

Actually, natural childbirth means *no* fear—and *little* pain. "My natural childbirth didn't hurt any more than my regular menstrual cramps," one woman said. Under ideal conditions, natural childbirth may indeed be completely painless. But this is the point: the woman who is relaxed, knows what to expect in each stage, and has the support of her doctor, husband, and nurses, will have a minimum of pain in childbirth.

Too often, effort is mistaken for pain. If you've ever watched the final pull in a tug of war or the facial contortions of a hundred-yard runner in his last-second sprint, you'll understand that this is effort—not pain.

Natural childbirth has discomfort but not agony. "The important thing about natural childbirth is that relaxed women are perfectly willing to tolerate some discomfort in return for the glorious sensation of being fully conscious at the

Color photo by Constance Bannister

(continued)

Natural childbirth rids mothers of exaggerated fears and therefore reduces tension and pain

time of delivery," explains Hazel Corbin, head of the Maternity Center Association.

2. *The No-drugs Myth*

Another widespread misconception is that anesthesia or analgesia is *never* used in natural childbirth. Countless otherwise well-informed young women who have refused to have babies by natural childbirth told me, "Gee, I want something to relieve the pain. I'm no Spartan!"

But actually, two out of three women having babies by natural childbirth ask for and get small doses of demerol or some other drug for temporary relief, rest, or improved relaxation.

Natural childbirth isn't an endurance contest. If a woman in labor wants something to ease her pain, all she has to do is request it. She isn't a failure if she calls for some anesthesia.

"It is just as much a mistake to withhold drugs from women who need them as to administer drugs to those who do *not* need them," explains Dr. Frederick W. Goodrich, Jr., of New London, Connecticut, a pioneer in natural childbirth.

Natural childbirth sensibly puts drugs in their proper perspective. "When weight lifters groan, grimace, and sweat in a gymnasium, we don't rush out to anesthetize them," reasons one natural-childbirth doctor. By reducing the need for anesthesia, natural childbirth decreases the hazards of anesthetics. In too many hospitals, mothers in labor have gas masks routinely slapped on them without being told of anesthesia's dangers to them and their babies.

For even opponents of natural childbirth admit that there is no single drug that is completely safe for mother and baby and that will not interfere with labor. During a recent twenty-one-month period in North Carolina, anesthesia was responsible for fifteen maternal deaths.

For many years, "twilight sleep" was popular—before doctors discovered that it sometimes made the baby incapable of taking his first breath. Similarly, caudal anesthesia—continuous injection at the spine's base—too often results in paralysis of the mother, infection, and death. "Saddle-block" anesthesia, hailed several years ago, also turned out to be dangerous.

Such perils of deep anesthesia recently prompted Dr. William Benbow Thompson, prominent Los Angeles obstetrician, to warn, "In addition to infection, toxemia, and hemorrhage, we must add anesthesia to the list of major hazards of childbirth."

The great contribution of natural childbirth is that it minimizes—doesn't eliminate—the need for pain-killing drugs.

3. *The Exercise Myth*

Another common misconception is that merely doing certain exercises during pregnancy automatically assures a natural childbirth.

It isn't that simple. Sure, exercises are extremely important in strengthening muscles and easing tensions. (One British obstetrician wrote a book called *Childbirth as an Athletic Event.*) But exercises are of little help unless a woman receives sympathetic support and encouragement from her doctor and nurses during labor.

The purpose of natural-childbirth exercises is to teach you how to relax and use the particular muscles that will be called on during labor. The abdominal breathing exercises—which, incidentally, are used by singers—are especially helpful during the *first* stage of labor. They lessen and shorten uterine contractions, making them bearable. Pelvic and squatting exercises are useful for the *second* stage of labor. If you practice squatting and pelvic rocking, it will make the actual delivery of your baby easier and faster. Unlike farmwomen and charwomen, city girls have lost the fine art of squatting. Also, their pelves are often out of line as a result of high heels. So the pelvic and squatting exercises are particularly important to them.

4. *The Longer-labor Myth*

Some girls mistakenly believe that labor is longer and harder under natural childbirth. Actually, the opposite is true. A Yale-Maternity Center study of more than a thousand women who used the natural-childbirth method concluded that "labor has been shortened; there is less abnormal bleeding and a lessened incidence of maternal fatigue."

Similar results are found at other modern hospitals practicing natural childbirth. My wife, for example, was in labor twenty-nine hours during her old-fashioned first delivery, compared with merely six hours for her natural childbirth.

5. *The Myth of Catholic Opposition*

Some Catholic girls have the erroneous impression that the Catholic Church is opposed to natural childbirth.

On the contrary, the Catholic Church is among its strongest supporters, for the whole philosophy of natural childbirth is to make birth a more wholesome, spiritual experience.

The former president of the Catholic Hospital Association, Monsignor Charles A. Towell of Covington, Kentucky, last year strongly urged Catholic hospital personnel to support national natural-childbirth programs. In advocating that women have an "intelligent understanding of their role in God's plan that childbirth be normal and entirely natural," Monsignor Towell quoted Pope Pius XII, who urged "giving back to the human person the dignity given to him by God from the very beginning."

In Santa Fe, New Mexico, the Medical Mission Sisters of Philadelphia have been successfully practicing natural childbirth for nearly ten years. They have kept all modern medicine's safeguards yet encouraged parents to build up in themselves the security that comes from being together and doing God's will with enthusiasm.

Together with doctors, these Sisters have delivered more than 2,500 babies, mostly in mothers' homes. Through exercises and lectures, they prepare mothers and fathers for their roles in childbirth, thus establishing a sense of "family" even before the child is born. The father stays with the mother during labor, delivery,

and the mother's period of recuperation after the baby's birth.

6. *The Neurotic Myth*

Some critics insist that natural childbirth is only for a relatively few immature, obsessive, high-strung women with "a compulsive drive" who "hypnotize themselves" into a "primitive" childbirth. This is utter nonsense. Perhaps the term *natural childbirth* is misleading. To some, it presents a picture of a primitive woman giving birth to her child, unaided, in a bush or hut. Though its basic philosophy is as old as the human race, natural childbirth uses the most modern medical safeguards and the new knowledge of psychiatry in a way nature intended—the natural way.

Because of occasional physiological complications, natural childbirth isn't for *every* woman. But it can be for *most* women. Most deliveries were by "natural childbirth" long before Grantley Dick Read was ever heard of. Natural childbirth merely says that, in most cases, birth is a perfectly normal, spontaneous event. And that the birth of a baby should be an easy, happy, satisfying experience.

This is deeply felt by women who have had their children by natural childbirth. "It's the most gratifying experience I ever had," said one mother.

One unlucky woman had her first baby by natural childbirth, and at the birth of her second child several years later, was in another city. The hospital there would not permit her to have natural childbirth. She wrote her first doctor at Yale, "When I woke up and was told it was all over, I felt cheated. The process of birth is so fascinating that it's stupid to black you out."

There Is Heavy Opposition

Despite these six myths, natural childbirth is making great headway in America, as modern mothers and fathers seek to make childbirth a more satisfying experience. But there is tremendous opposition to this idea. Why?

Let's be blunt: the attack on natural childbirth is spearheaded by many doctors, nurses, and hospitals. In some areas of this free country, young doctors dare not practice natural childbirth—even though they believe in it—for fear of losing their hospital appointments. Probably the biggest single reason for this opposition is that natural childbirth takes more of a doctor's, nurse's, and hospital's time and effort. "Why go to all the bother?" doctors have been known to say. "It's so much simpler to give a woman deep anesthesia."

"If a doctor has not time to give to pregnant women, he should earn his living another way," insists Dr. Read. "There is no greater obstetric crime than to leave a woman in a room by herself at three-fifths dilation and tell her, 'You're not going to have your baby for perhaps ten or twelve hours. Don't

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Rooming-in makes it possible for husband, wife, and baby to spend their time together at the hospital

make a lot of noise, and we will come and see you from time to time.' That's a way to ruin a woman's labor—and her whole life."

In many cases, the doctor promises to follow natural childbirth, but when the expectant mother arrives at the hospital, she is drugged by nurses and taken to the labor room, where her hands and legs are strapped down and a mask forced over her face. When she comes to, the doctor explains that he didn't have time to do as she wanted and it was his affair, anyhow.

One double-crossed Minneapolis woman who suffered this treatment reports, "I told my doctor that I wanted to be fully conscious when my baby was born. He agreed, even though he said the pain was too much for any woman to bear. The abdominal breathing I practiced made my contractions much easier. I felt no pain, only joy. But in the delivery room, they put a gas mask over my face, though I insisted I didn't need it. I tried to take it off, but my hands were tied. Everything that was wonderful was blotted out. Nobody believed that I could do what I wanted to do—have my baby *naturally*."

Despite such obstacles, more and more doctors and hospitals are practicing natural childbirth. Ironically, the condemnations come only from those who have *not* given it a fair trial. As Yale's Dr. Thoms says, "No obstetrician who has given the principles of natural childbirth a thorough and sympathetic trial has ever been willing to abandon it."

Recently at the staff meeting of a large hospital, a forthright chief said, "Some of you doctors and nurses may not like natural childbirth. You are entitled to think as you wish. But when a patient comes into this hospital wanting to have her baby by natural childbirth, all of us here must give her every encouragement and not hinder her efforts with disparaging remarks." Unfortunately, such hospital chiefs—and hospitals—are still in a distressing minority.

Hospital Births Split the Family

Within our lifetime, America's childbearing customs have sharply changed. Our grandmothers had their babies at home, with Grandpa keeping the water boiling. Today 85 per cent or more of America's babies are born in hospitals. This transfer of the scene of childbearing has broken up the warm family relationship. Since ancient days, the bearing and rearing of children have been the responsibility of two people. "Only once is this duality broken—at birth in a hospital," explains the Maternity Center's Hazel Corbin. "The security of the family is shattered at one of the most important moments of life."

In too many hospitals, mother and father are separated at the elevator door. She goes to the labor room and he to the waiting room. Though he wants to be with his wife—and she needs him as never before—his role is treated as a joke. One hospital even has a sign: "Babies should be shown as infrequently as possible to fathers as it is a waste of nursing time."

But in natural childbirth, the husband is with his wife in the labor room. His presence does a lot to relax her. Besides lending moral support, he can wipe her

brow and perhaps massage her back during contractions. "Husbands are the world's best back rubbers," explains Nurse Carol Janeway, a teacher in the Maternity Center's classes for expectant mothers and fathers. Some doctors—like Dr. Paul A. Bowers of Jefferson Hospital, Philadelphia—even encourage fathers to be in the delivery room.

Another tremendous advantage of natural childbirth is the "rooming-in" aspect. This means that the baby stays with his mother in her room, instead of being away from her in the hospital nursery. The father merely has to don a hygienic mask to enter the room occupied by his wife and newborn child. This arrangement combines the emotional satisfactions of home delivery with the best hospital safeguards.

Discussing the U.S. hospital practice of separating mothers and babies immediately after birth, a United Nations report recently concluded: "It is to be hoped that this aberration of Western society will never be copied by the so-called less developed countries."

But under rooming-in, the family relationship is kept as the mother and father learn together to diaper, take care of, and play with their baby.

"Rooming-in is wonderful," one mother declared. "That way, my husband and I became used to the baby before we got home."

Breast feeding, whose emotional values are now being rediscovered by experts, is also encouraged under rooming-in. This way, a baby can be fed when he is hungry, not when the hospital timetable dictates he *must* be fed by the bottle.

Almost any woman who can have a baby can nurse one. But in New York City hospitals, for example, three out of four mothers are prevented from ever getting started. "You're not going to nurse your baby, are you?" the hospital attendant will ask. Many nurses routinely put tight binders on women or give them hormone pills to dry up their breasts.

How to Plan a Natural Delivery

What can you do if you want to try natural childbirth?

1. Carefully select a doctor who favors the idea. Many doctors are ready and willing to use natural childbirth but are waiting for their patients to ask for it. If you are unable to locate such a doctor, the Maternity Center Association, 48 East Ninety-second Street, New York 28, New York, may be able to tell you what physicians in your area are interested.
2. If your community has a class in natural-childbirth principles, by all means attend it. There are many such groups across the country. Some of the more active groups are in Cleveland, Milwaukee, Seattle, Dayton, and Flint, Michigan.
3. Visit your hospital with your husband *before* your delivery so that you may become familiar with the nurses and the setup. Hospitals that are genuinely sympathetic to natural childbirth encourage mothers to do so. Ask your doctor to arrange the visit.
4. If you are unable to locate a doctor or hospital in your area receptive to natural childbirth, and you still want it, you can prepare yourself alone by doing the abdominal breathing and relaxation exercises. And you can ask your doctor not to give you sedation until you ask for it—and then only a minimum amount.

Natural childbirth is no mere fad. It is a rapidly spreading world-wide idea that has brought hope, comfort, and health to countless women and their families. It took a twenty-four-year-old husband to sum up natural childbirth for me. Recently he wrote the Maternity Center, "Please send us some information about natural childbirth. We're pregnant." THE END

Erich Kastan

Father of natural childbirth is Dr. Grantley Dick Read, an English obstetrician. In his popular Childbirth Without Fear, *he explains his methods do not promise that childbirth will be painless. But once a mother-to-be understands the process of birth, he says, she learns to relax. And when that happens, muscular constriction –and with it pain–is reduced.*

Color photo by Kostich

The Diddays of Holland

From Ohio, they moved to a Technicolor land of tulips and windmills, where a queen rides in a gold-and-crystal coach drawn by black horses

BY ANN CUTLER

Until their big move to Holland last year, the Richard Diddays were lifelong inhabitants of Batavia, Ohio. Now they live in a villa overlooking a canal on which white swans glide by. They've seen a real queen in a golden coach drawn by coal-black horses, and their two children, nine-year-old Rich and six-year-old Kathy, ice-skate on the canals of The Hague.

They arrived in this picturesque world last year, after Richard, a sales engineer for the Cincinnati Milling Company, manufacturer of machine tools, was asked to set up a European branch for the company. Their date of arrival—April 29, 1952—was highly propitious, they felt, for Rotterdam was gay with flags and bunting. It was, they discovered, the eve of Queen Juliana's birthday. It was also Richard Didday's fortieth birthday and his and Mamie's fifteenth wedding anniversary.

Nature lovers at heart, they immediately fell in love with their new country, reveling in the picture-postcard delights of crisscrossing canals, narrow twisting lanes, and gaily colored flower gardens that border even the tiniest houses.

"It's a Technicolor land," sighs Mamie rapturously.

After a lifetime in the Middle West, the Diddays found the expanse of sea around them pure enchantment. Warmond Beach, where whole families live through the summer months on houseboats, inspired Kathy with a solution to the housing problem that plagued the Diddays for their first few months in The Netherlands. "Why don't we live on a boat?" she suggested. The Diddays compromised by renting one for the summer.

A Charming but Impractical Villa

Several months passed before they found a house. Then one morning Mamie learned that an Embassy family was leaving and their house in Wassenaar, a tree-lined suburb of The Hague, would be available.

They rushed from their hotel to the house, and found a many-roomed three-story villa, with a smooth lawn that stretched to a canal bordered by tall silver birches. They entered through an interesting old Dutch door with wrought-iron trim, and discovered the house had three complete bathrooms and five extra lavatories, enormous halls, a beautifully proportioned living room, a special sewing room, and sizable servants' quarters.

The Diddays pay $100 a month for the house, but certain taxes on the rent and furniture bring the figure up to $145. During the war, the Germans used the lower floors as a stable. As a result, the Diddays had to sink over $2,000 into redecorating the house.

Architecturally, the villa is beautiful, with its rows of circular windows, lofty ceilings, and aristocratic staircase. But it poses numerous problems. There are three kitchens—but no place for the refrigerator. The cellar has a wonderful winerack capable of holding six hundred bottles of vintage wines—but no convenient spot for the electric washer and dryer. The elaborate light fixtures (which they had to buy from the previous tenants), swathed in fine embroidery, ruffles, and fringe, are things of beauty—but screen out light and collect dust.

The Diddays learned that they were lucky that their fireplace was considered a part of the house, for frequently the fireplace—and even the floors—are rented separately. Finished floors come in sections designed for easy moving, and underneath is the basic flooring.

When they started looking for a painter, they discovered that Dutch good will toward Americans can be overwhelming. They asked a mailman on a bicycle for information, and he smiled broadly and motioned them to follow in their car. He pedaled down a narrow alley, while they eased along behind him. To their mounting embarrassment, he stopped at each house to inquire if anyone spoke English, while other drivers obligingly moved their trucks to the sidewalk and a group of men hauled a heavy wagon out of the car's path. Meanwhile, knots of people gathered, eager to be helpful. The Diddays apologized profusely for the uproar they had innocently precipitated, but *neen, neen*, the burghers were most happy to be of assistance. Forty-five minutes later, the Diddays, still without a painter, were able to slip away.

In her new home in Wassenaar, custom decreed that Mamie wait for formal callers, but, used to small-town neighborliness, she soon took matters into her

Alexander Taylor

IN THEIR TOWN, Wassenaar, the Didday family stops at the tulip vendor's stand and gets an armload for a few pennies.

(continued)

Alexander Taylor

AT WARMOND BEACH, where the Diddays swim and sail, Rich and Kathy keep their shoes on while their Dutch friends scamper around the beach, chasing seagulls and collecting shells. The Didday family rented a boat here during their first summer.

own hands. Glancing out of her window one day, she saw her next-door neighbors on their lawn. She rushed out with the children, and her warm smile brought an immediate response from her neighbors, who, as it turned out, spoke English and were delighted to know their neighbors were American.

Since then, she has gotten to know many of her neighbors. Accustomed to club activities, she has joined the American Woman's Club in The Hague. She also teaches in a Sunday school for English-speaking children and acts as den mother for some American Cub Scouts.

Helping others is part of Mamie's small-town creed, and during Christmas season last year she collected food, clothing, and gifts for a group of Indonesian refugees in Holland. When disastrous floods, reminiscent of the Ohio River floods, inundated the Dutch countryside last fall, she helped gather clothes and food for families in need.

Mamie, who does her own cooking and most of her own marketing, now has a maid for the first time in sixteen years of marriage. The maid is a shy, pretty girl who speaks English and is invaluable as interpreter when Mamie gets into a hassle with one of the numerous tradespeople. She arrives promptly at nine, leaves at five, and is paid twenty-five guilders (about $6.50) a week. A once-a-week gardener who came with the house gets fourteen guilders.

All the household shopping, Mamie was amazed to discover, is done at the back door, from a procession of tradesmen, who arrive with their wares piled on carts pulled by bicycle or horse.

The dairyman is first on the scene, his cart stocked with the traditional items plus chocolate and vanilla pudding. At holiday time, he also has ice cream, which looks like the American version but tastes more like pudding. Another early caller is the baker, who sells bread, rolls, cake, but no pies. They are unknown in Holland, and when the Diddays have their favorite dessert, lemon meringue pie, it's Mamie's handiwork.

In quick succession, the ringing of the doorbell announces the meatman, the poultry dealer, the fishman, the greengrocer, the flower man, the general grocer, the druggist, the shoemaker, and the laundryman.

Herring Will Cure Anything

Food prices average about the same as in America, Mamie found. For though milk is cheap—about 6 cents a liter (a little less than a quart)—a can of fruit that costs 42 cents at home is a dollar in Holland. Eggs are bought singly and run 5 or 6 cents each. For anything imported from the States, the Diddays pay a premium. Thus American coffee, canned tuna fish, frozen vegetables, and popcorn (unknown in Holland) have become luxuries. Meat costs about the same, but it is cut differently and is less flavorful. Fish, of course, is plentiful and inexpensive. Herring is to Holland what the hot dog is to America, and it sells at about 12 cents a pound. The fishman declares it will cure a cold, rout indigestion, and increase vigor.

Shopping for clothes is a problem. Wool is scratchy, and cottons have an aggravating habit of shrinking the first time they're washed. Clothes are not so well made or so carefully styled as in America. Almost everything needs to be altered, since sizes are not standardized.

The Didday social life is somewhat more formal than at home. There are cocktail parties, where Dutch gin is served straight, and dinner parties for which guests are expected to dress. Their friends include both Dutch and American officials and businessmen.

During the winter months, there are plays and concerts in The Hague and in Amsterdam, less than an hour's drive away. Movies offer a special problem, as Dutch laws prohibit children under fourteen from attending any picture not especially designated for them.

Rich attends the American School, along with many of the Embassy and Armed Forces children. Early last December, he came home with the exciting news that Saint Nicolaas, who celebrates the eve of his feast day on December fifth, and his little dark Moorish helper, Zwarte Piet, had been visiting the homes of his new friends, leaving gifts for children who had been good. That evening, he and Kathy left their shoes in front of the fireplace. And though Piet is accustomed to finding wooden clogs, he left gifts in the children's leather shoes.

Despite their two cars, the Diddays rarely go motoring just for fun, for driving in Holland is a shattering experience. This is largely because of Holland's six million bicycles. (There are only ten million people.)

The Dutch maintain that Providence looks after bicycle riders. Certainly the laws don't, as Holland has no speed limits and few traffic lights. After a year, Mamie Didday is resigned to the bicycle rider who suddenly swoops out of a side

street and sails in front of her car without looking right or left, but she still hesitates to drive through the narrow, crowded streets.

The Diddays take a keen delight in the colorful Dutch customs and pageantry. This spring they spent a day at Scheveningen, watching the fishing fleet, gay with flag-decorated boats, set sail for the first herring catch.

A Real Queen Waved to Them

Their greatest thrill was when they joined thousands of Hollanders waiting along the streets to catch a glimpse of Queen Juliana on her way to open Parliament. Officials in scarlet and gold, uniformed soldiers and grenadiers, and dignitaries in shining black carriages drawn by sleek horses wound their way through the streets to the old Parliament Building. The high moment came when the queen, in a carriage gleaming with gold and crystal and drawn by eight black horses, leaned out of the carriage and waved, Kathy thinks, to them.

The Diddays will be in Holland at least five years. They plan while abroad to see something of other European countries. But no matter how much traveling the Diddays do, it is a safe bet that they will retain the basic qualities of small-town friendliness and warmth that have helped make their first year in Holland so enjoyable. THE END

Alexander Taylor

ON SIGHTSEEING TOURS around town, they see many such bright shuttered stucco buildings, some of them centuries old.

This was a rare beast. He held the love of a girl, the hatred of a woman, and the deep respect of a brave man

THE LION

BY ELEANOR DE LAMATER ILLUSTRATED BY THORNTON UTZ

The day she reported to the Parole Board was always bad.

"—Dorelda Klug, ma'am. Yes, ma'am, everything's okay. They treat me good. No, ma'am. I done nothing would send me back to the School. . . ."

But then it was over. Tomorrow came, and there was a whole month ahead before she had to account for herself again. She was humming a little as she came out of the house and went along the graveled drive to the highway, to take down the sign. It hung from a wrought-iron crosspiece and said in gold lettering:

George Dillon
WILD ANIMAL FARM
Visitors Allowed
9 A.M.—5 P.M.

It was after five now, chilly with early spring dusk, and the flat, wooded, nighttime countryside was coming alive. If you were an animal in one of the great enclosures at the back—a bear, say, or an eland or a rhino—you would smell the spring and you would call out in your own tongue, which captivity couldn't change. Dorelda heard the animals, and her wrists and throat thumped a little.

It *is* okay, she thought, wanting a better word but not knowing one. I'm okay now, for sure!

She reached up for the sign and swung it down easily. She was a big girl, barely eighteen but looking much older. She had black hair and a dark face. Her body showed strong under the cotton dress, unfeminine but pure female. She left the sign behind a stone gatepost and then went slowly back along the winding drive.

Okay now, Dorelda? Maybe. But remember far back, the reeking tenement and the ten brawling younger ones and your father's horny fingernail underlining the Bible's anger—"Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done." Remember the fierce, wordless needs and the running away and then the headlines: YOUTHFUL STICK-UP ARTIST AND GIRL SHOOT CASHIER. SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL SENTENCED IN JUVENILE COURT. Remember School, Dorelda, and parole time, at last, and this man George Dillon willing to take a good strong girl to work for her keep. Okay now? Yes, it can be.

"This here," Dorelda whispered, skirting the front terrace, "this here's for me."

Behind the house, the rank, heady smell from the pens lay like a fog. George Dillon knew his business. The creatures he bought from various expeditions were valuable to the zoo-and-circus market only if their condition was good. He kept them well, simulating their natural habitats on his many-acre farm. The tough wire fences were no cages, but enclosed wide plots where each species had shelter and plenty of space. Yet the stench was always in the air, acrid, faintly exciting.

Dorelda breathed it deep, feeling the little bite at the back of the throat, like inhaling a cigarette. She stopped near a high fence.

"Come out, Lion!" she called softly. He moved somewhere. It was still too light to see the green glare of his eyes, but she heard him rumble, back under the trees where the lair was. The great

"It's me," she said softly. "You know me."

pads thudded a few slow steps. Then they stopped. A man's voice said, "Hiyah, babe."

And another, "Still making with the woo for the cat?"

She turned around. She wasn't surprised. There were two of them, the one called Red and the Eyetalian. They worked here, helping around the pens, cleaning and feeding. She looked at them warily.

"Do me a favor," she said. "Beat it."

Red drawled, "Come off it, Toots. Quit the hard-to-get act."

"It's no act. Beat it."

"Now, baby!"

He reached out, but she side-stepped. She wasn't angry. She was used to men getting after her. It was how they were. Or maybe it was how she was—not on purpose, but just by being, like the she-animals. Ever since she was twelve, and didn't know. But she knew now.

"Git!"

"Is that nice?"

"I don't mean it nice. Leave me alone. You better!"

"Yeah? What'll you do? Yell? Pull a gun or something?"

"They got guns here. And I can use one. Now, take a powder."

They went. Swaggering, looking back, yet not pausing. As if she'd touch a gun. As if she didn't know how fast that would land her back in School. Not her! But let them think so. She turned to the fence.

Lion was there. He was standing back from the wire, his head low between the heavy shoulders, his body foreshortened so that he looked all face. He was young yet, some of the cub still left in his loose-jointedness and the yellow tint of his hide. But he was a whopper. You'd never know the way he'd arrived here, orphaned, half dead from seasickness, a wretched, furry bundle to be held in the lap. He was her charge at first, because he looked so hopeless. She kept him in the kitchen, feeding him from a baby bottle, getting up at night to help him to his water dish. And they played. Gently at first; then roughly; then dangerously, as he grew, until he knocked her down one day, hard and flat, and had to be put out here. That was all right. He wasn't a house pet; he wasn't a pet at all but a wild beast. It was his nature. She wasn't afraid of him, but she didn't moon over him, either.

"Come!" she said to him in a flat, firm voice. "Come here!"

He didn't move. In daylight she might have opened the gate and stepped inside and stood very still. But not at night, not when she couldn't hold his look. She didn't fool herself that he loved her. He was himself, unloving, unlovable, never to be tamed. Still she said again, "Come here to me!"

He came then, flowing toward her in a pale, deliberate streak. He smelled strong. She stood up very close to the fence. She didn't put her hand in—oh, no!—but pushed the toe of her shoe through the bottom mesh.

"It's me," she said. "You know me."

He snuffled, and she felt his breath hot on her foot. Then he backed off, grumbling deep in his throat. Yes, he knew her. Now, alone, well fed and unexcited, he knew her. It was no surrender. He was the same, not softened, free of her and of everything. She liked that. She gave the strands of the fence a single hard shake and turned away.

Yes, they were restless tonight. The leopard sent up his fierce caterwauling, and down at the salt lick you could hear the deer stamping and skittering. A mother langur monkey was crying over her sick baby in the shelter near the house.

It was a low wooden house, "modern," they called it, with its bright colors and glass brick and indoor plantings. Dorelda did only the dirty work. Mrs. Dillon managed the rest. Tonight, as always after their early supper, they would have coffee in the sunroom. Dorelda would take it in. She washed her hands and put out the tray. When she heard their chairs scrape, she nudged her way backward through the swinging door, balancing the silver pot and the little cups.

They were in their usual places, the man leaning back with his feet up, the woman upright beside the low table.

"Put it down here, Dorelda," she said. The thin face lifted. "You were out rather a long time."

It was a question. There was always that watchfulness in Mrs. Dillon. She was a very small woman, youngish, dressed like out of a bandbox. Her littleness wasn't weak, but wiry tight.

Dorelda placed her burden carefully. Then she answered.

"I went down to see Lion."

"Fine, isn't he?" George Dillon drawled. "About ready."

He didn't move or look up. His six-foot bulk lay in the chair, motionless. Dorelda hardly ever spoke to him, but now she blurted, "Ready? What for?"

"To pay off. Springer's coming down tomorrow. He needs a cat young enough to train for his main-ring show."

She said nothing. She was thinking of Lion in a ring, doing tricks for staring crowds. Of course, it was what he was here for. But she had a sick feeling.

"Springer's a hard bargainer," the man went on. "But the big fellow outside's worth plenty—if you did raise him from a pup, Dorelda. I'll get my price."

He would, of course. He was good with the animals, careful, never brutal, as calm and brave as the men who trapped them. He was a hunter, too. Only he hunted money.

"Trust you, dear," his wife said. "You'll make the lion show up well." She paused. "I'll certainly come out to see it."

Dorelda kept her eyes down. That note was in the light voice. Mary Dillon was afraid. Afraid of the animals, afraid of losing this man, afraid that he would find out her fear. She hid it well, but it was there. In her voice, in the gun she put in her pocket when she went out, in her watchful eyes. Dorelda turned to leave the room.

"Oh, by the way"—the voice came after her—"two of the boys were down at the pens when you were. Were you perhaps meeting them instead of visiting the lion?"

"No." She was supposed to say "ma'am," but she always forgot. "That Red come around and the young Eyetalian with him, but I never met them, not like you mean."

"I see. Well, be careful, my dear. We can't have you putting ideas in men's heads."

For just a second they looked at each other, the big, passive girl and the wary woman. Dorelda's eyes dropped first. She turned and went out. She was scared, too, now. It did no good to hear George Dillon say lazily as the door swung, "'Ideas in men's heads.' Mary? Bunk. The girl's harmless. I wouldn't have brought her here, otherwise. And it *is* her doing, partly, that I have a healthy lion to sell."

No good at all. If you were mad for a man, waiting on him, flattering him, watching him, then you'd hate anyone he defended, even lazily, even because of money saved.

Lion roared in the night. She woke hearing him, and thought of him out there, speaking his wild, rightful heart, yet threatened. Her own heart hurt.

Next day they closed down to visitors. Springer came at noon. Dorelda watched from a window as the station wagon drove up and George Dillon and the stranger got out. Mrs. Dillon joined them, laughing and talking. They all went down past the hippo tank. Dorelda waited, then followed at a distance.

It began at once. All the helpers gathered at the far end of the enclosure,

Mary Dillon was afraid. Afraid of the animals, afraid of losing her man, afraid he'd discover her fear

beyond the woods. Over there, out of sight, they started to yell and throw stones and beat on the wire fence. Every voice on the farm answered their racket, the leopard and the howling monkeys and even the wolves far out in the walled ravine. Lion spoke, too, rumblingly, from under the trees. Then he came out and stood there, head up, eyes slitted against the watery spring sunshine. You could see he was cross, like a roused sleeper, but not at all scared. He moved slowly over the rocks, down along the sandy bottom, while the noise closed in on each side behind him, driving him. They got him in a corner. George Dillon opened the gate a crack. He and the visitor slipped inside.

Everything went quiet. Mary Dillon stood nearby, rigid, one hand in her pocket. Her husband had a gun, but he wouldn't shoot a valuable animal. Springer carried a whip, nothing else. He walked forward slowly. Then he began to talk.

The voice was his weapon. Ripping, insistent, unbearable, like a buzz saw.

"You, cat. Get back there. Back."

Lion snarled. He gave a few paces. The man advanced. He was brave, all right.

"Damn you, back. Back there. Back. Back."

The whip cracked like a pistol shot. The beast swerved to one side, and the whip followed him. He swerved to the other. He was raging now, tail lashing, lips drawn back hatefully.

"Come on, cat. This is it. Move. Move."

They fought, dodging, staring, spitting at each other. Then Lion crouched back. The great haunches gathered under him. He roared deafeningly and sprang. Springer dodged, pivoted, streaked for the gate. George Dillon had it open, and closed and locked it in an instant. Both men were out. And the animal inside threw himself against it frantically. He charged the fence, snarling, swarming halfway up it again and again and again.

It was awful. Dorelda shook with it. That fury, roused and goaded and then cheated. Awful. Shameful, somehow. Her mouth was dry, and she wanted to cry out, too. She waited until the din quieted. Lion began to slink back and forth, low to the ground and moving fast. He had won—but he couldn't win. She started away.

He'll never change, she thought. Not him!

She ached with knowing it, and yet she was glad.

Perhaps it showed, for Mrs. Dillon said to her later, as she arranged flowers in the dining room, "Wake up, Dorelda! I've

One minute you're free—and then, suddenly, you're bound to the sound of a man's voice, the strength of his arms

asked you for the scissors twice now."

"Pardon!" She fetched them hastily.

"Yes'm, I'm awake."

"Dreaming? About the lion? I saw you there this morning, and I must say—"

"When'll they take him?"

"Take? Oh. They won't. Springer made an outrageously low offer. He says the animal is mean. Naturally, Mr. Dillon refused it."

"Gosh!" Dorelda stared. "He turned him down? He won't be back, Springer won't?"

"Hardly! He went off saying his offer would stand if George ever changed his mind. But there's no chance of that. My husband is determined to— Really, Dorelda, is it your affair?"

"Just Lion, Mrs. Dillon. Him and me—I raised him up."

"That's over. And I don't like your wandering down to the pens so often. It distracts the men."

"They don't get noplace with me."

"But they try. And I feel—since Mr. Dillon chose to bring you here instead of paid help—that it's my duty to see no harm comes of it."

"I don't do no harm. Honest."

"I hope not." She picked up a vase and turned away. "But be careful."

She walked out. Dorelda stared after her.

Be careful. Oh, let me be careful! Let me stay here, peaceful!

But it wasn't peaceful. Spring drew in, and the animals paced and howled. Lion was restless. The deep, coughing roar sounded often. Dorelda went down to him only once, secretly, at noon when the men were at lunch. She called him softly, and he came out of the woods and they stared at each other. He didn't move toward her as he used to. She kept clear of the gate. But just before she left, she wadded up an old knitted glove of her own and threw it in to him. If he pounced on it, snarling . . . He didn't. Halfway to the house, she looked back. He was still standing there, the heavy head lowered between the forepaws where the unfamiliar object lay. Maybe it meant something. Maybe it didn't.

That was in April. May came suddenly, and it was unseasonably hot. George Dillon worked hard and worked everyone else and spoke very little. His wife was silent, too, moving from room to room restlessly. Then they brought in a pair of hyenas. In the night, their crazy, vicious laughter would break into your sleep, and you would feel jumpy all day.

The fearful thing happened at mid-afternoon. It was quiet that day, too hot for tourists. Dorelda was in her room off the kitchen. She thought she heard a shout. Then nothing. Then, suddenly, footsteps at the front door and a man's stammering voice. Mary Dillon's shrill cry sliced the silence.

"Get a gun, get a gun!"

Dorelda was out and down the path before she knew it. The white-faced helper came behind her from the house, running softly on the grass. He tried to stop her.

"It's the big cat. He's out! He's got Dillon cornered. Keep back! Nobody can't go nearer!"

But she went nearer. It was true. Lion was out. The gate must have been left carelessly fastened. He must have nosed

it, slipped through, padded a little way unobserved. Then George Dillon must have seen him and given that warning shout and frozen into wary rigidity while the beast stalked him. He was cornered, standing perfectly still, his back against an angle of the wall of the hippo house. Nobody was near. Lion was in the foreground, still near the gate of his own pen but no longer imprisoned. He was on his belly, staring at the man. Dorelda couldn't see his eyes, only the tense rump and the tail starting to twitch. It was like a dream, the motionless man and the motionless animal, and death waiting.

Dorelda moved without planning, silently and very fast. Behind her, she caught a glimpse of Mary Dillon. She had a revolver in her hand, but she didn't raise it, couldn't seem to steady her terror-struck body. No time to stop her from shooting. No time for anything but a stealthy dash through the trees. Across the back of the hippo house. Up along the far wall. Then the corner, opposite George Dillon's. Dorelda stepped around it and stood still, facing the lion.

Now there were two of them. The glaring yellow eyes wavered from the man, who never stirred, to the other figure off to the side. Dorelda stared into the narrow pupils. The lion growled and came up off the ground onto his feet. She wasn't a fool. She knew he could move light-fast—and might at any moment. She knew he would kill her, horribly, if the impulse came. She took a step forward. The rumble deepened. and he moved, too. Then she spoke. "You, Lion. It's me. You know me."

She kept saying it, kept stepping forward, slowly, slowly. Her eyes were glazed into unwinking. She measured the distance, guessing how far a first spring could take him. He didn't spring. His tail moved ominously, but he only watched her. Slowly, slowly. Cross in front of the trapped man. Keep out of the deadly radius of that leap. But move. Inch by inch toward the waiting open gate.

"Come on, Lion. You know me. Come on."

Perhaps he got her scent. His head turned. Then one great pad after another lifted and set down. He was moving. Somewhere in his wild blood, there must have been a stir. A dim sense, not a memory, of a firm touch, and food given, and warm mother-lap. There was a chance. If no one moved or angered him. If Mary Dillon didn't shoot.

"Come here to me, Lion."

And there was the other chance, too—of the awful snarling shock, and the fall. and claws in the defenseless flesh. Dorelda was horribly afraid.

The gate was near now. She backed through it, still staring. She stepped aside and called once more through the mesh, "Lion! Come!"

And he came. He stalked in after her, deliberate, unconquered. She slipped out, closed the gate and locked it, then hung on it like a wet rag.

She didn't faint. But there was a blurred time when everything happened fast and hazily. Shouts, running footsteps, urgent hands on her, and the feel of being lifted. Voices clamoring all around. And one voice, lower and steadier than the others, saying over and over, "Good girl! Good girl!"

The excited babble trailed off behind, and she was conscious of someone carrying her, walking fast, though she must be heavy. She came out of the blur. It was George Dillon. She struggled a little, embarrassed.

"Leave me down," she got out. "I can walk, Mr. Dillon. I'm okay."

"Sure you are." He didn't pause. "You're fine."

"I can—"

"Shut up."

He carried her in, through the kitchen and into her own room. He put her down on the narrow bed. Then he went out and came back with a tiny filled glass.

"Drink this," he ordered. "It's brandy."

She drank it. It made her choke and her eyes water, but her head cleared instantly. She sat up on the edge of the bed.

"That's better." He stood back and stared at her. "Thanks, Dorelda. That was nice work, quick and brave and using your head."

"I figured Lion knows me, sometimes."

"And a good thing! Without you, somebody would have plugged him for sure. I wouldn't want that."

"Me, either." She looked up at him openly, warmly. He wasn't thinking of his own narrow escape. He thought of the beast, as she did. "I was scared, too, that somebody'd shoot. Lion'd of jumped then, and a person couldn't blame him. If he'd of got you—"

"*If*." He smiled briefly. "I was set to jump, too, you know. But he'd have been a dead lion, anyway—and what a loss! I'm obliged, Dorelda."

"It's nothing."

But it was something. Not the act. Not saving his life, which he carefully belittled, nor even saving Lion from a bullet. It was this moment. It was the tall calm man, unshaken by deadly danger, speaking straight to her, for the first time looking at her with approval in his eyes instead of blank unseeingness. Dorelda felt the arms around her again, hard as iron, supporting, compelling. . . . She looked away.

Then Mary Dillon came in. She was paper-white and her hands were trembling.

"Oh, George!" Her voice shook. "Oh, darling, are you all right? I tried to shoot, but I couldn't! What an awful thing to happen!"

"Nothing's happened, my dear," her husband said gently. "I'm fine. The big cat's safe and sound. It's all over."

"But you must be shaken. Come and lie down and relax."

"I'm relaxed. Dorelda here—"

"Dorelda isn't hurt. I'd say"—her eyes went to the brandy glass—"you've taken care of her. Come along, darling."

He went with her, not looking back. But Dorelda sat for a long time in her room. She had never felt as she felt now, though she had heard about it. One moment you were free and easy and wanting only your peaceful freedom. And then you were suddenly bound. Suddenly given over to a deep voice and eyes that acknowledge you calmly and the memory of arms.

She felt her heart beat strong and full. She was happier than she had ever been in her life.

In the evening, she took the coffee into the sunroom as usual. George Dillon nodded at her as she put the tray down.

"Feeling all right?"

"Oh, yeah. Fine."

She didn't look at him, but something must have been in her voice, for the woman glanced up sharply. "You've had a bad experience, Dorelda. I suppose you'll be wanting to leave now."

"No, ma'am." She straightened, not surprised, but feeling the old fear. "I'm staying."

"I wonder. It was quite a show this afternoon. Quite an exhibition for the men on the place. It's dangerous."

Their eyes met. They had always been enemies, but it was worse now.

"I didn't go to make a show, Mrs. Dillon. Lion was out."

"Yes, yes. But Mr. Dillon and I can't have the staff upset. Red Morris, now. He neglects his work to—"

"He won't anymore."

That was George Dillon, impassive as ever. Dorelda stared. His wife echoed, "Won't?"

"It was Red left the gate of the lion pen unlatched today. Or it was Tony. They were working there. I fired them both. They won't be back."

"Geeze!" Dorelda gasped before she could stop herself. "I'm obliged!"

"It wasn't done for you," the woman

THE LION

(continued)

snapped. "You may go now," she added.

She went out obediently. But she felt such a lift of her spirits that she leaned for a moment against the pantry door. Two less to dodge and to fear and to fend off. What a joyful, hopeful day!

They were still talking beyond the door. She heard her name.

"—needling Dorelda," George Dillon was saying.

"Not needling, darling," his wife purred. "Just concern for her behavior. Really, I think she should go."

"I don't."

Silence, briefly.

"But a girl like that—"

"A girl who works for nothing. A girl who did me a favor today."

"A favor?" The voice rose and roughened. "I suppose you think she saved your life. But I was there, dear. I was ready, and—"

"I was ready, too. Not my life, Mary. It was the lion's life she saved—and a very valuable one it is."

"So? Does it change the fact that Dorelda's been a wild, bad girl? That she may break out again, any time?"

"Until she does, she stays here."

That was all. She didn't answer. Dorelda crossed to the sink and washed the dinner dishes.

She stays here. She stays for sure now, for good. Oh, thank you for this, for today, and Lion safe and a man near—alive, not bloodily dead—who says in his positive voice, "She stays!"

It was a quiet night on the farm. Dorelda lay wakeful a long time, feeling the living, wishful dark around her. That other dark of the past, strong with the smell of bodies and rebellion and locked doors, released her at last, and she let herself sink, drift, secure where she was.

In the morning, she went down to Lion. She slipped out the back and hurried along the path. Just at the turn, she paused, seeing a glint in the grass. She crossed and picked up the revolver, which Mary Dillon must have dropped yesterday. She handled it expertly. It was loaded. She put it gingerly in her apron pocket.

Lion was out in the open. He was asleep in the sun. She stood by a clump of bushes, watching the beast.

You there, Dorelda thought. You, Lion. You're wild. You're fierce. That's how you are, how you got to be—not wrong. The words in her head broke off, then finished. Me, either.

Then she heard the sounds—rattling, a motor racing, voices. A big truck was bumbling down from the house. It swung around quickly, backed up. Helpers piled out, let down the tail, dumped a wheeled contraption on the ground. Then George Dillon slipped from the cab with someone else beside him. He was saying, "I damn near lost him yesterday. Your offer's better than risking total loss."

The other man said, "Offer stands. I said so on the phone. Let's get to it."

The other man was Springer. No whip this time, but the truck and the narrow cage on wheels and a crew to roll it up to the gate of Lion's pen. Nobody saw Dorelda. She stood frozen behind the bush.

It happened fast. They shoved the cage close, pushed the pen gate inward. Then they opened the cage, pulling the door up from the top. Now the pen gave directly onto the cage. They set the trap with a big hunk of meat.

Lion was up. He walked leisurely forward to investigate. He wasn't angry, for they didn't goad him this time. He looked them over slowly, his head up, his beautiful body like a statue. He stared into the cage. Then he smelled the meat. Calmly, unhurriedly, he walked into the trap. The door dropped behind him with a loud clang.

It wasn't until they shouted at each other and pushed him that he knew danger. Then he roared. Snarling, he flung himself sideways against the bars, slashing between them with both clawed front feet. Keeping clear, the men rolled the cage toward the truck.

Then Dorelda stepped out. She had no memory of reaching into her pocket, but she had the gun in her hand.

"Don't take him," she said.

Springer saw her first.

"Hey! What the—? Hey, Dillon, what's this?"

George Dillon turned and stared, then started forward. The others kept quiet. Only the animals still yammered.

"Dorelda!" Dillon said. "Put that gun away!" She held it on him, advancing. "Drop it, I tell you! Are you crazy? You know what can happen to you for this!"

"Yeah, I know. Stop still, Mr. Dillon. You won't take Lion."

He stopped. But he said, "I'm selling the cat. Don't interfere. We'll have to send you away."

Yes, they would send her away. She looked at him, from whom she had wished never to go away, and she moved on slowly toward the cage. They all drew back from it, forced by the gun.

"You won't take Lion," she said.

"He's taken."

"Not yet, he ain't."

She faced the bars and the penned fury inside. He snarled and spat at her and struck through, trying to reach her. Come, Lion. You know me. She chose the spot, high up on the head behind the ear. She shot him, carefully, expertly, at deadly close range.

He made one sound, then shuddered and reared back. He fell stiffly, flat on his side, with his legs stuck straight out. He twitched all over, and then he was dead.

Dorelda turned around and handed the gun, butt first, to George Dillon.

"I'll go pack now," she said.

He nodded. His eyes were like ice again. "You've destroyed my property. There's a train in an hour. I'll have you driven to it."

She went up to the house. The paper suitcase held her belongings easily. When it was full and her best dress put on, she stood at the window. The past waited again, cramped and unrelenting.

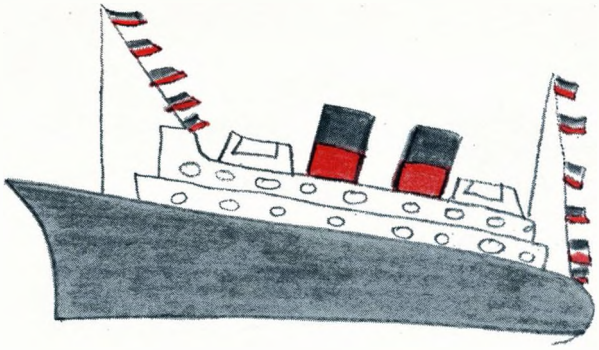
"—Dorelda Klug, ma'am. Yes, ma'am. I done something to send me back to School. . . ."

But there were fields here, and trees, and each creature roaming according to its kind, fulfilling its own nature. And somewhere in the woods, perhaps, on dark nights, a call might come and come again, as if a wild proud spirit were yet at large, still true, still strong, never now to be broken. That was good.

The station wagon rolled up to the back door. Dorelda went out and got in and was driven away.

You know me, Lion. . . . THE END

Her body showed strong under the cotton dress—unfeminine, but pure female.



STOWAWAY

Impossible that a ten-year-old girl should hide on a big liner all the way across the ocean.—Impossible?

BY CHARLES ROBBINS ILLUSTRATED BY BARBARA SCHWINN

While making his rounds on the night of May fifth, Patrolman James O'Malley saw a light flare up at the foot of the cellar stairs of a house on East Sixty-fifth Street. He peered over the railing and made out a figure in the darkness below.

"Hey!" he called.

When the figure made no reply, he demanded, "What's going on down there?" and felt for his revolver. There had been a robbery in the neighborhood less than a week before.

Suddenly a barrage of what sounded like gibberish bounced back at him. It was delivered in a girl's voice. Heartened, he said, "Come on up out of it, and let's have a look at ye."

The trespasser obeyed slowly. She was a thin little girl—about nine, he reckoned—with a narrow, intense face and long dark hair.

She wore a costume that consisted of a couple of sweaters, one over the other, a white skirt, knee-high socks, and scuffed shoes. Another flow of gibberish convinced O'Malley that he was not going to make any headway here. So, with a sigh, he said, "Okay, sister, let's take a walk."

Twenty minutes later, the Nineteenth Precinct Police Station sent out a hurry call for an interpreter. A French-Canadian garageman was commandeered for the occasion. After talking to the girl for some time, he turned to the circle of policemen and reported admiringly, "She's French, all right. Know what she said to me? She said, 'You're not French, are you? You must be a Canadian.' What do you think of that? And I speak pretty good French, too!"

Her name, she had told him, was Jeanne Gauthier, and she had stowed away on a ship that had arrived in New York that same day. With neither friends nor relatives in the country, she had been wandering around the streets.

"Ask her what ship it was," ordered the desk sergeant.

When the question was passed along, the child, who had seemed bewildered all through the interview, merely shook her head.

"If she says she got in today," observed a detective, "we ought to be able to find out the ship easy enough." And after turning to the day's paper, he continued, "It must have been the *Vendôme*. Ask her if it was the *Vendôme*."

So the interpreter asked, and, reluctantly, Jeanne Gauthier confessed that it might have been.

Charmed by her foreign ways, her air of grave trustfulness, her questioners got her some sandwiches, took down her name, address, and age (she was ten and a half, she said), and arranged to have her spend the rest of the night at the headquarters of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

She would be deported, of course, as soon as possible.

Next afternoon, Mme. Marcel Durand, wife of the passenger manager of the Maillard Steamship Lines, made a special trip to her husband's office in Rockefeller Center. Her reason was simple and feminine. M. Durand had learned about Jeanne Gauthier at breakfast and had reacted strongly. The incident, in his view, was the most humiliating that had occurred since the company had transferred him from Paris to New York two years before. The *Vendôme* was the queen ship of the Maillard Lines. It was incredible that a ten-year-old child should come all the way across the ocean on it, undetected! He was determined to question her, prove her a fraud.

Before he was through with the subject, he had vexed his wife by criticizing her for eating while he was talking, particularly for eating in the American fashion, with her fork in

They led her off to a children's shelter for the night. She would, of course, be deported.

The rapture that was in her face began to fade. She was frightened now.

She had an astonishing face, beautiful as that of the other Jeanne, Jeanne d'Arc

the right hand instead of in the left (where, according to French standards, it belonged). And then, to cap the whole performance, he had advised her to keep her nose out of this Gauthier affair.

After this, Madame had been left no choice, of course, except to visit his office with the express purpose of poking her nose into the forbidden spot.

"Monsieur is occupied," explained the girl at the switchboard. "Perhaps you read about the stowaway—"

"Ah," said Mme. Durand, "she has arrived already?"

"Yes, madame. With a matron and inspector from Ellis Island."

"They are inside?"

"Only Monsieur and Mlle. Vilette are with the child," came the reply. "The other two went downstairs to lunch."

"Good. I shall go in."

"But, madame—"

"It is in order," said Mme. Durand. "Monsieur expects me." And opening the gate, she crossed the loft room, studded with clerks and stenographers, to the door marked *Passenger Manager*.

As a rule, her husband's secretary, Mlle. Vilette, was working away in the pastel-shaded anteroom. Now her chair was vacant. Madame stepped forward, listened a moment at the inner door, and turned the knob.

With its collection of nautical objects (models, prints, and so on), the room inside suggested the prow of a ship. A mahogany desk stood catercorner in the angle made by two large windows, and behind the desk sat M. Durand, a portly gentleman with heavy, horn-rimmed glasses, a red face, and sleek black hair. In front of him was a tray of food; beside him, Mlle. Vilette, repressed and spinsterish, as usual, with a notebook and pencil in hand.

But it was the little girl, looking very frail and alone, who claimed Madame's attention. Madame's heart went out to her, and in the same instant, she understood her husband's strategy. He had sent the matron and inspector away; he had invited the girl to have lunch with him—all to win her confidence.

"I cannot see you now, Yvonne," he was saying in French. "As you perceive, I am busy!"

"Forgive me," his wife replied, and smiled a greeting at Mlle. Vilette. "I wish to talk to you for a few minutes, and I have appointments all afternoon."

"You could not telephone?" The questioned drowned out the secretary's "*Bonjour.*"

"I promise not to interrupt," Madame interrupted, "and I must see you before I go to the *coiffeur*. Do not be a tyrant, Marcel!"

He darted a glance at the child. Plainly, if he carried on, he would undo the impression he had gone to such lengths to create. So, putting the best possible face on it, he mumbled an introduction, adding importantly, "Let us proceed. Mlle. Vilette, you will repeat the questions and answers to this point."

Smiling, Madame seated herself in a straight-backed chair in the corner and listened with interest to the secretary's toneless recitation.

Jeanne Gauthier, it appeared, lived in the little Maritime Alps town of Sospel with her eight-year-old brother, Paul, and her grandfather, who tended the olives. Her grandfather was cruel to her. Often he would beat her. Her father had been killed in the war; her mother had died soon afterward. She had no other living relatives.

"So," resumed M. Durand, "how did it happen that you left Sospel?"

Keeping her glance on the table, the child did not answer at once. Then, in French so low and soft as to be almost inaudible, she said that she had decided to escape from her grandfather. She had always wished to visit the United States, for she had heard many wonderful things about that country from American soldiers who were stationed in the neighborhood.

"You said you didn't speak any English," M. Durand pointed out. "Is that correct?"

"It is correct, monsieur. Some of these Americans spoke French, not well but passably. So this day—"

"Which day?"

She shook her head. "I remember only asking Pierre, who drives the market truck to Nice, if he would give me a ride."

"And then?"

"In Nice, I stood in front of the Negresco Hotel, where in the past I had gone often to watch the rich people. This morning, there was a big car there. A man and lady came out, with a porter carrying luggage. The man called her Christiane, and she called him Raoul. When I heard them say that they were driving to Paris, I told them that my mother had gone there, leaving me with my grandfather, a wicked old man, always drunk. I wished to see my mother, I said, and asked them to take me with them. So they said they would. . . ."

Had she learned the last names of her companions?

No, they had not used their last names. They had merely let her out in Paris, near the home of a painter and his wife whom she knew because they spent each winter in Sospel. The painter had given her money to return home, and with it she had instead bought a one-way

ticket on the boat train to Cherbourg.

A look of defeat had begun to settle over M. Durand's plump face. This child, it seemed to say, is determined to thwart me. His questions became more hurried.

How had she got aboard the *Vendôme*?

There had been no difficulty, she answered. Everyone had thought that she was with someone else.

"And then, on the *Vendôme*?"

Well, she had wandered down through the ship to the engine room and there had met an oiler named Joseph, very nice. He had brought her food and arranged a place for her to sleep among the baggage.

Did anyone but the oiler know she was on board?

No, no one but the oiler.

How had she come ashore?

Joseph had lent her a pair of his overalls, and she had put these on over her clothes, rolling up the pant legs. Then she had got off the ship, using not the passengers' gangplank but the crew's. She had been so nervous and excited that everything had blurred. Besides, it had been nighttime. All she remembered was that, after leaving the pier, she had removed the overalls in the shadow of a doorway and had wandered around, finally climbing down some cellar stairs. She had hoped to discover a hiding place in the basement, but when she had struck a match to get her bearings, a policeman had noticed.

M. Durand pushed aside his almost untouched food, got to his feet, and began to pace the floor. Suddenly he threw up his hands and exclaimed, "So! A stowaway! And on the *Vendôme*! Ten years old!"

He sat down again, and turning to Mlle. Vilette, asked her to repeat the questions and answers.

"All of them?"

"All of them!"

"Do not expose the child to more of this, I beg of you," his wife pleaded in English. "You see, she is faint. Let me take her to the anteroom for a few minutes."

A spark of suspicion gleamed in his eyes. "You are not thinking of helping her to escape?"

"Don't be absurd!"

For a moment he hesitated. Then he said, "Take her! I will call you back."

As the door closed behind them, Jeanne, at Madame's invitation, sat down at one end of the couch, next to the table. Her eyes settled at once on a pile of folders; the top one showed a picture of Notre Dame Cathedral, and over it in large type: "*Visit* la belle France." As she read the words, her lips tightened.

"You are sorry that you came here?" asked Mme. Durand, seating herself beside her and noticing the change of expression.

"No, madame."

"My dear, why do you not tell me the truth? I am your friend. I will not betray you."

Meeting the opaque gaze of the girl's dark eyes, she thought: An astonishing face, beautiful as that of the other Jeanne, Jeanne d'Arc.

But now the rapture was fading. The almost godlike composure, which had proved so baffling to M. Durand, was beginning to crack under the compassion in his wife's glance. Suddenly, with a muffled cry, Jeanne Gauthier flung her arms about Madame, sobbing in a dry, gasping way that must have hurt.

"Sh, little one! They will hear you!"

As the sobbing subsided, a smothered voice said. "I am American, madame. My name is Jeanne Horan. I live in Poughkeepsie."

"Pokeep—" Madame let it go, mastering her astonishment. She had expected a story different from the one she had heard, but not this different.

"I did not guess that you are not French, you speak our language so beautifully."

"My mother is French."

"And you are running away?"

"Yes."

"But why? Are your parents unkind to you? —Like that grandfather in Sospel?"

"Oh, no! I love them, madame! They are so kind and good! But I have to go to France, and I could not think of any other way!"

"I do not understand."

"It is because of Grandmama," the child whispered. "I had heard that when stowaways are discovered they are sent back to the country from which they came. Papa told me. So I thought that if I pretended to be a French stowaway, they would send me to France. . . ."

The words trailed off in more sobs, louder than before. If that door opens! Madame thought, and even as she was thinking it, the door did open, and her husband peered in at her. Beyond his shoulder was Mlle. Vilette's bemused face.

"What are you doing to the girl?"

"Nothing!" Madame retorted. "Go back! I will quiet her!"

"But you have made her cry!"

Before she could decide how to deal with such stupidity, she heard Jeanne's tear-drenched voice say: "Madame did not make me cry. She knew I was lying. She knew all the time! I could see her watching me!"

"Ah, my dear, what have you done?" Madame exclaimed, and hugged the frail body. "I was not going to tell him that!"

Her husband had stepped forward. "What is this?" he burst out. "What lying?"

"Be still!" his wife ordered. "She merely quarreled with her grandfather. He is not the bad man she painted. She became upset and accused herself of lying!"

"Is that true, mademoiselle?"

"I don't know," Jeanne muttered. Then, having staved off so many attacks, unable to face another, she clung once more to Mme. Durand and babbled in English, "Please leave me alone! I didn't mean any harm! I just had to go to France, that's all!"

Monsieur struck himself on the forehead. "She speaks English! What is happening?"

"Marcel," exclaimed his wife, "do not persecute this child! She is a wonderful child! A Jeanne d'Arc!"

"Who is persecuting her? She is persecuting *me*! And will you stop talking about Jeanne d'Arc! Who is she?"

"Listen!" said Madame. "Her name is Jeanne Horan, and she has to go to France. As a stowaway, she will be sent there. Let her go!"

"Horan! She has told everyone it is Gauthier. Another lie!" He sat down in the nearest chair. "Why does she have to go to France? Where does she live?"

"Pokeep— Someplace."

"Poughkeepsie." Jeanne gasped. "My grandmama is dying. That is why I must go. You understand?"

"Do I understand!" M. Durand forced a hollow laugh. "Your grandmother is dying in Pokeep— What has that to do with France?"

"No!" Jeanne protested. "She is in Sospel! She *lives* there! And we have no money to go to her. It is terrible! Mama said it was terrible! We must stay here while Grandmama dies alone in Sospel!"

"What about Grandpapa, cruel, always drunk, is he not with her?"

"No, there is no grandpapa. I made him up."

"She made him up," M. Durand repeated, and looked bleakly at the ceiling. "And all the rest of it, too, I suppose, the trip to Paris, Raoul and Christiane, the artist, the oiler—"

"No, monsieur, not all. We lived in France for two years while Papa wrote a book. But we were American—and poor. We had to come back. I have met those people I spoke of."

"And your clothes? Monsieur the Commissioner assured me that they were made in France."

Looking down at herself sorrowfully, the child replied, "Mama bought them for me in Nice last year. They are too small

now, but they were very pretty then."

All at once, Mlle. Vilette came to life. "Bravo!" she cried. "You are a marvelous actress, mademoiselle! Better than Bernhardt!" She broke off as Monsieur made a noise in his throat.

"First Jeanne d'Arc and now Bernhardt! Incredible!" he declared.

"Marcel," Madame insisted, "think what this child has done! You must let her go to France!"

"How can I let her go? She is not a stowaway!"

"But you did not discover it! *I* discovered it! She is *my* stowaway!"

Before he could reply, the telephone on the desk gave an angry ring. Mlle. Vilette sprang to answer it. "For you, monsieur. Monsieur the Commissioner."

He gave his wife a look and strode over to the desk. "Durand speaking." And then, with pauses between sentences: "Yes, she is still here. Yes, I have just discovered as much myself. . . ." He smiled slowly. "Thank you! It is very kind. Yes, I must confess, it was difficult, but after twenty years in this business, one learns to be suspicious. . . . Really? The mother and father . . . ?" He listened for a minute. "Of course! . . . Good-by."

"So," he said, cradling the receiver and gazing at Jeanne. "Your parents are searching for you. They went to the police and then to Ellis Island. Now they are on their way to this office." He moved his glance to his wife. "The affair no longer is mine, thank heaven!"

"Poor little one!" Madame said softly. "There are too many grownups for you! Yet you nearly defeated them, and I love you for it!" She kissed the child on the cheek; then, catching sight of her wrist watch: "*Mon Dieu!* Almost two o'clock! I shall miss the *coiffeur*! Jeanne"—Hastily she opened her handbag and extracted a bill—"buy yourself a lovely present! Mlle. Vilette, you will put down the address and telephone number in Pokeep!"

"Oh, madame," Jeanne said, "I cannot take this! It is too much!"

"*Zut!* On the stage, you would be paid a thousand dollars for such a performance!"

As she stood up, she heard her husband say, "Wait!" He followed her to the door, asking in a low tone, "How did you know that she was lying?"

She smiled at him brightly. "You do not notice little things, Marcel."

"For example?"

"For example, when I spoke to you in English. I could see that she understood, and then—"

"Yes?"

"The fork, Marcel. She keeps it in her right hand in the American fashion—just as you criticized me for doing this morning! You see, Marcel, little things count."

Arriving home that day before his accustomed hour, M. Durand climbed the stairs to the upper floor. His wife's ordinarily tidy bedroom was a masterpiece of disorder. She had begun packing for their annual trip to Paris, three days off.

"I telephoned you," she said, "but Mlle. Vilette told me that you had gone. The child's mother and father came, she reported. They took Jeanne with them."

"Yes. They left about an hour ago."

"A marvelous little girl!"

Pushing aside a box of nylon stockings, he sat down on the bed. "Yvonne," he said heavily, "we are not sailing."

"Not—" She stopped in amazement. "Why not?"

"We have no cabin."

"But what has become of that de luxe cabin you have been talking about so much?"

"Gone," he said, and let his breath out in a sigh. "I gave it to that little girl and her parents."

"*Sacré*—" Madame caught herself. "But why?"

He went on in the same tone, "They told the story: the father without work now, the mother teaching French in that place where they live. They have no money. The grandmother, who for two years was the little girl's best friend, is very ill. They could not afford to go to her. So Jeanne discussed the affair with her brother, Paul, and between them they decided that she should try this fantastic masquerade for the parents' sake."

Madame stared at him. Then she laughed.

"What is it you call me?" she whispered tenderly. "Sentimentalist! You are worse than me, Marcel!" THE END

"Why did you run away, my dear? Are your parents unkind?"

ONE DAY WHEN THE FOG had settled over Dublin, I asked Seamus Ennis to record for me on the Uillean pipes (Gaelic for elbow pipes). He was very much pleased, and we had a wonderful afternoon. One of the songs was the funny one about the farmer's wife and the devil. It tells how the devil carts the farmer's wife away and then, returning her, says: "Now, I've been a devil the most of me life, But I ne'er was in hell till I met with your wife!" In Kentucky, our version is much the same except that it ends: "O the women they are so much *better* than men."

JEAN RITCHIE PICKOW began her quest on the Isle of Inishmore.

Girl in Search of a Song

A Kentucky mountain girl goes to the British Isles to see the locale of the ballads she sang in her childhood

PICTURES BY GEORGE PICKOW—CAPTIONS BY JEAN RITCHIE PICKOW

As a Kentucky mountain child, Jean Ritchie Pickow was raised on a diet of corn pone and old ballads. Together with her thirteen brothers and sisters, she spent the long evenings listening to her parents sing and tell stories about the old country from which the Ritchie clan had come six generations before.

Isolated from the world outside by the craggy Cumberland cliffs, the Ritchies lived like their English-Irish forebears. They had their play parties, their bean stringings, their corn hoeings, and always their lovely ballads.

Long before the radio sent its synthetic hillbilly tunes twanging through every mountain cabin, Jean wondered whether the places and deeds told about in the old songs were really so.

She began writing down and collecting the ballads from all the singers in her family and her community. She searched out the family history, back to the five Ritchie brothers who sailed to America from England in 1768. Then she decided to write the story of the Ritchie clan and the roots of their traditional old songs.

She won a Fulbright grant, and sailed with her husband, photographer George Pickow, for the British Isles.

Carrying her dulcimer (a mountain stringed instrument) and her wire recorder, she trod the land of her ancestors. Walking through Ireland's colorful moors, she recalled the tales and songs of the strange land where fairies and elves romped in legendary glee. She stopped in cabins lit by paraffin lanterns and heated by turf fires, where bread baked in hanging iron ovens. She attended a wedding garbed in straw. She listened and recorded, "Barbry Allen," "Lord Randal," and "Sourwood Mountains," the songs she knew so well. And whenever they asked her, she sang the same ballads—except that she gave them a Kentucky flavor.

Always she felt a kinship that bridged the two continents. She felt it most poignantly when the little Irish lady of the village Macroom in County Cork, who sang "Barbry Allen" for her, smiled and said, "Lass, may the roof fall in on the house ye'll not be welcomed in."

On these pages are her husband's pictures of their trip with her own comments on her adventures in the search for her songs.

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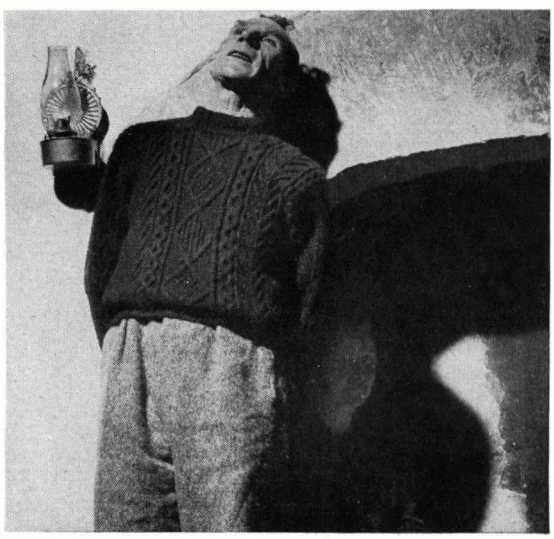
IN LISBEE MUIR, a town in County Cork, I was taken to a wedding as a straw boy. The traditional idea is that the straw boy has not been invited to the wedding and in order to hide his shame makes himself a straw costume so that he won't be recognized. He knocks on the door of the wedding party, joins in the festivities (straw boys are a symbol of good luck), drinks, eats, and tries to keep his identity a secret. The Connell boys dressed me so well that the guests didn't know I was a woman until I sang.

Girl in Search of a Song (continued)

ONE OF THE MOST COLORFUL ways of spending a warm Sunday afternoon in England is to visit the barge canals which crisscross the country and the interesting folk who live on the barges the year round. The English bargemen are not without their music. Most famous are the work songs or chants they sing while getting barges through low tunnels. The men push against the sides of the tunnel with their feet to the rhythm set by the song leader. I dressed myself in a barge maid's costume, bonnet and all, and chatted away an afternoon with the men.

(continued)

A MUMMERS' PLAY is given in Marshfield, Gloucestershire, on December twenty-sixth. Here, the old-time paper boys are the feature. They make their costumes by sewing hundreds of bits of paper onto old clothes, and then they re-enact the story of King William slaying the fiery dragon.



EVERYWHERE IN THE ISLANDS people sang, without theatrics—like Pacheen Faherty, who just stood up and sang twenty verses of a ballad. When he had finished, everybody clapped and cried, "Feis! Feis!"

THE TOWN CRIER still ushers in many traditional festivals in England by ringing his bell and calling the good news to all. "Oyez! Oyez!" he calls, and always, of course, ends with, "God save the Queen!"

THE SEA MEANS LIFE AND DEATH to the islanders. Every family has lost someone to the sea. I understand now why the mountain people of America, who live thousands of miles from the sea, are still singing: "O Father, Father, build me a boat. It's on the ocean I mean to float."

THE END

What Makes You Laugh

Sponsors pay millions to tickle your funny bone, and are still trying to discover why you are—or aren't—amused

BY ROBERT W. MARKS

It is one of the ironies of history that the rapid development of electronics has made it vitally important for science and industry to know what makes you laugh. Time was when humor was a subject for study by scholarly professors in whom it was utterly lacking. But today your guffaw is big business. The careers of radio and TV stars—and the sale of millions of packages of detergents, deodorants, and other dynamically plugged household items—hinge on your laugh quotient. And behind it is a billion-dollar question: What makes you laugh?

Psychologists can't agree on a single answer, but they have an assortment of theories. Some of the theories are as funny as the jokes they propose to explain.

The Moron Joke Analyzed

In a leading scientific magazine, a psychologist not long ago analyzed the so-called "moron joke." Example: "Why did the moron tiptoe past the medicine cabinet?" Answer: "Because he didn't want to wake the sleeping pills." Children, it was reported, guffaw at this joke. The explanation offered by the psychologist: "Sleeping pills symbolize parents. They put you to sleep, but they don't go to sleep themselves." The idea behind the humor, it was concluded, is that children are really on to their parents, and the joke is a kind of revenge.

Do you laugh at "shaggy-dog" stories. Chances are you, too, are bent on revenge. Here's a sample:

A woman sitting at a bar heard the man next to her say: "Five Martinis, please; two with olives, two with onions, and one with lemon peel." The drinks were delivered. The man tossed them off, one after another, then quietly walked across the room, straight up the wall, across the ceiling, down the opposite wall, and out the door.

The woman was wide-eyed. "That's the strangest thing I've ever seen," she told the bartender.

"Oh, don't pay any attention to it, lady," the bartender answered. "He often leaves without saying good night."

"If this joke is funny at all," one psychologist reported, "it is funny because in an upside-down world, where nothing turns out the way you would like it, you want to revenge yourself by making everything ridiculous."

Why do you laugh at so many different things? You laugh when you are tickled, when you are embarrassed, when someone skids on a banana peel. And sometimes you laugh when everything seems hopeless. Why do all these varied things make you laugh?

Dr. Horace M. Kallen, research professor in social psychology at the New School for Social Research, in New York City, has an explanation. "You laugh," he says, "to remove whatever stands in the way of your feeling of freedom. You laugh to be free."

SHREWD ANALYSIS lies behind the clowning of Martin and Lewis, who take the fear from daily tensions by burlesquing them.

A SURPRISE TO TV'S GAGWRITERS is Wally Cox's huge success as "Mr. Peepers." The sincere but pedantic Milquetoast teacher makes you feel superior, releases you from subconscious resentment against teachers who once bossed you.

A case in point is the organized nonsense of Jerry Lewis. Lewis is an inspired clown who with the violence of a tornado assaults every institution that inhibits civilized man. Asked his name, he replies in a banshee wail, "Mel-vin," and the sad moan that accompanies the first syllable pleads the case of every man who has been saddled with an impossible name. Asked his telephone number. he takes a deep breath and replies, "Melrose 8-8639565342845666666666635842-9461311111116355550." a poke at the tyranny of machines over man.

Life, according to Dr. Kallen's theory, is a serious business, full of worries, dangers, threats, all compounding into tensions. Anything that burlesques the cause of your tensions gives you a sudden release, a sudden feeling of freedom. And when your tensions are suddenly released, you laugh.

Even Comics Can't Predict Laughs

Formulas, however, are notoriously useless when it comes to predicting whether something will be funny to someone else. Even professional comedians can't do this. If they did. every joke would get big laughs. But the sad fact is that acts that are hilarious in rehearsal can be duds when the curtain goes up.

Television has produced a number of surprises. Fred Allen, for example, has been singularly unsuccessful on TV, while Jack Benny convulses viewers. And newcomer Wally Cox, as "Mr. Peepers," has demonstrated the astounding fact that a mild-mannered little man absorbed in flora and fauna can be hilariously funny. Red Skelton, on the other hand, who has been on the business end of countless custard pies, has suddenly discovered that slapstick is funny only in limited quantities; to be funny most of the time. it must tie in with situations involving the viewer.

Some psychologists lay the long-lasting

(continued)

FRED ALLEN'S DRY WIT flopped on TV. Anxiety increases if you don't get a joke. Jack Benny's running gags make you belong, win your laughter.

A PHILOSOPHY FOR LIVING, presented backward, is Jackie Gleason's ace. He puts an accurate finger on daily frustrations and ridicules them.

Sadism, release from

popularity of Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca to the fact they dramatize the everyday problems of most married couples. Caesar, as the husband, is harassed, excitable, worried, while Imogene is his scatterbrained but sometimes alarmingly intelligent wife. In a recent script, Caesar was about to hire a lush, slinky creature, played by Marguerite Piazza, as his secretary. Imogene, who barges in just before the interview, hammers home entirely irrelevant facts—the would-be secretary can't file, type, or take dictation, and has never before worked in an office—while Caesar is completely dazzled by her other talents.

What's funny about this? —The fact that at some time nearly every businessman finds himself in a situation like this, torn between his wolfish eye and his common sense. In real life the situation is serious. Burlesquing it takes the fear out of the situation, breaks the tension.

Sadism Accounts for Much Humor

Some authorities say that normal sadism is responsible for much humor. It is, they say, the basis for slapstick comedy: You laugh when somebody slips on a banana peel or gets smacked in the face with a custard pie. But psychologists point out that this is not always true. You don't think it's funny when a crippled old man slips on the banana peel—only when some stiff or pompous character has the sudden fall. You don't think it's funny when Charlie Chaplin receives the custard pie; the belly laugh comes when the boss or the cop is on the receiving end.

"We laugh," Freud once said, "when a menacing character is suddenly destroyed. His loss of dignity means his loss of authority. He then is no longer a challenge to us."

The rigid, pompous character symbolizes all such people you've known. In laughing at him, you unconsciously escape from the influence of others who restrict your freedom—parents, policemen, employers, moralists.

You also laugh when you remove—at least in imagination—anything that interferes with your instinctive needs. This fact explains the general appeal of sex jokes. The so-called "dirty" joke exists in every culture in which there is a high degree of sex repression. Most jokes of this type are pointless. They insult the intelligence. Yet people recite them with

fear, even revenge, draw your biggest laughs

great glee, and they generally meet with slightly repressed but nevertheless delighted laughter.

The formula for sex jokes is standard. A situation is established, and it then becomes more and more absurd or impossible as the story builds up. The climax is a sudden explosion of a taboo expression, or an absurd comment, that makes the whole action ridiculous.

Here is a polite example:

An elderly spinster retired to the country and decided to go in for poultry farming. She was told that White Leghorns were a desirable breed, and promptly bought herself a large flock of Leghorn hens. One day the county agent paid her a visit to see how she was getting along. He was shocked to find a Rhode Island Red rooster strutting around the hen house.

"Madam," he said, "if you want a pure brood, you must remove that Red rooster."

"Oh, you needn't worry about that," said the woman knowingly. "I cage him up every night."

Everybody is familiar with the man who can't remain serious a minute. Each remark is an excuse for him to make a bad pun, clown, or rush into a story. Usually he ends by making a fool of himself. What makes him become a professional jokester? Most experts on humor agree that clowning stems from a feeling of being unloved. Often this fear is partially based on reality. Clown types are usually physically unattractive people. In fact, the medieval court jesters were humpbacks.

If you look about at the compulsive joke makers you know, you'll probably find that most have some unlovely physical characteristic; they may be fatties, schnozzolas, shorties, or simply ugly. Almost all professional comedians are unhandsome types, although the recent rise of the paid gagwriter has made it possible for good-looking actors to serve as the mouthpiece for somebody else's lines.

A person who is ugly—or simply imagines himself ugly—feels undesired and unloved. Joking is his defense against fate. He laughs at his sadness—and throws off his anxiety.

Studies show that the jokes comedians tell on others are really directed toward themselves. By making themselves ridiculous, they momentarily destroy their fear of being unloved. This is the Chaplin formula, the W. C. Fields pattern, the logic of Bob Hope, Eddie Cantor, Ed Wynn, Red Skelton, the Marx Brothers.

In many cases, the impulse to clown has been converted into a talent for barbed wit. This is particularly true of such celebrated tongue-lashers as Dorothy Parker, Alexander Woollcott, Robert Benchley, George S. Kaufman, and Oscar Levant.

George Jessel is a master of this special splinter of the humorist's art. Chatting with Eddie Cantor not long ago, he complained bitterly about the stupidity of a certain important movie producer. He wound up by saying, "I told him straight from the shoulder why his pictures didn't click."

"Then what happened?" Cantor asked.

"Oh, nothing," Jessel answered. "We parted good friends. He boarded his yacht, and I took the subway home."

Self-Directed Humor Is Most Basic

The self-inflicted cut, it seems, is the most fundamental of all types of humor. And for Jessel, nothing is excluded from his art, not even his love life. Recently, when two of his friends married, he wired: I WISH YOU ALL THE HAPPINESS I HAVE HAD ON A DOZEN SIMILAR OCCASIONS.

Most sharp wit is sadistic. Its intent, unconscious or otherwise, is to ridicule someone—thus destroying him as a real or imaginary rival. A classic of this type is Tallulah Bankhead's remark about Bette Davis. Miss Bankhead was asked her impression of Miss Davis' take-off of her in the movie "All About Eve." "Bette and I are very good friends," Miss Bankhead remarked sweetly. "There's nothing I wouldn't say to her face—both of them."

There is Oscar Levant's crack about Miss Bankhead. "Tell me, off the record," he was asked, "did you ever have an affair with Tallulah?"

"Well," replied Levant, "she'll think me a cad for saying so, but I didn't."

W. C. Fields was a master of the sadistic barb. When interviewed by a reporter from a fan magazine, he said, "When I was a tot, I swore that if I ever got in the chips, I'd help kids who were homeless waifs like I had been. For years I couldn't afford it. Then came Hollywood and riches."

"What did you do?" asked the interviewer. "Did you set up a foundation?"

"No," said Fields. "I thought things

(continued)

REAL-LIFE MARITAL SITUATIONS turn hilarious under Sid Caesar-Imogene Coca treatment, and make you see your marital spats aren't yours alone.

Sex jokes and barbed wit get laughs—for widely different reasons!

over carefully. Then I said to myself, To hell with them."

Is there a secret to humor? Experts say yes, that storytelling is an art that you can master in half an hour—if you'll simply take the trouble to learn six basic rules:

1. **Be authoritative.** Tell your story without apology and hesitation. Don't ask if your audience has heard the story before. If you show a lack of confidence in your story, you destroy interest.

2. **Keep a straight face.** Humor depends on contrasts. If you laugh before you get to the punch line, you break the tension prematurely. A good storyteller keeps building tension until the moment he delivers. The final change in mood—the lightning transition from seriousness to absurdity—is what makes humor.

3. **Stick to the point.** Keep your pay-off line in mind, and build up to it. If you wander off into bypaths, you divert the hearers' minds from the central idea and weaken the build-up.

4. **Be terse.** Brevity is, indeed, the soul of wit. Nothing kills a good story more effectively than a long-drawn-out recital, loaded with pointless details. Stick to essentials; a joke is no excuse for a rambling yarn.

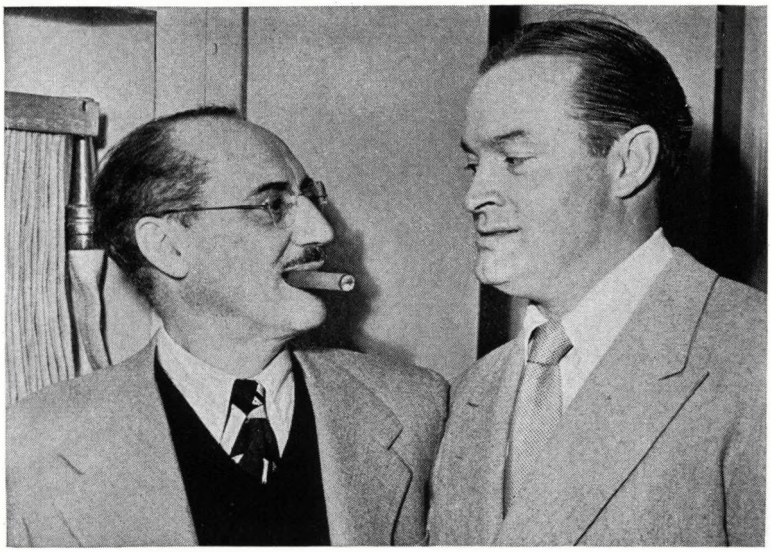
5. **Talk quickly.** Rapid patter holds interest and creates the kind of tension you want. It is not an accident that most successful comedians have a nervous, ackety-ack delivery. The speed and directness create a tense atmosphere that can be cut with a clean, verbal spark.

6. **Make your punch line dramatic.** The whole point of a joke is in the pay-off. If you fluff this, the build-up is wasted. When you are all set for the socko finish, hesitate a second, to command attention, then deliver the punch. Get the key words out with emphasis and authority. The quick, sharp release of tension is what makes your final line funny.

But no matter how adroit your delivery, there are listeners who defy all psychological analysis. Mark Twain ran across one of these once when he gave a humorous talk before a ladies' literary club. He was in good form and told story after story, reducing his audience to weeping laughter. But one stern-faced dowager sat poker-faced throughout the entire performance. When the lecture was finally over, Twain went up to her.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "You never once even smiled."

"Oh, I thought you were terribly funny," the woman replied, "but I'm not a member of this club." THE END



GROUCHO MARX AND BOB HOPE, after verbally slapping each other around, may come to grips with the scenery. Their nonsense world frees you from a real one.

I.N.P.

SADISM PROMPTS CHUCKLES at slapstick by W. C. Fields and Baby Le Roy. We laugh when pompous people look foolish, because this symbolizes the fall of authority.

Beach Blossoms

By Jon Whitcomb

Beach tutu *of silk and Orlon by Cole of California has a sophisticated top, little-girl pleats (permanent, of course) below. Ideal for showing the public your grands jetés.*

Soft-top convertible *by Claire McCardell hits the jackpot for versatility. Its detachable sarong can be tied on one hip, wrapped about your head as a turban, or used as a beach bag with your summer emeralds tied up in it while you're knifing the waves in the black tank suit.*

Here are the four most interesting swim suits I've seen on beaches this summer. Big manufacturers spend months scratching their heads over the problem of Sand Coquette vs. Water Baby, or, more simply, does a girl buy a suit to swim in or just to lure the stag line? The producers of these four came very sensibly to the conclusion that she might want to do both. So whether you're a sun bather or a minnow, here are four ways to enchant the public. Wet or dry, you'll kill 'em, doll. Incidentally, please observe the de-emphasized stomachs. Last winter the trend toward one-piece Annette Kellermanns was important at resorts; this summer the two-piece, bare-middle arrangement has been abandoned for the sculptured tank suit.

Rose Marie Reid *thinks you might as well go formal in her satin-bloomer dream with a nipped-in midriff. This is wonderful for fanny camouflage. If it makes you feel too bare, you can add a big white necklace.*

Seaside uniform *by Gantner comes in two sections, both made of terry cloth. The swim suit below is a slim, molded sheath. When you've had enough sun, don the Eisenhower jacket. Pocket holds locker keys, cigarettes, and Coke money.*

(continued)

Take a plain suit and startle your beach:

Guess who? *This one was fun to design—it involved clasping a model from behind and tracing my fingers. Fabric paints (Prang, Flo-Paque, Fabricolor) can be used—tan for the hands and black for the sleeves. The back of the suit is painted black. Final touch: sew on two red buttons to represent cuff links.*

Night club. *Designed for tall girls, this suit has two rows of fringe beau-catchers forming V's before and aft. Top row follows line of bosom down to zipper in back. The same fringe borders a dramatic forty-eight-inch triangular stole.*

The flag waver. *This aquabelle wears her boy's initials in international-code flags. (Sew on cutouts of fast-dye fabric or paint flags on suit with fabric paint.) If more intimate messages appeal to you, try any one of these combinations right out of* The Merchant Seaman's Manual:

Say it with flowers. *Not quite right for swimming the Channel, but very becoming under an umbrella. I'd like to see some plastic blossoms massed over the front mezzanine, firmly anchored and concealing a hidden cache for keys and money. If you have a bunch of artificial blooms around, try applying them to Jantzen's white Lastex batiste.*

SMILE, MONA LISA

BY ROY YOUNG

For a minute or two, Richard was able to look at her as if she were a stranger, but then Enid caught sight of him and waved, and the delightful illusion was gone.

"Darling," she said when he had kissed her, "you shouldn't have bothered to meet me. I could have got a cab and phoned you at the office from home. I hate to think I've broken up your day."

Even after a month, everything was suddenly the same. I might have known it, Richard thought; the first words out of her mouth were bound to be an apology.

"Anyway," she added, "you don't have to come all the way to the apartment with me. I can just drop you off at the—"

"I certainly do have to come all the way with you. I want to be there when you see it."

"See what?"

Richard patted her slim knee. "Just you wait."

"A coming-home surprise?"

"Well, partly."

"Oh, Dick!"

At the apartment, the doorman took the bags, and it was with unaffected pleasure

He tore open her letter—and suddenly his face was hot and there was a pounding in his ears.

ILLUSTRATED BY FREDERIC VARADY

She'd found the secret that would hold him forever. The real secret was how she'd found it

that he and the elevator boy said, "Glad to see you home, Mrs. Vining." For Enid was one of those rare creatures in whom the appraising male can imagine no flaw; surely behind such lovely features, clear skin, serene eyes, there must be a nature no less serene and lovely—and amenable.

So Richard had thought when he met her a little more than a year ago; and he had been right.

The moment she saw the new couch in the living room, she clasped her hands. "Dick!"

"It's the one you wanted, isn't it? The one you told me about?"

"Oh, yes!" she cried. "How wonderful of you to have remembered!"

She settled herself on the couch, and her air, as she stroked the fabric and looked up at him, was one of such fresh and charming delight that Richard went to the couch and took her in his arms.

"Darling," she murmured, "are you really glad to have me back?"

"Never knew a month could last so long," Richard said, at that moment almost believing it.

"I wanted to come back every day—I even wanted to write to you every day instead of just twice a week, but I made myself not."

"Why ever not?"

"Oh, those silly letters. I thought, They'll only bore him."

"They did nothing of the sort. Listen, I'll tell you every word you said in the last one." And clearing his throat, secure in his possession of a photographic memory, Richard began:

"Sweetheart.

"Here's my last letter, which you'll get the day before I get home. Darling, it *was* a good idea for me to come here, not just because I wanted to see Betty and Ted and the new baby but because it's given me a chance to think about us, you and me—me, most of all. A kind of breathing spell, to look back at our first year together and learn something from it, so that I can be everything you want me to be, so that

you'll love me as I want you to love me, more and more—and always more and more."

"It sounds so foolish now," she said. "But I meant it. I meant it so much."

"Doesn't sound foolish at all. Perfectly beautiful."

"Darling," she whispered.

What a pity it was, Richard thought, kissing her, that she hadn't married someone a little less cynical, a great deal less demanding, someone to really appreciate her for the sweet and lovely thing she was, someone whose eye, after only a year of marriage, wasn't still inclined to rove. For, unfortunately, his was, and more and more so.

Well, he thought, at least I admit it. At least I'm not a hypocrite.

How handsome of you, he thought. Isn't the ultimate hypocrisy that of the man who excuses himself for anything on the ground that at least he's no hypocrite?

All right, then, I *don't* excuse myself. It's the way I am, and there's nothing I can do about it.

No? he asked himself sharply. Have you ever tried? Don't you still think of yourself as Richard Vining, the permanent young bachelor-at-large? Have you ever made one twentieth the effort she's making to live up to your marriage? Why not give it a try? —start thinking of her not just as a pretty and always absolutely predictable little girl who's living in the same apartment with you for a while, but as Enid, your *wife*?

Deep in thought, feeling troubled and vaguely noble, he got up from the couch and went to mix their before-dinner Martinis. Halfway through pouring hers, he stopped suddenly and took another bottle and a liqueur glass.

"Dick, what's that?"

"Cherry liqueur. I know you don't really like Martinis. You only drink them because you think I want you to." He gave her the tiny glass and raised his. "To Enid," he said, "my beloved wife, and to her never leaving her husband alone again, even if her sister does have a new baby."

She had barely touched the glass with her lips when she put it down, so sharply some of the liquid spilled. "My Lord, what's wrong?"

There was a break in her voice. "I can't help it. Oh, Dick, I—I'm such a fool. I said in that letter I thought about us all the time, and I did, but it's no use, I didn't really learn a thing, I don't know any more than I knew when I went. I know I do things that irritate you, but I don't know what, and I know you're going to get bored and annoyed with me again and think it was all a mistake, our getting married."

"Darling," he said. "What nonsense."

"But isn't it true? Haven't you thought it?"

"Everyone loses his temper once in a while, and the first year's supposed to be the toughest one."

"No," she said. "It's me. It's something wrong with me. If you'd only be absolutely honest with me and *tell* me—"

He stared down at the glass in his hand. "Dick? *Please?*"

Perhaps it would be the best way. Be absolutely honest with her, your wife.

"All right, darling," he said, and sat down and put his arm around her and kissed her smooth and fragrant cheek. "I'll tell you. But it's nothing wrong with you; it's what's wrong with me. When I saw you coming up the ramp at the station, you know what I thought? Wouldn't it be great if I didn't know that lovely girl, if I had to invent a way to meet her?"

He swallowed the rest of his drink.

"See," he said, "before I met you, I never meant to get married until I'd—well, grown up a little. Because I know it can't be excitement all your life. I know the best thing in marriage is coming to know each other so well that you're like two people grown into one, dear and familiar in everything you think and do. But the trouble is, I know all that with my mind, but my body doesn't. I still want to provoke myself. With wondering about the unknown woman. Who is she? How am I going to meet her? And once I've met her, wondering what she's going to be like. Sweet? Temperamental? Fall into my arms? Scratch my face? The unknown woman, the unpredictable—the eternal mystery.

"But I'll grow up yet," he said, turning to kiss her again. "I'll—"

To his amazement, she was smiling. "Give me some more of that lovely red stuff, will you?" she said. "And you have another Martini."

The first time in their life together she had told him to do anything. For the first time in their life together, she had definitely surprised him.

Richard felt a pleasant glow of excitement.

His excitement lasted fairly well through the weekend, for several other things happened that never had before. Enid wrote a letter, told him nothing about it, went out to mail it, and stayed two hours. On Saturday afternoon, she went out again, three hours and some minutes. At the theatre that night, she hardly glanced at Richard and did not ask him once if the play was good or bad. When they came home, she said he hadn't bought the right couch after all.

On Sunday night, she didn't wait for him to make the first move to go to bed but simply announced that she was sleepy and left him. Richard looked after her with a smile, for though his excitement had gone, he admired the effort she was making.

If only she'd thought of it by herself—come back from the month's visit at her sister's in her new guise! He knew why she was acting like this, and therefore her behavior was just as predictable as it had been before. He had told her what he wanted, and she was playing the part wonderfully. If only, if only it weren't a *part*.

She was in bed, her eyes closed. Asleep already? No, he thought, but a good imitation. He bent over her. On her lips was the faintest trace of a smile. As if dreaming of secret, unregretted pleasures.

Complete even to this—the Mona Lisa smile!

Poor imitation Mona Lisa!

He got up early in the morning; he had an early appointment. Enid lay as if still asleep. Richard saw with amusement in the moment before he left that the little brushstroke smile was again on her lips.

He rode down in the elevator looking at the mail the boy had brought up. Bills and a letter. Richard had the stern habit of opening bills first. These were inconsequential. He opened the letter.

"All right, Mr. Vining?"

He looked up with a start and saw that they were at the ground floor. "Oh yes," he said. "Thanks. I—" His face was hot, there was a pounding in his ears. "Take me up again," he said. "Forgot something."

> "Sweetheart," he had read.
> "Here I am writing again—and when I thought I'd be back with you by now! I'm going to call you tonight so you'll know why I'm staying another few days. Betty asked me to because the baby isn't very well, you see, and—"

Even the pounding in his head could not prevent his mind from working with swiftness and precision. In the few moments of the elevator's rush back to his floor, he saw it all.

Ted and Betty had no telephone on their Wisconsin farm—or so Richard had been told. So he had never been able to call Enid. Betty wasn't exactly the brightest girl in the world. Betty had been given eight letters to mail, two a week, and mail them she had. But Betty had been given a ninth letter, too, just in case Enid wanted to stay away a little longer. Betty had been warned not to mail the ninth letter unless told to, but she had forgotten. Betty had mailed it anyway.

Where had Enid been all last month?

But, wait!

Enid had written a letter Friday. It could have been this letter. She could have enclosed it in an envelope addressed to him and sent it in another envelope air mail special delivery to Betty and instructed her to mail it at once.

She was playing the new role brilliantly. She had planned this as the most brilliant stroke of all, to make him wonder about her forever after.

Of course, that was what she had done.

Poor dear girl, he thought, so clever, so devoted—so devoted she leaves no stone unturned in trying to be the woman I want, the unpredictable, the eternal mystery, the Mona Lisa smile.

He went into the bedroom. She still lay there as if asleep, though she must have heard him come in. She was still pretending, her soft body curved seductively on the bed.

Or was she *genuinely* asleep?

Was she really the poor dear girl, so clever, so devoted?

Would he ever really know?

My Lord, how beautiful she was!

She still wore the smile. THE END

curved in that mysterious smile

MEDALS FOR HARRY

BY GENE PILLER

ILLUSTRATED BY ALEX ROSS

The bailiff came over to get Harry, and I shook hands with him. His face scrambled into that familiar grin of his that was half smile, half laugh. I thought again of those India-rubber dolls they used to make. It was a nice face.

"It wasn't a trial, Harry," I said unhappily. "If you'd only talked."

"It was very nice, George," he assured me. "A few years in the clink ain't gonna hurt me. I need the rest."

"I could've got you off, if you'd let—"

Harry shook his head. "You did right, George. And it ain't every day a two-bit crook gets an ex-D.A. for a mouthpiece. It was handsome."

"No crackin' out, Harry," I warned, trying to squeeze a laugh into the situation.

His eyes disappeared in wrinkles. "George," he said sadly, "you hurt me."

He walked away between the cops, a stocky little man with long arms and short legs and certain high ideals in his heart.

People go to war for a lot of reasons—parents at home, a house, blueberry pie, girls in summer dresses—a lot of reasons. Harry had one of his own.

The first I heard of it was outside Seoul. A flock of mortars and machine guns had us pinned down. We couldn't stir without the help of tanks, and the tanks were somewhere else.

The mortars were coming closer to us all the time. If we moved a hair, machine guns stuttered like wet hens. All we could do was lie in the ditch that was handy when we took cover, and hope it wouldn't turn into a grave.

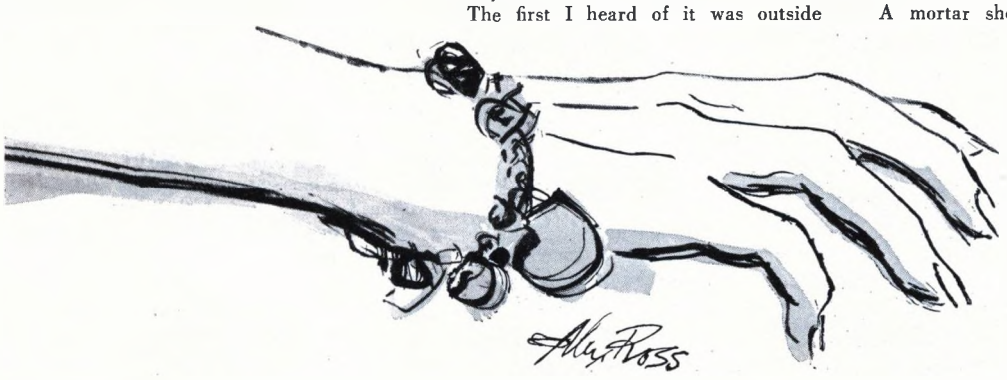
In a lull, I squirmed around until I could see who was near me. I should have known. No matter where the sergeant told Harry to go, he would always turn up to my right. He never said anything about it, and in a battle nobody asks too many questions. He was just my friend.

And he was there now, cleaning his nails with the point of a bayonet. His face was smeared with mud. I could barely see his eyes. But he was cleaning his nails.

"Harry," I said, "would you like a pedicure now or later?"

He grinned, and a chunk of mud fell off his face. "I was thinking, George," he said. "I was thinking that there must be a pretty good reason for all this noise."

A mortar shell exploded behind us



There was a special glory waiting for Harry. Her name was Emily, and she was everything a soldier wanted . . . almost

Being a fighting man was second nature to him. Being a lover was something else again

with a hollow thump. Harry's thoughtful expression never changed.

"What did you decide, Harry?"

I wanted to know because this was the first time Harry ever came out with something like that. He wasn't the kind to take fighting very seriously, which didn't mean he wasn't a fighter. He got medals right and left—the Bronze Star, the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and so many clusters they wouldn't fit on the ribbon. But they didn't make any difference to him. He was voted the soldier most likely to die a hero. He didn't care. He was just fighting because they told him to, because he had been fighting since he was born. But when it didn't have to be done, he preferred to be gentle.

Harry was the gentlest guy I ever knew. I saw him give first aid to kids who lay in the mud bleeding and crying for their mothers. Harry's hands were as gentle as any mother's hands. His voice had a quality that said everything was going to be okay.

"You know, George," he finally said between shell bursts, "I was a crook before this Korean caper."

Naturally, I knew that. Before I enlisted. I was with the D.A.'s office. One of the musts down there was to know the name of every local crook.

"You were?" I said.

"Not much of a crook," he went on apologetically. "About so big." He measured an inch with his fingers. "But I kinda enjoyed it. It didn't pay much, just a living, but I made a lot of friends—on and off the force," he added as an afterthought.

A neatly spaced barrage hung a lace curtain across the sky and spread a fresh coat of mud over Harry's face. He scraped part of it off with his bayonet and went on. "So I was telling ya—ever since we been fighting up here, I've been trying to think of why."

"And now you know, Harry?" I was hoping he did, because I had a feeling that if he didn't know now, he would never get the chance to find out.

"Yeah, George, now I know." His eyes, small and blue behind the mask of mud, had stopped twinkling. He was very serious. "I am fighting, I think, so that I can go back to a country where I have the right to be a crook in peace."

For a long moment, neither of us said anything. I didn't know whether to laugh or change the subject. But slowly his words began to mean something. Slowly they began to mean the same thing as fighting for freedom of speech or religion or the rest. Harry was fighting for a square deal for everyone.

I turned back to him to tell him what I thought. He was gone.

Fifteen minutes later, three grenades exploded in the enemy lines. The shelling and machine-gunning stopped.

That might have been the end of Harry's story, and probably good enough reason for my taking his case months later, except there wouldn't have been

a case if it hadn't been for the furlough.

And Emily . . .

We spent the first week of the furlough searching for medals.

"I am through with these dry goods, George," Harry said, indicating the rows of ribbons. "I want the real thing."

So, in the name of American ideals, we went from supply room to supply room, from privates to generals, until every last ribbon on Harry's shirt was replaced with a medal. There were a lot of them, and walking down the main stem of Tokyo, Harry looked like a cross between Marshal Foch and a sketch by Mauldin. Some people laughed at him, but he didn't care. He was as proud of those medals as a father is of his first kid. Besides, his ideals never weakened the power of his right hook.

We had just brushed off a Marine sergeant and two cocky buzz boys when along came Emily.

In that boiling swamp of sidewalk vendors and beggars and people from every backstreet in the world, Emily was like a single rosebud in a mess of bulrushes.

I looked at Harry as she came toward us and went by. There was an expression on his face that made me think of home and a thousand slim girls who walked with a long stride and heads held high.

"George," he said, turning around, "I think we should walk the other way."

We moved fast, ducking in and out of the crowd. Opposite the Kabuki Theatre, the mob thickened, and we were directly behind Emily.

A moment later, she missed her bag.

I couldn't hear her exclamation, because through some magic of his own, Harry had us leaning against a building calmly contemplating the excitement.

"A talent like yours," I said, "is being wasted in the Army."

"Kid stuff, George," he answered modestly.

We waited for a while, then pushed to her side. Harry was acting like a veteran, his breath coming fast as if he had run after someone.

Their romance began like that and grew like something in California. I went along with them, but they seldom knew I was there. Now and then, I'd wonder about Emily. After all, what did Harry know about her. Exactly nothing. And there had to be something to know about an American girl, single and alone, in Tokyo.

I scouted around quietly, but time and Emily were against me. She was something to have dreams about, and the end of our furlough was only a hangover away.

About three in the morning before we had to go back into the lines, Harry walked in on two inches of air. I knew he had done something drastic, because his medals were gone.

He dropped on a cot and stared dreamily at the ceiling. "I don't know what it is, George," he said. "But it makes me warm inside when I see her— like finding an open window after climbing two stories."

"Or maybe dinner on the table and someone to smile at you?"

He nodded and grinned sheepishly.

It wasn't too tough to figure what was happening to Harry. It was a natural follow-up to the ideals he had developed in Korea. He realized then he was fighting for something—a way of living. Now all the things that were part of living—a home, a wife, a log burning in the fireplace—were becoming part of him.

Only, I thought, why couldn't it have been with a girl in New York? I said, "What's going to happen, Harry?"

"It already happened, George."

"'It' meaning what?"

He jumped up like a jack-in-the-box, radiating. "I'm almost a married man, George," he shouted. "Me, almost hitched to the best-looking dame in the world."

I shook his hand, and if I wasn't too enthusiastic about it, he didn't notice. It was all set. She was keeping his money and his medals for him. When he got back again, they would be married.

From then on Harry was fighting for Emily, and it was just too bad for the Reds. He killed and captured so many, headquarters couldn't believe it. They sent a G-2 with him one night to observe. The G-2 came back mumbling unintelligibly and is probably still under observation himself. Harry came back with a slug in his shoulder—and a dozen prisoners.

A week later, Harry and I went back

He wasn't a man to go looking for trouble—

that is, not until Emily came along

to Tokyo. For some reason he couldn't understand, they wanted to give him the Medal of Honor.

We left the parade grounds, after Harry got his medal, on a cloud built for speed. We'd just been told we were returning to the States to be discharged. The rotation system had finally rotated around to us. Harry couldn't wait to tell Emily.

The elevator at the Tsura-ya, her hotel, couldn't go fast enough. But when we knocked, there was no answer. After a minute, Harry pulled out a key of his own and we went in.

"She's probably out for a while," I said. I hated to see the disappointment on his face.

"What are we gonna do 'til she gets back?" Harry asked.

"Take it easy. Sit down and rest." He still had his arm in a sling. The medal in its purple ribbon, resting on the white material, seemed incongruous.

I strolled into the kitchen. It was neat and clean and empty. I opened a closet. It was neat and clean and empty. The words repeated themselves in my mind. I didn't like them at all.

I went into the bedroom, looked into the bureau drawers, in the closet. I found what I expected. They were neat and clean and empty.

"What's it look like to you, George?" Harry's voice sounded worried.

I said, "It looks like—like she's beat it for good."

For no good reason, I picked up a vase and splintered it with all I had against the wall. Emily, the beautiful yellow rosebud.

"Yeah," Harry said.

"Did she ever tell you what she was doing here?" I asked.

Harry shook his head morosely. "Only that she was an actress."

And what an actress, I thought. This kind of actress I had prosecuted in my time.

"Come on, Harry," I said. "Maybe we can pick her up before she spends your dough."

"And my medals," he muttered, following me in a daze. "All my medals."

I understood how he felt. He hadn't searched for those medals because he liked the noise they made, because he was proud of being a better killer than anyone else. It was because they symbolized his new world. She had held it in her grimy hand—and dropped it.

We never found Emily. She had vanished like roses in winter. But Harry didn't go back to housebreaking, either—not right away. He never even thought of it. Those little images of normal living he had found in Korea were stuck in his head. He wanted them to come true.

Then one night he was walking along Broadway. A big fancy photograph advertising a stage show caught his eye. It was a picture of the sweetest face he had ever seen. Emily hadn't changed a bit.

"I watched her every night for a week, George," he told me in his cell just before the trial. "And every night I followed her home."

"Still in love?"

"Naw." He grinned and looked sheepish. "To tell ya the truth, George, I was casing the joint. But I couldn't make up my mind whether to crack it or not."

I sighed. "But you did, and they caught you before you could lift a thing."

The light in the cell was dim, but even in the dim light I could see the twinkle in his eyes. "If I show ya something, y'gotta swear to keep your yap shut."

"Okay. It's shut."

He pulled open his shirt. There they were, pinned to his undershirt—all of them from Good Conduct to Medal of Honor. The last glimmer in the cell touched them, and they shone brightly.

"Harry," I pleaded, "tell the story in court."

"Naw."

"Let me tell it," I begged. "Not a jury or a judge would give you a day."

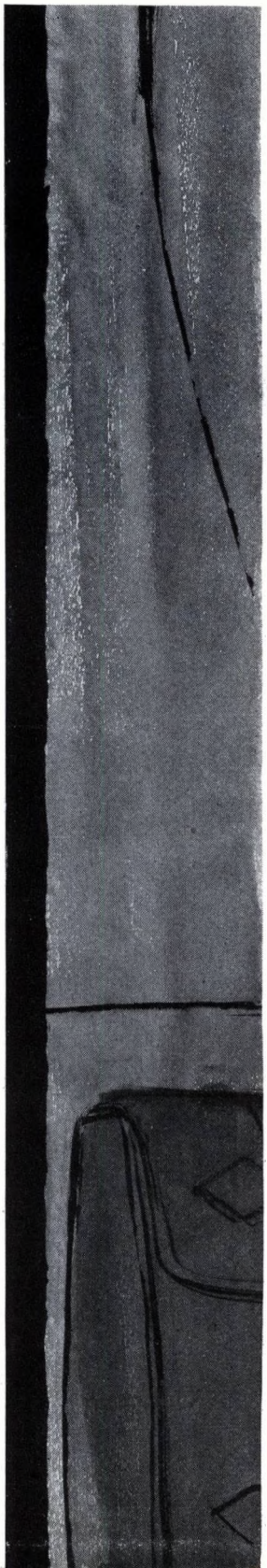
He looked at his shoes and mumbled, "I don't want everybody to laugh at me, George."

I remember I wanted to cry. He was willing to take the rap to keep that small piece of his life beyond ridicule. That way, when he got out, he figured, he could live in his new world again without anything having touched it.

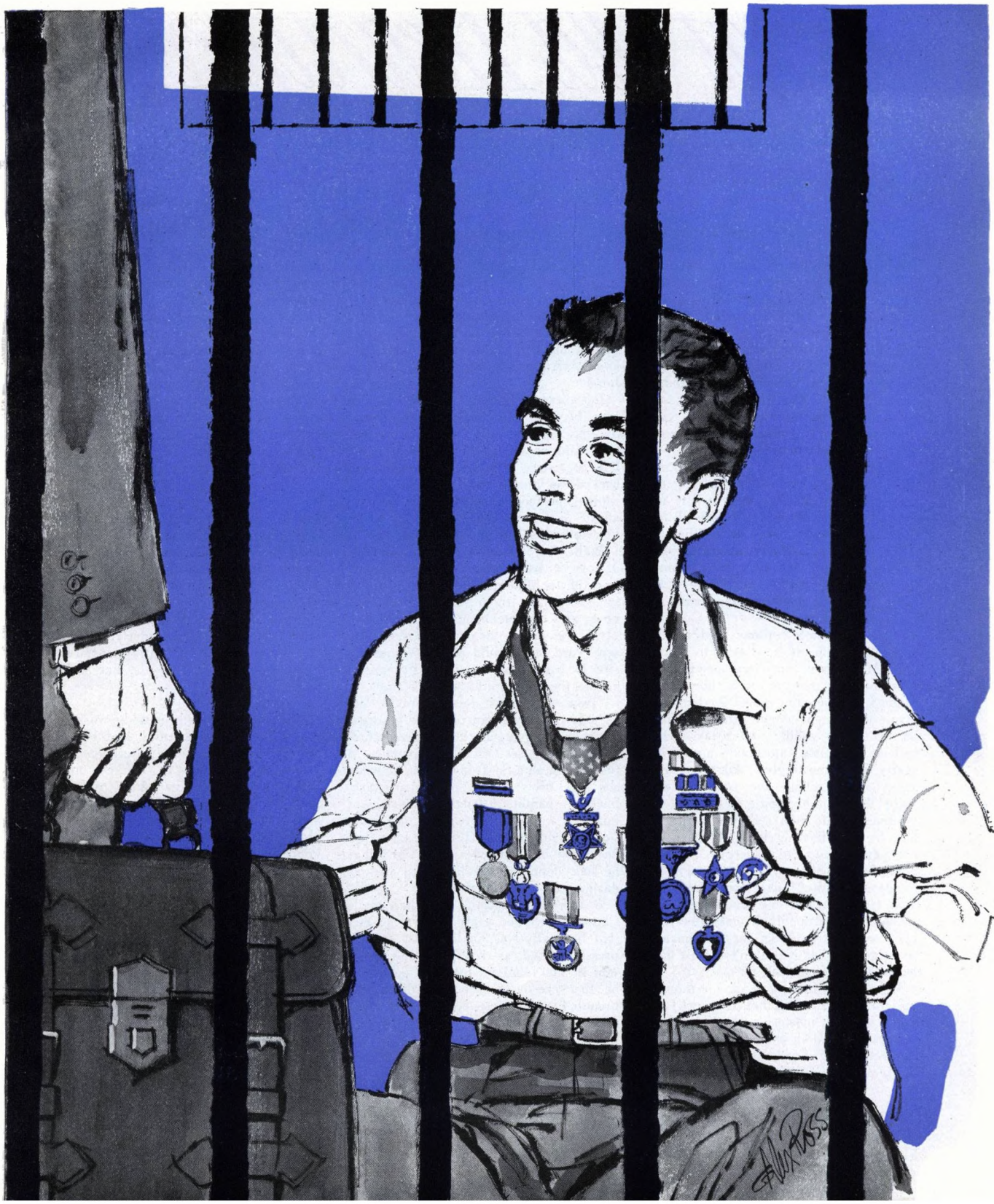
He looked over his shoulder just before he left the courtroom and grinned. "Keep 'em safe for me, George," he called.

"Okay, Harry," I promised, and began to figure out when he'd be due for parole.

THE END



The medals shone brightly in the dim cell. Then I knew what I had to do, but it was up to Harry.



That Old Heartthrob

It was a love scene he had played a thousand times and she had only dreamed about. Now his dreams, too, depended on how she played her role

BY DON STANFORD ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE HUGHES

Marty told her. Marty did not, of course, know what he was doing; Marty was simply making conversation in the idle, comfortable way of a man sharing with his fiancée the events of his day. Marty could not know that Chester Lawrence meant anything special to her; he could, in fact, having been engaged to her practically all her adult life, know that she had never met Chester Lawrence, and it would never occur to Marty that a man she had never met could mean anything to her.

But that was Marty, to whom life was quite real and in whose life nothing unreal was permitted to exist. It was not that she did not love Marty with all her heart, for she did; it was simply that she could never tell Marty about Chester Lawrence, for what Chester Lawrence had meant to Peggy O'Neill for twelve whole years was something too unreal for Marty to comprehend.

"The poor slob," Marty said mildly, and it was difficult for Peggy to realize that Marty was speaking of Chester Lawrence, a man in jack boots and plumed hat and cape, a man she had seen leap, sword in hand and laughing, from battlement to saddle and away. "He's had it this time, no doubt about it," Marty said knowingly. "All the press-agent stories about the countess who bailed him out of Monte Carlo and the producer's wife who sent her yacht for him from Hollywood to Hong Kong so her party would be a success—and the poor slob has to end up in the clutches of Harakourian Management, Incorporated, from which no one has ever escaped without paying in full. It looks like poor old Lawrence is fresh out of romantic rescuers. Too bad it couldn't at least have been the Waldorf, isn't it?"

It was more than too bad, she thought indignantly, blaming not Chester Lawrence but the mysterious and dramatic legions who had always loved him enough to rescue him, who should never have let him come to a hotel like the Alexander. The Alexander was all right, it was clean and well-run, but it wasn't glamorous enough for Chester Lawrence. Even though Marty was senior assistant manager, the Alexander would never be good enough for Chester Lawrence, who had bathed in champagne at the Paris Ritz and taken a whole floor at Claridges in London.

But there he was, a prisoner—a prisoner because his bill was overdue and the management had warned him that he would be locked out as soon as he left his suite. Chester Lawrence had cocked the famous quizzical eyebrow and replied courteously that he really couldn't afford to leave, then, unless they'd let him take his luggage with him.

Well, they wouldn't let him do that, of course. His luggage was security until he paid his bill. And they'd cut off Chester Lawrence's room service that afternoon, and his telephone service—though Mr. Harakourian, the owner, sardonically sent word that should Mr. Lawrence desire to communicate with his financial agents, the hotel would furnish stamps.

"How—how much does he owe?" Peggy asked Marty in an unhappy whisper, her memory going back to the very first time she had seen Chester Lawrence in the movies, on a Saturday afternoon when she was twelve. He'd played a swashbuckling bandit, a laughing, insouciant knave. It was all so unreal and so romantic, the things that Chester Lawrence had done in his movies. And the things he had done in real life were just as daring, just as impulsive.

It was that, perhaps, that had made Chester Lawrence a great star: the fact that he really was, in life, just as irrepressible—and as irresponsible—as he was in the fabulous roles he portrayed on the screen. If ever there lived and breathed a complete escape from drab reality, it was Chester Lawrence, and Peggy O'Neill cherished jealously the knowledge that he lived and that life could not touch him.

"It isn't much for a guy like that," Marty answered, and even in Marty's matter-of-fact voice there was a puzzled slowness, the faintest grudging resentment that the winged should be brought so low. "Only four hundred bucks, though it's a fortune for a five-day stay at the Alexander. I would've sworn you *couldn't* spend that much dough in that trap, even with all the florist bills and long-distance calls he ran up before we cut him off, and the bar. But it's peanuts compared to what he used to throw around in the better places. I guess . . . Hey, what's the matter with you?"

"N-nothing," Peggy said, and her voice sounded cottony and far away in her own ears, because the moment the idea was born she knew she was going to do it, and it scared her half to death. "Nothing, Marty, I guess I'm just tired."

"I guess you are," Marty said, and chuckled. His big, warm hand covered hers and squeezed it tenderly. "Whyn't you remind me there's always tomorrow night, honey? My late one, but still a night, tomorrow."

It was his late one because he worked a stagger shift—morning and evening off when he worked afternoons, the afternoon off when he worked morning and evening. That fitted right in with the crazy thing Peggy was going to do, because Marty wouldn't be at the hotel and she had never met Mr. Harakourian, the manager. Peggy O'Neill hadn't been inside the Alexander more than three times in her life. And if Marty was off duty, there wasn't much chance that anyone would recognize her. Especially if . . .

Peggy had never had what you could call a great deal of money saved up, because she worked as a saleslady and occasional model at DeLesseps, which is as smart a store as Fifth Avenue can offer, and when a girl is about to marry a man who will not hear of his wife's working after marriage, it would be very foolish,

"The poor slob," Marty said mildly. "Where are all those women now that he needs them?"


Hughes

indeed, for her not to take advantage of the opportunity to buy real DeLesseps clothes at the employee discount of thirty per cent. At the moment, she had something like six hundred dollars in her savings account, and her closet held several outfits the Duchess of Windsor could wear without embarrassment. That was all she really needed. That, and a mink coat.

The mink was easy, and never mind the knowing laughter. All Peggy had to do was tell the store's fur buyer that she had a very special lunch date and would like to borrow a mink. It was tacitly understood that if Peggy had occasion to throw the coat over the back of her chair, she would do so in such a way that the DeLesseps label would show.

There was one other thing she needed, and that she bought. She bought it right after she came back from the bank, the five hundred dollars in cash making a thick, comforting wad in her bag. Even with her thirty-per-cent discount, it cost a lot of money. But it was as smart as a DeLesseps hat can be, and what was more important, it had a heavy veil.

The veil kept catching on her eyelashes, so she was forced to hold herself very erect and keep her head thrown back a little as she faced Mr. Harakourian in the manager's office of the Hotel Alexander. But, although she did not know it, the effect was to lend her a regal bearing that almost overwhelmed Mr. Harakourian.

"There is to be no publicity, if you please," Peggy said with cold dignity, and Mr. Harakourian almost nodded his head off. Mr. Harakourian had thrown his soggy cigar away the very first time Peggy had turned her veiled face toward it with a gesture of distaste. His small black eyes were fascinated currants in his fat, doughy face now as his gaze stabbed at the veil, trying to see through it. He kept one pudgy hand protectively touching the wad of money on his desk.

"I will take the receipted bill up to Mr. Lawrence myself," Peggy said icily, and once again the pallid, doughy face nodded vehemently, and suddenly she remembered: *Marty said they cut off room service yesterday. He must be starving!*

"And—oh, yes," she added casually, drawing on one long black glove in the languid, graceful way DeLesseps teaches its models. Mr. Harakourian's currant eyes bugged in complete hypnosis. "Mr. Lawrence and I will lunch upstairs. Will you take care of that, please?"

"What you want, lady?" Mr. Harakourian croaked submissively, and the sudden heady knowledge that Mr. Harakourian was scared worse than she was enabled Peggy to answer, with a graceful, careless flirt of her black-gloved hand: "It really doesn't matter. A fish, I should think, and a good white wine. Your headwaiter will know what Mr. Lawrence prefers. And if you will send the check with the luncheon, I will be glad to pay it right away."

Mr. Harakourian touched a button on his desk and rose with massive dignity, his currant eyes downcast in wordless obeisance. "There will not be no check, lady," Mr. Harakourian said with proud dignity, and ushered Peggy out of his office and to the waiting elevator.

She wasn't scared at all as she stood outside Chester Lawrence's door, even as she heard his footsteps, light and springy, approaching to open it. Maybe it was Mr. Harakourian's acceptance of her role; maybe it was something else entirely, like the reality of the unreal Chester Lawrence, even now fumbling with the door latch. Whatever the reason, she simply wasn't scared at all. She knew quite certainly that she could play out her role as well as Chester Lawrence had ever played out one of his.

The door swung open away from her, and the stiff, prickly edge of the veil brushed lightly against her soft lips as they curved in a smile. Chester Lawrence stepped back and half bowed holding the door for her, and Peggy swept regally past him and into the room, her head held high so that the veil wouldn't catch.

She hadn't planned beyond this moment. To be exact, she hadn't planned up to this moment. The Crazy Idea had vaguely insisted that she pay Chester Lawrence's bill, that she bail him out as a countess once had bailed him out. She had known without question that she owed Chester Lawrence that, just as the countess had owed it to him. The mink and the veil had been for Mr. Harakourian's benefit, not Chester Lawrence's. Until she remembered about his being hungry, she hadn't really dared to plan actually meeting him. Or had she?

She heard the door close behind her, and now she could turn and look at him, across the stiffly furnished living room of the Alexander's best suite. Through the veil, he was blurred just a little—the effect was not unlike watching him on a movie screen—but he was unmistakably Chester Lawrence. A bit older than he should have been, but gracefully older: the gray in his hair contrasted with the sparkle in his eyes and the lilt of his smile, and even the pouchiness under his eyes was debonair.

He didn't have a coat on, nor a tie—after all, this *was* his hotel room—but his shirt was crisply ironed, he was freshly shaven, and his hair was faintly damp, with the clear marks of the comb showing plainly. And that was as it should be. Chester Lawrence, in movies or in life, would never despair enough to let his grooming slip. If the mysterious lady arrived to rescue him from durance vile, he would be clean shaven and ready for her, always.

"You've come, I see," Chester Lawrence said lightly, and he crossed to her with swift grace and bent his head over her black-gloved hand. And then he raised his head, and his eyebrow quirked as he turned his gaze courteously away, but in that briefest part of a second, his eyes stabbed hard at the veil and the faintest frown touched his face.

"For lunch," Peggy said lightly, easily, and the cool assurance that had descended upon her equaled the best the greatest of directors could have elicited from the greatest of Chester Lawrence's leading women. It was like being in a movie; there seemed to be faint background music playing somewhere, and it seemed that both he and she had learned every line and every gesture.

"I brought you this," Peggy said lightly, and permitted herself to smile a little, just enough so that the edge of the veil brushed her lips in a reassuring caress as he took the receipted hotel bill from her hand. And then she let the mink slip carelessly from her shoulders, and slowly, gracefully, began to draw off the long black glove on her right hand.

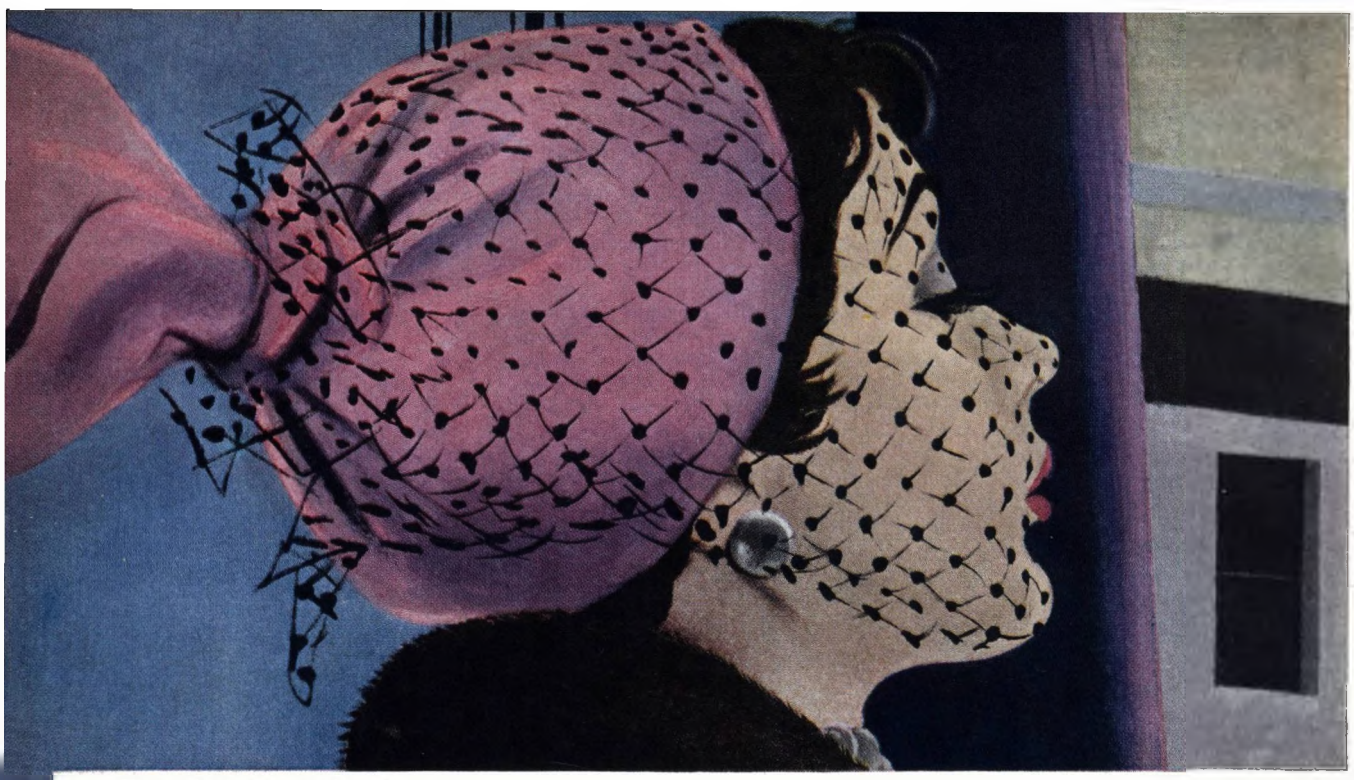
"Thank you." Chester Lawrence said after a long pause. His voice was rich and deep and assured, with the hint of ready laughter just beneath the surface, but his smile, while it matched hers almost exactly, lacked something she could not quite identify. "I've never seen you before," Chester Lawrence said firmly. "And yet I do know you, don't I?"

That was what was lacking in his smile. Assurance. His smile matched her own because he was matching it to her own. *She* was playing this scene, *he* was the foil. And it was awfully important that she play it properly, because there was a feverish light in Chester Lawrence's eyes. A clutching sort of thing, a desperate need to have this scene played properly.

"Of course, you haven't." Peggy said, "and of course, you do," and she could smile at him again, an impudent, easy smile this time because the words hadn't come from her head at all. They were unreal words, words in a script, and where they had come from she had no idea at all. But they were indubitably the right words; his zestful, blooming face declared they were.

It was time, of course, for a knock on

It was as smart as a DeLesseps hat can be, and more important, it had a heavy veil.



That Old Heartthrob (continued)

the door, and the knock came on cue. It was lunch, luncheon on a wheeled cart, with many silver-covered dishes and a tall vase of fresh roses and a silver bucket, with the long, graceful neck of a wine bottle protruding from its nest of crushed ice. And a waiter in a white coat opening the cart into a table and deftly arranging the place settings and a headwaiter in a black coat supervising.

"With the compliments of the management, Mr. Lawrence," the headwaiter said, bowing, "and if there is anything else, sir—?"

"There will be nothing else." Chester Lawrence said. He pulled a crumpled bill from his trouser pocket with such a careless gesture you wouldn't have known it was the very last bill he had in the world if the script hadn't called for it to be. The headwaiter pocketed the bill and obsequiously departed, shepherding the white-jacketed waiter before him.

"You know." Chester Lawrence said confidentially, "I was really beginning to doubt that you'd make it this time. Silly of me, wasn't it?" He had drawn the wine bottle out of its ice nest far enough to read the label, and now he replaced it carefully, his eyebrows and the fine line of his chiseled mouth expressing approval and controlled surprise. "Even a place like this can rise to an occasion . . . for you. This happens to be my favorite Pouilly, as I have no doubt you know."

The script didn't seem to have a line for Peggy then. An enigmatic little smile seemed to be called for, and she gave it. He held her chair for her, and his breath was warm on her neck as he seated her carefully, deferentially. He rounded the table to his own chair.

"I suppose," he said, "I should have anticipated a more than usually vivid dawn. The night has been particularly dark. But I confess you dazzle me, and I cannot remember when I have been dazzled before."

He turned his head to spin the wine bottle in its nest of ice, and a tiny muscle jumped in his cheek. But his voice was almost steady when he looked at her again and said. "I suppose you wouldn't raise your veil?"

"No." Peggy said quickly, instinctively. "Oh, no. I'm sorry, but—but I'm sure you understand."

"Oh, quite." Chester Lawrence said politely. "And—ah—the glove? You wouldn't remove the other glove?"

She had forgotten that entirely—but perhaps she hadn't, really. Certainly the script called for her to keep that long black glove on her left hand, mysteriously screening the finger that wore Marty's modest diamond: certainly the script would have her draw that gloved hand back quickly, just as she did, and shake her veiled head forbiddingly.

He poured the wine, wholly absorbed in the small ceremony of splashing the first drops into his own glass, then filling hers, and then his own, and the edge of the veil brushed her lips again as she raised the wine glass to her mouth.

"You're *sure* you can drink through that thing?" he asked, and his voice was teasing in the manner of a small boy trying an elaborately circuitous route to what has been forbidden him—a small boy, or a lover. Beneath the teasing and the lightness, there was something else, a wistfulness, a wholly genuine longing.

"I'm quite sure, thank you." she answered primly, her voice letting him know that the rebuke was just as much a game as his teasing had been. She saw the gaiety come back to his eyes.

"Now, why?" she asked him sternly, and swept her gloved hand in an eloquently accusing gesture that indicated the room. Her voice held a scolding note, but an affectionate scolding note, a proprietary note withal. His head came up a little at the sound of it. "How did all this happen? And why *here*?"

She was laughing at him now, and he was laughing with her, saying defensively, ruefully, "Do you know, I can't imagine? I suppose it began to seem as though there really wasn't any particular reason for anything, any particular incentive. I suppose I just let things slide, rather got out of the habit of trying, because—*I suppose I stopped believing in you!*"

The long, throbbing moment of silence might have been in the script, but the script couldn't have called for the roaring in Peggy's ears, and neither the script nor the one sip of the light, dry wine could have accounted for the dizziness that caught at her as she rose. That came under another heading entirely, a heading that might have been called revelation.

"You know," he told her. "I was really beginning to doubt that you'd make it this time."

The exact extent of the debt she owed Chester Lawrence was clear to her now, and so was the way she could take to pay it off. Chester Lawrence had always been the sheer beauty of the unreal, the ultimate essence of romance, to Peggy O'Neill. And Chester Lawrence had very nearly been destroyed because he had had no such unreal promise to believe in for himself. But now he would have, for she could give it to him.

"You'll be all right now, won't you?" Peggy said, and her question really wasn't a question at all, because she knew he would, and so did he.

"Until you come again," Chester Lawrence answered her, and she smiled once more from the doorway of the suite. She had her very last glimpse of Chester Lawrence as the door closed slowly and he stood, in the flamboyantly gallant highwayman's pose, toasting her farewell, his wine glass raised high.

Not his wine glass, but the one from which she had sipped, upon whose rim the stain of her lipstick marked where her mouth had touched it. And as Chester Lawrence set his lips to that same spot, his eyes told her that he would continue to believe in her existence, that he'd not give up again. THE END

A Kiss Before Dying

This, in the opinion of our editors, is the most exciting mystery novel in many years. Its realism may shock you. Its implications may frighten you. But we don't think you'll stop reading until you have finished it

BY IRA LEVIN

Dorothy

His plans had been running so beautifully, so damned beautifully, and now *she* was going to smash them all. Hate erupted and flooded through him, gripping his face with jaw-aching pressure. That was all right, though; the lights were out.

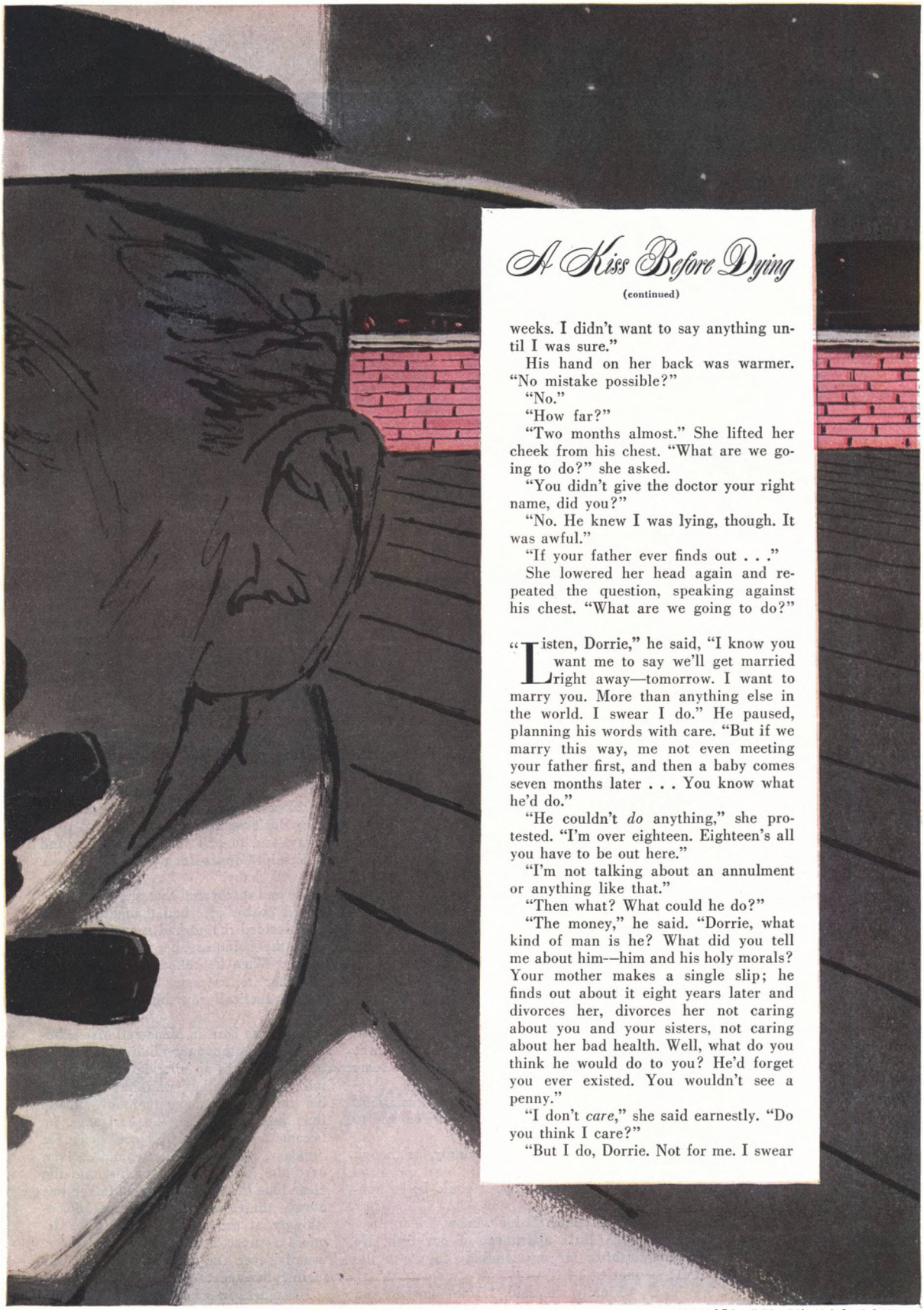
And she, she kept on sobbing weakly in the dark, her cheek pressed against his bare chest, her tears and her breath burning hot. He wanted to push her away.

Finally, his face relaxed. He put his arm around her and stroked her back. It was warm, or, rather, his hand was cold; all of him was cold, he discovered; his armpits were creeping with sweat, and his legs were quivering the way they always did when things caught him helpless and unprepared. He lay still for a moment, waiting for the trembling to subside. "Crying isn't going to do any good," he told her gently.

Obediently she tried to stop, catching her breath in long, choking gasps. She rubbed her eyes with the worn binding of the blanket. "It's just . . . the holding it in for so long. I've known for days,

A shriek of anguish trailed behind her like a burning wire. That didn't matter, though, for he alone heard it.

Ellen leaned over the ledge. "I read about some girl falling from here," she said. His voice was dry. "She didn't fall."



A Kiss Before Dying

(continued)

weeks. I didn't want to say anything until I was sure."

His hand on her back was warmer. "No mistake possible?"

"No."

"How far?"

"Two months almost." She lifted her cheek from his chest. "What are we going to do?" she asked.

"You didn't give the doctor your right name, did you?"

"No. He knew I was lying, though. It was awful."

"If your father ever finds out . . ."

She lowered her head again and repeated the question, speaking against his chest. "What are we going to do?"

"Listen, Dorrie," he said, "I know you want me to say we'll get married right away—tomorrow. I want to marry you. More than anything else in the world. I swear I do." He paused, planning his words with care. "But if we marry this way, me not even meeting your father first, and then a baby comes seven months later . . . You know what he'd do."

"He couldn't *do* anything," she protested. "I'm over eighteen. Eighteen's all you have to be out here."

"I'm not talking about an annulment or anything like that."

"Then what? What could he do?"

"The money," he said. "Dorrie, what kind of man is he? What did you tell me about him—him and his holy morals? Your mother makes a single slip; he finds out about it eight years later and divorces her, divorces her not caring about you and your sisters, not caring about her bad health. Well, what do you think he would do to you? He'd forget you ever existed. You wouldn't see a penny."

"I don't *care*," she said earnestly. "Do you think I care?"

"But I do, Dorrie. Not for me. I swear

ILLUSTRATED BY MAC CONNER

She was pretty enough, but it was her money he found so beautiful, so tantalizing. The thought of it never failed to excite him.

It was infuriating. One little piece of bad luck would ruin all his plans—unless he found an out

not for me. But for you. What will happen to us? We'll both have to quit school; you for the baby, me to work. And what will I do? —Another guy with two years' college and no degree. What will I be? A clerk or something?"

"It doesn't matter."

"It does! You don't know how much it does. You're only nineteen, and you've had money all your life. You don't know what it means not to have it. We'd be at each other's throats in a year."

"No . . . no . . . we wouldn't!" She began sobbing again.

He closed his eyes and spoke dreamily, intoning the words in a sedative chant. "I had it planned so beautifully. I would have come to New York this summer, and you would have introduced me to him. I could have gotten him to like me. And after graduation, we would have been married. Or even this summer. We could have come back here in September for our last two years. A little apartment of our own, right near the campus . . ."

She lifted her head from his chest. "What are you trying to do?" she begged. "Why are you saying these things?" There was silence, as though unnoticed motors had suddenly stopped. "Are—are you trying to get out of it? To get away?"

"No! No, Dorrie!" He grabbed her by the shoulders and pulled her up until her face was next to his. "No!"

"Then what are you doing to me? We *have* to get married now! We don't have any choice!"

"We *do* have a choice, Dorrie," he said.

He felt her body stiffen against his. She gave a small, terrified whisper—"No!"—and began shaking her head violently.

"Listen, Dorrie!" He caught her jaw in one hand, fingers pressing into her cheeks, holding her head rigid. "Listen!" He waited until the wildness of her breathing subsided. "There's a guy on campus, Hermy Godsen. His uncle owns a drugstore. Hermy could get some pills."

He let go of her jaw. She was silent.

"Don't you see, baby? We've got to try! It means so much!"

"Pills," she said gropingly, as though it were a new word.

"We've got to try. It could be so wonderful."

"Oh, Lord, I don't know."

"A little apartment of our own. No waiting for my landlady to go to the movies. . . ."

Finally she said, "How—how do you know they would work? What if they didn't work?"

He took a deep breath. "If they don't work—" he kissed her forehead and her cheek and the corner of her mouth—"if they don't work, we'll get married right away, and to hell with your father and Kingship Copper Incorporated. I swear we will, baby."

He had discovered that she liked to be called "baby." He had thought about it and decided that it had something to do with the coldness she felt toward her father. When he called her "baby" and held her in his arms, he could get her to do practically anything.

He was born in Menasset, Massachusetts, the only child of a father who was an oiler in a Fall River mill and a mother who had expected her husband to make more of himself than just an oiler. At an early age, he became conscious of his good looks. On Sundays, guests would come and exclaim over him, the blondness of his hair, the clear blue of his eyes, but his father was always there, shaking his head admonishingly at the guests. His parents argued a great deal as he grew older, usually over the time and money his mother devoted to dressing him.

His marks in school were good, which

made his mother glow and even won reluctant praise from his father. His marks became still better when he started sitting next to an unattractive but brilliant girl who was so beholden to him for some awkward cloakroom kisses that she neglected to cover her paper during examinations.

When he started dating, it was with girls from the better part of town. His mother began to talk of his marrying a rich man's daughter. She said it only jokingly, of course, but she said it more than once.

Two weeks after his graduation from high school—"The Most Likely to Succeed"—he was drafted, and in the infantry, under a blind and uncharmable authority, there was suddenly an awful insecurity. It persisted all through basic training and across the Pacific. It persisted until a day when he squeezed the trigger of his rifle and ended the life of a Japanese soldier who had come trembling out of the underbrush with his upraised hands begging in the air and the front of his pants dark with a spreading stain. Inexplicably, when the Jap died, the insecurity was gone.

He returned home in January of 1947, with the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart and the record of a shell fragment traced in a thin vein of scar tissue over his dextral ribs. He did not remain in Menasset long. His father had died the year before; the insurance money was sufficient to support his mother, and she was taking in sewing, besides; so, after two months, he left for New York and a job. College, he felt, would only be an unnecessary stopover on the road to the success he was certain awaited him.

He tried several jobs in New York, each of which had a promising future. But each also had a present that proved menial and, after a few weeks, unendurable. Then there was a dramatic school, for two ridiculously arduous months. Then there was a widow, fairly attractive and with a good deal of money, for six months.

And then he was back in Menasset, with the labels reluctantly cut from his too-expensive suits. He lounged around the house, silently lamenting the fact that the widow had not been younger, prettier, and of a more steadfast nature.

That was when he decided he would avail himself of the GI Bill and go to college after all. He chose Stoddard University, in Blue River, Iowa, which was supposed to be something of a country club for the children of the Midwestern wealthy. He entered in September of 1948.

In his first year, he met a lovely girl, a senior, the daughter of the vice-president of an internationally organized farm-equipment manufacturer. They took walks together, cut classes together, and slept together. In May, she told him that she was engaged to a boy back home and she hoped he hadn't taken it too seriously.

In his sophomore year, he met Dorothy Kingship.

He got the pills from Hermy Godsen. They cost him five dollars.

At eight o'clock Tuesday evening, he met Dorothy at their regular meeting place, a tree-shrouded bench in the center of the wide stretch of lawn between the Fine Arts and Pharmacy Buildings. She was sitting stiffly, with her fingers locked in her lap, a dark coat cloaking her shoulders against the April coolness. A street lamp off to the side cast leaf shadows on her face and her feathery blonde hair.

He sat down beside her and kissed her cheek. She greeted him softly. He took an envelope from his pocket and put it into her hand. "You're to take both of them together," he said.

After a moment, he looked at her face and saw that the wide brown eyes were staring off at something beyond the Fine Arts Building. He turned and followed her gaze to a winking red light miles away. It marked the local radio station's transmitting tower, which stood atop Blue River's tallest structure, the Municipal Building—where the Marriage License Bureau was. He wondered if she was staring at the light because of that, or only because it was a winking red light in a sky of darkness. He touched her hands and found them cold. "Don't worry, Dorrie. Everything will be all right."

They sat in silence for a few minutes, and then she said, "I'd like to go to a movie tonight."

"I'm sorry," he said, "but I've got a ton of Spanish homework."

"Let's go over to the Student Union. I'll help you with it."

"What are you trying to do, corrupt me?"

He walked her back to the girls' dormitory and then returned to his room. He couldn't do his Spanish. He sat with his elbows planted on the bridge table, his head in his hands, thinking about the pills. He tried not to. He got up and went to the bureau and opened the bottom drawer. From underneath the neatly folded pajamas, he took two pamphlets whose covers gleamed with a copper finish.

On first meeting Dorothy and discovering through one of the student-secretaries in the registrar's office that she was not merely one of the Kingship Copper Kingships but actually a daughter of the corporation's president, he wrote a businesslike letter to the organization's New York office, requesting descriptive brochures. Two weeks later, when he was reading *Rebecca* and pretending to love it because it was Dorothy's favorite book and when she was doggedly knitting him argyle socks because a previous boyfriend had liked them and so the knitting of them had become the badge of her devotion, the pamphlets arrived. They proved wonderful. They were crammed with photographs; mines and furnaces, concentrators and converters, reversing mills and rolling mills. He read them a hundred times and knew every caption by heart. He returned to them at odd moments, like a woman with a love letter.

Tonight they were no good. "Open-cut mine in Landers, Michigan. From this single mine, a yearly output . . ." If the pills didn't work . . . Leave school? Ditch her? It would be futile; she knew his Menasset address. Of course, there would be no legal action (or would there?), but her father could still cause him plenty of trouble. He imagined the wealthy as a closely knit, mutually protective clan, and he could hear Leo Kingship: "Watch out for this young man. I feel it my duty as a parent to warn you. . . ." And what would be left for him then? Some shipping room?

Or if he married her. Then she would have the baby, and they'd never get a cent from Kingship. Again the shipping room, only this time saddled with a wife and child. Oh, Lord!

The pills had to work. That was all there was to it. If they failed, he didn't know what he'd do.

The book of matches was white, with *Dorothy Kingship* stamped in copper leaf. Each Christmas, Kingship Copper gave personalized matches to its executives, customers, and friends. It took her four strokes to light the match, and when she held it to her cigarette, the flame trembled as though in a breeze. She sat back, trying to relax, but she couldn't tear her eyes from the open bathroom door, the white envelope waiting on the edge of the sink, the empty glass. . . .

She closed her eyes. If only she could speak to Ellen about it, talk to her the way they used to talk.

Dorothy had been five and Ellen six when Leo Kingship divorced his wife. A third sister, Marion, had been ten. When the girls lost their mother, first through the divorce and then through her death a year later, Marion felt the loss most deeply of all. As the years passed, she grew apart, solitary and withdrawn. Dorothy and Ellen, however, turned to each other. The two sisters went to the same schools and camps, joined the same clubs, and attended the same dances. But when Ellen entered Caldwell College, in Caldwell, Wisconsin, and Dorothy made plans

Waiting, he damned her for the agony of his suspense.

Then, with the opening of a door, he had his answer

to follow her there the next year, Ellen said no. Dorothy should grow up and become self-reliant. Their father agreed, and Dorothy was sent to Stoddard, slightly more than a hundred miles from Caldwell, with the understanding that the sisters would visit one another on weekends.

A few visits were made. The length of time between them increased progressively, until Dorothy austerely announced that her first year of college had made her completely self-reliant, and the visits stopped altogether. Finally, this past Christmas, there had been an argument. It had started on nothing—"If you wanted to borrow my blouse, you might at least have asked me!"—and had swollen because Dorothy had been in a depressed mood all during her vacation. When the girls returned to school, the letters between them faded to brief, infrequent notes.

There was still the telephone. Dorothy found herself staring at it. But no; why should she be the one to give in first and chance a rebuff? Besides, now that she had calmed down, what was there to hesitate about? She rose and went toward the bathroom.

The thought flashed into her mind, What if I don't take them?

They would be married tomorrow! Instead of waiting until the summer, or more likely until graduation, they'd be married by tomorrow night!

But it wouldn't be fair. She had promised she would try.

She turned on the water.

He sat in the back of the room, in the second seat from the window. The seat on his left, the window seat, the empty seat, was hers. It was the first class of the morning, a Social Science lecture, and their only class together this semester. The speaker's voice droned in the sun-filled air.

Today of all days she could have made an effort to be on time. He shifted in his seat, fingering his key chain nervously. Didn't she know he'd be frozen in an agony of suspense? Heaven or hell? Complete happiness, or the awful mess he didn't even want to think about. He looked at his watch. Damn her.

The door at the side of the room opened quietly. His head jerked around.

She looked awful. Her face was pasty-white, so that the rouge was like paint. There were gray arcs under her eyes. She was looking at him the instant the door opened, and with a barely perceptible motion, she shook her head.

When the bell sounded at nine fifty-five, they left the room with the other students. Outside, they moved from the crowded path and stood in the shadow of the building.

The color was beginning to return to Dorothy's cheeks. "It'll be all right. I know it will. You'll get more money from the Government, won't you? With a wife?"

"A hundred and five a month." He couldn't keep the sourness out of his voice.

"Others get along on it, the ones in the trailer camp. We'll manage."

The important thing was to get time, time to think. He took a deep breath. "Friday afternoon we'll go down to the Municipal—"

"Friday?"

"Baby, it's Wednesday. Two days won't make any difference."

"I thought we'd go today."

"Dorrie, be practical. There are so many things to be taken care of. I think I have to take a blood test first. And then, if we get married Friday, we can have the weekend for a honeymoon. I'm going to get us a reservation at the New Washington House."

She frowned indecisively.

"What difference will two days make?"

"I guess you're right," she sighed.

"That's my baby." He looked at his watch. "You have a ten o'clock, don't you?"

"*Solamente el Español.* I can cut it."

"Don't. We'll have better reasons to cut our morning classes." She squeezed his hand. "I'll see you at eight," he said. "At the bench."

Without forming a conscious decision, he was cutting the rest of the day's classes. He walked all the way through town and down to the river. Leaning on the rail of a black-girdered bridge, he looked into the water and smoked a cigarette.

Here it was. The dilemma had finally caught up with him. Marry her or leave her. A wife and child and no money, or be hounded and blackballed by her father.

If only he could get her to undergo an operation. But no, she was determined to get married, and even if he pleaded and argued and called her baby from now till doomsday, she'd still want to consult Ellen before taking such a drastic measure. And suppose something happened, suppose she died. He would be involved because he would be the one who arranged for the operation. He'd be right where he started, with her father out to get him. Her death wouldn't do him a bit of good.

Not if she died that way.

There was a heart scratched into the black paint of the railing, with initials on either side of the arrow that pierced it. He concentrated on the design, trying to blank his mind of what had finally welled to the surface. The scratches had exposed cross-sections of paint layers; black, orange, black, orange, black, orange. It reminded him of the pictures of rock strata in a geology text. Records of dead ages.

Dead.

After a while, he picked up his books and slowly walked from the bridge. Cars flew toward him and passed with a rushing sound.

The first thing that entered his mind was the Colt .45 he had taken on leaving the Army. But a gun would be no good. It would have to look like an accident, or suicide. The gun would complicate matters too much.

He thought of poison. But where could he get it? Hermy Godsen? No. Maybe the Pharmacy Building. The supply room shouldn't be too hard to get into. He would have to do some research at the library, to see which poison . . .

There were so many details. Today was Wednesday. The marriage could be postponed no later than Friday or she might get worried and call Ellen.

Friday was the deadline.

He returned to the campus and went directly to the library. In the card cata-

logue, he found listed six textbooks likely to contain the information he wanted. Rather than have a librarian get them for him, he registered at the desk and went into the stacks himself.

At the end of an hour, he had compiled a list of five toxic chemicals likely to be found in the pharmacy supply room, any one of which, by virtue of its reaction time and the symptoms it produced prior to death, would be suitable for the plan whose rudimentary outline he had already formulated during the walk from the river.

From the library, he went to the University Bookstore. After consulting the mimeographed book list tacked to the bulletin board, he purchased a packet of small envelopes and a copy of *Pharmaceutical Techniques*, the laboratory manual used by the advanced pharmacy students.

The College of Pharmacy was housed in one of Stoddard's old buildings. It had broad stone steps up to the main entrance. At either side of the building were steps leading down to a corridor that cut straight through the basement, where the supply room was located. There was a Yale lock on the supply-room door. Keys to this lock were in the possession of the entire faculty of the College of Pharmacy and those advanced students who had received permission to work without supervision. This was the regular arrangement followed in all departments of the university that used enough equipment to necessitate the maintenance of a supply room. It was an arrangement familiar to almost everyone on campus.

He stood in the basement corridor looking at the notices on a bulletin board next to the supply-room door. He stood there for two and a quarter hours, the laboratory manual conspicuous under his arm, while people passed back and forth behind him. Some of them unlocked the supply-room door and went in. They would reappear a few minutes later, the door clicking locked after them. But they were always groups of two or more, or solitary individuals who looked suspiciously like instructors.

Finally, after five o'clock, a girl came down the corridor. There was a lab manual in her hand. She was taking a brass key from the pocket of her smock.

He moved to the supply-room door, not looking at the approaching girl. He fumbled with his key chain, as though the keys had caught in the pocket's lining. When he finally brought out the bunch of keys, the girl was already beside him, smiling, her key at the lock. "Oh, thanks," he said, reaching over her to push the door wide as she turned the key. He followed her in.

It was a small room with counters and shelves filled with bottles and boxes and odd-looking apparatus. He went to the side and opened his manual on a counter there. He looked at meaningless pages of diagrams and instructions, listening to the small glass and metal sounds coming from the other side of the room where the girl was.

In five minutes, she left.

He closed the manual and took out his handkerchief, which he wrapped loosely about his right hand. There was no need to consult the list he had made in the library; the names he had written on it shimmered in the air before him, as though printed on a gauze screen. And, as if to make his task easier, the bottles containing poisonous compounds were labeled so in glaring red letters.

When he left the supply room, there were two envelopes in his pockets. One contained six empty gelatin capsules; the other, a generous measure of white arsenic.

He met Dorothy at eight o'clock. They went to a movie and afterward to a small restaurant near the campus, a place that was quiet and not popular with the students.

Seated in one of the blue-painted wall booths, they had cheeseburgers and chocolate malteds, while Dorothy chattered on about a new type of bookcase that opened out into a dining table. He nodded, waiting for a pause in the monologue.

"Oh, by the way," he said, "do you still have that picture I gave you? The one of me?"

"Of course I do."

"Well, let me have it back for a couple of days. I want to have a copy made to send to my mother."

She took a wallet from the pocket of the coat folded on the seat beside her. "Have you told your mother about us?"

"No, I haven't."

"Why not?"

"Well, as long as you can't tell your family until after, I thought I wouldn't tell my mother. Keep it our secret." He smiled. "You haven't told anyone, have you?"

"No," she said. She was holding a few snapshots she had taken from the wallet. He looked at the top one from across the table. Seeing his glance, she passed the picture to him. "The middle one is Ellen, and Marion's on the end."

The three sisters were standing in front of a car. The sun was behind them, their faces shadowed, but he could still discern a resemblance among them. All had the same wide eyes and prominent cheekbones. Ellen's hair seemed to be of a shade midway between Dorothy's light and Marion's dark. "Who's the prettiest?" he asked. "After you, I mean."

"Ellen." Dorothy said. "And before me. Marion could be very pretty, too, only she wears her hair like this." She pulled her hair back severely and frowned. "The intellectual. Remember?"

"Oh. The Proust fiend."

He returned the snapshot, and she passed him his own picture. "My fiancé," she said.

He looked at it speculatively, seeing the symmetry of the clear planes. "I don't know," he drawled, rubbing his chin. "Looks kind of dissolute to me."

"But so handsome," she said. "So very handsome." He smiled and pocketed the picture with a satisfied air. "Don't lose it," she warned seriously.

"I won't."

When he got back to his room, he made up the arsenic capsules. He funneled the flourlike powder from a folded sheet of paper into the tiny gelatin cups and then fitted over them the slightly larger cups that were the other halves of the capsules. The work was delicate; it took him almost an hour to complete two good ones.

Afterward, he cleaned up, disposing of the leftover powder and capsules in the toilet, and then he got out the photograph he had taken from Dorothy, held it over an ashtray, and touched a lighted match to its lowest corner. It was a print of the yearbook photo and a good picture of him; he hated to burn it, but he had written "To Dorrie, with all my love" across the bottom of it.

As usual, she was late for the class. Sitting in the back of the room, he watched the rows of seats fill up with students. It was raining outside, and ribbons of water sluiced down the windows. The seat on his left was still empty when the lecturer mounted the platform and began talking about the city-manager form of government.

He had everything in readiness. His pen was poised over the notebook opened before him, and a Spanish novel, *La Casa de las Flores Negras*, was balanced on his knee.

At ten past nine, Dorothy appeared, out of breath, her books in one arm, her raincoat over the other. Tiptoeing across the room behind him, she draped the raincoat over the back of her chair and sat down. She sorted her books, keeping a notebook and a small assignment pad before her and putting the remaining books in the aisle between their seats.

Then she saw the book that he held open on his knee, and her eyebrows lifted questioningly. He closed the book, keeping his finger between the pages, and tilted it toward her so that she could see the title. He opened it again and with his pen ruefully indicated the two exposed pages and his notebook to show that that was how much translation he had to do. Dorothy shook her head condolingly. He pointed to the lecturer and to her notebook; she should take notes, and he would copy them later. She nodded.

After he had worked for a quarter of an hour, slowly writing in his notebook, he glanced cautiously at Dorothy and saw that she was intent on her own

work. He tore a piece of paper from the corner of one of the notebook's pages. One side of it he covered with doodling; words written and crossed out, spirals and zigzagging lines. He turned that side downward. With a finger stabbing the print of the novel, he began shaking his head and tapping his foot in impatient perplexity.

Dorothy noticed. Inquiringly, she turned to him. He looked at her and expelled a troubled sigh. Then he lifted his finger in a gesture that asked her to wait a moment before returning her attention to the lecturer. He began to write, squeezing words onto the small piece of paper, words that he was apparently copying from the novel. When he was through, he passed the paper to her.

"*Traduccion, por favor,*" he had headed it. Translation, please.

Querido,
Espero que me perdonares por la infelicidad que causaré. No hay ninguna otra cosa puedo hacer.

Dorothy gave him a puzzled glance, because the sentences were quite easy. His face was blank, waiting. She picked up her pen and turned the paper over, but the back of it was covered with doodling. So she tore a page from her assignment pad and wrote on that.

She handed him the translation. He read it and nodded. "*Muchas gracias,*" he whispered. He hunched forward and wrote in his notebook. Dorothy crumpled the paper on which he had written the Spanish and dropped it to the floor. From the corner of his eye, he saw it land. There was another bit of paper near it and some cigarette butts. At the end of the day, they would all be swept together and burned.

He looked at the paper again, at Dorothy's small, slanted handwriting:

Darling,
I hope you will forgive me for the unhappiness that I will cause. There is nothing else that I can do.

They were not to see each other that evening; Dorothy wanted to wash and set her hair. But at eight-thirty, the phone on her desk rang.

"Listen, Dorrie. Something's come up. Something important. I've got to see you right away."

"I can't come out. I just washed my hair."

"Dorrie, this is important. Meet me at the bench in half an hour."

"It's *drizzling* out. Can't you come to the lounge downstairs?"

"No. Listen, you know that place where we had the cheeseburgers last night? Gideon's? Well, meet me there. At nine."

"Is—is it anything to do with tomorrow?"

"I'll explain everything at Gideon's. You just be there at nine."

At ten minutes of nine, he opened the bottom drawer of his bureau and took two envelopes from under the pajamas. One envelope was stamped and sealed, and addressed to Miss Ellen Kingship, North Dormitory, Caldwell College, Caldwell, Wisconsin. He had typed the address that afternoon in the Student Union lounge, on one of the typewriters available for general student use. In the envelope was the note that Dorothy had written that morning. The other envelope contained the two arsenic capsules.

She was waiting for him at Gideon's. He told her that Hermy Godsen had called; there had been a mistake; the pills she had taken Tuesday night were the wrong ones; these—putting the envelope on the table between them—were the right ones. It was a second chance, he said.

She didn't want a second chance. "Since yesterday morning, all I've been thinking about is how wonderful, how happy . . ." She looked as though she were about to cry.

They sat with the swollen, sterile whiteness of the envelope between them, her face sullen, his reproachful.

"If you refuse to take them, Dorothy, you're being stubborn, unrealistic, and unfair. Unfair more to yourself than to me."

Her eyes fell.

"Please, baby."

In the end, she took the envelope. She pushed it into the handbag on the bench beside her and then sat gazing at her hands on the table.

Across the street from the dorm, they kissed. Her lips under his were cool and compressed. He held her for a few minutes, whispering persuasively, and then they exchanged good nights. He watched as she crossed the street and passed into the yellow-lighted hall of the building.

He went to a nearby bar, where he drank two glasses of beer and played the pinball machine. When half an hour had passed, he stepped into the telephone booth.

She answered after two rings. "Hello?"

"Hello. Dorrie?" Silence at her end. "Dorrie, did you take them?"

"Yes."

He drew a deep breath. "Baby," he said. "I didn't want to tell you this before, but they might hurt a little." She said nothing. "Hermy said you'll probably throw up. And you might get a burning sensation in your throat and some pains in your stomach. Whatever happens, don't call anyone. It'll just mean that the pills are working." He paused, waiting for her to say something, but she was silent. "I'm sorry I didn't tell you before, but, well, it won't hurt too much. You're not angry with me, are you, Dorrie?"

"No. I'm sorry I was stubborn."

"That's all right, baby. Don't apologize."

There was silence for a moment, and then she said, "Well, good night."

"Good-by, Dorothy," he said.

Striding into the classroom Friday morning, he felt weightless and tall and wonderful. He took his seat in the back of the room, stretched his legs all the way out and folded his hands across his chest, watching the other students crowd in.

Three girls stood off to one side whispering excitedly. He wondered if they were dorm girls, if they could possibly be talking about Dorothy. She couldn't have been found yet. He was counting on her not being found for several hours. He held his breath until the girls' whispering erupted into laughter.

No, it was unlikely that she would be found before one o'clock or so. Many of the dorm girls slept through breakfast, and some of them ate lunch out occasionally. Dorrie hadn't had any close friends who would miss her right away. No, if his luck held, they might not find her until after Ellen's phone call came.

The night before, after saying good-by to Dorothy on the telephone, he had returned to the dorm. In the mailbox on the corner, he had posted the envelope addressed to Ellen Kingship, the envelope containing Dorothy's suicide note. The first mail collection of the morning was at six; Caldwell was only a hundred miles away, and so the letter would be delivered this afternoon. If Dorothy were found in the morning, Ellen, notified by her father, might leave Caldwell for Blue River before the letter arrived. It was the only risk, but a small one and unavoidable: it had been impossible to plant the note in Dorothy's room and impractical to secrete it in the pocket of her coat or in one of her books prior to giving her the pills, in which case there would have been the far greater risk of Dorothy's finding the note and throwing it away or, still worse, putting two and two together.

He had decided upon noon as the safety mark. If Dorothy were found after twelve, Ellen would have received the

note by the time the school authorities contacted Leo Kingship and Kingship in turn contacted her. If his luck *really* held, Dorothy would not be discovered until late afternoon, a frantic phone call from Ellen leading to the discovery. Then everything would be neat and in its proper order.

There would be an autopsy, of course. Its results and the note would more than satisfy the police. Would they look for the man in the case, the lover? Unlikely. That was hardly their concern. But what about Kingship? Would outraged morality inaugurate a private inquiry?

He would certainly be dragged into that. They had been seen together, though not so frequently as might be expected. In the beginning, when success with Dorothy had been in question, he had not taken her to popular places; there had been that other rich girl last year, and if Dorothy didn't work out as he planned, there would be others in the future; he didn't want the reputation of a moneychaser. Then, when Dorothy did work out, they had gone to movies, to his room, and to quiet places like Gideon's. Meeting at the bench rather than in the dorm lounge had become a custom.

He would be involved in any inquiry, all right, but Dorothy hadn't told anyone they were going steady, so other men would be involved, too. There was the redheaded one she'd been chatting with outside the classroom the day he first noticed the copper-stamped *Kingship* on her matches, and the one she'd started knitting argyle socks for, and every man she'd dated once or twice—they would *all* be brought into it, and then it would be anybody's guess as to—

The door at the side of the room opened. He turned to see who it was. It was Dorothy.

Shock burst over him, hot as a wave of lava. He half rose, blood pushing to his face, his chest a block of ice. Sweat dotted his body and crawled like a million insects. Dorothy. Coming to him, made anxious by his face.

His notebook slapped to the floor. He bent down, seizing the momentary escape. He stayed with his face near the side of the seat, trying to breathe. What had happened? Lord! She hadn't taken the pills! She couldn't have! She had lied! The note on its way to Ellen . . . Oh, Lord!

He heard her sliding into her seat, her frightened whisper—"*What's wrong? What's the matter?*" He picked up the notebook and sat erect, feeling the blood drain from his face. "*What's wrong?*" He looked at her. "*What is it?*" Students were turning to look. Finally, he scraped out, "Nothing. I'm all right. It's this," touching his side where she knew he had the Army scar. "It gives me a twinge once in a while."

"I thought you were having a heart attack or something," she whispered.

"No. I'm all right." What could he do? The bitch! She had planned, too—planned to get married!

He saw the anxiety for him melt from her face, a flushed tension replace it. She ripped a page from her assignment pad, scribbled on it, and passed it to him:

They didn't work.

The liar! He crumpled the paper and squeezed it in his hand. Think! Think! His danger was so enormous he couldn't grasp it all at once. Ellen would receive the note—when? Three o'clock? Four?—And call Dorothy—"What does this mean? Why did you write this?" —"Write what?" —Then Ellen would read the note, and Dorothy would recognize it. . . .

He could feel her looking at him, waiting for some kind of reaction to the words she'd written. He tore paper from his notebook and pulled open his pen. Make it sound natural!

Okay. We tried, that's all. Now we get married as per schedule.

He handed it to her.

It still wasn't too late. People wrote suicide notes and then stalled around before actually doing it. He looked at his watch: nine-twenty. The earliest Ellen could get the note would be three o'clock. Five hours and forty minutes. No step-by-step planning now. It would have to be quick, positive. No poison. How else do people kill themselves? In five hours and forty minutes, she must be dead.

At ten o'clock, they left the building, arm in arm, going out into the crystalline air that rang with the shouts of between-class students. "Does your side still hurt you?" Dorothy asked, concerned about his grim expression.

"A little," he said.

They stepped off the path onto the lawn. "When will we go?" She pressed his hand.

"This afternoon. Around four."

"Shouldn't we go earlier? They probably close around five."

"It won't take long."

She was suddenly serious, remorse flushing her cheeks. "Are you terribly sorry the pills didn't work?" she asked anxiously.

"No, not terribly. We'll make out okay. I just wanted you to try them for your own sake."

She flushed more deeply. He turned away, embarrassed by her transparency. When he looked at her again, the joy of the moment had crowded out her compunctions, and she was hugging her arms and smiling. "I *can't* go to my classes! I'm cutting."

"Good. I am, too. We'll spend the day together."

"Not the whole day, darling. I have to get back to the dorm, pack, dress. Don't you have to pack?"

"I left a suitcase down at the hotel when I made the reservation," he said. "You can give me *some* of your time, anyway. Until lunch."

"What'll we do?" They sauntered across the lawn.

"I don't know," he said. "Maybe go for a walk. Down to the river."

"In these shoes?" She lifted a foot, displaying a soft leather loafer. "I'd get fallen arches. There's no support in these things."

"Okay," he said. "No river."

"I've got an idea." She pointed to the Fine Arts Building ahead of them. "Let's go to the record room and listen to some records."

"I don't know. It's such a beautiful day I'd like to stay . . ." He paused, looking beyond the Fine Arts Building to where the needle of station KBRI's transmission tower speared the sky. "Dorrie, you're right. Why should we wait until four o'clock? Let's go down there now!"

"Get married *now*?"

"Well, after you dress and everything. Look, you go back to the dorm now and get ready. What do you say?"

"Oh, yes! Yes! Oh, I wanted to go now!"

"I'll call you up in a little while and tell you when I'll pick you up."

"Yes. Yes." She stretched up and kissed his cheek excitedly. "I love you so much," she whispered.

He grinned at her.

She hurried away, flashing a smile back over her shoulder. He watched her go.

Then he turned and looked again at the KBRI tower, which marked the Blue River Municipal Building, the tallest building in the city, fourteen stories above the hard slabs of the sidewalk.

He went into the Fine Arts Building, where a phone booth was jammed under the main stairway. He called the Marriage License Bureau and was informed that it was closed between twelve and one o'clock. He hung up, dropped another coin into the phone, and dialed the dorm. When they rang Dorothy's room, there was no answer. He

His danger was so enormous he could hardly grasp it.

Cold sweat crawled over him like a million insects

waited a few minutes and called again.

"Hello?"

"Hi. What took you so long?"

"Had to buy a pair of gloves." She sounded breathless and happy.

"Listen, it's twenty-five after ten now. Can you be ready at twelve-fifteen?"

"I don't know. I have to shower, pack—"

"You can pack later."

"Later?"

"We have to come back here this afternoon. About the trailer. We have to come back about that. I was down at the camp yesterday, and they said I couldn't make the formal application until we were actually married. So you can pack and sign out for the weekend later on."

"All right. Twelve-fifteen, then."

"I'll be waiting on University."

There was the sound of a kiss. "Goodby, groom."

"So long, bride."

They met at twelve-fifteen. She was wearing a green suit with a cluster of white silk sparkling at her throat. Her shoes and the purse in her white-gloved hand were brown alligator, and there was a froth of green veil floating in her soft golden hair. "All brides are beautiful," he said, "but you especially."

A streetcar clattered up and groaned to a halt. They got on.

It was twelve-thirty when they pushed through the central revolving door of the Municipal Building. The lobby was filled with people going to and from lunch, people hurrying to appointments, people standing and waiting.

He dropped a pace behind Dorothy, letting her lead the way to the directory board at the side of the lobby. "Would it be under R for Rockwell County or M for Marriage?" she asked. He looked at the board as though oblivious of her presence. "There it is," she said triumphantly. "Marriage License Bureau, six-oh-four." He turned toward the elevators. Dorothy hurried along beside him. She reached for his hand, but it was busy with the knot of his tie.

The Marriage License Bureau was closed. "Damn," he said. "I should have called to make sure." He looked at his watch. "Twenty-five to one."

"Twenty-five minutes," Dorothy said, reading the hours listed on the frosted-glass panel. "I guess we might as well go downstairs."

"Those crowds." he muttered, then paused. "Hey, I've got an idea."

"What?"

"The roof. It's such a beautiful day, I bet we'll be able to see for miles!"

"Are we allowed?"

"If nobody stops us, we're allowed." He started in the direction of the elevators. "Come on." He smiled. "Get your last look at the world as an unmarried woman."

They rode a crowded car to the fourteenth floor and there made a half circuit of the square formed by the corridors until, next to room 1402, they found a door marked *Stairway*. He pushed it open, and they entered. The door sighed closed behind them. They were on a landing, with black metal stairs leading up and down. They walked upward; eight steps, a turn, and eight more steps. A door confronted them, heavy reddish-brown metal. He tried the knob.

"Is it locked?"

"I don't think so."

He put his shoulder to the door and pushed.

"You're going to get your suit filthy."

The door rested on a ledge, a sort of giant threshold that raised its bottom a foot above the floor. The ledge jutted out, making it difficult for him to apply his weight squarely. He braced his shoulder against the door and tried again.

"We can go downstairs and wait," Dorothy said. "That door probably hasn't been opened in—"

He clenched his teeth. With the side of his foot jammed against the base of the ledge, he swung back and then smashed his shoulder against the door with all his strength. It gave, groaning open. The chain of a counterweight clattered. A slice of electric-blue sky hit their eyes, blinding after the obscurity of the stairway.

He stepped over the ledge. Pushing the door farther open, he stood with his back to it. He extended one hand to Dorothy. He gave her a mock bow and his best smile. "Enter, mam'selle," he said.

Taking his hand, she stepped gracefully over the ledge and onto the black tar of the roof.

He wasn't nervous. There had been a moment of panic when he couldn't get the door open, but it had dissolved the instant the door yielded to the force of his shoulder, and now he was calm and secure. Everything was going to be perfect. No mistakes, no intruders. He just *knew* it. He hadn't felt so good since—geeze, since high school!

"Come look at this."

He turned. Dorothy was standing a few feet away, her back toward him, the alligator purse tucked under one arm. Her hands rested on the waist-high parapet that edged the roof. He came up behind her. "Isn't it something?" she said. They were at the back of the building, facing south. The city sprawled before them, clear and sharp in the brilliant sunlight. He moved to her side, dropping one arm about her shoulders. He leaned over the parapet. Two stories below, the red tiled floor of a wide balcony extended like a shelf across the width of the building; the top of a setback at the twelfth story. That was bad; a two-floor drop wasn't what he wanted. He turned and surveyed the roof.

It was perhaps a hundred and fifty feet square, edged by the brick parapet, whose coping was flat white stone, a foot wide. An identical wall rimmed the air shaft, a square hole some thirty feet across, in the center of the roof. On the left side of the roof was a water-storage tank; on the right, the KBRI tower, its girdered pattern black against the sky. The slant-roofed staircase shed was in front of him and a bit to his left. Beyond the air shaft, at the north side of the building, was a large rectangular structure, the housing of the elevator machinery. The entire roof was dotted with chimneys and ventilator pipes that stuck up like piers from a tarry sea.

Leaving Dorothy, he walked across to the parapet of the air shaft. He leaned over. The four walls funneled down to a tiny areaway fourteen stories below, its corners banked with trash cans and

wooden crates. Three of the shaft's walls were striped with windows. The fourth, which faced him and evidently backed on the elevator shafts, was blank, windowless. This was the spot. The south side of the airshaft. Right near the stairway, too. He slapped the top of the parapet, his lips pursed thoughtfully.

Dorothy came up behind him and took his arm. They began walking. He led her past the air shaft and the elevator housing. As they strolled, she brushed his shoulder clean of the dust from the door. When they reached the northern rim of the roof, they were able to see the river, blue as the rivers painted on maps.

"Dorrie, there's something I want to tell you," he said. "About the pills."

Her face jerked around, going white. She swallowed. "What?"

"I'm glad they didn't work," he said, smiling.

She looked at him uncomprehendingly. "You're glad?"

"When I called you last night, I was going to tell you not to take them, but you already had." Come on, he thought, confess. It must be killing you.

Her voice was shaky. "Why? You were so— What made you change your mind?"

"I don't know. I thought it over. I suppose I'm as anxious to get married as you are. Besides, I guess it really is a sin to do something like that."

"Do you mean that?" she asked breathlessly. "Are you really glad?"

"I wouldn't say it if I weren't."

"Oh, thank heaven!"

"What's the matter, Dorrie?"

"Please don't be angry. I—I didn't take them." He tried to look surprised. The words poured from her lips: "I knew we could manage. I knew everything would work out, and I was counting on it *so* much. I knew I was right." She paused. "You aren't angry, are you?" she beseeched.

"Of course not. I told you I was glad they didn't work."

Her lips made a quivering smile of relief. "I felt like a criminal, lying to you. I thought I would never be able to tell you." She opened her purse, plucked out a turquoise handkerchief, and dabbed at her eyes.

"Dorrie, what did you do with the pills?"

"Threw them away." She smiled shamefacedly.

"Where?"

She closed the purse. "The john."

That was what he wanted to hear. There would be no questions about why she had taken such a messy way out when she had already gone to the trouble of obtaining poison.

"Oh, gee," Dorothy marveled, "everything's perfect now!"

He put his hands on her shoulders and kissed her gently on the lips. "Perfect," he said.

She consulted her watch. "It's ten to one."

"You're fast," he said, glancing at his. "We've got fifteen minutes yet." He took her arm. They turned and walked leisurely away from the edge of the roof.

"Did you speak to your landlady?" she asked.

"What—? Oh, yes. It's all set." They passed the elevator housing. "Monday we'll move your stuff from the dorm."

They strolled around the parapet of the air shaft. "Do you think she'll be able to give us some more closet space?"

"I think so."

"I can leave my winter things in the dorm attic."

They reached the south side of the air shaft. He stood with his back against the parapet, braced his hands on the top of it, and hitched himself up.

"Don't sit there," Dorothy said apprehensively.

"Why not?" he asked, glancing at the white stone coping. "It's a foot wide. You sit on a bench a foot wide and you don't fall off." He patted the stone on his left. "Come on."

"No," she said.

"Chicken."

She touched her rear. "My suit . . ."

He took out his handkerchief, whipped it open, and spread it on the stone beside him. "Sir Walter Raleigh," he said.

She hesitated a moment, then gave him her purse. Turning her back to the parapet, she gripped the top on either side of the handkerchief and lifted herself up. He helped her. "There," he said, putting his arm around her waist.

He set the purse on the stone to his right and they sat in silence for a moment, her hands still fastened upon the front of the coping.

"Are you going to call or write when you tell your mother?" Dorothy asked.

"I don't know."

"I think I'll write Ellen and Father. It's an awfully hard thing to just say over the phone."

A ventilator cap creaked. After a minute, he took his arm from her waist and put his hand over hers, which gripped the stone between them. He braced his other hand on the coping and eased himself down from the parapet. Before she could do likewise he swung around and was facing her, his waist against her knees, his hands covering both of hers. He smiled at her, and she smiled back.

His hands moved to her knees, cupped them, his fingertips caressing under the hem of her skirt.

"We'd better be going, hadn't we?" she said.

"In a minute, baby. We still have time."

His eyes caught hers, held them, as his hands descended and moved behind to rest, curving, on the slope of her calves. At the periphery of his field of vision he could make out her white-gloved hands; they still clasped the front of the coping firmly.

"That's a beautiful blouse," he said, looking at the fluffy silk bow at her throat. "Is it new?"

"Old as the hills."

His gaze became critical. "The bow is a little off center."

One hand left the stone and rose to finger the bow. "No," he said, "now you've got it worse." Her other hand detached itself from the top of the parapet.

His hands moved down over the silken swell of her calves, as low as he could reach without bending. His right foot dropped back, poised on the toe in readiness. He held his breath.

She adjusted the bow with both hands. "Is that any bett—"

With cobra speed he ducked, hands streaking down to catch her heels, stepped back, and straightened, lifting her legs high. For one frozen instant, as his hands shifted from cupping her heels to a flat grip against the soles of her shoes, their eyes met, stupefied terror bursting in hers, a cry rising in her throat. Then, with all his strength, he pushed against her fear-rigid legs.

Her shriek of petrified anguish trailed down into the shaft like a burning wire. He snatched his handkerchief from the rough stone and backed away. The scream died. Silence, then a terrible, deafening crash. Wincing, he remembered the cans and crates piled far below. He ran for the stairs.

From the Blue River Clarion-Ledger; *Saturday, April 29, 1950:*

COED'S DEATH WAS SUICIDE

The death of Dorothy Kingship, Stoddard coed who plunged from the roof of the Municipal Building yesterday afternoon, was a suicide, Chief of Police Eldon Chesser disclosed last night. An unsigned note described as "a clear expression of suicidal intent" and in a handwriting definitely established to be that of the dead girl was received through the mail late yesterday afternoon by her sister, Ellen Kingship, a student in Caldwell, Wisconsin. . . .

LAST PERSON TO SPEAK TO SUICIDE DESCRIBES HER AS TENSE, NERVOUS

"She laughed a lot and was smiling the whole time she was in my room. I thought at the time that she was very happy about something, but now I realize that those were symptoms of the nervous strain she was under. I should have recognized that right away, being a psychology major."

Thus Annabelle Koch, Stoddard sophomore, described the behavior of Dorothy Kingship two hours before her suicide.

Miss Koch, a native of Boston, a

petite eighteen-year-old coed, was confined to her dormitory room yesterday because of a severe head cold.

"Dorothy came into my room around a quarter past eleven," says Miss Koch. "I was a little surprised because we hardly knew each other. She asked if I would lend her the belt to my green suit. I should mention that we both have the exact same green suit. I hesitated at first, because it's my new spring suit, but she seemed to need the belt so badly that I finally gave it to her."

Miss Koch paused and removed her glasses. "Now, here's the strange part. Later, when the police came and searched her room for a note, *they found my belt on her desk!* I recognized it by the way the gold finish was rubbed off the tooth of the buckle.

"I was very puzzled by Dorothy's actions. She had pretended to want my belt, but she hadn't used it at all. She was wearing her green suit when it happened. The police checked, and her belt buckle wasn't the least bit broken, although that was why Dorothy had said she needed my belt.

"Then I realized that the belt must have been just a pretext to talk to me. She must have been desperate for someone to talk with. If only I'd recognized the signs at the time. I can't help feeling that if I had gotten her to talk out her troubles, whatever they might have been, maybe all this wouldn't have happened."

He found the last six weeks of the school year disappointingly flat. He had expected the excitement created by Dorothy's death to linger in the air like the glow of a rocket; instead, it had faded away almost immediately.

A paragraph announcing Leo Kingship's arrival in Blue River marked the last time the Kingship name appeared in the *Clarion-Ledger*. No word of an autopsy nor of her pregnancy, although surely when an unmarried girl committed suicide that must be the first thing they looked for. Keeping that fact out of the newspapers must have cost Kingship plenty.

He told himself he should be rejoicing. If there had been any kind of inquiry, he certainly would have been sought for questioning. But there had been no questions, no suspicion, hence no investigation. He should have been walking on air. Instead, there was this dull, leaden, let-down feeling.

His depression became worse when he returned to Menasset early in June. Here he was, right where he'd been last summer. Dorothy's death had been a defensive measure; all his planning hadn't advanced him in the slightest.

Toward the middle of July, however, he began to slough off his dejection. He still had the newspaper clippings about Dorothy's death, in a flat cardboard box he kept in his closet. He began taking them out once in a while, smiling at the officious certainty of Chief of Police Eldon Chesser and the half-baked theorizing of Annabelle Koch. (Although, why *had* Dorrie pretended to want the girl's belt?)

Until now he had always thought of what happened at the Municipal Building as Dorrie's death. Now he began to think of it as Dorrie's murder.

Sometimes the enormous daring of what he had done would overwhelm him. He would look at himself in the mirror and think: I got away with murder.

So what if he wasn't rich yet! He was only twenty-four.

Part Two: Ellen

Letter from Annabelle Koch to Leo Kingship:

March 5, 1951

Dear Mr. Kingship,

As you may recall, I am the young woman who lent a belt to your daughter Dorothy last April. Later the police found it (or what I thought was it) in her room. They kept it for a long time, and it was quite late in the season when they finally returned it, so I did not have an opportunity to wear my green suit again last year.

Now spring is approaching again, and last night when I tried on my spring clothes, I found to my surprise that it was Dorothy's belt all along. You see, the notch that is marked from the buckle is two notches too big for my waist. Dorothy was quite slender, but I am even more so. Originally, I identified the belt as mine because the gold finish on the tooth of the buckle was rubbed off. I should have realized that since both suits were made by the same manufacturer, the finish would have come off of *both* buckles.

So now it seems that Dorothy could not wear her own belt for some reason, even though it was not broken at all, and took mine instead. Now that I know this belt is Dorothy's I would feel funny wearing it, so I am sending it to you in a separate package. I can still wear the suit because all the girls here are wearing leather belts this year, anyway.

Yours truly,
Annabelle Koch

Letter from Leo Kingship to Ellen Kingship:

March 8, 1951

My dear Ellen,

I received the enclosed letter yesterday. Marion, who was here for dinner, suggested that I forward it to you. Read it now, and then continue with my letter.

I understand that ever since Dorothy's death you have been rebuking yourself for your imagined callousness to her. Miss Koch's unfortunate story of Dorothy's "desperate need of someone to talk with" made you feel, according to Marion, that that someone should have been you and would have been you, had you not pushed Dorothy out on her own too soon.

I suppose this explains why it took you so long to accept Dorothy's death as a suicide; you felt that if Dorothy had committed suicide, you were indirectly responsible.

This letter from Miss Koch makes it clear that, for some peculiar reason of her own, Dorothy did want the girl's belt. She was *not* in desperate need of someone to whom she could talk. I hope this knowledge will rid you of any feelings of self-recrimination that may remain.

Your loving
Father

Letter from Ellen Kingship to Bud Corliss:

March 12, 1951
8:35 A.M.

Dear Bud,

Here I sit in the club car with a Coke (at this hour, ugh!), trying to give a "lucid if not brilliant" explanation, as Professor Mulholland would say, of why I am making this trip to Blue River.

I'm sorry about tonight's basketball game, but I'm sure Connie or Jane will be glad to go in my place, and you can think of me between the halves.

First of all, this trip is *not* impulsive! It may be kind of sudden, but I've considered it very carefully. I won't be missing much work, because *you* are going to take complete notes in each class. Anyway, I doubt if I'll be gone more than a week.

Now that the objections are out of the way, let me explain why I am going:

From my father's letter, I suppose you gathered that Dorothy originally wanted to come to Caldwell and I opposed her "for her own good." Since her death, I've wondered whether it wasn't pure selfishness on my part. My life at home had been restrained both by Father's strictness and Dorothy's

great dependence on me, so when I got to Caldwell I really let go. During my first three years, I was the rah-rah girl—beer parties, hanging around with the big wheels, etc. You wouldn't recognize me. So as I say, I'm not sure whether I prevented Dorothy from coming in order to encourage her independence or to avoid losing mine, Caldwell being the every-body-knows-what-everybody-else-is-doing type of place that it is.

My father is right. I didn't want to admit Dorothy's death was suicide because that meant that I was partly responsible. I thought I had other reasons for doubt besides emotional ones, however. The note she sent me, for instance. It was her handwriting, but it didn't sound like her. I mentioned it to the Blue River police, but they said that naturally she was under a strain when she wrote it. And when I argued that she just wasn't the suicidal type, they didn't even bother to answer me.

Of course, I finally had to accept the facts—and the blame. But Dorothy's pregnancy meant that someone else shared the blame, the man. Early in the December before her death, Dorothy had written me about a man she had met in her English class. She had been going out with him for quite some time, and this was the Real Thing. She said she would give me all the details over Christmas vacation. But we had an argument during Christmas, and after that she wouldn't even give me the right time. And when we returned to school, our letters were almost like business letters. So I never even learned his name. All I knew about him was what she had mentioned in that letter; that he had been in her English class in the fall, and that he was handsome and somewhat like Len Vernon—he is the husband of a cousin of ours—which meant that Dorothy's man was tall and blond.

I told my father about him. I urged him to find out who he was and to punish him somehow. He refused, saying that it would be impossible to prove he was the one who had gotten Dorothy into trouble, and futile even if we could prove it.

That's how things stood until Saturday, when I received my father's letter with the one from Annabelle Koch enclosed. Which posed the question: Why couldn't Dorothy wear her own belt? I couldn't answer it, and it reminded me of three other puzzling things about the clothes Dorothy wore on the day of her death, three things that I had noticed last year and that I also couldn't explain.

Dorothy was wearing a pair of white gloves she had bought earlier that morning. The storekeeper saw her picture in the papers and told the police. Yet in her room she had a much better pair of handmade white gloves, perfectly spotless. Why hadn't she worn those? Also, she wore a blouse with a floppy, out-of-style bow that was all wrong for the lines of her green suit, while in her closet was a blouse, also perfectly spotless, which had been *specially made* to go with the suit. Why didn't she wear that blouse? And thirdly, when she was wearing a green suit with brown and white accessories, why on earth did she have a bright turquoise handkerchief in her purse? Almost any handkerchief she owned would have matched her clothes better.

I mentioned these points to the police last year. They said she was distracted; it was ridiculous to expect her to dress with her ordinary care. But I felt that since there was conscious preparation in the buying of the gloves, maybe there was conscious preparation behind each incident, and some meaning to them all.

Annabelle Koch's letter added a fourth incident, another case in which Dorothy rejected an appropriate item for one that was less appropriate. I racked my brains trying to find some kind of an explanation, because I wanted to know as much as I could about Dorothy's state of mind at the time.

I finally found the answer last night. Simple, obvious—terrifying in what it implies. The out-of-style blouse, the gloves she'd bought that morning, Annabelle Koch's belt, the turquoise handkerchief—*something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue.*

Dorothy went to the Municipal Building not because it is the tallest building in Blue River but because a municipal building is where you go to get married. And she can only have gone with one person, the man she'd been going with for a long time, the man she loved, the handsome blond of her fall English class. He got her up to the roof somehow.

The note? All it said was "I hope you will forgive me for the unhappiness that I will cause. There is nothing else that I can do." She was referring to the marriage! She knew Father would disapprove of such a hasty step, but there was nothing else she could do because she was pregnant.

"Something old, something new" would never be enough to make the police reclassify a suicide complete with note as an unsolved murder, especially when they would be prejudiced against me, the crank who pestered them last year. So I'm going to find this man and do some *very cautious* Sherlocking. As soon as I turn up anything that supports my suspicions, anything strong enough to interest the police, I promise to go straight to them. So don't worry about me, and don't get impatient.

We're entering Blue River now. I'll wind up this letter later in the day, when I'll be able to tell you where I'm staying and what progress, if any, I've made. Even

In Ellen's mental picture of the nameless man was one important omission: the fact that he was dangerous

though Stoddard is ten times as big as Caldwell, I have a pretty good idea of how to begin. Wish me luck.

She checked in at the New Washington House at eleven o'clock, and by noon was in the office of the dean of students of Stoddard University. The sun shone on her red-brown hair, and her eyes on the dean's were brown and level and honest.

"My father and I are trying to locate a certain man, a student here. He lent my sister a fairly large sum of money a few weeks before her death. She wrote me about it. I came across her checkbook last week, and it reminded me of the incident. There's nothing to indicate that she ever repaid the debt, and we thought he might have felt awkward about claiming it. The only trouble is that I don't recall his name. But I do remember Dorothy mentioning that he was in her English class during the fall semester, and that he was blond. Since I'm in Blue River, I thought perhaps you could help us locate him."

The dean called his secretary.

"Get the program card of Kingship, Dorothy, fall semester, nineteen forty-nine. See which English section she was in, and get the enrollment list for it. Bring me the folders of all the male students whose names appear on the list."

The dean smiled complacently at his visitor.

She smiled back and asked if she might smoke. The matchbook she used was white, with *Ellen Kingship* printed on it in copper leaf.

The secretary brought in seventeen folders, but the application photographs in twelve of them showed men with dark hair.

"Five with light," the dean said.

Ellen leaned forward. "Dorothy said he was handsome."

The dean reopened the first of the five folders. "Hardly," he murmured, lifting out the application form and turning it toward Ellen. The face in the photograph was a chinless, gimlet-eyed teen-ager. She shook her head.

The second was an emaciated young man with thick glasses, and the third was in his fifties, with hair that was white, not blond.

The dean opened the fourth folder. "Gordon Gant," he said. He turned the application form toward her.

He was blond and handsome; light eyes under full brows, a long firm jaw and a cavalier grin. "I think so," she said. "Yes, I think he . . ."

"Or could it be Dwight Powell?" the dean asked, displaying the fifth application form in his other hand.

The fifth photograph showed a square-jawed, serious-looking young man, with a cleft chin and pale-toned eyes.

Ellen looked impotently from one picture to the other.

They were both blond. They were both handsome.

In the end, the dean wrote both their addresses on a slip of paper:

Gordon C. Gant
1312 West 26th Street

Dwight Powell
1520 West 35th Street

Her lunch, eaten in a small restaurant near the campus, was a hasty mechanical affair, her mind racing with swift thoughts.

Two men. It would slow her up a little, that's all. It should be simple to find out which was the one. Ask a few discreet questions of their friends. But where do you start? Follow each man, learn the identity of his friends, meet them?

Time, time, time. Who would be *sure* to know about Gordon Gant and Dwight Powell?

She left her table and threaded her way to the phone booth. Hesitantly she ruffled the pages of the thin Blue River book. There was no Gant at all, no Powell on Thirty-fifth Street. That meant they either had no phone, which seemed unlikely, or they were living with families other than their own.

She called Information and obtained the number of the telephone at 1312 West Twenty-sixth Street: 2-2014.

"Hello?" The voice was a woman's, dry, middle-aged.

"Hello." Ellen swallowed. "Is Gordon Gant there?"

A pause. "Who's calling?"

"A friend of his. Is he there?"

"No." Snapped out sharply.

"Who is this?"

"His landlady."

"When do you expect him back?"

"Won't be back till late tonight." The woman's voice was quick with annoyance. There was a click as she hung up.

He would be gone all day. Go there? A single conversation with the landlady might establish whether Gant was the one who had gone with Dorothy. Speak to the landlady, but under what pretext?

Why, any pretext! Provided the woman believed it, what harm could the wildest story do? Either Gant wasn't the man, in which case let him puzzle over a mysterious questioner pretending to be a friend or a relative, or he *was* the man, in which case—if he had killed Dorothy—the story of a girl seeking information about him would make him uneasy. Uneasiness on his part might be a help to her, making him tense, more likely to betray himself. Why, he might even decide to take no chances and leave town, and that would be all she'd need to convince the police that there was a sound basis for her suspicions.

The woman who opened the door was tall and lank, with frizzy gray hair clustered above a long, equine face. She looked Ellen up and down. "Yes?"

"You must be Gordon's landlady!"

"That's right."

Ellen smiled. "I'm his cousin."

The woman arched thin eyebrows.

"Didn't he tell you I'd be here today?"

"Why, no. He didn't say anything about a cousin. Not a word."

"That's funny. I wrote him I'd be passing through. I'm on my way to Chicago, and I purposely came this way so I could stop off and see him. He must have forgotten to tell you."

The landlady frowned. "Well, Gordon isn't here right—"

"Couldn't I come in for a few minutes?" Ellen cut in quickly. "I took the wrong streetcar from the station, and I had to walk about ten blocks."

The woman scrutinized Ellen, and then

twitched a sudden smile. "Of course. Come on in."

Her name was Mrs. Arquette. She led Ellen back to a kitchen where a half-painted chair stood on spread-out newspapers. Ellen sat at the table and folded her coat in her lap. "How is Gordon these days?" she asked.

"Oh, fine," Mrs. Arquette said, kneeling on a sponge-rubber pad and dipping a brush into blue paint. "Busy as a bee, what with school and the program."

"The program?"

"You mean you don't know about Gordon's program?"

"Well, I haven't heard from him in quite a while. . . ."

"Why, he's had it for almost three months now. He plays records and talks. A disc jockey. Every night except Sunday, from eight to ten over KBRI."

"That's wonderful!"

"Why, he's a real celebrity," Mrs. Arquette continued, doing the seat of the chair with broad strokes. "Pictures in the paper, girls he don't even know calling him up at all hours just to hear his voice over the telephone. It's enough to drive a person crazy. He don't want anything to do with them, so I'm the one's got to answer."

Ellen fingered the edge of the table. "Is he still going out with that girl he wrote me about last year?"

"Which one's that?"

"A blonde girl. Short, pretty . . ."

"Well, I'll tell you," Mrs. Arquette said, "Gordon never talks much about the girls he goes out with. Other boys I had here before him used to, but they were younger. No veterans in those days." She dipped her brush thoughtfully. "What was that girl's name? You tell me her name, I can probably tell you if he's still going out with her, because sometimes when he's using the phone over by the stairs there, I'm in the parlor and can't help hearing part of the conversation."

"I don't remember her name," Ellen said, "but he was going with her last year, so maybe if *you* remember the names of some of the girls he spoke to then, I'll be able to recognize it."

"Let's see." Mrs. Arquette leaned back on her heels. "There was a Louella once. I remember that one because I had a sister-in-law by that name. And then there was a . . ." She shook her head. "There was others, but I'm hanged if I can remember them." She resumed her painting.

Finally, Ellen said, "I think this girl's name was Dorothy."

"Dorothy." Her eyes narrowed. "No. If the name's Dorothy, I don't think he's still going out with her, I haven't heard him talking to any Dorothy lately, I'm sure of that."

"But he *was* going out with a Dorothy last year?"

"Dorothy . . ."

"Or Dottie?"

Mrs. Arquette considered for a moment and then gave a noncommittal shrug. "Honestly, I couldn't say for sure." She smiled. "You'll just have to quiz Gordon."

"It looks that way," Ellen said. She stood up. "Well, I'll be leaving now. Thanks for—"

"Leaving?" Mrs. Arquette looked up. "Well, for goodness' sake, aren't you going to wait for Gordon?" She looked at a clock on the refrigerator. "It's ten after two," she sighed. "His last class ended at two. He should be here any minute."

"You . . . you told me he would be gone all day."

Mrs. Arquette looked injured. "Why, I never told you no such thing! Why you been sitting here, if not waiting for him?"

"The telephone . . ."

The landlady's jaw dropped. "Was that you?"

Ellen nodded helplessly.

"Well, why didn't you tell me it was you? I thought it was one of those fool girls. Whenever someone calls and won't give a name, I tell them he's gone for the day. Even if he's here. He told me to. He . . ." The expression of earnestness faded from Mrs. Arquette's face. The dull eyes, the thin-lipped mouth, became grim, suspicious. "If you thought he was out for the day," she demanded slowly, "then why did you come here at all?" She put down the brush and stood up. "Why were you asking all those questions?"

"I . . . I wanted to meet you. Gordon wrote so much—"

"You're not his cousin," Mrs. Arquette said. "You're one of those girls!"

The front door slammed.

"Gordon!" Mrs. Arquette shouted. "Gordon, come in here!" She moved quickly to the back door, blocking it. "There's a girl here says she's your cousin!" Footsteps approached from the front of the house. Ellen stood frozen in the middle of the kitchen, her eyes wide on Mrs. Arquette's rabid face. "She quizzed me about the"—the woman's voice dropped to an across-the-room volume—"She quizzed me about the girls you were going with last year. She says she's your cousin."

Ellen turned.

Gordon Gant stood in the doorway, tall and spare in a pale-blue topcoat. He looked at her for a moment. His lips curved a smile over his long jaw, and one eyebrow lifted slightly. "Why, Cousin Hester," he marveled softly, "you've passed through adolescence magnificently." He came forward, put his hands on Ellen's shoulders, and kissed her fondly on the cheek.

"You . . . you mean she really is your cousin?" Mrs. Arquette gasped.

Ellen eyed him crazily, her face flushed, her mouth slack. Then she pushed him aside with all her strength and ran blindly from the room.

Gant caught up with her outside, matching her angry strides with long, easy legs as she wrestled into her coat. "Isn't there a secret word?" he asked. "Aren't you supposed to press a message into my hand and whisper 'Southern Comfort' or something?"

She strode along in acid silence. He caught her arm. "Cousin Hester, I have the most *insatiable* curiosity."

She pulled her arm free. They had reached an intersecting avenue, along the other side of which a taxi cruised. She waved, and the cab began a U-turn. "It was a joke," she said tightly. "I'm sorry. I did it on a bet."

He wasn't smiling anymore. "Fun is fun, but why all the questions about my

sordid past?" The cab pulled up. She tried to open the door, but he braced his hand against it. "Look here, cousin, I'm not kidding."

The cabbie appeared at the front window, looking up at them and appraising the situation. "Hey, mister," he said.

With a sigh, Gant released the door. Ellen opened it, ducked in, and pulled it closed.

Gant stared at her from outside the cab.

She closed her eyes until the motor roared.

She had been in the hotel room three minutes. She had seated herself at the table by the window, had taken her pen and the letter to Bud from her purse, and was staring at the addressed but still unsealed envelope, debating whether or not to describe the magnificent mess she had made of everything, when there was a knock at the door. "Towels," a chambermaid's voice called. Ellen rose and crossed the room. She opened the door.

Gant lounged with one elbow against the jamb, the hand propping up his blond head. "Hi, Hester," he said. She tried to close the door, but his foot was in the way, immovable. He smiled. "Much fun. Follow that cab!" His right hand described a zigzag course. "The driver got such a kick out of it he almost refused the tip."

"Get away!" she whispered fiercely. "I'll call the manager!"

"Look, Hester"—the smile dropped—"I think I could have you arrested, so why don't you invite me in for a small confab?" He pushed gently on the door, forcing Ellen to retreat a step. "That's a good girl," he said, as he eased through the opening.

He strolled to the center of the room. "Well, for pity's sake, cuz, stop shaking! I'm not going to eat you!"

"What—what do you want?"

"An explanation."

She swung the door all the way open and remained standing in the doorway. "It's very simple," she said. "I listen to you all the time. To your program. I like it very much. I'm in Blue River, so I thought I'd try to meet you."

"And when you meet me, you run away."

"Well, what would you have done? I didn't plan it *that* way. I pretended to be your cousin because I—I wanted to get information about you, what kind of girls you like."

He rubbed his jaw doubtfully.

"Honestly." She looked down at her hands. "I know it was a crazy thing to do, but I like your program so much." When she looked up again, he was by the window.

He said, "Of all the stupid idiotic—" and suddenly he was staring at the hallway beyond her, his eyes baffled. She turned. There was nothing out of the ordinary to be seen. She looked back at Gant, and he was facing the window, his back to her. "Well, Hester," he said, "that was a flattering explanation." He turned, taking his hand from inside his jacket. He glanced at the partially open bathroom door. "Do you mind if I utilize your facilities?" Before she could say anything, he ducked into the bathroom and closed the door. The lock clicked.

Ellen gazed blankly at the door, wondering whether or not Gant had believed her. Her knees quivered. Drawing a deep, steadying breath, she crossed the room to the writing table to get a cigarette from her purse.

The purse was there, the pen was there. The letter to Bud was gone.

Frantically she hammered on the bathroom door. "Give me that letter! Give it to me!"

"My curiosity is especially insatiable," Gant said, "when it comes to phony cousins with flimsy stories."

She stood in the doorway with one hand on the jamb, looking from the still-closed bathroom door to the hallway and smiling inanely at passers-by.

Gant finally came out. He was folding the letter carefully into its envelope. He put it on the writing table. His face was stiff. "Look," he said. "I didn't even know her. I said hello to her once or twice. There were other blond guys in that class."

She didn't move.

He went to the bedside table and picked up the Gideon Bible. "I swear on this Bible that I never went out with your sister, or said more than two words to her." He put the Bible down. "Well?"

"If Dorothy was killed," Ellen said, "the man who did it would swear on a dozen Bibles."

Gant rolled his eyes heavenward and extended his wrists for the handcuffs. "All right," he said. "I'll go quietly."

"I'm glad you think this is something to joke about."

He lowered his hands. "I'm sorry," he said sincerely. "But how can I convince you that—"

"You can't." Ellen said. "You might as well go."

"There were other blond guys in the class," he insisted. He snapped his fingers. "There was one she used to come in with all the time! Cary Grant chin, tall . . ."

"Dwight Powell?"

"That's right! They were together all the time!"

She looked at him suspiciously.

He threw up his hands. "Okay. I give up." He moved toward the door; Ellen backed into the hallway. "I would just like to leave, as you suggested," Gant said loftily.

He came into the hallway. "Unless you want me to go on calling you Hester, you ought to tell me what your name really is."

"Ellen."

He seemed reluctant to go. "What are you going to do now?"

After a moment, she said, "I don't know."

"If you barge into Powell's place, don't pull a fluff like you did this afternoon. He may be no one to fool around with." He started to go and then turned back. "You wouldn't be in the market for a Watson, would you?"

"No, thanks," she said in the doorway. "I'm sorry, but . . ."

He shrugged and smiled. "I figured my credentials wouldn't be in order. Well, good luck." He turned and walked down the hallway.

It's five-thirty now, Bud, and I'm comfortably settled at the New Washington House, ready for dinner and early to bed.

I spent a good part of the afternoon in the waiting room of the dean of students. When I finally got to see him, I told a fabulous story about an unpaid debt that Dorothy owed to a handsome blond in her fall English class. After much digging through records, we came up with the man—Mr. Dwight Powell of 1520 West 35th Street. The hunting season opens tomorrow morning.

How's that for an efficient start?

Love,
Ellen

"Hello?" The voice was a woman's.

"Hello." Ellen said. "Is Dwight Powell there?"

"No, he isn't."

"When do you expect him back?"

"I couldn't say for sure. I know he works over at Folger's between his classes and afterward, but I don't know to what time he works."

"Aren't you his landlady?"

"No. I'm her daughter-in-law come over to clean. Mrs. Honig is in Iowa City with her foot. She cut it last week, and it got infected." She paused. "If you have a message for Dwight, I can leave him a note."

"No, thanks. It wasn't anything important."

"Okay. Good-by."

Ellen hung up, wondering what kind of place it was that Powell worked. Folger's. It would have to be near the campus if he went there between classes. If it were a store of some sort, where he waited on customers . . .

She picked up the telephone book, turned to the F's and skimmed through the listings.

Folger Drugs 1448 UnivAv.....2-3800

There was a soda fountain; mirrors, chrome, gray marble; a line of red stools. Dwight Powell stood behind the counter, wearing a snug white mess jacket and a white cap that rode his fine blond hair like an overturned ship. His square-jawed face was lean, and he had a thin mustache; a feature that evidently had been added some time after he had sat for the photograph the dean had shown.

Ellen took a seat at the far end of the counter. It was eleven-thirty; there were three other customers, all at the forward end. When Powell placed a napkin and a glass of water before her, she ordered a Swiss on rye and coffee. He made the sandwich a few feet away from her. She watched him. When he became conscious of her watching and looked up, she smiled at him.

He smiled back. "You go to Stoddard?"

"No, I don't."

He cut the sandwich in half with a long knife.

"You?" Ellen asked.

He nodded, sliding the sandwich onto a plate. "You haven't been in here before, have you?"

"No. I've only been in Blue River a couple of days."

He set the sandwich before her. "I would have noticed you if you'd been in here before," he said.

Down the counter, a spoon clinked against glass. Powell's lips compressed sullenly as he answered the call.

He was back in a couple of minutes with her coffee. He placed it before her. "Staying or passing through?"

"Staying. If I can find a job."

He produced a jigger of cream from below the counter. "As what?"

"A secretary. You wouldn't need a secretary, would you?" She poured sugar.

There was a pause. "Where you from?" he asked.

"Des Moines."

He straightened things below the counter. "Staying with relatives?"

"Hotel. I don't know a soul in town."

There was another signal from down the counter. "Darn," he muttered. "Maybe you want *my* job?" He stalked away.

In a few minutes, he returned. "How's the sandwich?"

"Fine."

"You want something else? A piece of cake?"

"No, thanks." She dabbed at her lips with the napkin. "Just the check."

He took a pencil and a green pad from a clip on his belt and began to write. "Listen," he said, "there's a very good revival at the Paramount tonight. 'Lost Horizon.' You want to go?"

She seemed to debate for a moment. "All right," she said.

He looked up and smiled. "Swell. Where can I meet you?"

"The New Washington House. In the lobby."

"Eight o'clock okay?" He tore the check from the pad. "My name is Dwight. As in Eisenhower. Dwight Powell." He looked at her, waiting.

"Evelyn Kittredge," she said.

"Hi, Evelyn," he said, smiling. She flashed a broad smile in return. Something flickered over Powell's face; surprise? memory?

"What's wrong?" Ellen asked. "Why do you look at me that way?"

"Your smile," he said uneasily. "A girl I used to . . ."

There was a pause; then Ellen said decisively, "Joan Bacon or Bascomb or something. I've been in this town only two days and two people have told me I look like this Joan—"

"No," Powell said, "this girl's name was Dorothy." He folded the check and tucked it in his pocket. "Lunch is on me."

"Thank you," she said. She stood up.

"See you tonight, Evelyn."

"Eight o'clock," she said.

At four, the phone in her room rang. It was Gordon Gant.

"Hello," she said warmly.

"Well! Well, well, *well!* Do I gather from the buddy-buddy tone that my innocence has been clearly and conclusively established?"

"You gather," she said. "Powell is the one who was going out with her."

"Your efficiency astounds me. How did you find out?"

"From him."

"What?"

"I picked him up in the drugstore where he works. I'm Evelyn Kittredge, unemployed secretary, of Des Moines, Iowa. I have a date with him tonight."

There was a long silence from Gant's end of the line. When he spoke again, he was serious. "Listen, Ellen, this doesn't sound like anything to fool around with."

"Why? As long as he thinks I'm Evelyn Kittredge—"

"How do you know he does?"

"He mentioned Dorothy's name. Would he do that if he suspected?"

"No, I guess not," Gant admitted reluctantly. "What now?"

"This afternoon I went to the library and read all the newspaper reports of Dorothy's death. There were a few details that were never mentioned, little things like the color of her hat and the fact that she was wearing gloves. If I can get him to talk about her 'suicide,' maybe he'll let drop one of those things that he couldn't know unless he was there."

"And how do you expect to get him

Preparing the trap, the moment of self-betrayal, she quite forgot how easily she could be its victim

talking in such detail without making him suspicious? He's not an idiot, is he?"

"I have to try," she argued. "What else is there to do?"

Gant thought for a moment. "I am the owner of an old ball-peen hammer," he said. "We could beat him over the head, drag him to the scene of the crime, and sweat it out of him."

"You see, there's no other way to . . ." Her voice faded.

"Hello?"

"I'm still here," she said. "I was just thinking."

"Look, seriously, be careful, will you? And if it's at all possible, call me during the evening, just to let me know where you are and how things are going."

"He thinks I'm Evelyn Kittredge."

"Well, call me anyway. My hair grays easily."

"All right."

When they had said good-by, Ellen remained sitting on the bed, biting her lower lip and drumming her fingers the way she always did when she was toying with an idea.

Snapping shut her purse, Ellen smiled across the lobby at Powell's approaching figure. He was wearing a gray topcoat and a navy-blue suit. The thin line of his mustache glinted over a practiced smile. "Hi," he said, dropping down beside her on the leather divan. "You certainly don't keep your dates waiting."

"Some of them I do."

His smile broadened. "How's the job hunting?"

"Pretty good. I think I've got something. With a lawyer."

"Swell!" His eyes flicked to his wrist watch. "We'd better get on our horses. The last show starts at ten after."

"Oh," she lamented.

"What's the matter?"

"I've got an errand to do first. This lawyer. I have to bring him a letter, a reference I forgot this afternoon. He's going to be at his office till eight-thirty." She sighed. "I'm awfully sorry."

"Well, if you have to bring it . . ."

Ellen stood up. "It's just two blocks from here," she said. "The Municipal Building."

Midway through the silent, marbled lobby, Powell stopped. "I'll wait for you here, Evvie," he said. His jaw was rigid, the words coming out stiffly.

"I wanted you to come up with me," she said. "I could have brought this letter over here before eight o'clock, but I thought it was kind of odd, his telling me to bring it in the evening." She smiled. "You're my protection."

"Oh," Powell said.

They continued toward the single lighted elevator, their footsteps drawing whispering echoes from the domed ceiling. "Floor, please," the elevator man said.

"Fourteen," said Ellen.

They made a half circuit of the deserted fourteenth-floor corridor and stopped before a door whose frosted-glass panel was inscribed *Frederic H. Clausen, Attorney at Law*. There was no light behind it. "How do you like that?" Ellen said, trying the knob. "He said he'd be here till eight-thirty." ("The office closes at five-thirty," the secretary had said when Ellen called from the lobby of the building late that afternoon, after returning from the fourteenth floor, where she had copied the names on the doors near the one important door, the door marked *Stairway*.)

"I guess I'll leave it under the door." She opened her purse and took out a large white envelope. "It's a shame about the movies," she said, "but I'd just as soon go someplace quiet, have a few drinks . . ."

"Okay," Powell said, his face relaxing into a smile.

"On second thought," Ellen said, "I might just as well bring this over in the morning. I'd only have to come back about it anyway." She returned the envelope to her purse. Her gaze drifted to a door across the corridor, the door marked *Stairway*. "Say, you know what I'd like to do?"

"What?"

"—Before we go find those drinks . . ."

"What?" He smiled.

She smiled back. "Go up to the roof."

He was silent for a moment. "What do you want to do that for?" he asked slowly.

"Didn't you see the moon? And the stars? The view must be tremendous." She crossed the corridor and pushed the door open.

"Evvie, I . . . The door's probably locked."

"I don't think they can lock a door to a roof. Fire laws." She smiled. "Come on!" She backed through the doorway onto the landing, holding the door, waiting for him.

He had no choice. He came.

They climbed eight steps, turned, and climbed eight more. There was a dark metal door. Ellen tried the knob.

"It must be locked," Powell said.

"You try."

He took the knob, pushed. "It's locked."

"Oh, come on. Give a real try."

"Okay," he said, "okay, okay," with abandon. He drew back and slammed his shoulder against the door full force. It flew open, almost dragging him with it. He stumbled across the high threshold onto the tarred deck. "Okay, Evvie," he said sullenly, straightening himself, holding the door wide, "come look at your gorgeous moon."

"Sourpuss," Ellen said. She stepped over the ledge and breezed a few steps past him. She heard the door closing behind her, and then Powell was at her side. "Sorry," he said, "it's just that I almost broke my shoulder on that door, that's all." He managed a starchy smile.

They were facing the KBRI tower: skeletal, black, against the blue-black star-spattered sky. At the top of it, a red light slowly flashed, its steady pulse flushing the roof with intermittent rose. Between the red throbs, there was the wan light of the quarter moon.

Ellen moved to the right, to the outer edge of the roof. Abrading her hands against the roughness of the parapet's coping, she breathed deeply of the cold night air. . . . I'm all right; I'm Evelyn Kittredge. . . . Powell came up beside her. They looked at the panorama below, the myriad lights glittering off into blackness. "Isn't it beautiful?" Ellen said.

"Yes."

She spoke without looking at him. "Have you ever been here at night?"

"No," he said. "I've never been here before."

She leaned over, looking down at the shelf of the setback two stories below. "Last year," she said slowly, "I think I read about some girl falling from the roof here."

A ventilator cap creaked. "Yes," Powell said. His voice was dry. "A suicide. She didn't fall."

"Oh." Ellen kept looking at the setback. "I don't see how she could have gotten killed."

He lifted a hand, the thumb pointing back over his shoulder. "Over there, the shaft."

"Oh, that's right." She straightened up. "I remember now. The Des Moines newspapers gave it a big write-up. She was a Stoddard girl, wasn't she?"

"Yes," he said. He pointed toward the horizon. "You see that roundish building there, with the lights on it? That's the Stoddard Observatory."

"Did you know her?"

The red light stained his face. "Why do you ask?" he said.

"I just thought you might have known her, both going to Stoddard."

"Yes," he said sharply. "I knew her. Now let's talk about something else."

"The only reason the story stuck in my mind," Ellen said, "was because of the hat."

Powell gave an exasperated sigh. "What hat?"

"She was wearing a red hat with a bow on it, and I had just bought a red hat with a bow on it the day that it happened."

"Who said she was wearing a red hat?" Powell asked.

"The Des Moines papers said . . ." . . . Tell me they were wrong, she prayed, tell me it was green. . . .

"I never saw anything about a red hat," he said. He squinted at his watch. "Look," he said brusquely, "it's twenty-five to nine. I've had enough of this magnificent view." He turned away, heading for the staircase housing.

Ellen hurried after him. "We can't go yet," she wheedled, catching his arm just outside the slant-roofed stair shed.

"Why not?"

"I—I want a cigarette."

"Oh, for . . ." His hand jerked toward a pocket, then stopped short. "I don't have any. Come on, we'll get some downstairs."

"I have some," she said quickly, flashing her purse. She turned and backed away, the location of the air shaft behind her clear in her mind. She sidled back toward it, opening the purse, smiling at Powell. The parapet reared against her hip. She fumbled in her purse. "You want one?"

He came toward her with resignation and compressed-lip anger. She shook the crumpled pack of cigarettes until one white cylinder protruded. He snatched the cigarette grimly.

Her fingertips dug for another, and as they did her eyes roved and apparently became aware of the air shaft for the first time. "Is this where—"

His jaw tightened. "Listen, Evvie," he said, "I asked you not to talk about it. Now, will you just do me that one favor?"

She drew a cigarette from the pack, put it calmly to her lips, and dropped the pack back into her purse. "I'm sorry," she said coolly. "I don't know what you're so touchy about."

"Can't you understand? I *knew* the girl."

She struck a match and held it to his cigarette, the orange glow lighting his taut-muscled face. . . . One more jab, one more jab . . . She withdrew the match from his lighted cigarette. "They never did say why she did it, did they?" His eyes closed painfully. "I'll bet she was pregnant."

His face flared from flame-orange to raw red as the match died and the tower light flashed on. . . . Now! Ellen thought triumphantly. Now! Let it be something good, something damning! . . . "All right!" he blazed. "You know why I won't talk about it? You know why I didn't want to come up here at all?" He flung away the cigarette. "The girl who committed suicide here was the one I mentioned this afternoon! The one you smile like!" His eyes dropped. "She and I—"

The words cut off guillotine-sharp, his downcast eyes dilating with shock. Ellen looked down. At the matchbook in her hand. The white matchbook with *Ellen Kingship* in copper letters.

The cigarette fell from her lips. Coldness engulfed her.

"Her sister," he faltered, "her sister." He was staring at the matchbook with glazed incomprehension. "What is this?" he asked dully. He backed away. "What do you want from me?"

"Nothing, nothing," she said quickly.

"You pick me up, you get me up here. . . ." His body flexed to move.

"Stop!" she cried.

The ball-poised feet dropped flat, frozen.

"If anything happens to me," she said, forcing herself to speak slowly, evenly, "there's somebody else who knows all about you. He knows I'm with you tonight, so if anything happens . . ."

"If anything . . . ?" His brow furrowed. "What are you talking about?"

"You know what I mean. If I fall . . ."

"Why should you—" He stared unbelievingly. "You think I'd . . . ?" One hand gestured limply toward the parapet. "Lord!" he whispered. "What are you, crazy?" He rubbed his forehead. "What's this 'knows all about me'?" he demanded. "Knows what?"

"Everything," she said. "And he's waiting downstairs. If I'm not down in five minutes, he's calling the police."

He slapped his forehead exhaustedly. "I give up," he moaned. "You want to go downstairs? You want to go? Well, go ahead!" He stepped aside, leaving her a clear path to the staircase shed. "Go ahead! Go on!"

She moved toward the door slowly, watching him, knowing he could cut her off. He didn't move. "If I'm supposed to be arrested," he said, "I'd just like to know what for. Or is that too much to ask?"

She made no answer until she had the door open in her hand. Then she said, "You think I'm bluffing. You think we really don't know." She stepped over the ledge.

"Lord," Powell whispered furiously.

"All right." Ellen glared. "I'll itemize

it for you. One, she was pregnant. Two, you didn't want—"

"Pregnant?" He leaned forward. "Is *that* why she did it? Is *that* why she killed herself?"

"She didn't kill herself!" Ellen cried. "You killed her!" She pulled the door shut, turned and ran.

She ran clatteringly down the metal steps—fourteen flights—with him thundering down after her all the way shouting, "*Evvie! Ellen! Wait!*" She ran through the lobby, down the marble steps outside, ignoring the people who turned to stare, and up the street toward Washington Avenue, never daring to look back, and down Washington Avenue toward the hotel, always hearing his footfalls behind her, and finally she pushed through glass doors and into the safety of the hotel with her heart hard-pumping and hurried to the corner phone booths, because if Gant went to the police with her, Gant who was a local celebrity, then they'd be more inclined to listen to her, believe her. Panting, she seized the phone book and flipped to the K's. It was five to nine, so he'd be at the studio. She slapped away pages, gaspingly catching her breath. There it was: KBRI, 5-1000. She opened her purse and hunted for coins. Five-one-thousand. five-one-thousand. She turned from the phone-book rack and looked up.

Powell confronted her. He was flushed and panting, his blond hair wild. She wasn't afraid; there were bright lights and people. Hate leveled her rough breathing like a glacier: "You should have run the other way. It won't do you any good, but I would start running if I were you."

"Please, I've got to talk to you," he pleaded.

"I have a phone call to make."

"Please. What—what month was she in?"

"Will you please get out of my—"

"What month?" His voice was demanding.

"Oh, Lord! The second."

He let out a tremendous, weight-dropping sigh of relief.

"Now will you please get out of my way?"

"Not until you explain what's going on. This Evelyn Kittredge act . . ."

Her glare was acid.

He whispered confusedly, "You mean you really think I killed her?" and saw no change in the narrow stabbing of her eyes. "I was in New York!" he protested. "I can prove it! I was in New York all last spring!"

"I suppose you could prove you were off in Cairo, Egypt, if you wanted to."

He clenched his teeth. "Will you just let me speak to you for five minutes? What harm can it do with people around?"

"What *good* can it do? If you were in New York and you didn't kill her, then why did I practically have to drag you into the Municipal Building?"

He looked at her uncomfortably. "Because I felt . . ."—he groped for a word—"I felt *responsible* for her suicide."

The hotel's cocktail lounge had black walls and red-upholstered booths, clinking glasses, a soft piano. They took a booth in a corner, where the other booths were empty, and when the drinks had come, Powell began his story.

He had met Dorothy late in September of the previous school year, in English class. A quiet one, he had gauged her, an easy mark. Within a month, his estimate had been proved correct. "She was so hungry for affection," he said, not looking at Ellen. "She told me about things at home, how she'd wanted to go to school with you. . . ."

Ellen felt a tremor; she told herself it was only the vibration caused by someone sitting down in the booth behind her.

They went steady for two months, Powell said, Dorothy hanging onto his arm, always smiling, knitting him argyle socks because he mentioned once he liked them, and then, before Christmas vacation, she asked him to come home with her and meet her family rather than visit an uncle in Omaha as he had planned. He refused. They argued, and he, having felt guilty all along and now beginning to feel trapped, used the argument as the wedge for a complete break.

Ellen said, "All during that vacation she was in such a bad mood. Sulking, picking arguments. . . ."

"After vacation," Powell said, "it was bad." Avoiding each other, they were continually meeting. Finally, he applied for a transfer to New York University, and late in January he left Blue River. He remained at N.Y.U. for one term, during which he read of Dorothy's never-explained suicide. His work suffered. At the end of the term, he decided to return to Stoddard in order to regain the credits he had lost in transferring and, he said wryly, "to try to convince myself that I didn't feel guilty."

"Well, that's it," he said. He printed wet rings on the table with the bottom of his glass. "I'm glad to see you've stopped running for the police. I don't know where you got the idea that I killed her."

"Someone did kill her," Ellen said. He looked at her wordlessly. The piano paused between selections, and in the sudden stillness, she could hear the faint cloth rustlings of the person in the booth behind her.

Leaning forward, she began talking, telling Powell of the ambiguously worded note, of something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue.

"My Lord," he said, "it *can't* be coincidence!"

Ellen said, "It must have been someone she started going with after Christmas vacation." Powell was staring at her. "What is it?" she asked. "Do you know something?"

"His address," Powell said. "I've got his address!"

"I saw them together a couple of times," he said. "The end of January, just before I left. One time was in a luncheonette; Dorothy and this guy, blond, tall. She was holding onto his arm the way she used to hold mine. When they left, I heard him say something about dropping their books at his place.

"Then some girls who'd been sitting next to them started talking about how good-looking he was. One of them said something like, 'He was going with so-and-so last year; it looks like he's only interested in the ones who have money.'

"Well, I figured that if Dorothy was a sitting duck because she was on the rebound from me, then I ought to make sure that she wasn't being taken in by some gold digger. So I left the luncheonette and followed them. They went to a house a few blocks north of the campus. I walked by on the other side of the street and copied down the address on one of my notebooks. I thought I would call up later, when someone else was there, and find out his name. I had a vague idea about speaking to some of the girls around school about him.

"I never did it, though. On the way back to the campus, the presumption of the whole thing hit me. You know, dog in the manger. How did I know they weren't fine for each other?"

"But you still have the address?" Ellen asked anxiously.

"I've got my old notebooks in a suitcase in my room," he said. "We can go over there and get it right now, if you want." He took out his wallet. "Of course, he isn't necessarily the right one."

"He must be. It can't be anyone she started going with much later than that." Ellen stood up. "There's still a phone call I'd like to make before we go."

"To your assistant who knows all about me?"

"That's right. He wasn't waiting downstairs, but there really is someone."

She found a phone booth at the back of the dimly lit room. She dialed 5-1000. The syrup-voiced woman who answered informed her that Gordon Gant's program was on the air; that phone calls could not be directed to the studio; that a message, however, could be delivered to Mr. Gant at ten o'clock, when the program ended.

Ellen told her that Miss Kingship—spelled out—said that Powell—spelled out—was all right but had an idea as to who wasn't, and Miss Kingship was going to Powell's home and would be there at ten, when Mr. Gant could call her.

"Any telephone number?"

"I don't have the number," Ellen said, opening the purse in her lap, "but the address"—managing to unfold the slip of paper—"is fifteen twenty West Thirty-fifth Street."

Powell was feeding coins onto a salver in the hand of a rapt waiter when Ellen returned to their table. She reached for her coat folded on the banquette where she had been sitting, and as she did so her shoulder struck the booth partition. "Excuse me," she said, glancing over it, but the next booth had been vacated.

"All set?" Powell asked, taking the coat and holding it for her. "There's a hackstand right outside."

Powell shucked off his coat and tossed it on a chintz-and-maple chair. He went to a staircase at the side of the room. "You'd better stay down here," he said. "Everything's in a mess upstairs. My landlady is in the hospital, and I wasn't expecting company." He paused halfway up the stairs. "It'll probably take me a few minutes to find that book. There's some instant coffee in the kitchen; you want to fix some?"

"All right," Ellen said, slipping out of her coat.

She found her way through a dining room to the kitchen. It was a depressing room, with old-fashioned appliances and cream-colored walls that were brown in the corners. There was, however, a pleasant breeze blowing through from the back.

She had just lighted the gas under a pan of water when she heard Powell calling her name. "Coming!" she answered. She hurried back through the dining room and into the living room. "Got it already?" she asked, going to the stairs and looking up.

Powell was leaning over the banistered side of the stairwell. "Not yet. But I thought you'd like to see this." He let go of a stiff sheet of paper that came sideslipping down. "Just in case you have any lingering doubts."

It landed on the stairs before her. Picking it up, she saw that it was a photostat of his N.Y.U. record. "If I had any lingering doubts," she said, "I wouldn't be here, would I?"

"True," Powell said, "true." He vanished from the stairwell.

Ellen left the transcript on a table and returned to the kitchen. She found cups and saucers and a can of instant coffee in the various cupboards. While she was spooning the powder into the cups, she noticed a radio with a cracked plastic case on the counter next to the stove. She turned it on, and once it had warmed up, slowly twisted the selector knob until she found KBRI. The small celluloid-vibrating set made Gant's voice unfamiliarly thin. ". . . and a little too much about things political," he was saying, "so let's get back to music. Time for one more record, and it's the late Buddy Clark singing 'If This Isn't Love.' "

After dropping the transcript to Ellen, Powell turned around and went back into his room. Squatting before the unmade bed, he reached underneath and caught the handle of a large, battered suitcase.

He dragged it out clear of the bed. He took a bunch of keys from his pocket, found the right one, and twisted it in the two locks, springing them open. The suitcase was filled with textbooks, a tennis racket, a bottle of whisky. He took out the larger items and put them on the floor, so that it would be easier to get at the stack of notebooks underneath them.

There were nine of them; pale-green spiral-bound notebooks. He gathered them into a bundle, stood up with the bundle in his arms, and began inspecting them one at a time.

It was on the seventh one, on the back cover. The penciled address was smudged, but still legible. He dropped the remaining notebooks into the suitcase and turned around, his mouth opening to form Ellen's name in a triumphant shout.

The shout didn't come, though. The exultant expression clung to his face for a moment, like a stopped movie, and then it cracked and slid slowly away.

The closet door was open, and a man in a trenchcoat stood framed there. He was tall and blond, and a gun bulked large in his gloved right hand.

He was sweating. Not cold sweat, though; hot, healthy sweat from standing in the sweatbox of an airless closet in the sweatsuit of an imporous trenchcoat. His hands, too; the gloves were brown leather with a fuzzy lining; his hands were sweating so much that the lining was sodden and caked. But the gun, having dragged heavily in his pocket all evening, was weightless now, like part of him.

Powell stared at it. "You're the one . . . with Dorothy . . ."

He nodded, smiling at Powell's widening eyes. He stepped closer. "The notebook, *por favor*," he said, extending his left hand. "And don't try anything."

He took the notebook that Powell held out, dropped back a step, and pressed it against his side, bending it in half lengthwise. "I'm awfully sorry you found this. I was standing in there hoping you

The triumphant expression froze, then slowly melted into terror. He opened his mouth, but no sound came

wouldn't." He stuck the folded notebook in his coat pocket.

"You really killed her," Powell said.

"Forget about her. You've got yourself to worry about."

"Why did you kill her?" Powell's eyes lifted from the gun. "If you didn't want to marry her, you could have left her."

"Shut up about her! What's the matter with you? You think I'm bluffing?"

Powell leaped forward.

Ellen had been standing in the kitchen, looking out through the closed window and listening to the fading theme of Gordon Gant's program, when she suddenly wondered. With the window closed, where is that pleasant breeze coming from?

There was a shadowed alcove in a rear corner of the room. She went to it and saw the back door. The pane of glass nearest the knob had been smashed in; it lay in fragments on the floor.

That was when she heard the shot. It smacked loudly through the house, and as the sound died, the ceiling light shivered as if something upstairs had fallen. Then there was silence.

"Dwight?" Ellen said.

There was no answer.

She went through the dining room and into the living room. This time she spoke the name with dry-throated apprehension: "Dwight?"

The silence held for another moment. Then a voice said, "It's all right, Ellen. Come on up."

She hurried up the stairs with her heart pumping. She pivoted around the newel post and swept to the doorway.

The first thing she saw was Powell lying on his back in the middle of the room, limbs sprawled loosely. His jacket had fallen away from his chest. On his white shirt, blood was flowering from a black core over his heart.

She steadied herself against the jamb. She raised her eyes to the man who stood beyond Powell, the man with the gun in his hand.

"I was in the closet," he said. "He opened that suitcase and took out this gun. He was going to kill you. I jumped him. The gun went off."

"Oh, Lord." She rubbed her forehead dizzily. "But how . . ."

He pocketed the gun. "I was right behind you in the cocktail lounge." he said. "I heard him talking you into coming up here. I left while you were in the phone booth." He came to her, stepping between Powell's spraddled legs.

She said, "But how . . . how . . .?"

He stood before her. "I'd been waiting in the lobby. Look, a heroine isn't supposed to question her nick-of-time rescuer. Just be glad you gave me his address."

She threw herself into his arms, sobbing with relief and retrospective fear. "It's all right, Ellen," he said softly. "Everything's all right now."

"Oh, Bud," she sobbed, "thank God for you! Thank God for you, Bud!"

He turned off the light and led her back down to the living room. "Listen, Ellen"—his hands were solid and convincing on her shoulders—"you don't want the papers to make a big story out of this, do you? Dragging up everything about Dorothy . . ."

"There's no way to stop them."

"There is. I have a car. I'll take you back to the hotel and then come right back here. If the police haven't shown up yet, I'll call them. Then you won't be here for the reporters to jump on, and I'll refuse to talk until I'm alone with the police."

"I wouldn't feel right about leaving," she said dully.

"Why not? I'm the one who did it, not you." He found her coat and put it around her shoulders. "It's not as if I'm going to lie about your being here; I'll need you to back up my story." He took her hand. "Trust me, Ellen," he said.

The black Buick sedan was parked some fifty feet down the block. He held the door open for Ellen, then went around to the other side and slipped in behind the wheel. Ellen sat silently, hands folded in her lap. "You feel all right?" he asked.

"Yes," she said, her voice thin and tired. "It's just that he was going to kill me." She sighed. "At least I was right about Dorothy. I *knew* she didn't commit suicide." She managed a reproachful smile. "And you tried to talk me out of making this trip."

He got the motor started. "Yes," he said. "You were right."

"Where did you get a car?" she asked.

"Borrowed it."

She was silent for a moment. "Anyway," she said, "there's a sort of silver lining to all this."

"What's that?" He shifted gears, and the car glided forward.

"Well, you saved my life. You really saved my life. That should cut short whatever objections my father might have, when you meet him and we speak to him about us."

"This is going to be a lousy business," he said after they had been driving down Washington Avenue for a few minutes. "I'll be held for manslaughter."

"But you didn't mean to kill him!"

"I know, but they'll still have to hold me, all kinds of red tape." He stole a quick glance at the downcast figure beside him and then returned his gaze to the traffic ahead. "Ellen, when we get to the hotel, you could just pick up your things and check out. We could be back in Caldwell in a couple of hours."

"Bud! We couldn't do a thing like that!"

"Why not? He killed your sister, didn't he? He had it coming to him. Why should we have to get mixed up—"

"We can't do it," she protested. "Aside from its being such a—a *wrong* thing to do, suppose they found out that you killed him. Then they'd never believe the truth, not if you ran away."

"I don't see how they could find out it was me," he said. "I'm wearing gloves, so there can't be any fingerprints. And nobody saw me there except you and him."

"But suppose they *did* find out! Or suppose they blamed someone else!" He was silent. "I guess it *will* be a terrible business," she said. "But to run away . . ."

"It was a foolish suggestion," he said. "I didn't really expect you to agree."

They drove in silence for a while. Suddenly she gasped. "Oh, Lord!"

He flicked a glance at her. "What is it?"

Her voice had taken on the sick glaze again. "He showed me his transcript, from N.Y.U. He was in New York. . . ."

"Probably a fake. He must have known someone in the registrar's office there. They could easily fake something like that."

"But suppose it wasn't. Are you sure he didn't—maybe take the gun out to get at something else?"

"He was going to the door with it."

"Oh, Lord, if he really didn't kill Dorothy . . ." She was silent for a moment. "The police will investigate," she said positively. "They'll prove he did it."

"That's right," he said.

"But even if he didn't, Bud, even if it was a—a terrible mistake, they wouldn't blame you for anything. You couldn't know; you saw him with the gun. They could never blame you for anything."

"That's right," he said.

She looked out the window. "Shouldn't we . . . Bud, this isn't the way into town."

He didn't answer her.

"Bud, you're going the wrong way!"

"What you want from me?" Chief of Police Chesser asked blandly. He lay on the chintz sofa, his large brown eyes vaguely contemplating the ceiling. "A dark car is all the man next door knows; after he called about the shot, he saw a man and a woman go down the block and get into a dark car. You know how many dark cars there is driving around town with a man and woman in them?"

Gant glared at him from the middle of the living room. "So what are we supposed to do?"

"Wait, is all. I notified the highway boys, didn't I? Maybe tonight is bank night. Why don't you sit down?"

"Sure, sit down," Gant snapped. "She's liable to be murdered! Last year her sister, now her."

"Here we go again," Chesser said. The brown eyes closed in weariness. "Her sister committed suicide," he articulated slowly. "I saw the note with my own two eyes." Gant made a noise. "And who killed her?" Chesser demanded. "You said Powell was supposed to be the one, only now it couldn't have been him 'cause the girl's message said he was all right, and you found this New York U. paper that makes it look like he wasn't even here last spring. So if the only suspect didn't do it, who did? Answer: nobody."

Gant glared at him and resumed his bitter pacing.

After a few minutes, Chesser said, "Well, I guess I got it all reconstructed now." He cleared his throat. "The guy breaks in about a quarter to ten—man next door heard the glass break but didn't think anything of it. A couple minutes later, Powell and the girl come in. The guy hides in Powell's closet—the clothes are all pushed to the side. Powell probably hears something. Anyway, he goes upstairs. The guy comes out. He's already tried to open the suitcase—we found glove smudges on it. He makes Powell unlock it and goes through it. Stuff all over the floor. Maybe he finds something, some money. Powell jumps him. Bang. Forty-five shell. Most likely an Army Colt. Million of 'em floating around.

"Next thing, the girl comes running upstairs—same prints on the doorframe up there as on the cups and stuff in the kitchen. The guy forces her to leave with him."

"Why?" Gant asked.

"Maybe he was panicky. Or maybe he got ideas. Sometimes they get ideas when they're holding a gun and there's a pretty girl on the other end of it."

"Thanks," Gant said. "That makes me feel a whole lot better. Thanks a lot."

Chesser finally turned his face from the ceiling. "What is she? Your girlfriend?" he asked.

"No." Gant said. He remembered the letter he had read in Ellen's room. "No, there's some guy in Wisconsin."

He drove with his left hand, occasionally giving the wheel an inappreciable right or left motion to relieve the hypnotic monotony of the highway. Ellen was huddled all the way over against the door, her body knotted tight, her eyes staring brokenly at the handkerchief-twisting hands in her lap. On the seat between them, snakelike, lay his gloved right hand with the gun in it, the muzzle riveted against her hip.

He had told her about everything; the pills and the roof and why it had been necessary to kill Dorothy, and why it had then been the most logical course to transfer to Caldwell and go after *her*, knowing her likes and dislikes from conversations with Dorothy, knowing how to make himself the man she was waiting for—not only the most logical course, going after the girl with whom he had such an advantage, but also the course most ironically satisfying, most compensatory for past bad luck (most law-defying, backslapping, ego-preening). He told her these things with irritation and contempt; she didn't know what it was to live on a swaying catwalk over the chasm of failure.

She listened with the muzzle of his gun pressing painfully into her hip, and then she cried, and then she sat staring brokenly at the handkerchief-twisting hands in her lap.

"I *told* you not to come," he said querulously. "I *begged* you to stay in Caldwell, didn't I?" He glanced at her as though expecting an affirmation. "But *no*. 'I'm leaving for Blue River. Dorothy didn't commit suicide. I'll write you this minute. I'll explain everything.'" His eyes returned to the highway. "That letter—how I sweated till this afternoon's mail came! When I first started to read it, I thought I was safe; you were looking for someone she'd met in her English class in the fall; I didn't meet her till January, and it was in Philosophy. But then I realized who the guy you were looking for really was—Old Argyle Socks, my predecessor. He'd seen me with Dorrie. I thought he might know my name. I knew that if he ever convinced you he didn't have anything to do with her murder, if he ever mentioned my name . . ."

Ellen said something faintly.

"What?"

"They'll catch you. . . ."

"How? Fingerprints? —None. Witnesses? —None. Motive? —None that

they know about. They won't even think of me. The gun? —I have to go over the Mississippi to get back to Caldwell; good-by gun. This car? —Two or three in the morning, I leave it a couple of blocks from where I took it; they think it was some crazy high-school kids, juvenile—"

Suddenly he jammed down on the brake pedal, and the car screeched to a halt. Reaching left-handed around the steering column, he shifted gears. The car rolled slowly backward. On their right, the dark form of a house slid into view, low-crouching behind a broad expanse of empty parking lot. The headlights of the retreating car caught an upright sign at the highway's edge: *Lillie and Doane's—The Steak Supreme.* A smaller sign swayed from the gallows of the larger one: *Reopening April 15th.*

He shifted back into first, spun the wheel to the right, and drove across the parking lot. At the side of the building, he pressed the horn ring; a loud blast banged through the night. He waited a minute. No window was raised, no light went on. "Nobody's home," he said, turning off the headlights.

"Please . . ." she said. "Please . . ."

In the darkness, the car rolled forward, turned to the left, moved behind the house where the asphalt of the parking lot flowed into a smaller paved area. He set the emergency brake and left the motor running.

"Please . . ." she said.

He opened his door and stepped out onto the asphalt. "Well, what am I supposed to do, Ellen? I asked you to go back to Caldwell without saying anything, didn't I?" The gun made an irritated gesture. "Come out."

She pulled herself across the seat, clutching her purse. She stepped out of the car.

"Please," she said, holding up the purse in a futile shielding movement, "please . . ."

From the Blue River Clarion-Ledger; *Wednesday, March 14, 1951:*

DOUBLE SLAYING HERE
POLICE SEEK MYSTERY GUNMAN

Within a period of two hours last night, an unknown gunman committed two brutal murders. His victims were Ellen Kingship, 21, of New York City, and Dwight Powell, 23, a junior at Stoddard University. . . .

As police reconstruct the events, Powell, entering the house at 9:50 in the company of Miss Kingship, went to his second floor room, where he encountered an armed burglar...

Leo Kingship, president of Kingship Copper, Inc., and father of the slain girl, is expected to arrive in Blue River this afternoon. This is the second visit Mr. Kingship has made here under tragic circumstances. Last April . . .

Police admit there are no clues. . . .

At the end of the school year, he returned to Menasset and sat around the house in somber depression.

One day in July, he took the cardboard box from his closet. Opening it on his desk, he took out the newspaper clippings about Dorothy's murder. He tore them into small pieces and dropped them into the wastebasket. He did the same with the clippings on Ellen and Powell. Then he took out the Kingship Copper pamphlets. As his hands gripped them, ready to tear, he smiled ruefully. Dorothy, Ellen . . .

It was like thinking Faith, Hope, . . . "Charity" pops into the mind to fulfill the sequence.

Dorothy, Ellen, . . . Marion.

He smiled at himself and gripped the pamphlets again.

But he found that he couldn't tear them. Slowly he put them down on the desk, mechanically smoothing the creases his hands had made.

There were so many things in favor of it: months of conversations with Dorothy, months of conversations with Ellen; all studded with passing references to Marion, her likes, her dislikes, her opinions, her past. He knew her like a book without even having met her. And emotion was in favor of it, too. Another chance. Hit a home run and the two strikes that preceded it are washed away. Third time lucky . . .

That night he began compiling a list of Marion Kingship's characteristics, opinions, and tastes. He made several notations, and in the weeks that followed, added regularly to the list. His spirit swelled. Sometimes he would take the paper from the box even when he had nothing to add, just to admire it; the keenness, the planning, the potency displayed. It was almost as good as having the clippings on Dorothy and Ellen.

"You're crazy," he told himself aloud one day, looking at the list. "You're a crazy nut," he said affectionately. He didn't really think that; he thought he was daring, audacious, brilliant, intrepid, and bold.

Part Three: MARION

When Dorothy Kingship followed her sister Ellen's lead and entered a Midwestern school, Marion Kingship, who had been graduated the year before from Columbia University, found herself alone in an eight-room apartment with her father, the two of them like charged metal pellets that drift and pass but never touch. A month later, against his objections, she rented a two-room apartment in a converted brownstone in the East Fifties.

She furnished it with a great deal of care. Every article was invested with significance; the furniture and the lamps and the ashtrays (modern but not modernistic), the reproduction of her favorite painting (Charles Demuth's "My Egypt"), the phonograph records and the books—everything was an index of her personality. Her egocentricity was that of the lonely, and the objects displayed in the two rooms were like the concentrated abbreviations of a help-wanted ad that some visitor, some day, would read and respond to.

Visitors came; Dorothy and Ellen home on vacation, the girls in the advertising agency where Marion worked. Once a man came; the bright young junior account executive. His interest in the apartment manifested itself in sidelong glances at the studio couch.

When Dorothy committed suicide, Marion returned to her father's apartment for two weeks, and when Ellen died, she stayed with him for a month, at the end of which he suggested with a diffidence new to him that she move back permanently. She couldn't; the thought of relinquishing her own apartment was unimaginable. After that, though, she had dinner at her father's three evenings a week instead of only one.

On Saturdays, she thorough-cleaned the rooms, and once each month she opened all the books to prevent their bindings from growing stiff.

One Saturday morning in September, the phone rang. The voice on the other end was a man's, unfamiliar. "Hello. Is this Marion Kingship?"

"Yes."

"You don't know me. I was a friend of Ellen's." Marion felt suddenly awkward; a friend of Ellen's; someone handsome and clever and fast-talking. "My name," he continued, "is Burton Corliss —Bud Corliss."

"Oh, yes. Ellen told me about you."

"I wonder if I could see you," he said. "I have something that belonged to Ellen. A book. I thought you might like to have it."

Probably some book-club novel, Marion thought, and then, hating herself for her smallness, said, "Yes, I'd like very much to have it. Yes, I would."

"I could bring it over now. I'm in the neighborhood."

"No, I'm going out." She shifted uncomfortably, ashamed of her lying, ashamed that she didn't want him in her apartment. "We could meet someplace this afternoon," she offered. "I'm going to be around Fifth Avenue."

"Fine. Then suppose we meet in front of the statue at Rockefeller Center, the one of Atlas holding up the world."

"Yes, that would be all right. Around three o'clock."

"Three o'clock. Fine," he said. "Good-by, Marion."

"Good-by, . . ." she said, unable to decide whether to call him Bud or Mr. Corliss.

In the shadow of the towering statue, he stood with his back to the pedestal, immaculate in gray flannel, a paper-wrapped package under his arm. Before him passed intermeshing streams of oppositely bound people, slow-moving against a backdrop of roaring busses and impatient taxis. He watched their faces carefully, trying to recall the snapshot Dorothy had shown him so long ago.

She came from the north, and he recognized her when she was still a hundred feet away. She was tall and thin, a bit too thin, wearing a brown suit and a small felt hat. Her pulled-back hair was brown. As she came nearer, she saw him. With an uncertain, questioning smile, she approached, appearing ill-at-ease in the spotlight of his gaze.

"Marion?"

"Yes." She offered her hand hesitantly.

"Hello," he said. "I've been looking forward to meeting you."

They went to a cocktail lounge around the corner, where Marion, after some indecision, ordered a Daiquiri. "I—I can't stay long, I'm afraid," she said, sitting erect on the edge of her chair.

"Where are they always running, these beautiful women?" he inquired smilingly. He immediately saw it was the wrong approach; she smiled tensely and seemed to grow more uncomfortable. After a moment, he began again. "You're with an advertising agency, aren't you?"

"Yes," she said. "Are you still at Caldwell?"

"No."

"I thought Ellen said you were a junior."

"I was, but I had to quit school." He sipped his Martini. "My father is dead. I didn't want my mother to work anymore. Where did you go to school?"

"Columbia. Are you from New York?"

Every time he tried to steer the conversation around to her, she turned it back toward him. Eventually she asked, "Is that the book?"

"Yes. *Dinner at Antoine's.* Ellen wanted me to read it. There are some personal notes she scribbled on the flyleaf, so I thought you might like to have it." He passed the package to her. "Personally," he said, "I go for books that have a little more meaning."

Marion stood up. "I'll have to be leaving now," she said.

"But you haven't finished your drink."

"I'm sorry," she said quickly, looking down at the package in her hands. "I have a business appointment."

They walked back to Fifth Avenue. "It's been very nice meeting you, Mr. Corliss," she said. "Thank you for the drink. And the book. I appreciate it. Very thoughtful." She turned and melted into the stream of people.

Emptily he stood on the corner for a moment. Then his lips clenched, and he started walking. He followed her. She walked up to Fifty-fourth Street, where she crossed the avenue, heading east toward Madison. He knew where she was going; he remembered the address from the telephone book. She crossed Madison and Park. He stopped on the corner and watched her climb the steps of the brownstone house.

"Business appointment," he muttered. He turned and walked slowly back toward Fifth Avenue.

Sunday afternoon, Marion went to the Museum of Modern Art. Two men were in the room that held the Lehmbruck sculptures, but they went out soon after Marion entered, leaving her alone in the cool gray cube with the two statues, the male and the female, he standing and she kneeling in opposite quarters of the room, their bodies elongated and gauntly beautiful. Marion moved slowly around the figure of the kneeling woman.

"Hello." The voice was behind her, pleasantly surprised.

She turned around. Bud Corliss smiled in the doorway.

"Hello," Marion said confusedly.

"It really *is* a small world," he said, coming to her. "I came in right behind you downstairs, only I wasn't sure it was you."

They turned to the statue. Why did she feel so clumsy?

"Do you come here often?" he asked.

"Yes." What brought him here? You'd think he'd be strolling in Central Park with some poised, flawless Ellen on his arm.

"So do I," he said.

They looked at the statue. After a moment, he said, "I really didn't think it was you downstairs."

"Why not?"

"Well, Ellen wasn't exactly the museum type."

"All sisters aren't exactly alike," she said.

"No, I guess not." He began to circle around the statue. "The Fine Arts Department at Caldwell had a small museum," he said. "I dragged Ellen there once or twice. Thought I'd indoctrinate her." He shook his head. "No luck."

"She wasn't interested in art."

"No," he said. "It's funny the way we try to push our tastes and interests on people we like."

Marion looked at him, facing her on the other side of the statue. "I once took

This was the part he loved, the skillful stalking, careful closing in—only this one was almost too easy

Ellen and Dorothy—Dorothy was our youngest sister—"

"I know."

"I took them here once when they were just going into their teens. They were bored, though. I guess they were too young."

"I don't know," he said, retracing his semicircular path toward her. "If there'd been a museum in my home town when I was that age . . . Did *you* come here when you were twelve or thirteen?"

"Yes."

"See?" he said. His smile made them fellow members of a group to which Ellen and Dorothy had never belonged.

They went through the third floor and half of the second, then down to the main floor and out through the glass doors to the garden behind the museum. They sat on one of the benches, smoking and talking about Ellen.

"We had a great many things in common," he said, "but they were mainly surface things, things having to do with Caldwell. Once we were through with college, I don't think we would've . . . I don't think we would've gotten married." He stared at his cigarette. "I liked Ellen better than any girl I've ever known. But, I don't know, she wasn't a very *deep* person." He paused. "I hope I'm not offending you."

Marion shook her head. "She'd led a restricted life at home. I suppose she was making up for it."

"Yes," he said. "And then, she was four years younger than I." He put out his cigarette. "Didn't they ever find out *anything* about who did it?" he asked incredulously.

"Nothing. Isn't it awful?"

They sat in silence for a moment. Then they began to talk again, about how many interesting things there were to do in New York, what a pleasant place the museum was, about the Matisse exhibit that was coming soon.

"Do you know who I like?" he asked.

"Who?"

"I don't know if you're familiar with his work," he said. "Charles Demuth."

"You've been seeing Bud frequently, haven't you?" Leo Kingship said, trying to sound casual.

With elaborate care, Marion placed her coffee cup in the indentation of the blue-and-gold saucer and then looked across the crystal and silver and damask at her father. Reflected light blanked the lenses of his glasses, masking his eyes. "Yes," Marion said squarely, "I've been seeing him frequently."

"This job of his, what are its prospects?"

After a cold moment, Marion said, "He's on the executive training squad. He should be a section manager in a few months. Why all the questions?" She smiled with her lips only.

"You brought him here to dinner, Marion." Kingship said. "You never brought anyone to dinner before. Doesn't that entitle me to ask a few questions?"

"He's someone I like, not someone applying for a job with Kingship Copper."

"Marion . . ."

She plucked a cigarette from a silver cup and lighted it with a silver table lighter. "You don't like him, do you?"

"I didn't say that."

"Because he's poor," she said.

"That's not true, Marion, and you know it."

There was silence for a moment.

"Marion, believe me, I only want to see you happy." He spoke awkwardly. "I know I haven't always been so . . . concerned, but haven't I done better since Dorothy and Ellen . . . ?"

"I know," she admitted reluctantly. "But I'm practically twenty-five, a grown woman. You don't have to treat me as if—"

"I just don't want you rushing into anything. Marion."

"I'm not," she said softly.

"That's all I want."

Marion fingered the cigarette lighter. "Why do you dislike him?" she asked.

"I don't dislike him. He —I don't know, I—"

"You really should be grateful to Bud," she said. "I'll tell you something. I didn't want him to have dinner here the other night. As soon as I suggested it, I was sorry. But he insisted. 'He's your father,' he said. 'Think of his feelings.' You see, Bud is strong on family ties, even if I'm not. So you should be grateful to him, not antagonistic. Because if he does anything, it will be to bring us closer together."

"All right," Kingship said. "He's probably a wonderful boy. I just want to make sure you don't make any mistakes."

She looked up. "What do you mean?"

"I just don't want you to make any mistakes, that's all," Kingship said uncertainly.

"Are you asking other questions about him? Asking other people? Do you have someone checking on him?"

"No!"

"Like you did with Ellen?"

"Ellen was seventeen at the time! And I was right, wasn't I? Was that boy any good?"

"Well, I'm twenty-five, and I know my own mind! If you have anyone checking on Bud—"

"The idea never entered my mind!"

Marion's eyes stung him. "I like Bud." she said slowly, her voice tight. "I like him very much. Do you know what that means, to finally find someone you like?"

"Marion, I—"

"So if you do *anything*, anything at all, to make him feel unwelcome or unwanted, to make him feel he's not good enough for me, I'll never forgive you."

"The idea never entered my mind. Marion, I swear."

His eyes followed her futilely as she rose from the table and left the room.

Marion's birthday fell on a Saturday early in November. At six she left her apartment and went down to the hall where Bud was waiting. They went to a Fifty-second Street steakhouse and then to see "Saint Joan." They sat in the orchestra, sixth row center.

Afterward—because, she told herself, Bud had already spent so much money that evening—Marion suggested that they go to her apartment.

"I feel like a pilgrim who's finally been permitted to enter the shrine." Bud said, his eyes ranging over the deep-gray walls, the blue-and-white-striped drapes, the limed-oak furniture.

"It's very small," Marion said.

"But it's nice," he said. "Very nice."

"Thank you." She turned away from him, suddenly as ill at ease as when they first met. She hung their coats in the closet mechanically, and then turned to the mirror over the sideboard. Her eyes focused beyond her own reflection on Bud's image. He had walked down to the center of the room and was standing before the low bookcase, looking at the picture on the wall above it. Marion watched him. "Our old friend Demuth," he said. He glanced at her, smiling. She turned from the mirror and smiled back. He looked at the picture again.

After a moment, Marion moved forward and went to his side.

"I never could figure out why he called a picture of a grain elevator 'My Egypt,'" Bud said.

"Is that what it is? I never knew." She took his arm. "Would you like something to drink?"

"Mmm-hmm."

"There's nothing but wine."

"Perfect."

She turned toward the kitchen.

"Before you go . . ." He took a small tissue-wrapped box from his pocket. "Happy birthday."

"Oh, Bud, you shouldn't have!"

"I shouldn't have," he mimicked simultaneously. "But aren't you glad I did?"

There were silver earrings in the box, simple polished triangles. "Oh, thank you! They're lovely!" Marion exclaimed, and kissed him.

She hurried to the sideboard to try them on. He came up behind her, looking at her in the mirror. When she had fastened both earrings, he turned her around. "Lovely is right," he said.

When the kiss ended, he said, "Now, where's that wine we were talking about?"

She came out of the kitchen with a raffia-covered bottle of Bardolino and two glasses. Bud, his jacket off, was sitting cross-legged on the floor in front of the bookcase, a book opened on his lap. "I didn't know you liked Proust," he said.

"Oh, I do!" She set the tray on the bookcase, filled the two glasses, and handed one to Bud. Holding the other, she worked her feet out of her shoes and lowered herself to the floor beside him. He leafed through the pages of the book. "I'll show you the part I'm crazy about," he said.

Later, they sat together on the studio couch. Bud, leaning back against the thick bolster that ran along the wall, scanned the room, now softly lighted by a single lamp. "Everything's so perfect here," he said. "Why haven't you asked me up before?"

Marion picked at a filament of raffia that had got caught on one of the buttons on the front of her dress. "I don't know. . . ." she said. "I—I thought maybe you wouldn't like it."

"How could I not like it?" he asked. He kissed her. "How could I not like anything about you?"

From the New York Times; *Monday, December 24th, 1951:*

MARION J. KINGSHIP
TO WED SATURDAY

Miss Marion Joyce Kingship, daughter of Mr. Leo Kingship of Manhattan and the late Mrs. Kingship, will be married to Burton Corliss, son of Mrs. Joseph Corliss of Menasset, Massachusetts, and the late Mr. Corliss, on the afternoon of Saturday, December 29, in the home of her father.

Miss Kingship was graduated from the Spence School in New York and is an alumna of Columbia University. Until last week she was with the advertising agency of Camden and Galbraith.

The prospective bridegroom, who served with the Army during the Second World War and attended Caldwell College in Caldwell, Wisconsin, has recently joined the domestic-sales division of the Kingship Copper Corporation.

Leo Kingship, seated behind his desk in his shirt sleeves, looked up from the papers before him. Impatiently he said, "I asked not to be disturbed, Miss Richardson."

The secretary came gingerly across the carpeted room. "I told him that, but he wouldn't go away. This man outside, he said I should give you this." She handed him a slip of paper.

Kingship read it. He looked up, his eyes uneasy. "'Information about Dorothy and Ellen'?"

"He wouldn't give me his name. I asked, but he wouldn't tell me."

Kingship stood up. "Send him in."

His eyes returned to the slip of paper.

At the faint sound of the door closing, he looked up. "Oh," he said. "You." He crumpled the paper, his expression of anxiety turning to relief and then to annoyance.

"Hello, Mr. Kingship," the visitor said, offering his hand.

Kingship took it halfheartedly. "No wonder you wouldn't give your name to Miss Richardson."

Smiling, the man seated himself in the chair before the desk. He settled his coat and a large blue leatherette book in his lap.

"But I'm afraid I've forgotten it," Kingship said. "Grant?"

"Gant. Gordon Gant."

Kingship remained standing. "I'm extremely busy, Mr. Gant, so if this 'information about Dorothy and Ellen' consists of the same theories you were expounding back in Blue River . . ."

"Partially," Gant said.

"Well, I'm sorry. I don't want to listen."

"I gathered that I wasn't number one on your 'Hit Parade.'"

"You mean I didn't like you? That isn't so. Not at all. I realized your motives were of the best; you had taken a liking to Ellen; you showed a—a youthful enthusiasm. But it was misdirected, misdirected in a way that was extremely painful to me. Barging into my hotel room so soon after Ellen's death, bringing up the past at such a moment." He looked at Gant appealingly. "Do you think I wouldn't have liked to believe that Dorothy didn't take her own life?"

Gant leaned forward. "Dorothy went to the Municipal Building to get married. Ellen's theory was right; the fact that she was killed proves it."

"It does no such thing. There was no connection. You heard the police."

"A housebreaker!"

Kingship braced his hands tiredly on

the desk. "Would you please go now."

Gant made no move to rise. "I'm home on vacation," he said. "Home is White Plains. I didn't spend an hour on the New York Central in the pre-Christmas rush just to hash over what was already said last March."

"What, then?"

"There was an article in this morning's *Times*, the society page."

"My daughter?"

Gant nodded. "What do you know about Bud Corliss?" he asked.

"What do you mean, know about him?"

"Do you know that he and Ellen were going together?"

"Of course." Kingship straightened up. "What are you driving at?"

"It's a long story, and my delivery is bound to suffer if you stand towering over me."

Kingship sat down.

"When Ellen left Caldwell," Gant said, "she wrote a letter to Bud Corliss. I happened to read it soon after Ellen arrived in Blue River. It made quite an impression on me, since it described a murder suspect whom I resembled much too closely for comfort. I read the letter twice, and carefully, as you can imagine.

"On the night Ellen was killed, the chief of police asked me if she was my girl. It was probably the only constructive thing he ever did, because it set me thinking of friend Corliss. Partly to take my mind off Ellen, who was heaven knows where with an armed killer, and partly because I liked her and wondered what kind of man she liked, I thought about that letter. It was still fresh in my mind, and it was my only source of information about my 'rival' in Wisconsin."

Gant paused for a second, and then continued. "At first, it seemed to contain nothing; a name and an address; no other clues. But on further reflection, I found several bits of information in Ellen's letter, and I was able to fit them together into an even bigger piece of information about Bud Corliss; it seemed insignificant at the time, a purely external fact about him. But that fact stayed with me, and today it seems significant indeed.

"First of all, Ellen wrote Bud that she wouldn't fall behind in her work because she would be able to get all the notes from him. Now, Ellen was a senior. In almost every college, senior courses are closed to freshmen and often to sophomores. If Bud shared *all* Ellen's classes—they must have made out their programs together—it meant that he was conceivably a sophomore but in all probability a junior or a senior.

"Secondly, at one point in the letter, Ellen mentioned that she had been 'the rah-rah girl' during her first three years at Caldwell, and then she said—I think I remember the exact words—'You wouldn't recognize me.' Which meant, as clearly as could possibly be, that Bud had not seen her during those first three years.

"Thirdly, Caldwell is a very small college; one tenth the size of Stoddard, Ellen wrote. I checked in the almanac; she was giving it the benefit of the doubt. Furthermore, she mentioned that she hadn't wanted Dorothy to come to Caldwell precisely because it was the kind of place where everyone knew everyone else and knew what they were doing.

"So, we add one, two, and three: Bud Corliss, who is at least in his third year of college, was a stranger to Ellen at the beginning of her fourth year, despite the fact that they were both attending a very small college where the social side of life plays hob with the scholastic. All of which can be explained in only one way and can be condensed to a simple statement of fact: *Bud Corliss was a transfer student, and he transferred to Caldwell in September of 1950, at the beginning of Ellen's fourth year and after Dorothy's death.*"

Kingship frowned. "I don't see what—"

"We come now to today," Gant said, "when I pick up the New York *Times* and see that Miss Marion Kingship is about to wed Mr. Burton Corliss. Imagine my surprise. It looks to me, says I, as though the new member of the domestic-sales division was determined not to be disqualified from the Kingship Copper sweepstakes."

"Now look here, Mr. Gant—"

"I considered," Gant went on, "how when one sister was killed, he proceeded directly to the next one. Beloved of two of the Kingship daughters. Two out of three. Not a bad score.

"And then I thought: three out of three would have been an even better score for Mr. Burton Corliss who transferred to Caldwell College in September of 1950."

Kingship stood up, staring at Gant.

"A random thought," Gant said. "Wildly improbable. But easily removed from the realm of doubt. A simple matter of going to the bookcase and taking therefrom *The Stoddard Flame*, yearbook for 1950." He lifted the large blue book he had been holding in his lap, opened it to a page marked by a strip of newsprint, and put it down on the desk, his finger stabbing one of the checkerboard photographs. He recited the inscription beside it from memory: "Corliss, Burton —Menasset, Mass.—Liberal Arts."

Kingship sat down again.

"He never told you he went to Stoddard, did he?" Gant asked.

"We've never discussed things like that. He must have told Marion, though. Marion must know."

"Maybe she does, in which case the whole thing might be a coincidence; he went to Stoddard and he transferred to Caldwell; he might not have known Dorothy any more than he knew me." Gant paused. "Or on the other hand, since the article in the *Times* doesn't mention Stoddard, maybe he *didn't* tell Marion he went there."

"Which means?" Kingship challenged.

"Which means that he must have been involved with Dorothy in some way. Why else would he conceal it?" Gant closed the yearbook. "There was a man who wanted Dorothy out of the way because he had gotten her pregnant. . . ."

Kingship stared at him. "You're going back to the same thing! Someone killed Dorothy and then killed Ellen. You've got this—this cockeyed moving-picture theory, and you don't want to admit . . ." Gant was silent. "Bud?" Kingship smiled incredulously. He sat back. He shook his head, smiling pityingly. "Come on, now," he said. "That's crazy, just crazy." He kept shaking his head. "What do you think that boy is, a maniac?" And smiling. "You've got this crazy idea. . . ."

"All right," Gant said, "it's crazy. For the time being. But if he didn't tell Marion he went to Stoddard, then in some way he must have been involved with Dorothy. And if he was involved with Dorothy, and then with Ellen, and now with Marion, then he was good and determined to marry one of your daughters! Any one!"

The smile left Kingship's face slowly, draining it of expression.

"That isn't so crazy, I take it."

Kingship said, "I have to speak to Marion."

Gant looked at the telephone.

"No. She's had her phone disconnected. She's giving up her apartment, staying with me until the wedding." Kingship's voice faltered. "He's been so good with her, made the two of us get along so much better. She's even interested in the business; I'm taking him to the smelter Thursday, and she's coming along. She was never interested before."

"Do you know where she is?" Gant asked.

"At her place, packing things." Kingship stood up. He took his jacket from

the back of the chair. "He *must* have told her about Stoddard."

"Gordon Gant?" Marion said when they had shaken hands. "Don't I know that name?"

"Blue River." Kingship's voice was wooden as when he had performed the introduction, and his eyes were not quite on Marion's. "I think I told you about him."

"Oh, yes. You knew Ellen, wasn't that it?"

"That's right," Gant said.

Marion gestured despairingly at the room. "I'm afraid there isn't even a place to sit down." She moved toward a chair on which some shoe boxes were piled.

"Don't bother," Kingship said. "We just stopped by. Only for a minute."

"You haven't forgotten tonight, have you? You can expect us around seven or so. She's arriving at five, and I guess she'll want to stop at her hotel first." Marion turned to Gant. "My prospective mother-in-law," she said. There was silence. "To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit?" she inquired, a curtsy in her voice. "Anything special?"

Gant looked at Kingship, waiting for him to speak.

After a moment, Gant said, "I knew Dorothy, too. Very slightly. She was in one of my classes. I go to Stoddard." He paused. "I don't think Bud was ever in any of my classes, though."

"Bud?" she said.

"Bud Corliss. Your—"

She shook her head, smiling. "Bud was never at Stoddard," she corrected him. "He went to Caldwell."

"He went to Stoddard, *then* to Caldwell."

Marion smiled quizzically at Kingship, as though expecting him to offer some explanation for the obstinacy of the caller he had brought.

"He was at Stoddard, Marion," Kingship said heavily. "Show her the book."

Gant opened the yearbook and handed it to Marion, pointing to Bud's picture.

"Well, for goodness' sake," she said. "I have to apologize. I never knew. . . . Isn't that funny? Maybe he knew Dorothy." She sounded pleased, as though this were yet another bond between her and her fiancé.

"He never mentioned it to you at all?" Gant asked, despite Kingship's prohibitive headshakings.

"Why, no, he never said a—" She looked up from the book. "Why are the two of you standing there as if—" There was a tightening movement in her throat. "Is this why you came up here, to tell me this?"

"We—we only wondered if you knew, that's all," Kingship said.

"Why?" she asked.

"Why should Bud conceal it," Gant said, "unless—"

Kingship said, "Gant!"

"*Conceal* it?" Marion said. "What kind of a word is that? He didn't *conceal* it; we never talk about school much, because of Ellen; it just didn't come up."

"Why should the girl he's marrying not know he spent two years at Stoddard," Gant rephrased implacably, "unless he was involved with Dorothy?"

"*Involved?* With *Dorothy*?" Her eyes, wide with incredulity, probed into Gant's, and then swung, narrowing, to Kingship. "How much are you paying him?" she asked coldly.

"Paying him?"

"For snooping!" she flared. "For digging up dirt! For *inventing* dirt!" She thrust the yearbook into his hands.

"He came to me of his own accord, Marion!"

Gant said, "I saw the article in the *Times*."

"See?" Kingship said.

Marion stared at Gant. "Just who are you? What makes this your business?"

"I knew Ellen."

"So I understand," she snapped. "Are you jealous of Bud? Is that it? Because Ellen preferred him to you?"

"That's right," Gant said dryly. "I'm consumed with jealousy."

Kingship edged toward the door, signaling Gant with his eyes. "Yes," Marion said, "you'd better go."

"Wait a minute," she said as Gant opened the door. "Is this going to stop?"

Kingship said, "There's nothing *to* stop, Marion."

"Whoever's behind it"—she looked at Gant—"it's got to stop. We never talked about school. Why should we, with Ellen? It just never came up."

"All right, Marion," Kingship said, "all right." He followed Gant into the hall, closing the door behind him.

"At least we know where we stand," Gant said as they walked down the stairs. "He didn't tell her. That makes it practically certain that—"

"You heard Marion," Kingship said. "They don't talk about school because of Ellen. Considering the circumstances, I think that's understandable."

"Sure. The circumstances being that he was mixed up with Dorothy."

"That's an assumption you have no right to make."

They went out into the street. "You're afraid of her, aren't you," Gant said.

"Of Marion? Don't be ridiculous. A man is innocent until proved guilty, that's all."

"Then we've got to find proof."

"You see? You're assuming he's a fortune hunter before you've started."

"I'm assuming a lot more than that," Gant said.

"It's a free country." Kingship signaled a passing taxi without success.

"You could at least hire detectives," Gant said. "Today is Monday. There are four days yet. They might find something."

"Might," Kingship said. "If there's anything to find. Or Bud might get wind of it and tell Marion." A cab pulled over to the curb.

Gant smiled. "I thought I was just

Marion was a girl who would do anything to protect her lover. He was dearer to her than life itself

being ridiculous about you and Marion."

Kingship opened the door. "I think you'd better just go back to Yonkers and enjoy your vacation," he said, and got in.

"White Plains," Gant said to the departing cab.

On Tuesday, at two P.M., Gordon Gant boarded a train in Grand Central Station. He arrived in Providence shortly after five. At ten minutes of six, he boarded a blue-and-yellow bus marked *Menasset-Somerset-Fall River*.

In Menasset, at six-thirty, the family of a mill hand sat down to dinner. Had there not been so many children talking so loudly, the sound of glass breaking might have been heard nearby.

On Wednesday night, Leo Kingship returned home at ten o'clock, having worked late in order to compensate for some of the lost hours Christmas had entailed. "Is Marion in?" he asked the butler, giving him his coat.

"Out with Mr. Corliss. She said she'd be in early, though. There's a Mr. Dettweiler in the living room."

"Dettweiler?"

"He said Miss Richardson sent him about the securities."

"Dettweiler?" Kingship frowned.

He went into the living room.

Gordon Gant rose from a comfortable chair near the fireplace. "Hello," he said pleasantly.

Kingship glared at him. "Didn't Miss Richardson make it clear this afternoon that I don't—"

"Exhibit A," Gant pronounced, raising a pamphlet in each hand, "in the case against Bud Corliss."

"I don't . . ." The sentence hung unfinished. Kingship came forward. He took the pamphlets from Gant's hands.

"In the possession of Mr. Corliss," Gant said. "Kept in a box that until last night resided in a closet in Menasset. I stole it."

"*Stole* it?"

"Fight fire with fire. I don't know where he's staying in New York, so I decided to sally forth to Massachusetts."

"You crazy . . ." Kingship sat heavily on a couch. He stared at the pamphlets.

"I'm not so sure about Exhibit B," Gant said, "but it was in the box with the pamphlets." He handed Kingship a folded sheet of blue-lined paper. "It's a list of some kind."

Kingship read it.

"Oh, Lord," he said.

"What is it? Do you know?"

"These bits of description, names of books and artists—I think they all apply to Marion. Facts about her, things she likes to do. . . ."

They were silent. Kingship folded the paper.

"Systematic devil, isn't he," Gant said.

They heard the front door open, and then voices: ". . . come in for a while?"

"I don't think so, Marion. Early reveille tomorrow." There was a long silence. "I'll be in front of my place at seven-thirty."

"You'd better wear a dark suit. A smelter must be a filthy place." Another silence. "Good night, Bud."

"Good night."

The door closed.

Kingship went to the living-room door. "Marion," he said, "please, could you come in here for a minute?"

She came into the room, with her cheeks shining from the cold. When she saw Gant, she wanted to leave; Kingship ordered her into a chair. She sat with her knuckles gripping white and her mouth clamped to a lipless line while Gant told her what he had done. They gave her the pamphlets. She held them with trembling hands, and then she smiled a brittle smile and said, "Ellen must have given them to him."

So they showed her the list.

She read a quarter of the closely written page, her cheeks draining of color. Then she folded it with trembling care. "Well," she said, folding it again, not looking up, "haven't I been . . . the trusting soul . . . ?" She smiled crazily at her father standing helplessly beside her. "I should have known, shouldn't I?" The blood rushed back to her cheeks, burning red. Her eyes were swimming, and her fingers were suddenly mashing and twisting the paper with steel strength. "Too good to be true." She smiled, tears starting down her cheeks, her fingers plucking at the paper. "I really should have known." Her hands released the white fragments and flew to her face. She began to cry.

Kingship joined Gant at the window, the pamphlets a tight cylinder in his fist. "You'd better let her cry for a few minutes," Gant said softly.

A clock ticked.

"Mr. Kingship," Gant said, "I was right this far. Will you admit I might be right all the way?"

"All the way?"

"He didn't tell Marion he went to Stoddard. He *must* have been mixed up with Dorothy. He *must* be the one who got her pregnant. He killed her, and Powell and Ellen somehow found out it was him; he had to kill them, too."

"Dorothy's suicide note . . ."

"He could have tricked her into writing it. It's been done before."

"But why? If he was after the money and she was willing to marry him, why would he kill her?"

Gant was silent for a moment, looking at Kingship. Finally he asked, "Were you very strict with your daughters?"

"I taught them right from wrong."

"What would you have done if Dorothy had married without first consulting you and then had a baby too soon?"

"He would have thrown her out," Marion said quietly. The two men turned. She had lowered her hands from her face. She was looking at the bits of paper on the floor.

Kingship said, "I don't think I would have thrown her out."

"You would have." Marion said tonelessly.

He turned back to the window.

"There you are," Gant said. "That's why he killed her."

"Bud?" Marion spoke the name blankly, her face showing the barest flicker of surprise, as though someone had accused her fiancé of having imperfect table manners.

Kingship stared narrow-eyed out the window. "I'd believe it," he said intently. "I'd believe it." The resolution faded from his eyes. "You're basing it all on his not telling Marion about Stoddard. We're not even sure he *knew* Dorothy, let alone he was the one she was . . .

seeing. We have to be *sure* he's the one."

"The dorm girls," Gant said. "Some of them must have known who she was going with. If you could get someone to go out there and speak—" He shook his head. "It's no good; it's vacation; by the time you managed to locate one of the girls who knew, it would be too late."

"Too late?"

"Once he knows the wedding is off"—he glanced at Marion; she was silent—"he's not going to wait around to find out why."

"We'd find him," Kingship said.

"Maybe. And maybe not. People disappear." He reached for his cigarettes. "Didn't Dorothy keep a diary or any—"

"My Lord," Kingship said. He was looking at the pamphlets.

"What's the matter?"

"These pamphlets. They're not the new ones. They're old. We make up new ones every spring." He opened one of the pamphlets, squinted at small type. He looked at Gant. "These are the pamphlets we sent out between June forty-nine and June fifty. He's had them a couple of years. He's had them since—"

"Since before Dorothy," Gant said.

The clock's ticking asserted itself again.

Gant took a deep breath. "Now we're in Ellen's boat," he said. "The police have Dorothy's 'suicide note,' and all we have are suspicions and a flock of circumstantial evidence. No proof. A first-year law student could get him off in five minutes."

"I'll get proof," Kingship said. "I'll get it somehow."

"We've either got to find out how he got her to write that note or else find the gun he used on Powell and Ellen. And before Saturday."

"I'll do it." Kingship said. "He picked the wrong man. He should have picked somebody else's daughters."

Was there ever such a perfect day? That was all he wanted to know. He smiled to himself, looking through the plane window at the ceramic blue of the sky, at the snow-patched fields slowly sliding by below. Another hour, he thought, glancing at his watch. Another hour to the smelter. To the grail!

He turned from the window to the neat blue interior of the craft, relishing the thought of himself in a private airplane. Marion was across the aisle on his left, her face to her own window. She was in a somber mood this morning; bridal nerves, probably. At the last moment, Leo hadn't wanted her to come, but she had insisted.

Leo, up front, was leaning across the aisle talking inaudibly to that guy—what had Leo said he was?—the son of one of the company's directors. Dettweiler. Leo and Dettweiler had been talking on and off during the whole flight so far. Big business, to judge from their faces. Well, there was plenty of time in the future for the serious side of the copper industry; today was a day for enjoying it all, for sheer enjoyment.

He turned back to the window. No, he decided judicially, there really never had been such a perfect day. Why did his mother have to be afraid of flying? It would have been terrific having her along!

There was a limousine waiting when they descended from the plane; custom-built, black, and polished. It carried them over a highway that speared between fields of snow, and then up a gravel road that climbed a hillside parallel to railroad tracks. The car bore them smoothly up the hill, ascending toward the suddenly looming mass of the smelter buildings; brown, geometric, with thick tails of smoke dragging from their stacks.

When they left the car, they were taken in hand by a Mr. Otto, a bland, white-haired man who looked like the manager of a department store. With suitable deference, he ushered them into the din of the first building.

Standing on a chain-railed platform, surveying an ordered forest of huge cylindrical furnaces, Bud suddenly became aware that Leo and Dettweiler were no longer with them. "Where'd your father and Dettweiler go?" he asked Marion, standing beside him.

"I don't know," she said stiffly. "Dad said he wanted to show him something."

"What's the matter, Marion? Don't you feel well?"

"I feel fine."

"There are six hearths, one above the other, in each furnace," Mr. Otto said, beginning his lecture.

"Converters," said Mr. Otto, pushing his voice over a roaring tide of sound. "Probably the most spectacular part of the entire process."

"Holy . . . !"

The building was a vast steel shell, percussant with the sustained thunder of machines and men. A greenish haze obscured its far reaches, swimming around shafts of yellow-green sunlight that pillared down through crane tracks and catwalks from windows in the peaked roof, dim and high above.

At the near end of the building, on either side of the island of railed platform on which the visitors stood, lay six massive vessels, end to end, like giant steel barrels on their sides, dwarfing the workmen on platforms between them. Each vessel had an opening in its uppermost surface. Flames burst forth from these mouths, roaring up into funnel-like hoods overhead.

One of the converters was turned forward on the cogged rollers that supported it, so that its round mouth was at the side; liquid fire rushed from the radiant throat, pouring down into an immense crucible on the floor.

"It's green," Bud said, surprised.

"When it cools, it regains its usual copper color," Mr. Otto said.

Behind them, a door closed. Bud turned. Leo was standing beside Marion. Dettweiler leaned against a ladder that climbed the wall beside the door. "Are you enjoying the tour?" Leo asked.

"Wonderful, Leo! Overpowering!"

He turned back to the railing. The crucible was almost full, the stream of molten copper thinning and twisting as the converter began rolling back. "Are you all right, Marion?" he heard Leo ask. The smoke above the vat dissolved to vaporous wisps. "You look pale," Leo said. The air above the pool of green copper trembled as though sheets of cellophane were being shaken.

Bud turned around. Marion seemed

no paler than usual. "I'm all right," she was saying.

"The fumes," Leo said. "Some people can't stand the fumes. Mr. Otto, why don't you take my daughter back to the administration building. We'll be along in a few minutes."

"Honestly, Dad," she said tiredly, "I feel—"

"No nonsense." Leo smiled thinly. "We'll be with you in a few minutes."

"But . . ." She hesitated a moment, looking annoyed, and then shrugged and turned to the door. Dettweiler opened it for her. Mr. Otto followed Marion out. Dettweiler closed the door.

"She's been acting funny all morning," Bud said.

"Yes," Leo said.

Bud turned to the converters again. The angular yoke of the crucible was lifting, caught by a great blunt hook from whose block a dozen cables rose in unwavering ascension, rose higher than the converters, higher than the central spine of catwalk, up to the underbelly of a grimy cab that hung from a single-railed track below the dimness of the roof. The cables tensed, vibrating, and then rigidified sharply. The vat lifted from the floor.

Leo said, "Did Mr. Otto take you up on the catwalk?"

"No," Bud said.

"You get a much better view," Leo said. "Would you like to go up?"

Bud turned. "Do we have the time?"

"Yes," Leo said.

Dettweiler, his back against the ladder, stepped aside. "After you."

He climbed the ladder up through a square trap and stepped off onto the metal catwalk. The narrow, chain-railed runway extended in a straight line down the spine of the building. It ended halfway down the building's length, where it was cut off by a broad strip of steel partition that hung from roof to floor, some twelve feet wider than the catwalk. Overhead, on either side, crane tracks paralleled the runway.

He looked down on the converters and the men scurrying between them. Farther on, twenty feet below and ten feet out from the catwalk, hung the vat of copper on its slow procession toward the far end of the building. He followed it, staying far enough behind the vat so that he could just feel the fringe of its radiant heat. He heard Leo and Dettweiler behind him.

Nearing the steel partition, he saw that the catwalk didn't end there after all; it branched six feet to right and left, following the partition to its edges. The vat of copper vanished beyond the steel wall. He turned on to the left branch of the T. A three-foot chain swung across the catwalk's end. He leaned forward and peered beyond the partition. "Where does it go now?" he called out.

Behind him, Leo said, "Refining furnaces."

He turned around. Leo and Dettweiler faced him shoulder to shoulder, blocking the stem of the T.

"Any more questions?" Leo asked.

He shook his head, puzzled by the grimness of the two men.

"Then I've got one for you," Leo said. "How did you get Dorothy to write that suicide note?"

"What're you talking about?" He caught the corner stanchion in his right hand, the edge of the partition in his left. His knees were shaking.

"Dorothy," Dettweiler said. "You killed her."

"No! She committed suicide! She sent a note to Ellen! You know that, Leo!"

"You tricked her into writing it," Leo said.

"How —Leo, how could I do that?"

"That's what you're going to tell us."

"I didn't even know her!"

Leo's fists clenched. "You sent for our publications that spring!"

Bud stared, his hand bracing tightly against the partition. "What publications?"

Dettweiler said, "The pamphlets I found in a box in your room in Menasset."

The catwalk dipped crazily. The box! Oh, Lord! The pamphlets and what else? The clippings? —He'd thrown them out, thank heaven! The pamphlets . . . *and the list on Marion!* Oh, Lord! "Who are you?" he exploded. "Where do you come off breaking into—"

"Gordon Gant," Dettweiler said. "Didn't Ellen tell you about me? —Before you killed her!"

"I—" He felt the sweat running. "Crazy!" he shouted. "You're crazy! Who else did I kill?" To Leo, "You listen to him? Then you're crazy, too! I never killed anybody! Only a Jap, and that was in the Army!"

"Then why are your legs shaking?" Leo asked. "Why is the sweat dripping down your cheek?"

He swiped at his cheek. Control! Self-control! He dragged a deep breath into his chest. Slow up, slow up. They can't prove a thing, not a damn thing! They know about the list, about Marion, about the pamphlets, but they can't prove a thing about . . . He drew another breath.

"Okay," he said, "I knew Dorrie. So did a dozen other guys. And I've had my eyes on the money all along the way. Where's the law against that? So there's no wedding. Okay." He straightened his jacket with stiff fingers. "Now get out of the way and let me pass. I don't feel like standing around talking to a couple of crazy lunatics."

They didn't move. They stood shoulder to shoulder six feet away.

"Move," he said.

Leo's face was like stone. "Touch the chain behind you," he said.

He didn't have to touch the chain; he just had to turn and look at it; the metal eye of the stanchion had been bent open into a loose C that barely engaged the first of the heavy links.

"We were up here when Otto was showing you around," Leo said. "Touch it."

His hand came forward, brushed the chain. It collapsed. The free end clanked to the floor; it slid rattlingly off and swung down, striking noisily against the partition.

Fifty feet below, cement floor yawned, seemed to sway. . . .

"I would rather not do it," Leo was saying. "I would rather hand you over to the police." He looked at his watch. "So I'll give you three minutes. I want something that will convince a jury, a jury that won't be able to take you by surprise and see the guilt written all over you."

"How did you get Dorothy to write the note?" Gant asked.

His hands were so tight against the partition and the stanchion that they throbbed with a leaden numbness. "You're bluffing," he said. They leaned forward to hear him. "You're trying to scare me into admitting—to something I never did."

A moment passed. "Two minutes and thirty seconds," Leo said.

Bud whirled to the right, catching the stanchion with his left hand and shouting to the men over at the converters. "Help!" he cried. "Help! Help!" He bellowed as loud as he could, waving his right arm furiously, clutching the stanchion. "Help!"

The men far off and below might as well have been painted figures; their attention was centered on a converter that was rolled forward, pouring copper.

He turned back to Leo and Gant. "You'll be killing an innocent man, that's what you'll be doing!"

"Where's the gun?" Gant asked.

"There is no gun! I never had a gun!"

Leo said, "Two minutes."

They were bluffing! They must be! He looked around desperately; the main

shaft of the catwalk, the roof, the crane tracks, the few windows, the . . . The crane tracks!

Slowly, trying not to be too obvious, he glanced to the right again. The converter had rolled back. The smoking vat before it was rising under cables that hung taut from the cab. The cab, now over two hundred feet away, would bear the vat forward, approaching along the track that passed behind and above him; and the man in the cab—a dozen feet up? four feet out?—would be able to hear! To see!

"One minute, thirty seconds," Leo said.

How could time race by so fast? "Listen," he said frantically, "listen, I want to tell you something—something about Dorrie. She . . ." He groped for something to stall them with—and then stopped, wide-eyed; there had been a flicker of movement in the dimness at the far end of the catwalk. Someone else was up here!

"Help!" he cried, his arms semaphoring. "You! Come here! Help!"

The flicker of movement became a figure hurrying along the catwalk, speeding toward them. Leo and Gant looked over their shoulders in confusion.

Oh, dear God, thank you!

Then he saw it was Marion.

Leo cried out, "For the love of heaven, Marion, go back down!"

She seemed not to hear him. She came up behind them, her face flushed and large-eyed above their shoulders.

Bud felt her gaze rake his face and then descend to his legs. Legs that were trembling again. If he only had a gun . . . "Marion," he pleaded. "Stop them! They're crazy! They're trying to kill me! Stop them! I can explain about that list, I can explain everything! I swear I wasn't lying—"

She kept looking at him.

"I love you! I swear I do! I started out thinking about the money, I admit that, but I love you! You know I wasn't lying about that!"

"*How* do I know?" she asked.

"I swear it!"

"You swore so many things." Her fingers appeared, curving over the men's shoulders; long, white, pink-nailed fingers; they seemed to be pushing.

"Marion," he begged futilely.

Suddenly he became aware of a swelling in the smelter's thunder, an added rumble. A wave of heat was spreading up his right side. The cab! He wheeled, catching the stanchion with both hands. There it was!—Not twenty feet away, grinding closer on the overhead track with the cables shooting down from its belly. Through the opening in its front end, he could see a bent head in a visored gray cap. "You!" he bellowed, his jaw muscles cording. "You in the cab! Help! You!" Heat from the oncoming vat pressed heavily against his chest. "Help! You! In the cab!" The gray cap, coming closer, never lifted. "Help!" he roared chokingly again and again.

Leo said, "The noisiest place in the smelter, up there in those cabs." He took a step forward. Gant moved up beside him. Marion followed behind.

"Look," Bud said. "Please . . ."

They came another step closer.

The catwalk dipped and bucked like a shaken blanket. The baking heat on his right began extending itself across his back. They meant it! They weren't bluffing! They were going to kill him! Moisture trickled all over him.

"All right!" he cried. "All right! She thought she was doing a Spanish translation! I wrote out the note in Spanish! I asked her to translate. . . ." His voice faded and stopped.

What was the matter with them? Their faces were warped into—into embarrassment and sick contempt, and they were looking down at . . .

He looked down. The front of his pants was dark with a spreading stain that ran in a series of island blotches down his right trouser leg. Oh, Lord! The Jap, the Jap he had killed, that wretched, trembling, pants-wetting caricature of a man—was that *him*? Was that *himself*?

The answer was in their faces.

"No!" he cried. He clapped his hands over his eyes, but their faces were still there. "No! I'm not like him!" He wheeled away from them. His foot slipped on wetness and kicked out from under him. His hands flew from his face and flailed the air. Heat blasted up at him. Falling, he saw a giant disc of glistening green sliding into place below; gaseous, restless, shimmering . . .

His scream knifed through the thunder of the smelter and ended in a viscous splash. From the other side of the vat, a sheet of green leaped up. Arcing, it sheared down to the floor where it splattered into a million pools and droplets. They hissed softly on the cement and slowly dawned from green to copper.

Kingship remained at the smelter. Gant accompanied Marion back to New York. In the plane, they sat immobile and silent.

After a while, Marion took out a handkerchief and pressed it to her eyes. Gant turned to her, his face pale. "We only wanted him to confess," he said defensively. "We weren't going to *do* it. And he *did* confess. What did he have to turn away like that for?"

The words took a long time to reach her. Almost inaudibly she said, "Don't . . ."

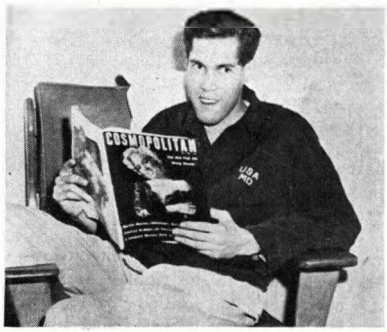
He looked at her downcast face. "You're crying," he told her gently.

She gazed at the handkerchief in her hands, saw the damp places in it. She folded it and turned to the window at her side. Quietly she said, "Not for him."

THE END

This is a condensation of the full-length novel of the same name to be published by Simon & Schuster.

The Last Word



Pfc. Raymond Medina, one of the recently returned prisoners of war back from Korea, catches up on some good reading.

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Austin, Texas: Those unfortunate enough to take seriously such pseudoscientific trash as Amram Scheinfeld's article are forced to conclude: 1. It is the men who do most of the choosing. 2. Women marry men not right for them in spite of the fact that they know such men are not right for them. 3. Women have little or nothing to say about whom they shall or shall not marry. —L. L. AINSWORTH

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