SEPTEMBER

REDBOOK

MAGAZINE

30 CENTS

Beginning A GREAT NOVEL of HUMAN HOPES

by HOWARD SPRING who wrote "My Son, My Son"

ALSO A COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

Gordon's has the Advantage of Liqueur Quality & High Proof, 94.4

Select the gin that is recognized for certain definite advantages. For all gins are not alike. In Gordon's you have the advantage of Liqueur Quality and High Proof, 94.4. This means richer flavor, velvety smoothness, drinks that never taste thin.

DRINKS NEVER TASTE THIN WITH

Gordon's Gin

HE WAS ABOUT TO WHISPER:

"Lovely Lady... Don't ever leave me!"

UNTIL, ALAS, SHE SMILED!

Don't risk the charm of your smile! Let Ipana and Massage help guard you from "Pink Tooth Brush"!

THE WORDS WERE on his lips—words to confirm what his eyes had confessed, "You're lovely—lovely! All my dreams rolled into one!"

And then—and then, poor girl, she smiled! How tragic—and how foolish to let loveliness be ruined by a dull and lifeless smile! Don't ever run this risk. Let yours be a smile of beauty... a bright and radiant smile of sparkling teeth and healthy gums.

NEVER NEGLECT YOUR GUMS! Your gums as well as your teeth need constant care. Never ignore the warning of "pink tooth brush"! The minute you see that tinge of "pink" on your tooth brush...*see your dentist right away.* And follow the advice he gives you.

"PINK TOOTH BRUSH" A WARNING! It may not mean serious trouble, but get your dentist's advice. It may merely mean that your gums, denied hard chewing by today's soft foods, have grown weak and tender. And your dentist, like so many dentists, may suggest that you give your gums the exercise they need by "the healthful stimulation of Ipana and massage."

FOR IPANA TOOTH PASTE is especially designed not only to clean teeth thoroughly but, with massage, to stimulate and help invigorate the gums. So when you brush your teeth, massage a little extra Ipana onto your gums. That pleasant "tang" you notice (exclusive with Ipana and massage) is evidence that circulation in the gums is being increased... that gums are being aided to better health.

GET A TUBE OF IPANA at your druggist's today and start the sensible practice of Ipana and massage! See how it helps your gums to become firmer, your teeth brighter, your smile more radiant and sparkling.

Get the new D.D. Tooth Brush, too! It is specially designed with a twisted handle for more thorough cleaning, more effective gum massage.

IPANA TOOTH PASTE

SEPTEMBER VOL. 75

REDBOOK MAGAZINE

1940 No. 5

EDWIN BALMER, *Editor*
Associate Editors, DONALD KENNICOTT *and* VOLDEMAR VETLUGUIN
SID L. HYDEMAN, *Art Editor*

REDBOOK'S NOVEL OF THE MONTH

REDBOOK'S NOVELETTE OF THE MONTH

REDBOOK'S ENCORE OF THE MONTH

THREE SERIALS

FIVE SHORT STORIES

THREE ARTICLES

NINE SPECIAL FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

Cover: Natural-color photograph by Ruzzie Green
Posed by Miss Josephine Caldwell — Hat by Lilly Daché
Dress by Joseph Whitehead

The short stories, serials, novel and novelette herein are fiction and intended as such. They do not refer to real characters or actual events. If the name of any living person is used, it is a coincidence.

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The Redbook Camp and School Directory will be found on pages 114 through 124

GOOD BYE DANDRUFF SYMPTOMS!

THE TREATMENT

MEN: Douse full strength Listerine Antiseptic on the scalp morning and night. **WOMEN:** Part the hair at various places, and apply Listerine Antiseptic right along the part with a medicine dropper, to avoid wetting the hair excessively.

Always follow with vigorous and persistent massage with fingers or a good hair brush. Continue the treatment so long as dandruff is in evidence. And even though you're free from dandruff, enjoy a Listerine massage once a week to guard against infection. Listerine is the same antiseptic that has been famous for more than 50 years as a mouth wash and gargle.

Soothing Listerine Treatment gives hair and scalp antiseptic bath . . . kills millions of germs associated with infectious dandruff

If infectious dandruff has got you in its grip . . . if you are constantly embarrassed by all the ugly, distressing symptoms of this stubborn disease—the humiliating flakes and scales, the itching, or even inflammation . . . here's news—*grand news!*

Listerine kills millions of germs associated with the infectious type of dandruff—an all too common form of this scalp condition. It destroys, on contact, countless numbers of these tiny, almost invisible parasites, including the queer "bottle bacillus," called Pityrosporum Ovale, which outstanding specialists recognize as a causative agent of infectious dandruff.

First Listerine treats hair and scalp to a cooling, soothing antiseptic bath. The scalp tingles and glows, ugly flakes and scales begin to go . . . inflammation and itching are alleviated. Then Listerine Antiseptic gets to work on the germs themselves. In test after test, in laboratory and clinic, Listerine Antiseptic's germicidal action brought amazingly quick results.

Improvement in 76% of Test Cases

When rabbits were inoculated with Pityrosporum Ovale in laboratory research, they quickly developed the usual dandruff symptoms. Within 14 days, on the average, these symptoms disappeared when Listerine Antiseptic was applied daily to the affected areas.

Clinical tests on men and women who used Listerine Antiseptic and massage twice a day brought even more impressive results. In one series of tests, 76% of dandruff sufferers showed either complete disappearance of or marked improvement in the symptoms of dandruff within 30 days. So, if you have the slightest sign of a dandruff condition, do not neglect what may be a real infection.

Start right now with Listerine Antiseptic and massage. Neglect may aggravate the symptoms. Lambert Pharmacal Company, *St. Louis, Mo.*

LISTERINE . . . THE MEDICAL TREATMENT THOUSANDS EMPLOY!

Miss Josephine Caldwell makes her first appearance on the cover of REDBOOK. One of the most beautiful and successful "Powers girls," she is the only one we know who is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. In her junior year she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and immediately after her graduation, she married a fellow-student. Altogether, she is a very unusual model, to say the least.

NEWS ABOUT REDBOOK

"LIKE a boy who is astonished by the profundity of his voice the first time he utters a complete half-sentence in the bass tones of manhood, Hollywood is startled by every evidence of maturity that reaches the screen. The boy likes the rasping sound that denotes the passing of adolescence, and though embarrassed, tries again; but the cinema is apt to be merely embarrassed. Following any adult display, Hollywood generally offers its apologies and presents a series of juvenile pictures to prove that the lapse was unintentional."

These lines were written by Douglas W. Churchill in his review of the screen version of Thornton Wilder's "Our Town," (June, 1940, issue of REDBOOK), but by and large, they summarized the whole philosophy of the man who selects REDBOOK's "Picture of the Month." He refuses to be overawed by "glamour." He takes with a pound of salt what the press-agents tell him, and he knows all there is to be known about the motion-picture industry. He ought to. A native of Los Angeles, he is thoroughly immune to the superlatives hurled by the counsels of public relations. An excellent reporter, he relies on his eyes and ears to guide him in his selections of our "Pictures of the Month."

Churchill makes it a rule never to hear what a publicity man has to say. "Our Town," which was released and shown to the public in the month of June, was seen by Churchill in the projection-room of United Artists the first week of March. Nobody, not even Sam Wood, the man who directed the picture, could have suspected then what a tremendous appeal the picture would exercise. And yet—once more we refer our readers to Mr. Churchill's review in our June issue—Mr. Churchill felt no hesitancy in predicting that "Our Town" would mark a milestone in the history of the screen.

"Hollywood is startled by every evidence of maturity that reaches the screen," says Douglas Churchill.

How does he do it? God only knows. The fact remains that when Mr. Wood found out that "Our Town" was selected by REDBOOK as the "Picture of the Month," he shook his head and said: "I hope that Doug Churchill is right."

A few words about the man himself. . . . Douglas Churchill is a huge fellow whom few people would take for a newspaper man. He looks like a magistrate and talks like a professor. He seldom goes to parties, not because he dislikes people but because he believes that there is such a thing as being too friendly with producers and stars. It would take the combined brains of *Sherlock Holmes* and J. Edgar Hoover to find the way to Churchill's house. Built on the top of one of the highest hills in Beverly Hills, it is connected with civilization by a dirt road which would defy Hitler's mechanized divisions. People have been known to start for Churchill's house at six o'clock in the afternoon and wind up several hours later calling for a team of mules to rescue their cars.

ONCE again we remind you of the rules and prizes of our new photographic contest.

Your time-limit is up to and including April 1, 1941; and the monthly prizes are: first prize for the expert's choice $25; the two second prizes, $10 each. First prize for the laymen's choice, $25; the two (or three) second prizes, $10 each. At the end of the year "the" photograph of the year will be selected by Mr. Green, and will be awarded a prize of $250. The laymen will also select their picture, and that will receive $250. If the expert and laymen should agree on the same picture, that picture will receive a double prize.

The contest is open to photographers of any country, except professionals, and employes of the McCall Corporation and their families. Submit as many pictures as you like at any one time, but pictures must have been made after April 1, 1940. Any type of camera or film, except glass-plate, is acceptable. Developing may be done by professional or entrant, but retouching or composite pictures are not permitted. Ten inches in the longest dimension is the largest size that may be submitted. Do not submit negatives. Pictures are judged solely on their general interest and appeal.

Prize-winners will be notified within ninety days of receipt of their entries. They must then submit the original negative with print, and sign a statement that the prize-winning picture has not been entered in any other contest or sold to any other publication. The winning of one prize does not preclude you from winning another.

Label each picture clearly on the back with your name and address, and date of picture. Print in ink. If you take a picture which includes a person or persons, be sure to get the name and address of each one, because if your picture wins a prize, the written consent of such persons to the use of the picture in a magazine must be obtained. All pictures should be titled, but editors may retitle or edit all prize-winners. *No print will be returned.* REDBOOK Magazine assumes no responsibility for negatives. Mail prints to Photo Editor, REDBOOK Magazine, 230 Park Avenue, New York, New York.

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SEPTEMBER CREDITS

"Oh, This Is Living," by Rose Franken, illustrations by Arthur William Brown: Bed-jacket and negligée by Perfect Negligée. "An Unposted Letter," by Alec Waugh, illustration by William Reusswig: Evening gown by Joseph Whitehead. "Hildreth—Her Story," by Harlow Estes, illustrations by Frank Bensing: Bathing ensemble by Polly's Park Avenue.

OUR READERS *Speak*

EACH month we will publish not less than ten letters from our readers, and will pay ten dollars for each one published. Address all letters to Editor of Letters, Redbook Magazine, 230 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y. Keep your letters within one hundred words. No letters will be returned, and all of them will become property of McCall Corporation.

Hungry Men Fight Hardest

Dear Sir:

You raise the heavy black pistol swiftly, smoothly. Not too high—remember, the belly is surest. Over the sights your target's face goes pasty, greenish. Here it comes—he knows. Caught redhanded in his sabotage, slashing from behind at the lines which his uniformed countrymen are pounding in front—who knows better than he and his countrymen how such matters are dealt with?

Easy now; squeeze that trigger—no jerk. Your target shrivels within his dusty clothes, anticipating the slow, final crumpling of the next second. And in the back of your brain, little voices begin to beat softly at you: Big brothers, scoutmasters, Y.M.C.A. physical instructors, school teachers—a hundred little voices out of all the years of your consciousness. "Fight fair," they say, "not below the belt—wait till he takes off his glasses. . . . Women and children first. . . . Never hit a man when he's down—"

Do you give the trigger that last ounce of pressure? You do not. You should, you must; it's your duty—but you can't! With your country in desperate danger, your back to the wall, you as an individual are still shackled by the rules of a century of bountiful living, physical and spiritual.

Well, break those shackles now, my countryman, before they break you and everything you own and love. For the Hungry Men are out once more, and devil take the sportsman!

From the time of the Old Testament, when scriveners first began to inscribe the gory details, the real turning-points in history have been the same. Hungry men threw away the rule-book, went up against less hungry men who knew the rules by heart and by ingrained habit, and tore those comfortable gentlemen to bleeding shreds. After which the hungry ones glutted themselves on what remained, wrote their own new rules into the book, and settled down to respectability—and eventual doom.

Take a look at the scoreboard of history! Skip the early innings—Alexander and Tamerlane, Genghis Khan and Attila the Hun. Spain ruled the world while hungry Spaniards like Cortez and Pizarro could rip with powder and steel into happy civilizations defended by wood and bronze. Her hold slipped when hungry Englishmen—Drake and Frobisher and Hawkins—applied the rulelessness of highwaymen to war at sea. It broke completely only when the hunger of her subjects reached desperation; then they rose up in hard-learned savagery under men like Bolivar and slaughtered what remained of Spanish rule—and rules!

Napoleon was indomitable while he could recruit hungry Frenchmen from a newborn people who shattered every established law of peace and war, and ground the fragments into the faces of every nation within reach. Consider him particularly; he wrote a very famous rulebook of his own, the Code Napoleon, and from that moment began to lose his mastery of force.

Germany came next. The German Empire rose and fell on the same simple formula—build a hunger in your people, an unbearable hunger for *anything* your neighbor possesses; throw away the rules and turn loose the most savage force you can conceive; slaughter and destroy and horrify until your rule-minding neighbor is helpless; then take what you want, write your own new rules of decency—and become vulnerable yourself.

That was the last—until now. World War No. 1 was no historical turning-point. Why? Because no one involved was hungry enough. World War No. 1 was a *gentlemanly* war, in that neither side really threw away the book. . . .

The lesson is clear enough. Now we have our country, our United States, for the first time in its life face to face with one of these frightful crises. The world is full of Hungry Men; we are the finest, fattest prize for such, that the world has ever seen; and they *can* get at us. They are reaching with a sure hand for the weak spots which our rules make for them. No savage, appalling rush—yet; the modern Hungry Man is cunning. He is inching, feeling, whittling a foothold here, a peephole there. The savagery will come, all right, when the tentacles have gripped firmly. How can anyone think it won't, who hasn't been blind and deaf for months?

What have we got to meet him with? We have the memory of our forefathers, our early settlers—fighters who have never been topped, man for man. But *they* were Hungry Men, remember; throwing away the rulebook to push away the native Indians, to baffle and slaughter such European-trained troops as came their way. We have a worthy record of accomplishment in World War No. 1—but that one, don't forget, was under the rules. We have Doctrines, and Policies, and Trade Agreements, a marvelous assortment of comforts, educations, and refinements—every single one of them an added handicap when we tangle with the Hungry Ones.

We have a gentlemanly and efficient

army; a navy ditto; every man knows the rules, is prepared to die under them, and quite possibly will. Back of everything we have 130 million or so of the nicest, finest people who ever lived. Do you think any one of them is safe from having his body trampled, starved, and smashed by the Hungry Men? Do you think niceness and fineness are going to stare away the savagery? If you do, ask the Czechs, the Poles, Finns, Dutch—write your own list, and don't forget the Chinese.

So what? Well, maybe we have something else; maybe we have a hunger of our own, a *hunger for decency*, which can rise within us now until we throw away *our* book and meet the others on something like equal terms. Don't you feel it rising? I do. We have the strength; we have the organization and leadership—and we have the lesson. Take a good hard look at that lesson; see yourself and your family and your possessions in the middle of it, if you can, with Hungry Men and their savage machinery all around you. If the picture makes you retch, maybe you'll spew out some of the Rights and Rules and Restraints which aid the Hungry Men more than their airplanes. Maybe if we all do it, we can raise a wave of savagery here which will meet the one coming toward us and wash it right back to where it started.

But we'd better hurry. If you don't believe *that*, ask the Belgians, the French, the English.

Carl S. Molitor,
Miami Beach, Florida.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: *Mr. Molitor's letter exceeds the length prescribed for the letters printed on these pages, but because of its timeliness and significance, we have decided to publish it.)*

Wylie Carries Maine But Loses Idaho

Dear Sir:

A story that really matters is one which in the words of Shelley *"vibrates in the memory."* To me, REDBOOK stories do go on "vibrating in the memory" because they are made of sterner stuff than the boy-meets-girl material.

It is particularly true of the stories by Philip Wylie, whose realistic philosophy hits home. His characters are people trying to find the way to fuller and more interesting lives; people confused in values yet full of determination and hope; everyday people with everyday problems—even as you and I!

Marian Carter Chapman,
Portland, Maine.

Dear Sir:

I can't understand how the mediocre "No Scandal!" was printed in REDBOOK. The occasional flashes of wit and bits of good analysis did not compensate for the contradictions and the utterly fatuous idea of Midwestern concepts of love.

The worst contradiction was Jim Windon, who though a thoroughly virile man, allowed his wife to lead him by the nose. Mr. Wylie should have created Jim a sissy or else permitted him to give Pauline a sound beating.

Mrs. Frank L. Cobb,
Kellogg, Idaho.

(Please turn to page 93)

Test your Hollywood Knowledge . . .

She can't sit down! Movie stars rest by reclining against padded leaning-boards . . . to avoid wrinkled skirts. And to avoid "tell-tale" bulges, glamorous women of Hollywood do just what *most* American women do . . . choose Kotex sanitary napkins! For Kotex has flat, form-fitting ends that never show . . . the way stubby-end napkins do.

Save your sympathy! That skyline is a painted backdrop . . . that parapet only thirty inches off the studio floor! For safety of the stars is of major importance to movie makers. And *your* safety is of major importance to the makers of Kotex! That's why a moisture-resistant *"protection-panel"* is placed between the soft folds of every Kotex pad.

It's nip and tuck to make the stars look slim . . . for the camera adds pounds to their appearance! So costume designers use folds instead of bunchy gathers. To avoid bunchiness—Kotex also is made in soft *folds*, (with more absorbent material where needed . . . less where it isn't). This explains why Kotex *is less bulky* than pads having loose, wadded fillers!

In Hollywood—as elsewhere—stockings come in 3 different lengths . . . And Kotex in 3 different sizes: *Junior—Regular—Super!* So you can get a size that's exactly right for *you!* (Or you can vary the pad to suit different days!) Get Kotex in all 3 sizes this month . . . and treat yourself to honest-to-goodness comfort! Why not? *All 3 sizes sell for the same low price!*

"You scarcely know you're wearing Kotex"

Trade Mark Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

● FEEL ITS NEW SOFTNESS . . . PROVE ITS NEW SAFETY . . . COMPARE ITS NEW FLATTER ENDS

Elmer Davis, one of the best known radio newscasters, begins his day by studying the ever-changing map of Europe.

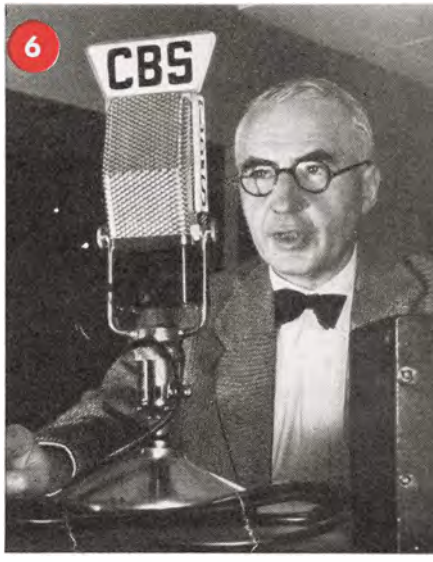
Mr. Davis enters the news-room of the Columbia Broadcasting System and spends a while examining the latest dispatches.

A teletype machine is a feature of the news-department of a big network. It brings a steady flow of news, comments, denials.

His information gathered and digested, Mr. Davis settles at his typewriter and begins writing the manuscript of his broadcast.

Richard Carver Wood

Just about to go on the air, he studies a last-minute dispatch brought to him by one of his assistants. It looks important!



An experienced newspaper-man, a writer of short stories and essays, Mr. Davis says it "all" in five short minutes.

THEY FOUGHT THE WAR ON AMERICAN AIR

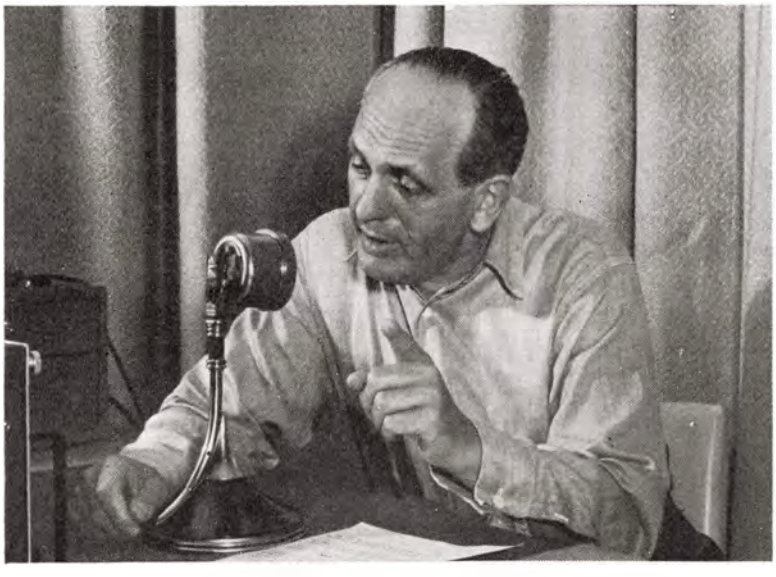
THE tragic summer of 1940 will be long remembered by our newscasters and radio commentators. After a decade spent in learning how to pronounce the names of Chinese war-lords, Japanese statesmen, Ethiopian generals, Spanish Loyalists and Nationalists, Polish refugees, Finnish towns, Bolshevik agitators, Lithuanian presidents, Latvian and Estonian plenipotentiaries, Danish ships in distress and Norwegian Fifth Columnists, the gentlemen of the air faced their crucial test shortly after midnight of May tenth. . . . Looking back at the fury and turmoil of the past few months, one cannot help but admire the gentlemen of the air. It was because of their efforts that a housewife of Spokane, Washington, was aware of the latest developments in Europe hours and hours ahead of the best-informed private citizens of London.

On this and the following three pages we publish photographs of some of the men to whom you were listening in your living-rooms while a civilization was dying in Europe.

THEY FOUGHT THE WAR ON AMERICAN AIR *(Continued)*

Tall and burly, with broad shoulders and a booming voice, Major George Fielding Eliot is a "natural" for a military expert.

H. V. Kaltenborn, who started his career in Wisconsin in the building-material business, says: "The picture across the Atlantic reminds me of the day our yard was hit by a cyclone."



Gabriel Heatter, one of radio's foremost personalities, is known for his change of pace, vibrantly dramatic voice, and a knack for mixing the major news with colorful "human interest" stories.

Johannes Steel is a naturalized American who speaks eight languages. His selective audience appreciates his understanding of European affairs.

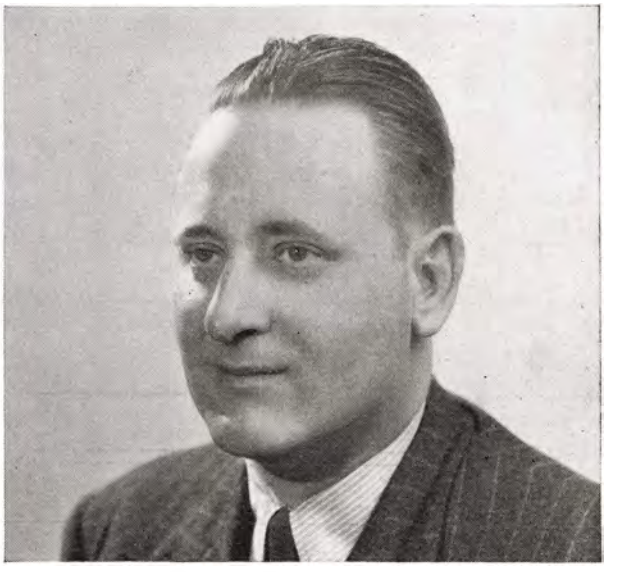
A former foreign correspondent who scored many a "scoop" in 1914-1918, Raymond Gram Swing's is one of the air's best-known voices.

Although Paul Sullivan specializes in foreign news, he is the only network analyst stationed west of the Hudson River. As American as an ice-cream cone, he sticks to Louisville, Kentucky.

The voice of William Hillman comes from London late in the evening. His summary is the "night-cap" of the radio.

Thomas Grandin (right) and Eric Sevareid (left) used to send spot news from Paris. When next heard from, they were broadcasting from Bordeaux, then the seat of the French Government.

A veteran of radio in Europe, Edward R. Murrow has seen his job change from bringing a quaint broadcast from a country pub in England, to covering the Blitzkrieg.



John Gunther (author of "Inside Europe" and "Inside Asia") is as firmly established on the air as his books are on the list of national best-sellers.

A former diplomat and banker, Frederick Bate is now representing the National Broadcasting Company in Europe. He broadcasts from London.

William L. Shirer's is the toughest job of all. He broadcasts from Berlin. He battles daily with the German censors and sometimes gets their O.K. only at the very last moment.

THEY FOUGHT THE WAR ON AMERICAN AIR *(Continued)*

Robert Waldrop is one of the three "Esso Reporters." He does not comment or elaborate. He gives straight news, as it comes, and lets the audience reach their own conclusions.

A former newspaper-man, editor and columnist, Fulton Lewis, Jr., concentrates his activities on his daily fifteen-minute broadcast from Washington.

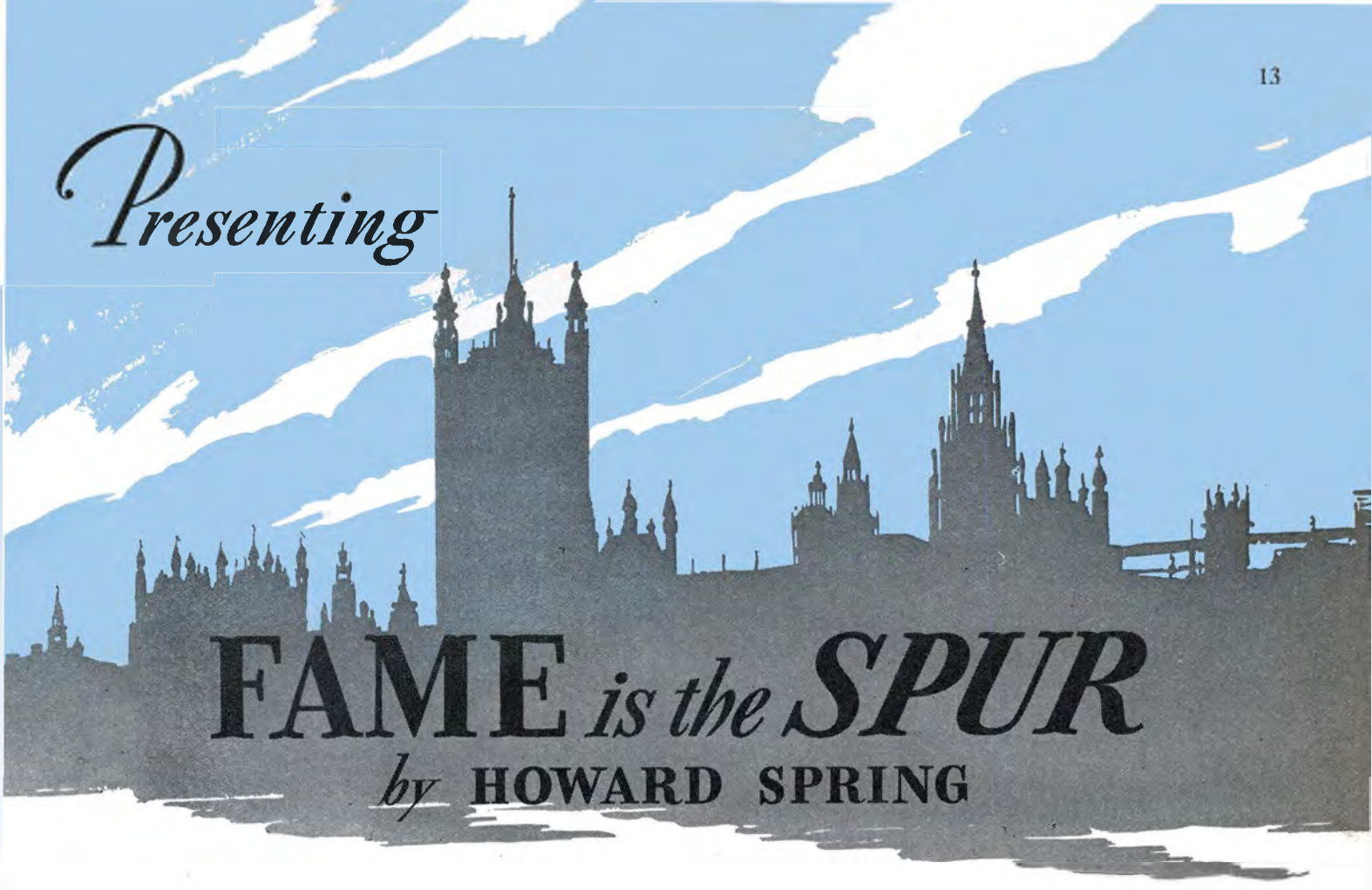
Arthur Hale, the voice behind WOR-Mutual's "Confidentially Yours," is an accomplished pianist. He says he actually likes announcing.

William Spargrove's name is never mentioned on the air. He is introduced as an "Esso Reporter." Like his other two colleagues, he is not supposed to deviate or "reason why."

Kastan

John Fraser is the third member of the Esso trio. His is also a case of satisfied anonymity. Nobody asks him for an autograph, but millions listen to him every day.

Frank King Singiser, Jr., WOR's emphatic newscaster, comes from Minnesota. He attended Brown University and studied voice in Boston.



Presenting

FAME *is the* SPUR

by HOWARD SPRING

"Fame Is the Spur" is a great novel. Not only because its author, Howard Spring, is a master craftsman and a natural story-teller, but because of its utmost significance. As a rule, comparisons are meaningless, but there is no doubt that "Fame Is the Spur" does for the present-day England what Galsworthy's "Forsyte Saga" did for the prosperous, comfortable and unchallengeable England of yesteryear. On the occasion of the appearance of "Swan Song," that volume of the "Forsyte Saga" in which "the man of property," *Soames Forsyte,* met his untimely death while rescuing his art treasures from a burning house, the austere London *Times* wrote on its editorial page: "Mr. *Soames Forsyte* is dead. . . . We shall never see the like of him again." On the occasion of the appearance of "Fame Is the Spur," every newspaper will be justified in saying: "The world that existed up to May 10, 1940, is no more. It was shot to pieces by Hitler's diving planes, bombers and tanks."

Galsworthy wrote in his "Forsyte Saga" of a way of living that never recovered from the first World War and that collapsed on the night of the Armistice. Howard Spring is writing of another way of living, a way of living that managed to survive the first World War but was crushed under the feet of the Nazi invaders.

Had Mr. Spring's novel appeared last winter when we were still hoping that somehow and in some way the world of the mad 1920's and the disillusioned 1930's would succeed in muddling through, it would have been just as much of a success as it is bound to be now. But in the winter of 1939-'40, "Fame Is the Spur" would have been merely a great novel. Now it sounds like a requiem.

To every generation, its measure. The England of Howard Spring has no more in common with the England of Galsworthy than the background of the author of "Forsyte Saga" has with that of the author of "Fame Is the Spur." John Galsworthy was what is known in England as an "Edwardian"—a gentleman of the old school, a man of property, product of a proud civilization that expected to go on and on. Born into a well-to-do and distinguished family, Galsworthy never knew privation. After his graduation from college, he practiced law for a while, then discovered that he was destined to be a writer, not a barrister. Howard Spring, on the other hand, was born into a Manchester family which could afford little more than the sheer necessities of life. He had to fight both for his living and his education, and he owes his present position to no one but himself.

For a number of years he worked on a London newspaper, first as a reporter, later as a book-reviewer. Then he began writing fiction. Previous to the appearance of his tremendously successful "My Son, My Son!", none of his novels made the list of national best-sellers. In other words, recognition and all that it implies came to Howard Spring too late in life to spoil him, as it often spoils those precocious youngsters who wake up one morning to find the whole world at their feet.

"My Son, My Son!" was the story of a personal tragedy: a father born in the slums of Manchester sacrifices everything in order to spare his only child the hunger and the privations of his own youth. "Fame Is the Spur" is the story of a tragedy that befell a civilization. Although its main characters are three boys who live to see their ambitions fulfilled, its real protagonist is the world which all of us have known: Lords and laborers, agitators and philosophers, politicians and dreamers, saints and knaves, heroes and cowards—we watch them all marching forward toward an inevitable climax. The birth of the Labor party in England, the suffragette movement, the war that was supposed to end all wars, the dreams of eternal peace, the bitter disillusionment of the years of depression, the rehearsal in Spain, the two years of appeasement, the cavalcade of the nations that are no more—you will find them all in Howard Spring's novel. Read it carefully, and you will hear the roar of the future. —The Editors

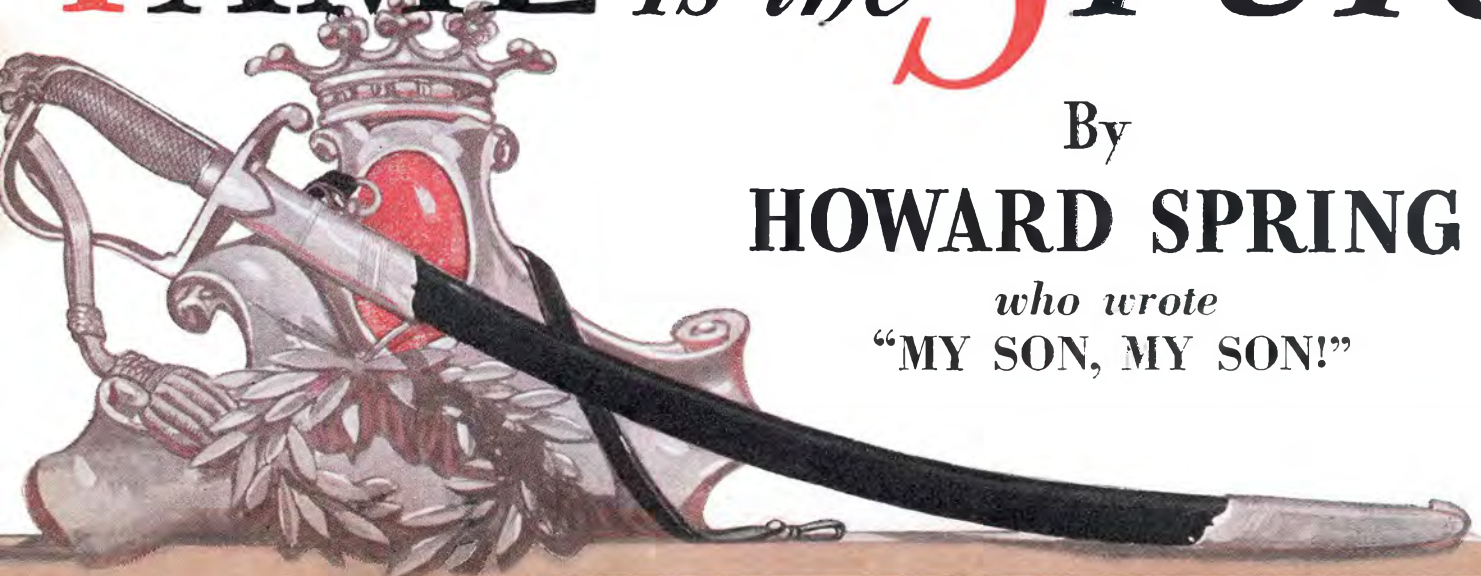
FAME *is the* SPUR

By

HOWARD SPRING

who wrote

"MY SON, MY SON!"



"God alone saved me from murder. I aimed a blow that would have cut him in two."

WHEN they buried the Old Warrior, there was only one small wreath to go on the coffin; so, as the hearse stood there in the narrow street, with the two black horses drooping their heads under the leaden winter weather, someone ran back into the house and brought out the cavalry saber that hung over the mantelpiece. This was laid on top of the flowers.

John Hamer Shawcross never forgot that moment. Years afterward, on the other side of a gulf well-nigh incredible, he watched a uniformed and bearded King place with a kid-gloved hand a wreath of flowers at the foot of a cenotaph gleaming whitely under the pale blue of a London winter sky. Soldiers in formal lines, and beyond the soldiers the dense press of the people in Whitehall; and here, in front of the cenotaph, an open space yellow as the seashore with clean strewed sand. The air was cold, and the sun shone palely, and so great was the silence that the whickering of banners could be heard, and the passage of a pigeon's wing. You could hear, too, the crunch of the spurred royal boot on the harsh texture of the sand as the King stepped forward a few paces, leaned the tall wreath against the tall white stone, stepped back, and saluted. And as he stood there with his colleagues of the Government within the wide cleared space, dressed in his formal clothes, holding his silk hat in his hand, with the people away back there behind the barrier of the soldiers, with the King's sons here about him, and with a queen and princesses looking on from a near-by window, the Right Honourable Hamer Shawcross saw again the day when he was twelve years old, and a meaner wreath than this lay upon the coffin of the Old Warrior, and someone ran into the house in Broadbent Street and brought out the cavalry saber.

Soon the bugles were blowing reveille, reminding the Right Honourable Hamer Shawcross, P.C., M.P., that there was so much to do, so much to do.

THE house in Broadbent Street was very small. The houses were in a row, with no division between them, and they had no gardens. The front doors opened right off the street, and if you went through one of them, you were in a narrow passageway with the stairs in front of you, going straight up between walls, with no handrails. Downstairs, there were two rooms: the front room and the kitchen, and behind the kitchen was a back-kitchen which you could hardly call a room.

Upstairs, there were two bedrooms. Ever since he could remember, little John Shawcross—no Hamer about it in those days—had shared the back bedroom with the Old Warrior. His mother

A GREAT NOVEL OF HUMAN HOPES

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days....

Milton: "Lycidas."

and Gordon Stansfield, his stepfather, slept in the other. The Old Warrior had a large bed with fine brass knobs on the posts, and young John had a low pallet against the wall. Between them they filled the room. Often the child would awaken early and steal to the side of the old man's bed and gaze spellbound at the wild disordered beard spreading over the counterpane, and the gnarled hands, ridged with hard violet veins, sometimes clenching and unclenching, as though in sleep he were again engaged in the exploits because of which, while still living, he was already a legend.

There were not many people in Ancoats then, whose memories went back to 1819. So far as the Old Warrior knew, there were none at all. He was within two years of eighty when he died. There had been a time when he would look round the circle in which he happened to find himself, and see the nodding heads and hear the murmuring voices which confirmed his story. But for long now he had been taken on trust, and those who listened to him noted an embellishment here and there, as a man, looking back to the home of his childhood, will, as it recedes farther and farther down the years, add to the height of its trees and prolong the golden splendor of its summer evenings.

BUT of the main facts there was no doubt. They were written in history. Always, with a hand that increasingly trembled, old Etchells, or the Old Warrior as they called him, would prelude his story by taking down the saber from the wall. It hung over the mantelpiece in the kitchen, which was the family living-room in Broadbent Street, the loop of the hand-grip resting upon a nail, another nail supporting the end of its curved shining length.

It was always to young John Shawcross a magnificent moment when the old man got up to unhook the saber. It was usually when someone had looked in, for Gordon Stansfield was a hospitable man who liked to see a friend or two about him. It was a lovely home, that little house in Broadbent Street, for Gordon's wife, Ellen, who was John Shawcross' mother, would have worked her fingers to the bone for the quiet man with the brown twinkling eyes who had put that roof over her head when, God knows, she had needed a roof and love beneath it.

She had found that, and she made Gordon's house her Hallelujah Chorus, with its shining brass and steel, its scoured floors, its winking fire, its red curtains, which seemed, of a winter's night, to be contentment's very wings, drawn and protective about the hearth. To one side of the fire was an old leather armchair, its crimson faded to a homely brown, its resilience undermined so that it no longer buoyed up a sitter, but accepted him and absorbed him into its amorphous and decrepit amplitude.

Gordon bought the chair when the Old Warrior came to live with him; he was a brother of Gordon's mother, and he had outlived most of his generation. He was beyond working, an old man who had never saved a penny, and no one else cared whether he went to the workhouse or the devil. So Gordon bought the chair, and the big bed with the brass knobs that was now in the back bedroom, and then he invited old Etchells to make his home in Broadbent Street.

He arrived on a winter night, with a spare pair of boots and a clean shirt wrapped in a large red handkerchief, and the naked saber gleaming in his hand. Before he would settle down, he demanded a hammer and two nails. He fixed the saber over the mantelpiece, and there it had remained, for ten years now, undisturbed save when Ellen took it down every Saturday morning and laid it among the kitchen knives to be cleaned with a cork dipped in moistened powder of bath-brick, or on those occasions when the old man himself told the story of how he came to possess it. . . .

He was so old and done with and finished; and there was the saber, as old as he was, shining with a bright menace like a flame that might yet begin a conflagration.

And sometimes the flame that was in the saber would be in the old man's eyes when occasion led him to speak of 1819. He had told the tale so often that he never stumbled in its telling, not even now in the days of his last decrepitude. It ran down the grooves of his memory as easily as a ship launched on a greased slipway. He would evoke the gay break of the morning of that August day when he was a boy of twenty, a boy in love going out to meet his girl. He laid the saber on the table under the lamp, and it shone like a curve of solid light.

"No, you wouldn't think it to look at me now, but I was a grand lad at twenty. There wasn't much to eat for the likes of me, I can tell you, in those days; but I had big bones, and I was six foot three."

He held out his thin, old man's wrists, looked at the hands dangling at the ends of them, and shook his head.

"Emma had asked me to breakfast," he said.

He always used those words, and no one knew who that Emma was who had waited for her grand lad on the sunshiny morning so long ago.

"She wore gingham," he said, "a gingham gown, and there was a red ribbon in her hair. She didn't wear a hat. She was a little bit of a thing, not up to my shoulder; and when she wanted to kiss me, she'd stand on my feet and then get on tiptoe. We worked in the same mill, but we didn't go to work that day. None of us did. It was like a holiday. That was the funny thing about it. It was like a holiday to begin with: all fun, what with the bands and the singing and us all wearing our best. . . .

"Emma's mother wasn't up. We had breakfast just to our two selves, with a bit o' kissing; and then Emma pinned a rosette in my coat and we went to join the others.

"This was in Middleton, and there was Sam Bamford wearing green leaves in his hat and trying to shove everybody into order. 'Come on, you two handsome ones,' Sam said. 'You'll look a treat at the head of a column.' And he took me and Emma by the arms and stuck us in front of a lot of lads and lasses from our mill. 'Let's have law and order,' Sam said. 'March as if you meant it, an' sing as if you meant it, but behave yersens.'

"'What's it all about, Sam?' I said; and Sam said: 'Keep yer ear-oils open when you get there, and you'll know.' And then, more quiet, he said: 'It's about bread, lad, and about liberty, an' that's why you've got to act like sensible chaps and behave yersens.' And with that, off he goes and tells the band to begin."

SO there they were, rolling down the gritty road to Manchester, the Old Warrior—young then, in his strength—and his girl Emma who wasn't up to his shoulder and wore gingham and a red ribbon in her hair. It was a gay procession, with the band playing, the sun shining on the men in their Sunday best and the girls with their ribbons; and they all sang as Sam Bamford, who knew so well how to write their songs, had told them to.

And as the miles went by, the procession swelled, as here and there an odd enthusiast, and from side-roads regular marching bands, linked on, and the dust rose up from thousands of marching feet and dimmed the laurels in Bamford's hat.

"And we were only the beginning of it," the Old Warrior would say. "Thousands and thousands of 'em, marching with their bands and banners down all the roads into Manchester. I never saw so many people in all my life. Children, too, dancing along as they always will when there's music and a march. You couldn't move in Mosley Street—not if you wanted to move backwards, that is. You had to go on now, and Emma was tired and hanging on to my arm, and I ended up by fair carrying her into St. Peter's Field."

There they were, then, those thousands upon thousands of Lancashire working-folk, men, women and children, milling and shouting in the field that still stood open in the heart of the town. A holiday crowd for the most part, some of them intent, but not too seriously, on hearing what the speakers would have to say about this improbable question of their lives being made a little more

Illustrated by TOM WEBB

bearable; and a few blackly set on a desperate venture. The bands brayed; the people shouted and cheered in front of the wagons from which they were to be addressed; and the hot August sun burned down.

"There were two lovely white horses," old Etchells would say. "We squeezed back to let them go by, and they had to go so slow that Emma patted the one nearest to us. It was Orator Hunt going up to the platform in his carriage, and he had a woman with him, all in white, with a red cap on her head. It looked very pretty."

Ah, poor Warrior! The Cap of Liberty, and one or two such symbols—see that banner with the skull and crossbones!—did not look pretty to the magistrates safely secluded in a room above the heated cheering crowd. There was on the old man's face a look of pain and astonishment, as though a lifetime had not wiped out the emotions of that dark moment.

"WE didn't know!" he cried. "We never guessed!" But they knew then, with the gray rounded rumps of the horses pushing among them, with the sabers rising and falling.

"There were so many of us, we couldn't move; and they came at us like mad. I thought at first they were just trying to clear us out, till I heard a woman shriek and saw the blood rush out of her mouth as she opened it. Even with that, her mouth spouting red, she managed to shout: 'Dragoons! Dragoons! Get Annie out of it!' And then she fell and they went over her.

"My God, the shrieks and yells! They came from all round us, and from the ground under our feet where poor devils had fallen and were being trampled by men and horses. I wasn't afraid—"

The Old Warrior's eyes caught a hint of fire as he looked round the small circle of his hearers in the warm Ancoats kitchen. "No, my friends, I was not afraid. I used to wonder sometimes what I should feel if I found myself in a great danger, and now I knew. I was angry, not excited, but angry with a cold furious anger. I said to Emma: 'Get behind me, luv. I'll shove a way out for you.' And I was ready to smash and kill anyone who stopped me. 'Keep hold of my coat, luv,' I said, 'an' then I'll know you're there.' And I pushed on with my big oak stick in my hand.

"I pushed through everyone: bleeding men, and women with their clothes torn off them, and whimpering children, and wounded people down on their knees or flat on the ground. I wasn't thinking about any of them. The sweat was pouring down into my eyes, and I was thinking: 'A soldier! Let me meet a soldier!'

"And there he was, coming at us. The crowd had loosened. You could hear their wailing spreading out and away, and there was a clear space, and this

"Well, don't keep it here, where I'll have it all day under my eyes," Ellen commanded.

soldier coming across it on a gray horse. I saw his empty scabbard clicking at his side, and the saber red with blood in his hand, and I rushed to meet him, shouting: 'Damn you! You're a poor man like us. What are you doing? What are you doing?'

"I waved my stick, and I could hear the leather creaking in the saddle and see the shine of his lovely boots. And then, when I was on him, his horse reared up, and I could see its front hoofs dangling over my head with the shoes gleaming, and the big veins in its belly. I struck upward with my stick and hit the beast in the belly; and then Emma shrieked and pulled me backwards. I slipped in some blood and fell, and when the hoofs came pounding down, I thought I was done for. But they missed me, and I lay there for a second with the dark arch of the horse over me; and then I saw the saber sweeping past the side of the arch and a spurt of blood hit me in the face. Then the horse was gone, and there was Emma lying on the ground."

The old man's voice trembled. His hands trembled on the arms of the chair. "She was dead. The blood was spurting out of her neck."

He didn't speak for a moment; then he said simply: "He had cut through her hair at the side of her head, the bit she had tied the ribbon on. I picked it up and put it in my pocket. There was nothing I could do for her then. I went to find the soldier."

He found him spurring his horse into a desperate mass of fustian and corduroy, gingham and shawls and ribbon, found him with his arm again uplifted to strike. "I whirled my staff—good solid oak it was—and you could hear his elbow crack like a broken stick when I hit it. My anger was not cold now. God alone saved me from murder—from murdering the man. I was fair blind. The saber fell on the field, and I picked it up, dropping the stick from my hand. I swung it round my head and aimed at the middle of him with a blow that would have cut him in two. He dug his spurs into his horse, and the beast gave a sideways leap that ended my blow in the empty air. Then the soldier pulled him round and fled with one arm dangling at his side as though it were tied on with string.

"I was finished. All of a sudden I was done for, no more fight left in me. I felt weak and wretched, and saw that the field was nearly empty, except for the groaning people lying on the ground. I went back to look for Emma, but I couldn't find her anywhere; and it wasn't till I was wandering down Mosley Street that I realized I was still carrying the saber. A man went hurrying by me. 'Drop it, chum; throw it away,' he said. 'If they cop you with that, you're done.' And then I saw that I had the saber in my hand.

"It was dangerous to keep it. Thousands of panic-stricken people were hurrying now down all the streets that led away from St. Peter's Field. They were hurrying to hide themselves, as though they, God help us, were the sinners who had committed some crime. The dragoons were harrying them here and there, still shouting and striking, and the police were everywhere.

"But I knew I wanted to keep that saber. I didn't know rightly what Sam Bamford meant about bread and liberty, and goodness knows whether I should have understood what Orator Hunt was talking about if they had let him talk. But I knew that this saber had something to do with it. I knew that all us simple thousands, slashed and trampled by the soldiers, had something to do with it.

"So I slipped into my brother's little barber's shop in Oldham Street, and we hid the saber there. And there it stayed for many a day."

The Old Warrior gazed, almost with affection, at the curved, shining length of steel. "A symbol," he said. "Not much now to me." He shook his head, and his beard trembled. "And not much to you," he said, looking with affection out of his watery eyes at Gordon Stansfield, kindly and placid on the other side of the hearth. "No, not much to you, you man of peace."

Then he turned his old head slowly toward young John Hamer Shawcross, sitting spellbound beside the lamp. "But what about him, eh?" he asked. "What about this young shaver? You've got a long way to go, young feller. You'll see things—many strange things. A symbol might help you to sort 'em out. Gordon, there, is a man of God." There was a hint of rarely permitted raillery in the Old Warrior's voice. "He will tell you, 'They that take the sword shall perish by the sword.' Well, there's a sword from the field of Peterloo. Think on, lad."

AND now the tale would be told no more. The Old Warrior was in his coffin, and little John Shawcross stood in the parlor with his nose against the window-pane watching for the arrival of the hearse. He always felt proud that he lived in Broadbent Street, because Broadbent Street was different from any other street he had seen. On one side were the houses, on the other a wall breast-high, behind which oozed the slow waters of a canal with the high soot-caked brick front of a factory rising beyond it. Young Shawcross, who liked browsing among the few books that Gordon Stansfield possessed, had once come upon a picture of Venice, with fretted balconies, flower-hung, breaking the façades of old palaces dreaming above the water; and often of a winter night, when the raw damp air of Ancoats was favorable to illusion, and a light fell here and there with a diffused blur upon the water, he would imagine that Broadbent Street was as near to Venice as makes no difference, especially if you could shut your eyes to everything else and concentrate upon the flow of the water under the smooth round arch of the hump-backed bridge away toward the end of the street.

The coping of the wall that divided street from canal was a favorite place for the boys of Broadbent Street and the district round about to sit and talk; and standing now at the window, John saw that Arnold Ryerson and Tom Hannaway were there,

The pair were dressed for church. "By the time we are back, be out of this house," said the woman.

"I'd like to say a word of prayer," Gordon said . . . . and before the meager fire the three knelt.

looking with intense interest at a place so romantic as to contain a corpse.

Although John's nose was to the windowpane, he could not see much, because the blind was down. He could see only the narrow strip of territory revealed by drawing the blind slightly to one side. He wished he might pull the blind up, so that Tom Hannaway and Arnold Ryerson could see him properly. He was wearing a new black suit, and he hoped that his face was pale and interesting with grief. He felt no grief at all; but that was no reason why he should not hope to appear grief-stricken.

He was a thin, undersized boy, with a face that was almost white. His forehead was beautiful—smooth and splendidly proportioned—with black curling hair falling slantwise across it, and large eyes, so dark as almost to be black, shining below the thick straight brows. Small as he was, his appearance was further diminished by the rounded stoop of his shoulders. He looked almost humpbacked, and the boys called him Charley, because he had a Charley on his back. He hated the nickname the more because he was too weak to fight, and he didn't see why a back like his should excite derision. In his own mind it was held to be interesting.

He pulled the blind a little aside and looked again into the street. A few women were leaning now against the wall on which the boys sat. They made quite an audience.

Aware of the eyes watching him with the sympathy that goes out always to the bereaved, John Shawcross paused for a moment to gaze profoundly at the pavement, then raising his head and, with a swift sweeping gesture that was to endure for a lifetime, putting back the hair from his forehead, he saw the two black horses drawing the hearse round the corner of the street. . . .

The cab was an old four-wheeler, smelling of mildew and moldy leather. Gordon, who had a mortal fear of cold, pulled up the window, leaned back, and took John's hand in his. He did not speak as they went at a slow trot through the lugubrious Manchester streets, with the gray sky pressing down upon them, and no tree, no open space, greeting the eye anywhere. Brick, stone, windows, chimneys, pallid people pausing on the pavements to stare at the black horses and the yellow flowers and the unaccustomed note that the saber gave to a spectacle not otherwise unfamiliar.

"What's a symbol, Father?" the boy asked suddenly. Gordon had always been "Father" to him, and the Old Warrior had been "Grandfather," though in law neither was anything of the sort. "What did Grandfather mean when he said his sword was a symbol?"

"A symbol," Gordon patiently explained. "is a material thing to remind us of some condition. A royal crown is a symbol that the man who wears it has the condition of kingship. This ring," he said, extending his left hand, seamed with work, blunt-nailed, "is a symbol that your mother and I are in the condition of marriage. I suppose what your Grandfather meant when he called that saber a symbol was that it represented a condition of warfare existing between two sets of men."

"What sets of men?" the boy asked.

"Well," said Gordon, who was ever, as the Old Warrior had called him, a man of peace, "I suppose your Grandfather would have said between men like him and men like those who turned the soldiers on the people at Peterloo."

The boy said no more. The cab windows by now were misted over with condensed breath. He could hardly see through them, and he was content to sit there holding Gordon Stansfield's hand in the comfortable stuffy obscurity. It was a hard, knotted hand, but there had never been a time, so far as John Shawcross could remember, when he hadn't liked to hold it and feel comfort flowing into him from it. . . .

The hearse and the cab had halted in front of a chapel, soiled, like everything the eye rested upon, with thick black accretions; and standing there on ground that rose a little, John could see the melancholy funereal landscape, dotted with recumbent stones, and upright crosses, and angelic monuments, reaching through the dun afternoon to the surrounding impingement of the town: line upon line of smoking chimneys and mean roofs, with a tall mill stack soaring here and there into the sky which already was darkening before the onrush of a premature night.

Already the coffin was out of the hearse. Its few flowers made a little yellow gleam that seemed no more effective than a candlelight to disperse the immense darkness of the cemetery. Balanced on four shoulders, the coffin was moving ahead, following a minister who had been waiting under the porch of the chapel, and who now went forward with long swinging strides, as though anxious to have an unpleasant business over and done with. Gordon took off his hat; and he and the boy, hand-in-hand, followed the coffin. A little wind had arisen, enough to catch the words flying out of the minister's mouth and blow them like distracted birds about that desolate and stricken field.

THERE was not far to go. Soon they left the gravel path and trod upon the wet grass, threading deviously in and out of mounds and monuments, and so came to a new gash in the earth, piled round with yellow glucous clay. John was not aware of what the minister was saying. Gripping Gordon Stansfield's hand with an intensity of emotion, he was aware only of that deep narrow hole, and of the men taking the flowers and the saber and laying them to one side before they passed ropes under the coffin and stood there with the box that contained the Old Warrior held back from the abyss only by those cords that were stained with clay like the hands that held them. Then the ropes began to slip through the hands, and he could hear the rasping sound of them. and presently saw the tension on them slacken. He wanted to step forward and gaze down into that hole in the ground, but he dared not. Instead, he let go Gordon's hand *(Please turn to page 103)*

OH, THIS IS *Living*

A STORY OF CLAUDIA AND DAVID

by

ROSE FRANKEN

CLAUDIA sat up in bed and said: "I'm stagnating."

David didn't say anything; he seemed sound asleep. Claudia glanced at her watch. Just three minutes before seven-thirty. It wouldn't hurt him to wake up three minutes earlier. Besides, he'd soon be awake anyway, for she could hear Bobby's shrill voice in the kitchen, nagging Bertha for his breakfast. Not that Bobby was hungry—he hated breakfast; but he was at the age when he rose at six o'clock, importantly harried because he was going to be late for school. He probably inherited his urgency from David, who made a fetish of being early—or maybe it was just childhood; Claudia could remember that she'd been the same way at Bobby's age.

At this stage of her life, however, six o'clock seemed like the middle of the night, and she adored breakfast. This morning she sniffed with enthusiasm the rich dark fragrance of coffee, intertwined with the beautiful smell of bacon, frying to a curly crisp. The bacon was getting under David's skin too, so to speak; he sighed and shifted to his back. Claudia looked down at him. He slept becomingly—his lips neatly together, and his manners just as refined as if he were awake. She felt that she couldn't bear being married to a man who jerked and made funny noises as soon as he became unconscious. She often wondered how she looked when she was asleep, but it was one of those things that you could never know—like seeing if the light was out when the ice-box was shut. David told her that she slept with her mouth wide open like a fish, but she was sure she didn't.

Sitting up in bed, she could see herself in the mirror above the bureau on the opposite side of the room. It was the sort of a bureau she'd never care to own—it wasn't curly maple, but it looked as if it might have been, with a little encouragement. The whole apartment was just what you'd expect a furnished apartment to be, but every cloud has a silver lining, and this one had a double bed in the master-bedroom. When David had found that he'd have to spend the winter in New York, there hadn't been much time to look around for an apartment, and in their hurried search, this was literally the only home they'd seen where husband and wife apparently slept together.

"The ceilings are unusually high," Claudia had murmured, glancing about.

"Three exposures," David had approved.

Neither of them had mentioned the double bed.

"We were fools," David had said merely, the morning after the day they moved in.

"You were the architect," Claudia reminded him bitterly.

"It wasn't a question of architecture. You said that twin beds were more sanitary."

"Don't be silly. That was modesty. After all, you were practically a stranger to me. The least you could have done was to argue the point."

"I never argue with ladies," David had returned virtuously. "But of course," he'd amended, "I had no way of knowing that you weren't a lady."

"Were you disappointed when you found out I wasn't?"

"If there were more wives and fewer ladies—" David had answered obliquely.

"There wouldn't be so many what-you-may-call-its," Claudia had finished with dispatch.

WITH heavy creaks, Bobby tiptoed to the door and whispered in a hoarse shout: "Is Daddy asleep?"

"If I was, I'm not," David roared, and reached out his arms like an octopus, swooping Bobby onto the bed and jumbling them all up together.

"You lunatic!" Claudia scolded. "Now look what you've done—you've made Bobby's nose bleed!"

Bobby was at once pleased and startled. He felt of his nose, and then gasped at the crimson stain upon his finger. He almost wept in self-pity, until David discovered it was only grape jelly. "Little boys are starving," he reprimanded severely, "and you waste good jelly on your nose. —I smell coffee," he broke off. He swung his long legs out of bed, and pulled Claudia willy-nilly after him.

"Oh, David, stop it!" she protested. "I hate people who wake up all full of good humor."

"Sunday I can take you home!" David cried, jubilance in his voice. "Dr. Rowfield says you won't even need a nurse!"

Illustrated by
ARTHUR WILLIAM
BROWN

"I'll be late for school," Bobby remembered, and scurried importantly from the room He looked very well and happy, Claudia remarked to herself—as if his world were all in order.

"Divorce must be awful for children," she said, trailing after David.

"Raises hob with the division of the toys," he agreed.

"Fool—"

"Well, that's what you said. Are you going to get out of here before I shave, or not?"

"Not."

"Then keep away from the washstand. And that's my toothbrush."

"Don't flatter yourself. I wasn't going to use it."

He snuffled into a basin of water the way she loved to see him do it, and tumbled his face around in a towel.

"What'd you say, before?" he asked through it.

"Before when?" she replied through tooth-paste.

"Just before. In bed. You were—what?"

"I wasn't anything."

"Yes you were. You said you were suffocating, or something."

A light came over her. "Oh, that!" She turned on him. "So you really weren't asleep, after all. You just let me talk to the wind."

"Naturally I wasn't asleep after you woke me up."

"Why didn't you answer, then?"

"What was there to answer?"

"You could at least say yes or no. And I didn't say I was suffocating; I said I was stagnating. Which amounts to the same thing, really."

"So?" David thrust the towel over a rack, and opened the medicine-closet for his razor.

"Yes, so. We're almost ready to go back to the farm, and what have I done these three months in town?"

"What did you want to do?" he queried mildly.

"Any number of things. Look at Julia, how full her life is. Besides being very active in everything that's foreign, she's in business."

"Don't make me laugh," David rudely interjected. He didn't have a great deal of respect for his sister-in-law's full life.

"The shop has her name in it, anyway," Claudia argued. "And look at that friend of hers who's had two divorces and any number of affairs. And she's only twenty-four, now!"

"You wouldn't like affairs," David advised her. "You'd get too sleepy."

Claudia stiffened. "That's not funny."

"It's sad," he acknowledged.

BERTHA knocked at the door. Her face was purple with excitement. She said: "Come quick! Matthew has two teeth!"

They ran as if the teeth would disappear before they got there. Matthew lay in his crib, enchanted with the hubbub that surrounded him. "From now on he will have no more colds," Bertha ordained, like a priest. "He teeths hard," she added a little proudly.

"He's wonderful," breathed Claudia.

David said, "You fatuous females," and stalked from the room.

"Hypocrite!" she flung after him, for she knew perfectly well that he was as pleased about it as they were.

On the other hand, Matthew's teeth weren't the alpha and omega of David's whole life. Home and children merely formed the background of his essential existence. That was the way it should be. But the trouble was, Claudia felt, that she herself had no other life beyond the four walls of motherhood and domesticity. For weeks, a growing discontent had been shaping within her. She hadn't talked to David seriously about it; but when she'd wakened this morning, the full impact of an unimportant day spread out before her, and filled her with a kind of despair. *"I'm stagnating."* David had been too sleepy to realize that she'd been in dead earnest about it. It was easy enough to be satisfied with her soul when she compared herself to women who were bridge-playing parasites; but when she lined herself up alongside of women who actually functioned in life, she realized her utter worthlessness in a world of seething chaos and progressive ideas. Surely there must be a place for her too in that world. Surely, with Bobby old enough to go to school, and Matthew off bottles and drinking from a cup, it was

high time to attend to her own development. Then too, the fact that he had just cut his first two teeth was like an omen. Claudia believed in omens, although David always said she made them up to suit her own ends. Therefore she refrained from identifying Matthew's dental achievement with any Superior Intervention. She simply said, as David was shrugging into his overcoat in the hall: "You wouldn't mind awfully, would you, if I started to get busy today on a job?"

"What job?" he asked.

"The job I'm going to find."

"Oh," said David. "No, go right ahead."

"You think I can't," she challenged him. "You think all I am is somebody you can call out to when you come in nights, and say: 'I'm home!'"

"Well," David admitted, "I wouldn't know of anyone else I'd rather call to."

"I'll have a phonograph record made."

"Look," he said, "I'm late. Anyway, we'll be going back to the farm in a month or two."

"Suppose we are—is there any law against my taking the train in with you every day? Or furnishing a little apartment in town and only going up week-ends?"

"There's no law, but we can't afford two establishments."

"I'll be contributing."

"Oh," said David on a long breath of enlightenment, "why doesn't somebody *tell* me these things?" He dropped a kiss on her nose. "So long, darling. See you tonight." He saw her watching him from the door, and started bowlegged down the hall to the elevator. He was funny, but she was in no mood to laugh at him.

"Man's chattel," she muttered.

"Man's what?" he called back with his finger on the bell.

"Chattel," she repeated in stony-faced antagonism.

She should have known better, because when he telephoned at noon, he said: "Is Mrs. Chattel to house?"

"No," Claudia replied. "Mrs. Chattel doesn't live here any more."

As a matter of fact, Mrs. Chattel would have already been on her way, if Mrs. Chattel hadn't happened to have developed a stomachache, of all things. It had come upon her out of a perfectly clear sky just as she was going over her clothes, trying to make up her mind whether to wear her old tweed suit or her new ensemble. The ensemble had a lot of Persian lamb on it—it was an original model reduced to a third of its cost in an after-holiday sale; and although it was good psychology to look successful when you went after a job, still, you had to have something to look successful about, so she decided in favor of the tweed.

She carried it to the kitchen. "Bertha," she said, "be an angel—there's a little tiny spot on the skirt, and maybe one on the jacket."

BERTHA was wonderful at getting spots out. When she brought the suit back a short while later, it might have come from the hands of a tailor. But Claudia was no longer interested in it. She was huddled on the bed.

"Is something wrong?" Bertha asked, alarmed.

"The funniest pain—"

Bertha's large hand descended with amazing gentleness to a designated point beneath Claudia's diaphragm.

"No, not there, here—" Claudia wavered, perplexed. "A little further over. . . . It's nothing, though. I must have eaten too much bacon this morning."

"That is nonsense," Bertha refuted. "You eat always very good."

"I know." Claudia couldn't help feeling embarrassed about her present plight. She'd never had a great deal of patience with people who couldn't eat this, and couldn't eat that. She'd always felt that a lot of Hartley's gall-bladder, for example, was due to the stock-market. David agreed that Hartley's trouble was largely in his head, but he refused to blame it on the market—afraid, very likely, that Claudia would use it as a boomerang against himself. He said that it was probably living with Julia that made Hartley's juices dry up—or whatever it was he didn't have enough of.

"I wonder," thought Claudia, "if I've got this pain because I've been stagnating—" She hoped she didn't have to be psycho-analyzed for it. "All I need," Claudia told herself firmly, "is to get out of this rut I'm in, and begin to live!" She hoped, however, that she could find a real job, and not be forced to go in for painting cabbages, or sculpturing odds and ends of people's bodies.

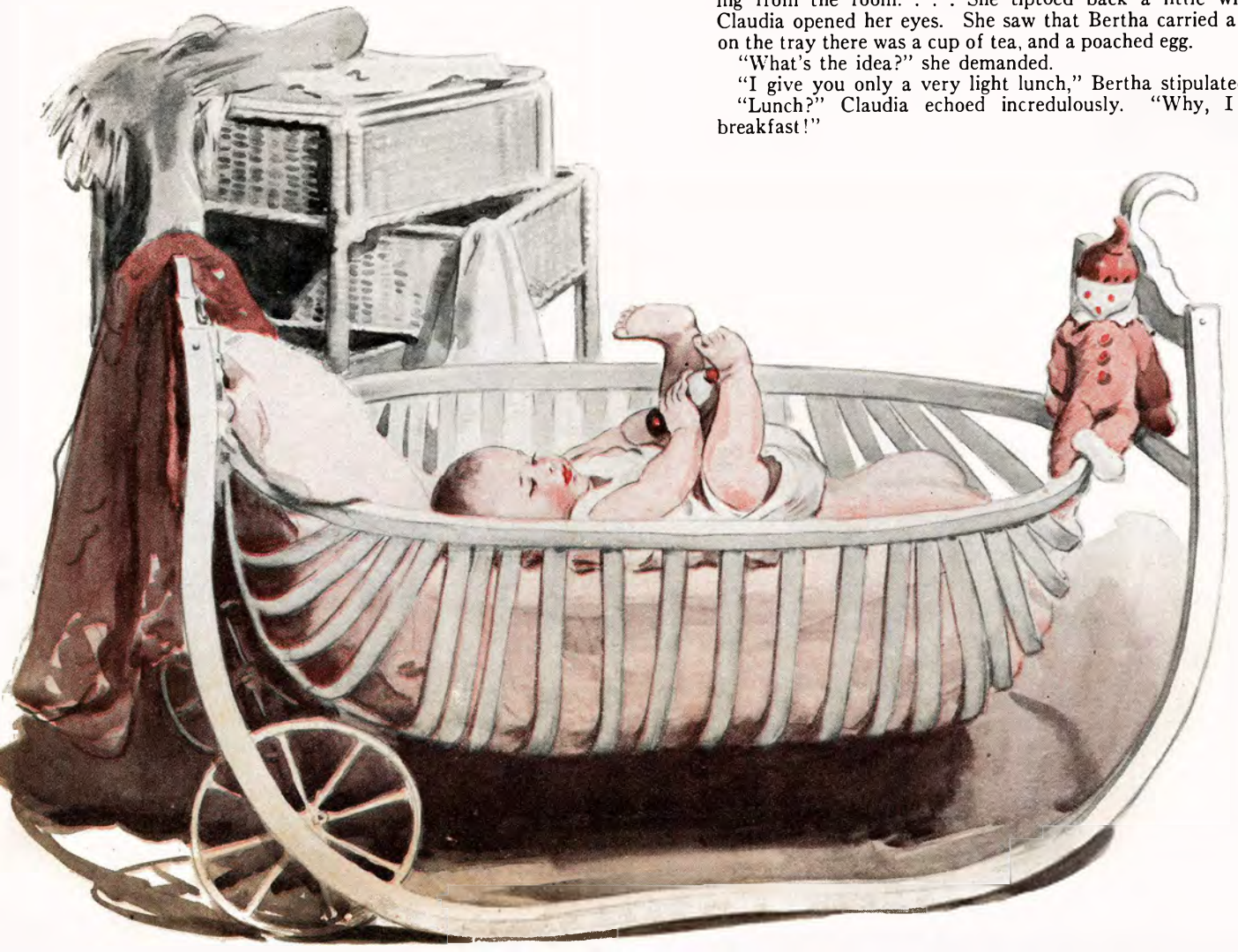
"Let me help you to undress and get under the covers," Bertha broke in upon her thoughts.

"That's ridiculous," Claudia scoffed. "I'm going out in a few minutes." Her voice trailed off, as if breath were suddenly at a premium against the strange discordancy that pressed into her. She was aware of Bertha lingering for a moment, and then tiptoeing from the room. . . . She tiptoed back a little while later. Claudia opened her eyes. She saw that Bertha carried a tray, and on the tray there was a cup of tea, and a poached egg.

"What's the idea?" she demanded.

"I give you only a very light lunch," Bertha stipulated.

"Lunch?" Claudia echoed incredulously. "Why, I just ate breakfast!"



Bertha said: "Come quick! Matthew has two teeth . . . He teeths hard," she added a bit proudly.

"Oh, no, it is already half-past twelve. I leave now to call for Bobby."

"It's impossible it's that late!"

"You slept," Bertha informed her.

Claudia was affronted. "I never sleep in the daytime!"

THE telephone-bell rang. Claudia reached for it. That was when David said: "Is Mrs. Chattel to house?" It didn't occur to her to tell him she wasn't feeling well, because in the first place, he always got very upset over the least little thing that bothered her, and in the second place, a stomachache was nothing to brag about.

The poached egg turned out to be a great mistake, for by the time Bertha came home with Bobby, she was huddled again into a crescent of discomfort. She heard Bobby call out to her as he came in the front door—the image of David. But as she tried to answer him, her voice broke in a bleat.

"Mother!" he kept calling on an importunate crescendo. "Mother, are you home?"

"Mamma don't feel so good," Bertha explained gently on the threshold of the room, and Claudia was aware of Bobby's startled and resentful frown as he was propelled toward the nursery. "Wash now your hands, lovey, and for your lunch I have a nice lamb chop," Bertha cajoled.

Claudia winced. The mere mention of food was a trigger to the vast unhappiness within her physical being. She was glad she was grown-up. If she were in Bobby's shoes, she'd probably be in for a dose of castor-oil.

Claudia shuddered violently. "Oh, God, if You let me get all right before I have to take castor-oil, I'll never eat any more bacon as long as I live, and I'll never make fun of people on diets, amen."

God must have been trying to teach her a lesson, because she was far from all right by the time David came home. Nevertheless she made the effort to appear as usual. But she couldn't fool him. The minute he noticed that she had no appetite, he knew that something was wrong. He tossed his napkin aside, rose from the table, and felt her forehead. He was half in fun, but Bertha had to put her two cents in, and said, portentously: "All day she was in bed, Mr. David. I think you should know."

"I wasn't *in* bed!" Claudia denied hotly. "I was on the bed!" She rose a little dizzily. "And if you don't mind," she continued with as much dignity and as little haste as she could manage, "I think I'll go back there."

David insisted on taking off her shoes and stockings, which she hated. "Shut up," he ordered, and slapped her hands down.

Bobby hovered on the threshold, looking as upset as David. "Is Mother sick?"

"Certainly I'm not sick," Claudia assured him. "Your father's just being officious."

But it was good to huddle down beneath the blankets.

David eyed her sharply. Then he started for the door.

"Where are you going?" she called. *(Please turn to page 90)*

A Proper Young Lady

— and Another

MUSIC throbbed from the ballroom of the Boston Ritz, echoed off down the hallways and lost itself. The scent of flowers and white kid gloves and powder and young perfume and débutantes drifted with it. A line of soberly gowned white-haired ladies stood on a strip of carpet laid in the entrance to the ballroom, shaking hands and bowing and smiling and occasionally freezing. Young men, hordes of young men, in dinner jackets and tail coats, walked along the line, lost themselves in the stag-line in the center of the room or cut in on the circling dancers. A young lady named Felicity Carpandon was, that night, being introduced to society. Actually she was being introduced to a lot of Boston people she'd known all her life, and to a large proportion of Harvard College.

To most of the Harvards, this was an old story. They were connoisseurs of deb parties at the Ritz or the Copley-Plaza or, as happened occasionally, in the big private houses on Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue. To Rusty Milforth, who wasn't really a Harvardian, since he was a special student in mineralogy and had come to Boston for the sole purpose of studying, it was walking through the looking-glass. His real world was a world of deserts and iron mountains, and higher mountains where cold streams ran, and where, if a man tunneled deep enough into the rock, or sifted well enough the sand in the stream-bottoms, he could perhaps get gold. With strength and youth and courage and sweat, he could get enough gold to come to the East and learn a better way of getting more gold when he went home again. To such a man, this party at the Boston Ritz was fairyland.

Rusty hadn't wanted to come. He'd thought he'd look out of place. He was glad now that Bill Brown, his roommate, had made him come. Like many men who have lived in the far places, he loved beauty: silver-mounted saddles, bright-colored silk shirts, music. The music at this joint was tops. The dresses and the diamond bracelets and wrist-watches and rings and the diamond chokers on the receiving ladies, had silver-mounted saddles stung a mile. Before he reached the chokered ladies, he stopped.

"Well, doggone!" he said aloud. "Imagine old Wayne Rusty-Gulch de Vere Milforth bein' allowed into a place like this!"

All of that really was his baptismal name. His father had said: "Names can help or hinder. We'll give the little feller a whole lot, some plain, some fancy; then he'll be all right either way. Come he's a cowhand, he can call himself Rusty-Gulch; come he's a fancy feller, I don't know no name any fancier'n *De Vere*."

Rusty stepped forward; a servant asked the name, sang out: "*Mister Milforth.*" Rusty grinned. He almost wished he'd given the man his full name. It would have sounded terrific, he thought. Then he was shaking hands with more diamond bracelets than he'd believed possible.

"How do you do, Mr. Milforth?"

"How do, ma'am."

"Mr. Milforth." A warm smile. "Didn't I know your mother?"

"Maybe, ma'am, if you've packed through the Rockies."

He went on down the line. He heard that lady turn to her neighbor and whisper. "He asked me if I'd ever packed through the Rockies!"

A man of perhaps fifty-five, hovering near, smiled. He was Felicity's father; and he was a little bored with the polite, insincere gush that he'd been listening to from the mouths of the young men arriving at the party. It was a pleasant surprise suddenly to see one who didn't look like all the rest. He smiled again as his sister, who had kept house for him since his wife died many years ago, held out her gloved hand.

"How do you do, Mr. Milforth! So glad you could come."

"Me too, ma'am."

"My niece, Felicity. Mr. Milforth."

Milforth took a small white gloved hand in his, bowed over it. There were no brace-

She wasn't conscious of saying, "Yes, thank you, Mr. Milforth," and of stepping out of the receiving-line.

Redbook's **NOVELETTE OF THE MONTH**

By ERIC HATCH

Illustrated by ANDREW LOOMIS

lets over the glove this time. He looked up at the decorously, timidly bared shoulders, and then into the most delicately made face he had ever seen. That night Felicity Carpandon looked like a story-book girl. Standing there all in white, holding an old-fashioned bouquet, her dark eyes bright with excitement, her dark hair reflecting light from a crystal chandelier above her, she made Rusty Milforth think of everything lovely he'd ever dreamed about; and in the desert you had time for lots of dreaming. He stared at her so hard that she caught her breath in a little gasp. She knew it was rude of people to stare, but he wasn't staring that way. He was staring the way she'd seen people stare at Serge Koussevitsky when he conducted the Boston Symphony in some especially beautiful piece. It made her heart beat fast—she hoped it didn't show, where her satin dress was tight across the front.

"May I have this dance, please?"

Felicity was conscious of a square chin, of a squarish sort of face with a shy grin and surprisingly leathery skin for a Harvardian, and of clean blue eyes gazing into hers. She was vaguely conscious that the eyes made her think of blue distance. She wasn't conscious at all of saying, "Yes, thank you, Mr. Milforth," and of stepping out of the receiving-line, which she should not have done for another hour, and into arms so strong as to be almost frightening. She had the odd feeling that if Mr. Milforth looked at her like that again and said, "Will you marry me and go live on top of Mount Whitney, please?" she would say: "Yes, thank you."

BUT Mr. Milforth, as they danced off, was temporarily without the power of speech. He held her carefully as a retriever learning to carry eggs in its teeth, and he danced beautifully, so that for a few seconds they rode on the waves of music. Then Felicity's aunt caught up with them, and that was the end of that idyl.

"Felicity! I'm ashamed of you!" She looked up at Rusty. "Mr. Milforth, I'm surprised at *you*. You know perfectly well Felicity isn't supposed to leave the receiving-line till half-past eleven!"

Rusty flushed. He felt as though he'd come there in his blue jeans and high-heeled boots. He felt as though he were all thumbs.

"I'm sorry," he said. "In my country when you're introduced to a young lady, first thing you should do is ask her to dance. I didn't know I was makin' a *faux pas*." He turned the blue eyes on the aunt. "I should have asked you to dance first, ma'am—is that it?"

Miss Carpandon the elder began to feel ashamed of herself. The instant her first fury had passed, she had realized that she wasn't talking to a boy,—most all of Felicity's Harvard men were really boys,—but to a man. Furthermore, since this Mr. Milforth was quite obviously neither a Bostonian, a Philadelphian or a New Yorker, he was a foreigner; and being rude to a foreigner under your roof was disgraceful. Besides, there was an air of quality about him—different from the quality she knew, but it was there. Besides that, he was handsome. She put her hand on his arm, started as she felt the enormous forearm muscle, then smiled.

"I've been rude," she said. "Forgive me. I've been so excited about Felicity's party. I did so want everything to go smoothly, and for there not to be any fights amongst the boys—they will drink, you know—or anything that I— *I* know! Come and sit with us at supper!"

Rusty realized that for some reason totally beyond his comprehension he was being apologized to. He also knew quite suddenly that Miss Carpandon the elder was not, as he had at first supposed, an angry dreadnought, but was a gracious lady. If you forgot about the diamond choker, you'd probably find her right easy to talk to. He grinned.

"I'd be proud to," he said; then to Felicity: "Would *you* mind, Miss Carpandon?"

Felicity gave him such a look that for a second he was afraid he was going to go all limp and fall flat on his face.

"Oh, *no!*"

She might just as well have said: "I think I shall probably curl up and die if you don't sit with us at supper."

THROUGHOUT supper Rusty continued to lose his heart. Felicity, having recovered a little from the electric shock she suffered on their meeting, acted like a normal young woman. Rusty, feeling he was among friends, limbered up. His phrases became less stilted, his eyes, more used now to concentrated beauty, less hungry, and so less alarming to other eyes that met them. He told her of his work, his quest of the treasure metal in the earth; and she, her head full of the party and music and romance and feathers, made her own picture of him. It was quite a picture: It mounted him on a great white horse and had him silhouetted against mountain-tops directing hundreds of men with lamps on their hats as they brought glistening golden rocks up out of the mouth of a tunnel.

Wayne Rusty-Gulch Milforth had a lovely time at supper. Afterward there was an interval while the girls went to re-powder, and the men smoked cigars. Felicity's father dropped into a chair next to Rusty's. He was interested in Milforth. In addition to being vastly amused, he had been just a little worried by Milforth's manner when he was introduced to Felicity. Kenneth Carpandon's quick mind had pursued the look that had passed between them to its ultimate meaning.

"You're at Harvard?" he said.

Rusty looked at him respectfully. "Yes sir," he said. "That is, I'm a special student." He grinned. "I don't suppose you'd rightly call me a Harvard man—I mean, you say, 'So-and-so's a Harvard man;' well, I think if anybody pointed at me and said, 'He's a Harvard man,' you'd say he was a liar."

"Oh, not at all, Milforth, not at all!" Carpandon was a little embarrassed. What Milforth had said was true, but it didn't seem courteous to admit it. "Why, you're a credit to Harvard. That tail coat fits you like a glove!"

Rusty's grin broadened. It seemed to fill his whole face.

"I bought it from the ringmaster of a circus that went broke in Phœnix," he said. "He needed ten bucks right bad."

"Well, I'll be damned!" said Carpandon.

"These are more valuable," said Rusty. He reached down, took out one of his waistcoat buttons and laid it on the table. It was gold, worked into the intricate shape of a crown knot. Set into the top of the knot was a tiny tourmaline. "I made them," he said. "Out of the first nugget I ever struck. The stone's from California."

Carpandon's eyes widened.

"You must have done pretty well for yourself."

"No," said Rusty. "There weren't any more nuggets. 'Course I've got a grubstake, but I figured I'd be smart to spend that goin' to Harvard. I wanted to study under Doc Paley."

A smile twisted the corners of Carpandon's mouth.

"You mean you actually came to Harvard to *learn* something?"

"Doggone if I didn't!" said Rusty.

"Well, I'll be damned!" Carpandon laughed. "You won't believe it," he said, "but that's why I went there. By the way, I know Paley. He's a good man."

"He knows more about gold," said Rusty, "than anybody in the world. He told me about a new sonic locater. He says it isn't perfected. I say it's nothin' to me if he thinks so or not; if it'll get gold, it's perfected."

"Will it?"

"I can get gold with it," said Rusty. "I know what extra it needs, which, aside from one little gadget, is mostly brains in the man who uses it. I've got that particular kind of brains."

Carpandon was interested.

"What kind of brains is that?" he asked.

Rusty paused; words came a little hard for him sometimes. He didn't know overly many.

"The kind," he said presently, "that when you're sleepin' out alone with the desert and the mountains and the stars, makes you feel that over the next ridge or maybe the one after that, gold is hidin'—hidin' deep. That's one part of 'em. The other part tells you men have been there ahead of you, and they couldn't find it, so you've got to educate yourself to be smarter'n they were. Then it'll be you who finds it."

A LONG silence ensued; then music came over the silence. The orchestra had taken up its work again in the ballroom. Kenneth Carpandon looked at the young man by his side, at the other young men at the table. Some of them were a little flushed now; there had been champagne, a lot of champagne, with the supper. They were nice-looking young men. Their faces wore vacant expressions, and they all looked alike. They were all of them highly eligible—eligible as sons-in-law. Suddenly they didn't look so eligible to Carpandon. His leather-faced friend had, for a second, taken him into a world where men, even young men, stand on their own instead of standing on safe platforms their fathers have built for them. If he'd had a son, he would have liked him to grow up in that world. The son would have refused, of course; and besides, he didn't have a son. Just Felicity. Felicity wouldn't even know there was such a world. She probably never would: she was a Carpandon of Boston, and the Carpandons of Beacon Street, Boston, had their own private world. Maybe they wouldn't always have it. Maybe it wouldn't hurt her to see something of that other world, through this Milforth boy's eyes. Sort of insurance against social revolution—or evolution. Dammit, this boy had something! He'd fight to get what he wanted. Bought his tail coat from a circus ringmaster! Talked funny, too. Be a mistake to encourage him. *Most* ineligible, of course. . . . Presently for no apparent reason he said: "The hell with Beacon Street."

Rusty looked at him in surprise. "Sir?"

Carpandon smiled.

"Skip it," he said. "I meant to say will you and what's-his-name—Bill Brown, he's your roommate, isn't he?—come to dinner at the house next Sunday?"

Wayne Rusty-Gulch Milforth beamed at his host. As Felicity's father, Carpandon was already surrounded with a sanctified aura. He now became practically beatified. It passed through Rusty's head that he was getting to be something of a social tiger. First he got asked to supper by the aunt; then he got asked to dinner by the father. Then a worrying thought crept into his mind. He looked Carpandon in the eyes, his own squinted as though he was staring into the sun.

"You wouldn't be askin' me because you think I might do rope tricks, would you?"

Carpandon's eyes met his steadily.

"No," he said slowly. "I'm asking you because I think it might be good for my daughter to know one young man who—works for a living."

At the mention of Felicity, Rusty's eyes glazed. His mouth spread into a tender smile, like the prop smile women wear when they look at babies—any babies.

"Mr. Carpandon," he said, "your daughter's the most beautiful girl in the world."

"Helena!" he shouted. "We've hit it! That doggone ol' locater was right. There's a vein of gold! We've done it!"

Kenneth Carpandon started as though Rusty had pinched him, and drew back in his chair as though he were trying to get away from something he was thinking. He was wondering most justifiably, if he hadn't just made the greatest mistake of his life. A moment later Felicity came to the table to speak to him before going back to the dancing. She looked once at Rusty and her father saw there were stars in her eyes. He grimaced; then he smiled at himself. If anything were going to happen, it was best to take it with grace and humor.

Chapter Two

FELICITY CARPANDON sat by the window in her room staring at the snow that was making Beacon Street look as timeless as the Boston Tea Party. It fell in great thick flakes, making a screen through which the traffic looked ghostly. The motorcars could easily have been the broughams and coaches of another day. Felicity's room carried out the illusion. It was hardly any different than when her great-grandmother had known it. Felicity, except for her dress which came from Hattie Carnegie's, blended with the room and the scene. She had the fragile beauty and panting innocence that belonged with her great-grandmother's ruffles and lavallières. But though her great-grandmother had undoubtedly sat on that window-bench, her laced bosom bursting against its stays with romantic deep breathing, she had never sat there waiting to see the gaunt figure of a cow-hand and prospector swing along the snowy sidewalk, her heart heavy with the thought of the long good-by that in a little while now must be said.

Rusty was going away. His sister, who he had told them rode rodeo on the Ice-Cream Circuit ("They none of 'em drink in that outfit—oh, maybe they'll knock off five or six bourbons on Saturday night, but drink? No indeedy!") had ridden one bronc' too many and had broken her leg. Rusty Milforth's educational grubstake would go now to doctors and hospitals, and he would go back to the deserts and mountains he came from.

DOWN the cream of Felicity's cheeks, tears ran. Rusty was going away; there would be no more Sunday-night suppers where she could sit surreptitiously holding his hand under the table while he and her father and aunt and Doctor Paley talked about gold and horses and a world she'd seen pictures of once in a while. . . . A few dances together, a few almost silent walks on the banks of the frozen Charles, a tea-party at his and Bill Brown's rooms, supervised by heavily armed chaperons; and now it was over—except that she knew it would never be over for her. When Felicity Carpandon fell in love, she did it the way this same great-grandmother had done it; with her whole soul, unquestioningly, for life. Rusty hadn't proposed to her. It hadn't mattered. He hadn't told her he loved her, either; but he had treated her from the moment they'd met as though he'd been

waiting for her all his life. His chivalry, his overdone courtesy, would have seemed ridiculous to a New York girl. It hadn't seemed at all ridiculous to Felicity. It was, after all, the same sort of stuff her father and grandfather had handed out to their brides. Boston had much in common with the West. The advance of super-sophistication had stopped in Boston when the town was young. The West was still young.

Presently thrushes sang in her mind, the snow melted and the warm love-sun of June cleared the moldy skies. She drew back the curtain and waved her handkerchief, though she knew he couldn't see her, because his head was bent against the storm. She waited at the window until he turned up the high front stoop and disappeared in the doorway. At once, as flighty as the thrushes she heard in her imagining, she went to her mirror, tucked a brown lock in here, fluffed one out there, wriggled in her dress to straighten it, and then, demure and a little breathless, hurried into the hall and down the stairs.

By the time she entered the drawing-room, she was composed, a proper Boston young lady, but under the visible composure her heart was pounding. She had a wild hope that Rusty was going to propose to her, or at the very least, would in his shy way hint around and ask her to wait for him.

He was standing in front of the bright cannel-coal fire, staring into it, his legs spread wide, his head lowered and arms limp at his sides. His whole figure reflected gloom. As he heard Felicity's step on the hardwood floor, he turned and held out his hands. She came to him and took them.

"Felicity," he said, "my heart's in my boots. I feel lower'n a Death Valley rattlesnake."

"I do too."

"There's no use my tryin' to tell you how I feel about sayin' good-by to *you*. I haven't got any words that would say it."

"I—I feel that way too," said Felicity. "About saying good-by to you, Rusty."

He began, obliquely, to tell her how he felt about it. He said: "I'd hoped at Harvard to smooth the edges so's I could go places with you, and folks—your kind of folks—wouldn't stare at me like I was a one-man rodeo." He lowered his eyes shyly. "You see, I wanted to be—I guess your father'd call it—eligible." A faint smile ghosted at the corners of his mouth. "Mr. Carpandon was worried about that, when he saw we—we liked each other so well. That's one reason I'm sorry Sis broke her leg right now. I reckon now I'll always look like I'd just mislaid my horse."

"No!" said Felicity, hanging tight to his hands. "No, Rusty! People don't look at you that way. I won't let them!"

He grinned at her, a crooked, twisted grin. Her eyes were blazing anger at the imaginary people who might, from time to time, laugh at her man.

"For an angel," he said, "you'd sure make a fightin' partner."

"Partner!"

For a second Felicity thought this was the proposal; but it wasn't, for he said quickly, as though he was afraid she'd misunderstood: "*Partner* is cow-country talk for *buddy*."

"Oh." There was a moment of awkwardness; then Felicity remembered she was a hostess. "Would you care for some tea? Or a drink?" She crossed to the sofa at the side of the fire and sat on it. Rusty grinned.

"I'm not a drinker," he said; "but right now I'll accept a couple of straight bourbons with pleasure." Felicity reached behind her and jerked a brocaded bell-pull that hung on the wall behind the sofa. The maid appeared, and she ordered the drinks. Rusty, with a sigh vast as the Santa Ana rustling through pine trees, sank to the sofa beside her. "I feel low as a Death Valley rattler!" he said again.

There was silence; then the maid returned with a decanter and a whisky glass and a little silver pitcher of water. Felicity poured whisky into the glass. In her nervousness she poured too much, and it spilled over the top onto the snowy lace tray cloth.

"Oh, how clumsy of me!" —as he mopped at the cloth with his handkerchief. "Don't bother, Rusty; it'll wash right out."

He grinned again.

"Will it? Stuff we drink back home would peel the hide off the tray."

"No!"

"Yes ma'am! That's why we use nothin' but solid gold trays out there."

"Now you're teasing me," said Felicity. "Because I was clumsy."

The silence came again, but the awkwardness had passed. It was a friendly silence now, warm. Rusty picked up his drink, tossed it off, poured the second one, and with the deliberateness of a man taking a dose of needed medicine, swallowed it. He took a long breath and then he reached over and took Felicity's hand in both of his. It was lost in them. Almost she prayed she could keep it from trembling. He might not like it, if she trembled.

"Now," he said, "I want to speak a little piece I've got in my mind." He laughed. "I needed some Dutch courage to get me started."

With her free hand Felicity hurried to pour him another slug of the bourbon. She wanted to make sure he'd stay started. He sipped it slowly. He was looking for the words he didn't have. Suddenly he found them. He bent over so he could look up at her, as though, revering her, he felt he must look up at her.

"Felicity," he said, "I reckon you know how I feel toward you. I can't ask you what I want to ask you, so I can only tell you that when I'm at the other end of nowhere, you'll be there with me. I'll see your eyes every time I look at the stars. I'll see your sweet brown hair blowin' like it did when you'd walk in the wind with me by the river, every time I see tumbleweed driftin' on the desert." He pressed her hand, smiled. "And when I find the ridge that's got the vein of gold in it with my name on it, I'll come back for you in a bright red coach hauled by six white horses with gold inlaid harness."

Another girl might have laughed, might even have thought he was talking so to be funny. He wasn't. He was talking the same words cowboys have been putting into their songs since there first were cowboy songs. It was the only kind of sentimental talk he knew. It made Felicity's lip tremble until she bit it to hold it still, and made tears rise in her eyes. He *(Please turn to page 70)*

A SHORT SHORT STORY

by

GEORGE FRAZIER

Illustrated by O. F. SCHMIDT

NOT *for just a* YEAR

COULDN'T he tell by the look in her eyes? Couldn't he tell by the pressure of her fingers on his hand? What was the matter with him, anyway? Was he blind? Or stupid? Or—or was it simply that he did not want to tell? Wasn't that the reason? If he let her know that he knew, why, he would have to do something about it, wouldn't he? And that would be embarrassing for both of them, wouldn't it? Wasn't that the story? Oh, he could tell, all right. He could tell only *too* well: that was the trouble. . . .

So she sat there beside him in a cab that inched its way through downtown Manhattan. Twilight was falling, and the skyscrapers were jagged against the wintry dusk, and lights went on and people poured out of buildings and hurried along the streets to their homes. To their homes, she thought, hurt a little. And presently she would be going back to an empty apartment. Oh, a nice-enough apartment, with a lovely view and maid service and a fireplace in the living-room, but an apartment just the same. An apartment for her to be alone in. All alone, and not sitting by the telephone either, as she had been, on so many evenings since he had come to New York.

The cab stopped for a red light, and the jolt threw her closer to him. She could feel his big arm touch her lap and then it was gone, quickly and a little shyly too. Well, if that was the way it was, that was the way it was. Two years of seeing him and dancing with him and kissing him, and now it was ending. Not ending slowly, but ending abruptly and sickeningly in Grand Central—ending in a mob scene, with heels clicking smartly on the marble floor, the leathery smell of luggage, the babble of voices and the clean smell of fresh news-print.

"I'm twenty-eight," she thought. "Twenty-eight and crazy about the guy, and now he's going away. Going away not for just a day or not for just a year, but for always. Going away to a new job in a new place." Well, she'd get over it. Or would she? She saw his eyes, liquid now in the darkness of the cab. They were nice eyes, brown and long-lashed, and now they were looking straight ahead, a little angry as they watched the light and waited for it to change.

"You won't miss the train?" she murmured.

"No, I've plenty of time." He bit his lip. "These lights gripe me, though. The only time they're red is when you're in a hurry."

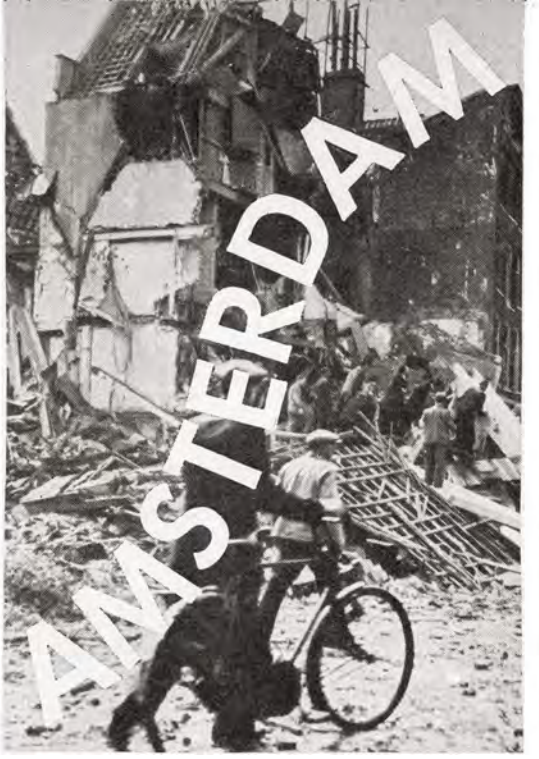
And then silence again. Silence at dusk, with people hurrying home and taxies honking, and the odor of gasoline and the throb of the engine running and lights going on in store windows. Silence was hanging over the cab like some rain-swollen cloud.

"I hate the thought of the train-ride." He took out his cigarettes. "Cigarette?"

She shook her head. "The train won't be bad," she said. "They say that the train from St. Louis to Mexico City is marvelous. All the comforts of home."

"Mmm—I hope so. But sure as anything, the air-conditioning will go on the fritz when we *(Please turn to page 94)*

"Good-by, Mike. Be careful of the señoritas!" ("Good-by, darling," she said to herself.)



WHOM HITLER REASSURES

When this article appears, Hitler may be threatening us, or he may again be reassuring us. Mr. van Paassen tells why German reassurances are more dangerous than German threats.

"NO race has greater claim to rule in the United States of America than the Germanic race. Our vision of a Germanically dominated Western Hemisphere will not be obscured by the red-, brown- and black-skinned races who populate almost half of America. When we will be ready to assert ourselves as a world-power, we will be able to count upon the millions of Germans who have helped make the North American continent the wealthiest on the globe. Never shall we forget that a substantial portion of the United States does not need to be made German. It is German! A strong, determined army of occupation under dynamic National-Socialist command can be recruited overnight in certain parts of the United States. The job of taking over North America will be comparatively simple."

It was not a demented patient playing Napoleon in the ward of some insane asylum who babbled this threat. Nor is this statement culled from the irresponsible tripe dished out nightly by would-be Fuehrers at German Bund meetings from coast to coast. The man whose ideas are represented in these words is Karl Haushofer, President of the Geopolitical Institute at Munich. He heads the academy of thinkers who prepare the plans for Germany's world conquest.

There is nothing of the emotional soap-box orator about General Haushofer. He is a very earnest, reserved gentleman who has devoted half a century to concentrated research work in the field of history, geography, political economy and military strategy. This little Munich general is the brain that shapes the statesmanship Hitler parades as his own. In the austere Haushofer study, Hitler sits at the feet of the high priest of geopolitics, listening to the wisdom that the great planner never tires of imparting. Haushofer's written and spoken words are the "mysterious source" of Adolf Hitler's amazing gift for striking the right objective at the right time.

The Haushofer-Hitler combination is not a freakish prank that history has played on modern civilization. It is not a one-time phenomenon that will evaporate with the disappearance of a few men who in the eyes of the world represent Nazi Germany. Only victims of amnesia could declare that the plans for a Nazi-dominated Europe and a German conquest of the Western Hemisphere would dissolve into thin air with the repudiation of Hitler by the German people. The present specter of German world-domination that throws a swastika-shaped shadow over even our peaceful shores is not a nightmare born in the Brown House of the Nazi party. Germany's ambition to rule the world is a fire-spitting dragon with multiple heads that grow anew as soon as they are cut off. The Teutonic lust to subjugate the nations of the world is as old as Methuselah. Modern Germany has never given up that hope.

Years before the outbreak of the first world war, General Bernhardi had stated in unmistakable language that Germany's next war would decide the issue of her *Weltmacht oder Niedergang*, world-power for Germany or her complete eclipse as a great power. It is no secret that the Kaiser's military plans were aimed not only at the conquest of France, Britain and Russia but also at control of the Western Hemisphere. The Kaiser failed. American manpower and resources stopped his march to world-power just as it seemed that he had overcome the resistance of Britain and France as he had already knocked out Russia.

He failed. "But," said Adolf Hitler at Vienna last year, "it is the dwarfs who led the invincible German army who are responsible for the disaster of 1918. I will succeed where they fell down. Germany's place is at the head of the nations of the world, and I am going to put her there. . . . I don't care what the world says about German rights. Within a few years the world, from East to West and from North to South, will have to listen to what I think and say. When I give the word, nothing will stand in the way until we have reached our goal."

But the Kaiser and Hitler are merely German leaders who in two periods of history have tried to carry out the plan of world-domination. The dragon of modern German world conquest reared its head even in the days of the American Civil War. At that time Germany very seriously considered supporting the South—not because of the righteousness of the Southern cause or for any sentimental reasons, but because intervention might have led to the establishment of two rival nations on this continent. One of them could have been under German influence, and thus would have provided the jumping-off place for the total subjugation of the Americas.

Ever since this opportunity was lost, a note of regret and anger has run through German war literature, deploring Germany's failure to get or even attempt to obtain a footing in the Western Hemisphere. Frequent and envious reference is made to the time when Spain, Holland, England and Portugal carved colonial empires for themselves out of this continent.

Photos by Acme, International, and Wide World

—He Will Destroy!

And the determination to strive for the day when Germany will balance her accounts with the Americas recurs again and again in the published works of Germany's great military and economic thinkers: Men like Heinrich von Treitschke, General von Bernhardi, Professor Duisburg, Hans Delbrueck, Kurt Trampler, General von Altrock and Hitler's ghost-writer Karl Haushofer.

It is not on books and scientific treatises alone, however, that I base my knowledge that present-day Germany means business as regards the Germanification of the Western Hemisphere. Visits to Germany have taken up much of my time as a foreign correspondent in the last two decades. I speak from personal first-hand experience.

The Reich in the years following the Versailles Treaty intrigued me. Routine newspaper contacts and interviews did not satisfy me. The contrast between what officials might say and what the people actually believed always disturbed me. I wanted to know what the little man, the taxi-driver and shopkeeper, the small business and professional man, thought about the bombastic boasts of the military leaders and the Nazi would-be chieftains.

Everyone, from university professor to doorman, concluded his political exposition with the same refrain: *"Wir werden noch mal mit Amerika abrechnen!"* ("Some day we'll square our account with America!") A passionate desire to go to America as conquerors and to partake fully of the wealth of this country had taken deep root in the minds of many average German citizens. That the Nazi leaders spoke the same language as the plain man in the street was brought strikingly home to me in 1932.

In that year I was the guest of a Nazi official high in the propaganda section of the party at Munich. After a strenuous day of calls on prominent sympathizers and leaders, and endless discussions with these men on the rebirth of true Germanic *Kultur* with Hitler's imminent assumption of supreme power, my host suggested that we finish the evening in a cinema, where one of Hollywood's latest successes was attracting huge crowds.

The picture, I recall, was one of those lavish musical comedies dealing with American high life at the peak of the prosperity era. It showed homes built and furnished with an elaborateness inconceivable to almost any class in Germany. In this picture were scenes emphasizing the fabulous wealth and extravagant spending of a financier, the hero of the plot. He controlled railroads, mines and automobile factories, and with a single word could panic the stock exchanges of the world. Hollywood's imagination had run riot in this film. Yet the story was to a certain extent realistic, and unmistakably characteristic of America's wealth and easy living.

I asked my host why, after he had been talking so intensely all day about Germany's future greatness, he had taken me to see an American movie. To my amazement he replied, with a grave expression on his face: "Germany's greatness lies in America's wealth. Your country is the most powerful country in the world today. It will determine the political fate of Germany.

"We don't go to see American films merely to be entertained. We study them. We want to feel at home in America when we get there."

SUCH naïveté startled me. In 1932, fourteen years after the collapse of imperial Germany, the Reich was in the midst of a seemingly hopeless struggle for survival and actually on the verge of an economic breakdown. Any reference to coming days of glory and military conquest seemed to me nothing short of insanity. The World War, with its disastrous issue for Germany, must surely have blasted the dream of world-hegemony forever, I thought.

Clemenceau had stripped the Reich of the means to wage war against even weak countries like Holland or Denmark. Germany's fortresses had been dismantled. Her munitions factories were supposed to have been closed and the machinery destroyed. The victorious Allies had shipped all the surplus war-stocks out of the country. For months upon months on end I myself had seen trains loaded with cannon, tanks, machine-guns, field kitchens, scrap iron and other war materials rolling across Alsace-Lorraine, bound for the re-casting foundries in Le Creusot and the metallurgical suburbs of Paris. Military control commissions were still scouring the German land for hidden stocks. Formidable military restrictions had been imposed on the vanquished foe. Three solid bridgeheads, forty miles in depth, had been established on the right bank of the Rhine. British, American, French and Belgian armies occupied them, ready to march at a moment's notice should there be the least sign that Germany was about to march again.

The last airplane had been taken out *(Please turn to page 96)*

by **PIERRE van PAASSEN**

who wrote "Days of Our Years"

HELP US

THE Argentine orchestra skated with a clatter of gourds into the theatrical sorrow of the Tango in D, and the girl in the shimmering gold frock leaned across the table to ask in her clear voice:

"What would we be doing now?"

The young man with pilot's silver wings on the breast of his R.A.F. tunic, creased a lean brown cheek at her through the smoke of his cigarette and answered softly:

"It's eight o'clock now, here in London. That would be noon on Vancouver Island. . . . You'd be coming up over the hill-trail, darling, to see how the morning's work had gone. And bringing our lunch—in a basket. The woods are beautiful in October, on Vancouver Island."

His hand moved absent-mindedly toward an ash-tray, and the girl's hand met it and stopped it in the middle of the cloth. The ash fell on both their fingers, and they didn't notice.

"Tell me again," she said.

He looked at her, and his eyes tried to keep smiling.

"About the woods, Ron," she said.

"Mmm. Well, there are maples," he said. "There'd have been frost in the night, by now. It's—you'd be surprised, how lovely the maples are. A—a sort of very clear yellow, you know. On the hill, above water bluer than you'd believe. There'll be one or two maples, maybe, on the hill, and they make the fir and spruce look black and—mysterious. And under your feet, the Oregon-grape leaves will be deep red and green, and the madrona limbs over the tide—you don't know them, of course, here in England. But they're all twisted, like the trees in fairy-book illustrations; and last year's bark is peeling away, and the new bark is bright orange-colored and— In the spring, of course, they flower. Masses of pale flowers, Cathy, over the tide."

The girl took her hand away and said:

"Oh, Ron—are we ever really going to—"

The orchestra finished the first lamenting recitation of the Tango's theme, and jarred the smoky air of the cellar café as it crashed into the infinitely complicated and infinitely noisy rhythms of its own arrangement.

BELIEVE

by Michael Foster

"I'm sorry, Ron," the girl said. "I didn't mean to be— Tell me about our lunch. —Dearest!"

"Yes?" he said.

"The lunch we'd be having now. Tell me about it. Please."

"Oh! Yes," he said. "Well, we'd be sitting on a log, probably. It wouldn't be trimmed yet, I guess, because it would be a tree I'd just felled—this morning, d'you see. But we'd find a place where there weren't any branches, and we'd sit there. So—there'd be pitch in the cracks of the bark, where it was warm in the sunshine. You'd have to watch out for that, and—and you'd be so beautiful, Cathy, and— Oh, I'd probably tell you about the deer I saw in the clearing this morning when I came up to go to work, and the way they went sailing away into the timber, in the fog—and—"

He was watching her face, now, while he talked. It was a game they played, he and Cathy; and he loved to watch the way her face was quiet and believing, like a good child listening to a fairy-tale.

AS the slanting metal wings of the bomber slowly took shape in the graying darkness and then began to shine palely in the wet colorless light of dawn, he thought of his father. He could see the other plane now, leading a half-mile ahead and five hundred feet higher: whipping through an occasional upflung drifting tatter of fog, which would whirl in monstrous leisurely eddies, closing in behind it. He was cutting through fog-strata himself, so that the wet glass before him was like a screen flashing from flat motionless gray to swift glimpses of the other plane, flitting along a little faster now in that higher light. He touched his own throttles, and the steady hell of noise increased in pitch, sharpening ever so little the chord of engines and propeller-blades and screaming wind that filled their world. He could sense without seeing that Bates, the observer, was fumbling nervously with his earphones, twiddling with his gauntlets, blowing on his fingers to warm them. Occasionally, away below, they began to have glimpses of the North Sea through ragged tears in the fog, like a surface of black glass, with motionless wrinkles. It was still night down there.

But he was thinking about his father, and the way the old man would be seeing the dawns of Vancouver Island. He would lie awake in the night, the old Major, and hear the wind prowling and moaning on the hill. It was night there, now: and the wind would be banging a loose shutter somewhere on the house, the very sound of desolation. But when dawn came to Vancouver Island, turning the waters of the inlet to liquid light, the Major would go out into the back yard, his boots making crisp sounds on the frosty grass. He would lift his thin lined face to see the moon setting behind the hill. A fox would bark from the timbered ridge under the setting moon, and the Major would listen gravely. There would be the smell of crisping bacon in the wood-smoke of the breakfast fire, and he would hear Mrs. McKechnie, the housekeeper, clattering her skillet in the kitchen as he went down the trail to the cove to make sure the gas-boat had ridden the night out safely at her mooring. Ron wished he could tell Cathy about that as he could see it—the Major, and the way the light came from beyond the peaks and turned the timber on the top of the hill to a vivid green that crept downward, and—and all that. The Major would love Cathy—nobody could help loving Cathy. And she would— They would have good times, when—

The first of the sunlight caught the plane ahead, and for a second its metal burned like a daytime star, and then it went into shadow again and became silver-transparent against the morning sky. But it dipped a wing-tip once in signal, and then arced over and flattened out on a new course. Banking sharply, Ron wondered curiously how Intelligence could be so sure of what they said. This war was being fought underground: the big things were being done by impassive efficient men in offices, who never heard anything louder than the businesslike clatter of typewriters next door; or by furtive men in the back rooms of side-street cafés. Pilots just got orders, crisp, exact orders telling nothing. He began to think how good breakfast would taste, after a while, with maybe a drink beforehand while they waited for the steward to set the table. Billy Budrick, who was piloting the plane ahead, would be standing around long-legged, crinkling up his eyes as he made a joke. Billy's mother and father lived somewhere in Sussex, and he had a girl there: he'd shown Ron the picture of her he carried in his wallet.

Without a preliminary signal, the plane ahead suddenly nosed down and slammed into a power-dive. It looked slow, at first, and very graceful in an idle sort of way. But by the time it shot into a hole in the fog, it was streaky with speed, and then it was gone. Ron was conscious, as he followed it down, that he had said, into his mouthpiece:

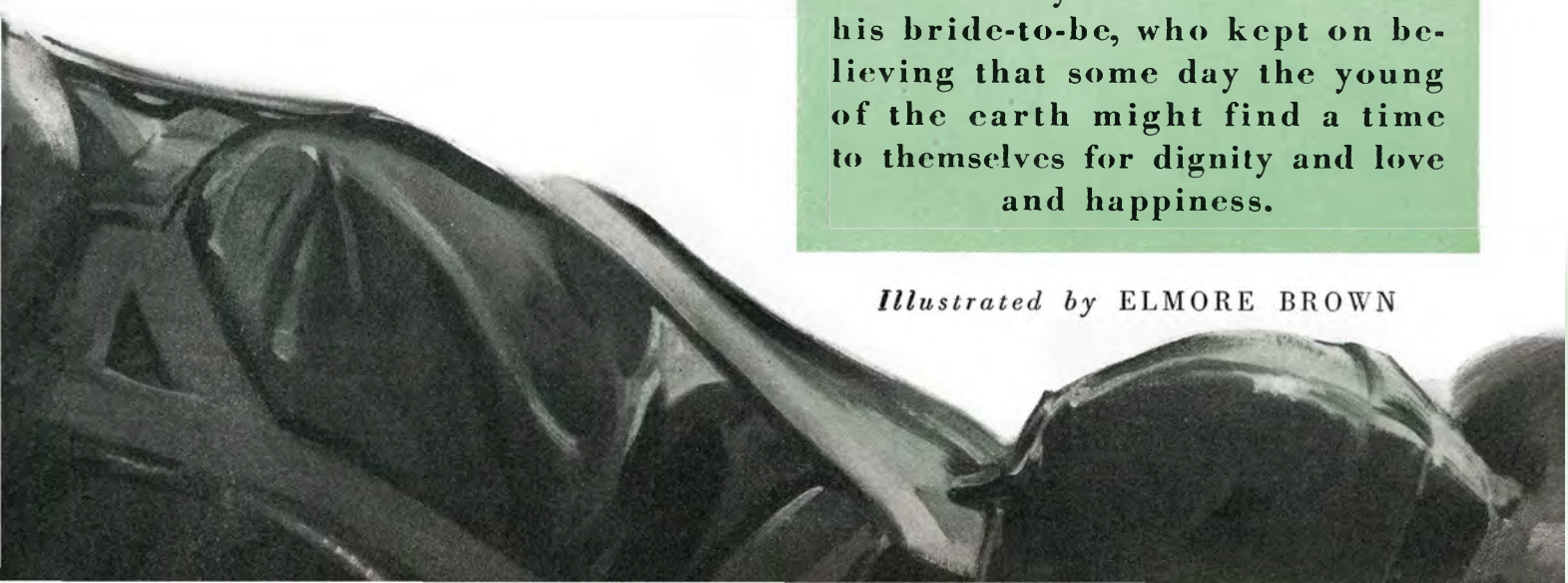
"All right, Bates."

THEN they were down through the hole in the fog, and the other plane was pulling out of it and flattening off, and thin columns of white were standing up all around the shape of the submarine, and there was still a glitter of bombs in the air, still falling. The plane's noise was an enormous constant screaming, and he was surprised to see that the water was in sunlight. It was very green, with flecks of whitecaps, and the submarine was a dark shape floating in clear depths, with only the top of the conning-tower sticking up and making a frozen V of white behind it. A tiny man was there, struggling in slow motion to get through the hatch, trying to close it behind him, and then one of the glitter-streaks hit just in front of the conning-tower, and there was a dull dirty flowering of orange flame in a white burst of sea-water, and Ron held up his left hand, shaking his head for Bates to see. No use to waste any more bombs. As he pulled the ship out of the dive and went climbing away in a circle, he saw the submarine again. It was in a vast spread of foam, and the stern was just lifting, ever

He was waiting for Mac, but Mac didn't get there. . . . Then he was alone in space.

A love-story of an aviator and his bride-to-be, who kept on believing that some day the young of the earth might find a time to themselves for dignity and love and happiness.

Illustrated by ELMORE BROWN



so slowly, out of the mess, into the air, with the two propellers still turning madly. And then they were in fog again, climbing, and Ron was wondering, again, by what dirty means Intelligence knew that a big mine-laying U-boat was scheduled to come out through a lane in their minefields at sunrise, on a course of—

The sun hit the windshield like a blast; and squinting his eyes against the sudden glare, he thought he saw the other bomber leading out, above him, the way home. Peering, he seemed suddenly to see black darting motes all around the shape of the bomber, and he thought suddenly: *"My God—their coastal patrols!"* but he didn't really believe it until he felt his machine-gun chattering in broken irregular bursts behind him, in the tail of the machine. He straightened out and went up for a woolly bank of fog that had become a cloud, candy-box pink with sunrise; and the sound of his engines as the throttles went open banged their ears, a roaring terrified snarl. As they went up, shoulder-blades flattened against the backs of their seats, Ron had a detached, impersonal feeling that he'd been more excited in a dory with a big salmon on the line; but at once they were out of the eye of the sun and he saw the other bomber clearly now. It nosed over, quite casually, and began to fall, away from the bright swarm of Messerschmidts; and suddenly, as it fell, it drew across the sky with smoke the sort of line you'd draw downward with a piece of crumbly charcoal across a bit of blue-and-gray mottled paper. There went Billy Budrick. . . .

They were in the cloud; and he banked and whirled and leveled off into steady flight. The cloud ended before he expected it to, and nothing was in sight. Nothing. The sky was blue, and perfectly blank. There were other clouds, of course—woolly, fair-weather clouds. And the sea stretched empty and sunlit to the horizons. There wasn't even a ship in sight. After a long time, he felt Bates sigh and relax behind him. Bates' voice quacked flatly in his earphones:

"Nicely done, Canuck."

Ron lifted his shoulders without looking around. Halfway home, he felt a scrabbling in the fuselage behind him; and Mac, the machine-gunner, had crawled forward and was tugging at his sleeve. He looked down. Mac's face was smudged, with a mustache and a grin. He held up three fingers, and pointed vigorously toward the tail. So they'd had three of them on their tail!

CATHY met him at the door. The girl with whom Cathy shared the apartment had gone out for the evening with her young man, so that he and Cathy could have a quiet time alone.

"A good dinner," Cathy said. "You didn't know I'm a good cook, did you?"

"No," he said.

Cathy had a newspaper in her hand. She showed him what she had been reading:

His Majesty's Government announced tonight that an enemy submarine has been sunk by bombing operations of the Royal Air Force over the North Sea. Despite the protective activity of enemy aircraft, the British force sustained only nominal loss.

"Nominal loss." Ron thought of Billy Budrick, and the picture of the girl he had carried in his wallet. As he handed the paper back to Cathy, he saw that she had been watching him, her eyes deep with fear.

"Somebody got a little excitement," he said. "I suppose I should be thankful for safe little routine flights."

WITHOUT saying anything, she looked away; after a while they went into the dining-nook. She had set the table beautifully; there were candles, and autumn flowers in a pewter bowl. He hadn't realized how quaintly darling she'd look in a gingham apron, standing there smiling at him, with her hands thrust into its pockets. He'd only seen her dressed up for a date, before, or in the funny uniform she wore in her war work, as chauffeur to Sir Humphrey Naismith Wandsworth-Terrill, a big nob in the War Office, and a friend of her family.

She had a bottle of wine, too, an Australian sauterne; and as she opened it with the salad, she mentioned negligently:

"We'd be having this afternoon off, wouldn't we?"

Watching her quick hands, he said:

"I—yes. I guess so."

"Because you'd have worked so hard all week, clearing for the Major's high orchard," she said. "I think probably we'd have had a morning's fishing, and we'd be having our lunch now."

"Mmm. Probably."

"On Crippled Doe Creek, wouldn't it be? Up toward the headwaters, darling, where—"

"Likely. The trout rise well there, after the first cold nights of October. In the pools below the rapids."

"And we'd be sitting on a gravel-bar, in the sunshine, unpacking our lunch-basket, and—"

"That's a mountain creek," he said. "There aren't any gravel-bars."

"Oh," she said. "I didn't realize. But where would we—"

"I know a place," he said. "It's a—a place you'll love. See, here are the rapids, like this; and then at the bottom, where the creek makes a sharp turn against a cliff, there are several deep pools. It's so quiet there that I've seen a wood-duck's feather floating there, around and around in a back-eddy, all afternoon. There aren't many wood-ducks left anywhere, you know; but they are there. In that timber."

"Oh, darling," she said. "It will be—"

"Well, what I was saying, there's a rock, very high, on this side, opposite the cliff. There's deep moss on the top of it, so deep you can sleep on it; it's springy as spruce-boughs under your blankets. I think we'd be camping there overnight."

"Oh, yes. That *would* be more fun—and—"

"At this time of year, when the bucks are running with the does, the moss would be all cut by their hoofs, like knives," he said. "It's a place they meet. There above the creek, at the foot of the rapids. It's away in the back-country, you know."

"And we'd put our rods and our baskets down there and have lunch," she said. "I'd have the loveliest lunch for you, darling. There'd be sandwiches of wild strawberry jam, and apple jelly that I'd have made, and we'd have our coffee out of tin cups from a pot on the fire. Oh, and—"

"I expect we'd broil trout on sticks, between two slices of bacon," he said. "And for supper I'd show you how to make brochettes on longer sticks, over the coals—strips of bacon and a mutton chop, cut thick, and more bacon and then a sausage, and then more bacon and a couple of slices of kidney and—"

"Oh, darling, how can we eat this poky dinner, when there are such—"

"It's a good dinner," he said. "The other will come. Some day, when—"

"I know. But . . . . Tell me the rest of it, darling. Please."

"Well," he said, "after supper you get drowsy. With the wind in the trees, while the fire begins to burn low. You have a smoke, and then there's sleep. But you wake up toward morning, and—the moon is waning just now, you know, and we'd creep to the edge of the rock and watch, and pretty soon you'd see the deer coming out of the brush to drink.

Mac held up three fingers, and pointed. So they'd had three of them on their tail!

They looked at each other for a time; then Cathy was saying: "Tell me again, Ron. Help us believe."

They'd stand with their forefeet in the water, and the moon setting behind the trees, you know; and if you made a sound, they'd lift their muzzles and look at you, for a minute. And then they'd be gone. Have you ever seen a deer when it—"

"No," she whispered.

"Well, they are there one minute, looking up at you; and then they—rather float off and are gone, and the moon reflections are sort of—all broken into fragments in the water where their feet have been. You'll know what I mean when you see it, Cathy."

"I know," she said.

"By that time, it'll be about time to fish again," he said. "So we'll make some coffee and then take our rods and go down to the pool, and I expect your first cast ought to get a good strike. You—you don't know what fishing can be until one of those big cutthroats of the high hills takes your fly, just with the first light, when— And you will be so— I—I love you so, and—oh, hell, Cathy."

"I know," she said. "But please, Ron."

He held his wineglass between his fingers, staring at it: all the bubble and sparkle and belief gone suddenly out of him. Lifting it to drink, he mumbled:

"Sure.... What's the use?"

The rim of the glass was at his lips, but he didn't drink because Cathy's eyes were—were— There wasn't anything to say, and they looked at each other for a long time.

Then Cathy's lips were moving stiffly, and she was saying:

"Tell me again, Ron. Please. Help us believe."

THEY were flying in morning sunshine, and he tried not to think. Not to think at all. He was second in formation, and kept his eyes on the squadron leader's rudder. But to the right and sixteen thousand feet down, there was a dim coastline, drawn in crawling surf. They hadn't much farther to go.

Away ahead, the horizon-haze was confused in one spot, as if the coastline there were broken up by curious and complicated formations. In two or three minutes, he began to be able to make out landmarks which he'd noted on aërial photographic maps, and then dim smudges beyond a headland became banks and banners of industrial smokes hung against the pale sky-rim. The squadron leader waggled the signal, *"Bombing formation,"* and began going down on a long easy line. As they lost altitude, Ron was conscious of the other planes maneuvering with slow precision into their places, and then he saw the harbor. It was another minute or so before he saw that the ships were in the positions placed by yesterday's reconnaissance, and it was nearly time to flatten out for the final run toward the objective. He watched the squadron leader methodically—but saw, as the sun caught their wings at a slant for a long second, a slow ascending spiral of shining motes against the blue curtains of the smoke. Their interceptors were coming up.

SUDDENLY the squadron leader flattened to a straight-away streak, and they went on in. It wasn't very far, and as they went, Ron saw ahead of them their own fighters coming down glittering like sparse raindrops in the sun to meet the interceptors. Then they were there so suddenly that he wasn't quite ready for it, and as the squadron leader peeled off and went down, Ron was conscious that strange swift things were going on in the sky ahead of them and above. But he was watching the underside of the squadron leader go down and away so fast that the wings shrank suddenly with distance; then he was out of sight, and Ron blinked a little to discover that the whole world had bloomed suddenly with flowers of smoke. It was like a magic show to astound little believing children: in a patch of clear blue a smoke-flower suddenly was there, with blinding white pistils of flame which vanished instantly, leaving the petals of smoke to grow.

Once his plane rocked suddenly like a motor-launch in the wake of a steamer. He thought their aim was uncommonly good, and then it was his turn to go down, and he slammed her into it and eased the gun wide open. It had seemed a long time since the squadron leader peeled off for his dive, and Ron was surprised to see how closely he was riding the boss' tail down. A trifle too close, perhaps; but as he saw the bombs leave—one, and two, and then a sort of cluster, coming out and holding parallel and very close to the plane for a split second, he lined up the objective in his diving sights. From beneath the roar that filled the bones of his skull, a dull slant-edged scream of *(Please turn to page 95)*

"Listen here, young woman: Whatever I may have done before, I'm not being modern about you."

An

She wrote it on the last night of her honeymoon, and she hoped that he would never have to read it.

UNPOSTED LETTER

by Alec Waugh

Illustrated by WILLIAM REUSSWIG

DARLING: You've just gone below, to do your packing. You had to be alone, you said. This afternoon when I was doing mine, you straddled across your bunk, reading out jokes from the new *New Yorker,* interrupting me. Dear one, do you remember *how* you interrupted me? But your packing, that's another matter. That's a serious masculine occupation, requiring serious masculine concentration. I was not to come down, you said, for a full half-hour. Those were your orders, delivered as though it were a prison sentence. If only you could have guessed how I chuckled then! Because half an hour alone, that's just what I needed for myself. And dear one, I was beginning to be so afraid I'd never have it. Do you realize this is the first time, the very first time, that I've been alone, really alone, without danger of those "interruptions," in fourteen days—since this pleasure cruise, since our honeymoon, began?

Fourteen days. Is it really only fourteen days since I was sitting in that bachelor-girl flat of mine, staring at nothing, repeating over and over again, "This time tomorrow I'll be married!"—and in a mood most inappropriate to a wedding eve? I wasn't any of the things I should have been. I wasn't ecstatic, trancelike, in a dream. I was restless, irritable, on edge; not frightened, not apprehensive, but resentful, feeling myself in a trap; telling myself that it was not too late, that I could still get out of it: not certain whether I wanted to or not. Was that only fourteen days ago?

Fourteen days. I can't believe that there ever was a time I wasn't married, just as I can't believe there was a time I didn't know you. And do you realize that it's not three months since an independent young woman, very proud of her modernity and her modernistic flat and her job in Conway's that bought her that flat and freedom; a young woman without a worry in the world, with everything very cut and dried, knowing exactly how she was going to run her life, as men run theirs; standing on her own feet, organizing her job and income, preserving her independence after marriage, a very Twentieth Century woman—was getting ready for a party where—

Would I have gone to that party if I'd known that I was going to meet there a man who was going to destroy that program? Would I? I'm sure I wouldn't. Darling, I was so proud of that pretty program; I was so resentful at seeing it destroyed. Because it was going to be destroyed, I realized that, if I let myself fall in love with you in the way you wanted—in the way that with nine-tenths of myself I longed to fall. I fought so hard against it. That's why I was so moody, so capricious, why I made all those scenes. You were so patient, too. I can't think even now how you put up with me. "He must really be in love with me," I'd think, and feel so contrite. "I'll never do that again," I'd swear. And the very next day I would.

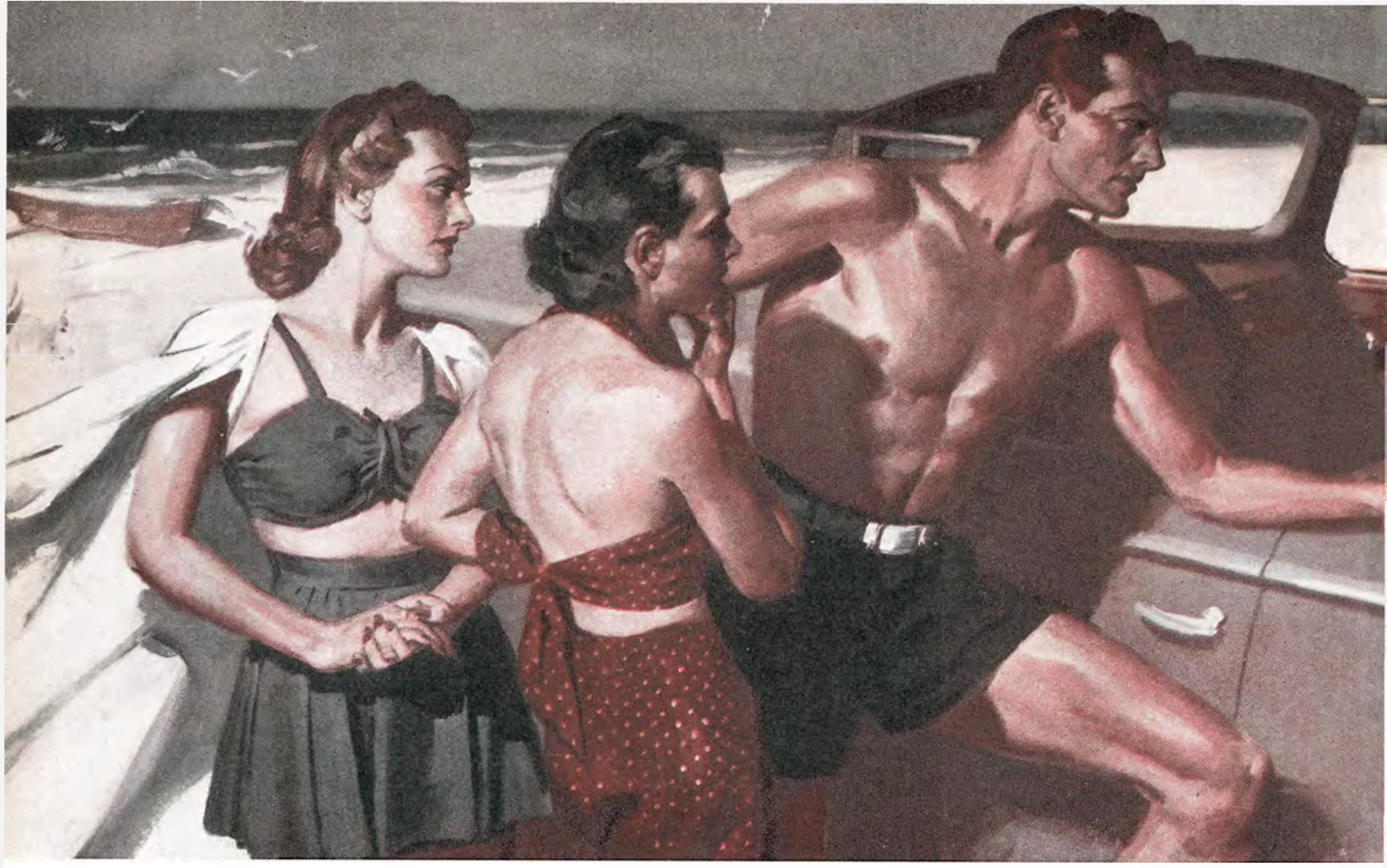
And later when I'd realized that it *was* hopeless, that I *was* in love; even then I went on fighting. "Very well," I said. "I've fallen: and that's that. But it's not going to interfere with anything. I'm going to keep it apart from the main run of my life, as men do." It was something to be worked out of my system, I told myself. That's why I was so debonair when you began talking about this cruise. "That'll be fun," I said, "as long as you show some regard for the conventions." I made a fine show, didn't I, of being a hard-boiled sophisticate? I kept it up, too, didn't I, till your eyes suddenly went stern and you put your hands upon my shoulders: "Now listen here, young woman, and get this straight: Whatever I may have done before, I'm not being modern about you. This is something that I'm in for keeps." How my heart bounded when you said that! Yet even then there was that one-tenth part of me resentful, still jealous for its independence.

And it was that one-tenth part that kept me irritable and restless, fourteen nights ago, as I paced the flat I had been so proud of; the next day it would be handed over to the renting office. It was that one-tenth part that kept me during those first days— How shall I put it? Is there any need to explain? You must know the difference between the me that you found waiting for you that first night, and the me that'll be joining you in twenty minutes. You're subtle; you're sensitive. I couldn't love you if you weren't. You must see the difference between this me and that other one. For that other me wasn't me at all: it was someone who was trying to prevent herself from becoming the me that is yours now.

Dear one, that's why I'm writing you this letter—to remind you how wholly, how completely, *that* me is yours. I don't know what's happened to that girl who was so proud of her independence. She was a mask, a cloak that has been dropped. She's become a girl in love, a girl who's relaxed to love, given way to love, let its tides flow over her. And yet, and this is the strangest thing, she doesn't feel that she's become a slave, that she's been invaded, submerged, annihilated. On the contrary, she feels more alive, more real, more personal; as though she had become herself for the first time, had lost herself to find herself. That's why I'm writing you this letter, to tell you this: or rather not to tell you, but to remind you, because when you read this, it'll be a long while hence, when things will be very different.

IT won't always be like this, darling. . . . Tomorrow the ship will dock, and we'll be starting our new life in our new home. And it'll be a lovely life, and we'll have lovely times, in ways that we can't guess at now. It'll be heaven, counting hours at my office, saying to myself: "In three and three-quarter hours I'll be with him." The excitement of hurrying back to you when the office closes! It'll be heaven—yes, of course it will. But it'll be different, even so. We'll have our separate offices, our separate problems. One can't share everything. We'll never again be so absolutely one person as we are today. We'll grow away from one another, just a little. And later, when there are children—they say, don't they, that children bring people together, but I don't think that's true. They may keep together people who are mentally and spiritually apart, but I half suspect that they may separate people who already are at one. After all, for a woman, a child's her own, in a way that her husband can never be. Suppose I were to become maternally possessive; suppose you were to feel yourself shut out, or suppose that you began to succeed, on a large scale. Why shouldn't you, after all? You're young; you're ambitious; you've gone a long way already. You might become absorbed by your ambition. Then it would be I who would feel left out. There are so many pitfalls. . . . And then there's propinquity and use and wont. Yes, it may well be that a time will come when you'll feel tempted to shrug your shoulders over all of this. It couldn't have amounted to very much, you'll think, if it could have come to the nothingness so quickly. . . . That's why I'm writing you this letter to remind you.

Before I come down tonight, I'm going to address this letter to your club; I'm going to put it with a covering letter in another envelope that I'll send *(Please turn to page125)*



Geoffrey's voice was frighteningly quiet: "Mrs. Carsidine, I don't need help from anyone."

HILDRETH

The Story Thus Far:

SHE lived with her mother—who was fat and foolish and divorced—in a little seacoast Maine village. Would her mind, she wondered, be like her mother's when she was old? It would if she didn't get some discipline for it pretty soon. She shuddered. Nineteen years wasted so far. Nineteen years old, and she still knew nothing, had accomplished nothing. "O God," she prayed, "don't let me be wholly wasted, please! And don't let Geoff be wasted either! He's worth saving."

Geoffrey Weirson at least had a college education, though he had no job, and lived—or starved—alone in the old Weirson house near by. Geoff meant much to Hildreth; she'd worried a lot about his friendship with a girl named Cathy last summer. Tonight she was hurrying over to his house with a plan: Her mother's newly widowed sister Laura was about to descend upon them for the summer with her four young boys and their nurse Regina; and there was no room in their house for so many. Would Geoff rent a couple of his vacant rooms to Laura for her boys?

Geoff suspected a subterfuge to bestow charity upon him, and hesitated. And then Laura Furnard and her four young hellions arrived—Laura, who was sweet and only thirty-two, but who left the care of the boys almost wholly to their dour nurse; and Regina was too worn and ill to care for them properly.

Next day they went to town on a little excursion—Hildreth and Laura and Geoffrey. And during luncheon at the hotel Laura suddenly got up, walked over to a thin and sour-looking man lunching alone across the room, and talked with him for some time. Later Laura said to jealous Geoffrey when Hildreth had left them:

"You know that man you thought was staring at me? He was staring at Hildreth. He's her father—Mimi's ex.—Alec Carsidine. I don't know what possessed me to hunt him up. I never liked him. I don't know why Mimi married him. She had plenty of other men crazy about her. Girls are so silly. It seemed awful to me tonight, seeing Alec and Hildreth there in that dining-room, father and daughter, alike as two peas; strangers to each other, not speaking, not even recognizing each other, perhaps. I suppose that's what made me go and hunt him up. I was snubbed for my trouble."

Geoffrey's black mood had exploded like a rocket into splendor. She was confiding in him—telling him things no one else knew!

"Hildreth would never let her mother take him back," said Geoffrey presently. "She hates him as much as your mother did."

"Do you think I'd better tell her he's here? It would be a shock to Mimi to run into him in the Port without warning."

He didn't know what to say. He was a little dizzy. Her cheek was only a breath away from his lips. She would be sweet to kiss—sweeter than Cathy had ever been. *(The story continues in detail:)*

REGINA lay on her back, her arms straight at her sides, the sheet drawn smoothly up to her heavy chin. This was the way she would lie when she was dead. She'd rather be dead than idle and useless like this. She had never stayed this long in bed before in her life. She had worked hard ever since she was able to walk, almost. She hadn't minded. She'd been healthy and strong. There had always been plenty of work to do at home: The babies to take care of, Clara and Thomas and Robert. Ma did cleaning by the day. She wasted no strength cleaning her own two rooms. A pigsty, they had been.

Regina's nose could remember her home: The smell of sour milk and drying laundry and old cooking and unwashed bodies. She'd loathed it even when she was little. She'd tried to keep Clara clean. No use. Poor Thomas was too dull to learn. Robert had been the only one worth saving. He'd come along when she was fourteen. She'd done a good job on Robert. He didn't need her help any more. He didn't want her around. He had a wife now.

Ma dead. Clara married. Thomas dead. Robert married.

Mr. Furnard dead. And probably Mrs. Furnard would be get-

—Her Story

A novel of neighbors—like yours, perhaps—living their own lives in America today.

by

HARLOW ESTES

who won the Redbook-Dodd Mead $10,000 prize.

ting married again in a year or two. A pretty, helpless woman like that always got married again.

"What's it to me?" thought Regina. "I'm out of the picture, anyhow. Even if he hadn't died, I'd have been out of a job in a year or two. Fergus is ready for kindergarten. The boys don't need me. But that Carsidine girl needn't keep rubbing it in."

If he hadn't died, though, he'd have made a job for her. He wouldn't have thrown her out on the street. He'd liked her. Not many people had liked her. They'd depended on her and respected her, and she hadn't wanted anything else. But Mr. Furnard had liked her. Right in front of her, he'd said to Mrs. Garlinde: "Helen, I'm going to steal Regina from you when our baby comes. She's exactly what we need at our house."

He always got what he wanted. He hadn't had to steal her. Even when he said that, joking, Mrs. Garlinde was planning to go to Reno.

She couldn't have walked out on Mrs. Garlinde, even to please him. It had just been a good break. Every time she'd made a change, it had been to a better job. The Hubbards first. Not enough money. She'd done all the work there, besides taking care of the little girls. The MacIntyres had enough money, but Mrs. Mac was always interfering, spoiling the children or yelling at them. The Garlindes had been nice people, but Mr. Garlinde couldn't keep away from women.

Nothing like that in the Furnard house. It had been the best job of all, and had lasted the longest—eleven years. She'd been happy, and proud of her job, complete boss of the nursery wing, a member of the family. Mr. Furnard hadn't even let her wear a uniform. "My mother's hired girl wore the same kind of house-dresses my mother wore. You're a member of the family, and don't you forget it." He'd paid her the biggest wages she'd ever earned, and discussed the boys with her as if she were a friend, and teased her, and liked her. "You've got what I want my boys to have, Regina. You won't baby them. And you'll make them mind without yelling at them or threatening. They'll trust you, because you won't lie to them. They can count on you, and so can I."

She had been happy: money enough to put Robert through school; work she enjoyed and was good at. The Furnard boys were the smartest and liveliest children she'd ever had charge of. And there was that good safe happy feeling in the house all the time, because Mr. and Mrs. Furnard were crazy about each other, and had a wonderful time just being alive, and together.

It was finished now. Any day now Mrs. Furnard would say: "The boys don't need a nurse any more, Regina."

Well, she had savings; she wouldn't starve. She could always get a new job. But she didn't want a new job. She was tired, and she was alone, and she didn't belong anywhere.

"BUT hasn't she any people of her own?" asked Hildreth.

"A brother, I think," said Laura. "An accountant or something. She's never said much of anything about him, or about her own private life. I doubt if she has one. She isn't chatty, and I don't like to seem prying."

"Probably she thinks you aren't interested." Hildreth was stern. "Think how dreary, spending a whole life in somebody else's home, taking care of somebody else's children, and nobody interested enough in her as a person to find out what her own people were like, or when her birthday is, or anything."

Drake, Laura remembered, had been interested to a certain extent, and friendly. But Laura had been a little in awe of Regina.

"After a certain age," said Laura, "women don't thank you for inquiring into their birthdays."

"Don't be trivial, Laura. I think you should find out about this brother, and how he's situated; and if he can have Regina make him a long visit, you ought to give her the whole summer off on pay and make her go. Insist that she go! She's well enough to travel right now. She's low in her mind because she hasn't anything to interest her. Diphtheria or a real disease like that is an occupation in itself, but she's just supposed to take things easy, and there's nothing so tiresome as that! She doesn't even read. I took her up some books, but she said she'd never got the reading habit. Always too busy. Laura, make her take a good vacation. You must learn to do without her sometime."

"Oh, darling, don't fuss," coaxed Madeleine. "If you're going to swim, why don't you? The tide's far enough in, and it's two hours since lunch."

PETE began trying to uproot the beach-umbrella. Hildreth said: "Don't, Pete! I had trouble enough getting that planted."

"I'm stronger than you are!" he grinned. "I bet I can pull it out easy! Watch me!"

"Don't! It might fall on Aunty Mimi and hurt her."

He used more strength. Hildreth had to get up and chase him away. Laura said, sighing: "The shades of the prison-house can't close on that child any too soon to suit me."

Madeleine cried: "You wouldn't put your own son in a reform school!"

"Oh, skip it," said Laura, pulling on her white rubber cap. "I was only quoting."

The cap shut out her sister's indignant: "Quoting Drake, I suppose!" She shed her white cape and ran down into the surf, shuddering as the icy soapsuds frothed about her knees. Cass yelled: "Mummy, look, I can swim. Geoff says I'm good—see me!" and flung himself on his stomach, threshing wildly. Fergus squealed, "I can swim! I'm good, Mummy—see me!" and flung himself forward and disappeared instantly. Geoffrey plucked him out, bubbling and spouting but undismayed. Laura said: "You're good to bother with them."

"No bother," he said. "It's fun."

He tried not to stare at her. But he couldn't help it. She was pretty even with that tight cap hiding all her hair and pulling her eyes faintly aslant. And her figure was as good as Cathy's. Different, but just as pretty, firm and slim and high-breasted. She stood shivering, afraid to plunge. She shrieked as a spatter of cold water struck her naked back. Behind her Pete was cupping his hands for more. Geoffrey said, "Cut that out!" and started for him. Hildreth said: "Oh, don't be a sissy, Laura!"

There was nothing for it but to plunge and make for deep water.

She hadn't forgotten her crawl. She was out of practice, but her muscles seemed to remember. She couldn't get any reaction from the cold, though, even with hard swimming. Her body ached. Her breathing hurt her. Talk about the Arctic!

"Don't go too far. Better get used to it gradually."

Geoffrey was close beside her, reassuring, dependable. He wouldn't let her drown, even if the cold gave her cramps. They turned back and swam to shore side by side, companionably.

Hildreth lay on her face near the beach-umbrella. Her back was splotchy with sunburn, and her shoulders were peeling. Her legs were skinny and long. Her old bathing-suit wasn't much more covering than a loin-cloth and bib. Madeleine said: "Did you know you had a couple of moth-holes where you sit down? Remind me to mend them when we go back to the house."

Hildreth sat up, brushing sand out of her hair. She said: "You'd better hurry and get some tan on you, Laura. You look like something from under a board."

"She never tans," said Madeleine from under the umbrella; "she has that thick white skin like Papa's. Mine's so sensitive I think the light from a candle would freckle me. Remember, Laura, how Papa could sit right in the bright sun all day without even dark glasses? I do think you might have named one of the boys *Gerald* for Papa; I don't like any of their names, and neither did Mamma."

Laura picked up a handful of sand and let it slide out through her fingers. Her hands were thinner. The wedding ring and Drake's emerald were a little loose. Drake had named the boys. *Cass* was his father's first name, *Dillon* his mother's maiden name, *Peter* his own middle name, *Fergus* for a Scotchman he had roomed with in college and drunk Scotch with. She hadn't cared what he named the boys. Whatever pleased him suited her.

"Hildy, this sand is awfully hard to sit on," Madeleine said. "Help me up. Why don't we all go back to the house? I want to empty the sand out of my shoes and get those lobsters ready."

Geoffrey helped Hildreth haul her mother up, but he let them struggle toward the car alone. He wouldn't go while Laura stayed. He didn't have much time alone with her. He wasn't alone with her now two minutes. Fergus came up and sat down with a thump on Geoffrey's chest, and Cass came to show a handful of sand-dollars. "Look, Geoff, I guess the fellows at school will be surprised when I tell them I picked up dollars on the beach. They'd be swell to play poker with, wouldn't they? Better than chips."

Laura said: "The boys think the world of you, Geoff. I don't suppose you'd be willing to take them on as a full-time job, would you? Hildreth says I must give Regina a long vacation. Geoff, would you? Mimi said you used to be a camp counselor. This wouldn't be much different, except you'd have fewer boys to handle. You're spending half your time with them as it is. It's a shame for you to do it for nothing."

He rolled Fergus off him. He said uneasily: "My time isn't worth anything."

"But it is! It would be worth a great deal to me to have the boys on your mind instead of on my own."

She hesitated. She didn't want to push him. She wasn't used to making business arrangements. Drake had always done it for her.

"They need a man's supervision and companionship—if they can get it."

She mustn't push him. She caught up her bath-towel and began rubbing the damp ends of her hair, hard. She said: "I'm wholly selfish in suggesting it. It would bore you, of course."

"It wouldn't bore me at all," he said, but reluctantly. He couldn't make up his mind. Such jobs weren't to be scorned. He had known a fellow in college who had had just such a job three summers—pleasant easy work and excellent pay. But he hated to have Laura paying him wages. Room-rent would have been bad enough. But wages! He couldn't feel easy with her, couldn't just be friends with her, if he was working for her. Yet the way she put it, it was hard to refuse her. She was so gentle about it, not jumping at him the way Hildreth did.

Hildreth came back for the picnic hamper. Why did she have to come at just this minute? Her eyes were on him, anxious.

"Aren't you coming?"

After a minute she added, aware of some tension:

"What's the matter?"

She knew there was something between them, Geoff was hiding from her behind his poker face.

"I haven't any sense," said Laura, dropping the towel. "I offered him a job. I wanted to throw him to my private lions. But why should he be a living sacrifice?"

"A job!" cried Hildreth. "What do you mean?"

"The boys, of course," said Laura. "I don't blame him for refusing to tie himself up for the entire summer."

Hildreth stamped her foot in the sand.

"You didn't refuse, Geoff! But you can't refuse! It's a wonderful idea! I don't see why I didn't think of it myself!"

("Don't shove him," begged Laura silently. "Let him make up his own mind.")

She pulled on her cape and started off toward the car, letting the big bath-towel drag behind her.

"GEOFF, for heaven's sake! It's a real job, the first in three years. And she wouldn't patronize you or treat you like a servant, if that's what you're afraid of."

"Cass!" he shouted. "Dillon! Hey, you! Come along!"

They came running.

"You see," said Hildreth, "they eat out of your hand."

Cass said: "Look, I tried to pick up a jellyfish, and it stung me—I didn't know they stung. I'm all red like poison ivy."

"It would mean real money, Geoff. Clear! Enough to take you away from here in the fall, and to live on while you look for a year-round job, the sort you're trained to do."

Why did she have to keep nagging at him? The matter was between Laura and him. It wasn't her affair. He took the hamper from her, roughly, and started across the beach.

Dillon went close beside him, hopping on one leg.

"Geoff, do you think Mummy would s-send for Whisky and Soda if we s-stay all summer? They could come in c-crates. You ask her. She'll send for them if you ask her. She thinks you're t-terribly nice. She s-said so."

The little boys swarmed into the car, but Hildreth had to get the matter settled; she couldn't let it rest. "Say you'll do it, Geoff!"

"Do what?" asked her mother.

"Take on the boys as a summer job," said Hildreth, and Laura groaned. Now it *was* in the soup!

"Why, *(Please turn to page 62)*

He stared at Laura mutely. She said: "Am I interrupting something important? I just wanted your advice."


FRANK
ENSING
40

ORDERS *are* ORDERS

AFTER the Gestapo's visit and Hertha's unhappy encounter with the Lieutenant the evening full of talk in the Herder apartment grew into a long night. When the lights at last went out, not one of them could sleep.

Hertha had told what there was to tell, assured them, as a matter of fact, that she never wanted to see Von Drossen again. Her feeling of hurt and shame found vent in Herder's indignation at the offered financial settlement. Finally he declared himself willing to write both Von Drossen and his commander that his daughter considered no one but herself responsible for her condition. But when, having made his decision, he was willing to call it a day, they had a surprise visitor—Dr. Schien.

He had come straight from a meeting of the local Gau administration, at which he had heard that Herder had been warned by the Gestapo. "Don't worry about it any more," he told them. "I spoke up for you, and I vouched for you. Now you must see to it that you don't let me down."

Herder did not like his patronizing tone, and answered almost roughly: "I have always done my duty."

"Your duty," said Schien slowly. "First, even if you had, it would not be enough. In these days every one of us must do ten times his duty. And besides, you haven't even done what you said. Else you'd have reported the General's widow."

"She is a harmless, unhappy old woman."

"The slightest inclination to opposition must be nipped." Schien's voice cut sharply through the room. He stood angrily, weird in his blackness, and his bald skull gleamed in the light. After a pause he went on more quietly:

"We must win this war. It's going to begin in earnest now. If we lose, there'll be one of us hanging from every tree in Germany. But we can win only if we're able to put all the strength of the nation into the battle. All of our material and moral reserves must be mobilized. In the beginning many of us pictured our revolution differently, friendlier perhaps, and certainly much easier. You are one of those, and so am I. But now there is only one road for us—and that leads forward. Do you think I like to work the sick and the aged to death?"

Elsbeth felt his words cut to the bone. But then he changed, and he was the old friendly Schien again. "I have arranged," he said, "that you are to be appointed my deputy for this district. You will be in charge of the work-stations for the sick and aged. You are responsible only to me. The Gestapo will leave you in peace."

He looked at Herder as if he were expecting thanks. But Herder shook his head. "I know what I can do, and what I cannot. What you want of me may be necessary—but I cannot do it. It goes against my grain. I can't work people to death."

Schien winced when he heard his own words flung back at him. Then he stepped close up to Herder. "You learn *anything* after a while," he asserted. "You have until morning to think it over." There was a menacing threat in the silence that followed. Then he said good night to them and left. Elsbeth had been unable to shake hands with him, she was trembling so.

When Herder came back from showing Schien to the door, he looked at Elsbeth and then at Hertha, then back at Elsbeth again, and it seemed as if he wanted to say something. But without a word he turned away, and went into the bedroom.

It was only after Elsbeth had followed him that Hertha moved. "You learn *anything* after a while," she said aloud to herself.

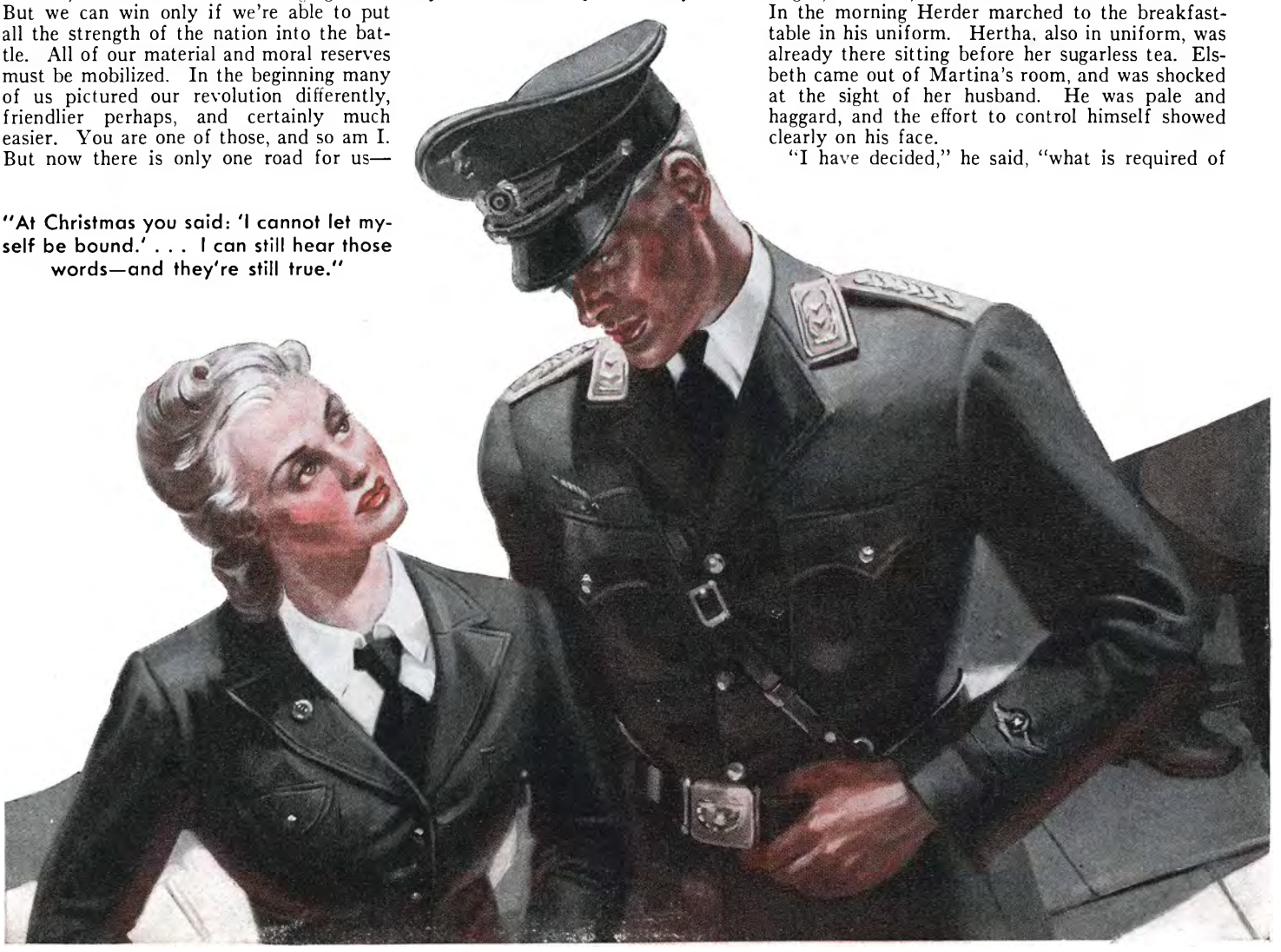
There was moon that night; the clouds drove hard and dark. The muffled roar of the air squadrons out on practice flights over Harstadt was already one of the familiar sounds. It did not bother them. But tortured minds see faces in the darkness, and hear thoughts crying in the silence. . . .

Only the little girl, Martina, smiled in a dream.

In the morning Herder marched to the breakfast-table in his uniform. Hertha, also in uniform, was already there sitting before her sugarless tea. Elsbeth came out of Martina's room, and was shocked at the sight of her husband. He was pale and haggard, and the effort to control himself showed clearly on his face.

"I have decided," he said, "what is required of

"At Christmas you said: 'I cannot let myself be bound.' . . . I can still hear those words—and they're still true."



BY FRANZ HOELLERING

ILLUSTRATED BY JOSEPH NUSSDORF

After "the real war" began . . . A dramatic episode dealing with an average family in the Nazi Germany of the year 1940.

me. I will do my duty." He sat down and opened the newspaper, and then pretended not to notice how Elsbeth's hand shook when she poured his tea. She knew too well what that decision had cost him. "He is doing it for me and the children," she told herself, and the thought only made her more miserable. She wanted to ask him if he did not want another talk with Schien, a friendly one; he had been so gruff the night before. But there sat Hertha in her uniform with that cold, resolute look she had seen in her eyes the day before when she spoke those terrible words: "There is no such thing as happiness. There are no such things as personal feelings. There must not be!"

Herder was reading the paper. "The English are laying mines in Norwegian territorial waters," he said. "We cannot allow that." He did not look up. Elsbeth felt his tone was forced.

"They've also torpedoed three of our ships," she answered, only to be saying something, only to keep the tears back. But at once she was sorry she had not kept still. Herder searched the columns of the paper for a moment, then looked at her sharply.

"Not a line about torpedoings. You've been listening to the foreign radio again. You know it's strictly forbidden, but you are going to destroy us with your curiosity." He spoke loudly, but stopped when he heard the servant in the hallway.

Elsbeth did not say a word. But it was not curiosity that had made her listen, not even the wish to escape their own propaganda. The others lied too, after all. It was nothing but the longing for a voice out of another world, after such a long time one word out of another world, no matter what world it was.

In the forced silence that followed Herder's outbreak, the doorbell rang suddenly. It was hardly half-past seven. Herder and Elsbeth looked at each other. Hertha lifted her head slowly and then stood up. But Herder stopped her with a quick gesture, and went to open the door himself, helplessness in his heavy steps, dumb resignation toward whatever waited for him outside.

But it was only bony little Thérèse, the Generalin's old cook. She wore her *(Please turn to page 87)*

OUR PRIZE-WINNING

THE EXPERT SELECTS:

Twenty-five-dollar prize from the expert goes to Dr. O. C. Posner of Brooklyn, New York. Congratulations!

OUR second round of "Expert *vs.* Layman" brings some splendid photographs to the pages of REDBOOK. Ruzzie Green, our expert, selected those on the left-hand page, while the editors of REDBOOK, the laymen, have selected those on the right-hand page. The laymen have again chosen four pictures instead of three, because both "The Thinker" (feline) and "The Pianist" (canine) had to be included. Do you feel that the laymen's choice for first prize is really a better photograph than is Mr. Green's choice for first prize? What do you think?

(Rules are on page 5 of this issue.)

A ten-dollar prize goes to Mr. Julien H. Turk of Baltimore, Maryland, for this young fisherman.

And another prize to Mr. G. L. Osmanson of Morris, Illinois, for this difficult shot.

SNAPSHOTS OF THE MONTH

THE LAYMAN SELECTS:

The twenty-five-dollar prize from the laymen is awarded Miss Elise Voysey of Bayville, New York.

This pianist wins for Mr. Fred F. Ritterbusch of West Englewood, New Jersey.

And Mr. Lyle Miller of Clifton, New York, deserves an award, as well.

Mr. James A. McMahon of St. Louis, Missouri, gets ten dollars for this cat, "The Thinker."

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, the producers of "Boom Town," must believe that there's safety in numbers. Instead of starring one star, they trot out four: Clark Gable, Spencer Tracy, Claudette Colbert and Hedy Lamarr.

BOOM TOWN

THE screen dotes on fiction; and the more implausible the plot, the better. Rarely does it turn to fables behind which lurk the elements of reality. As customers, we have shown an inordinate interest in the fascinating problem of whether boy gets girl. That, to the average film-addict, is the alpha and omega of life.

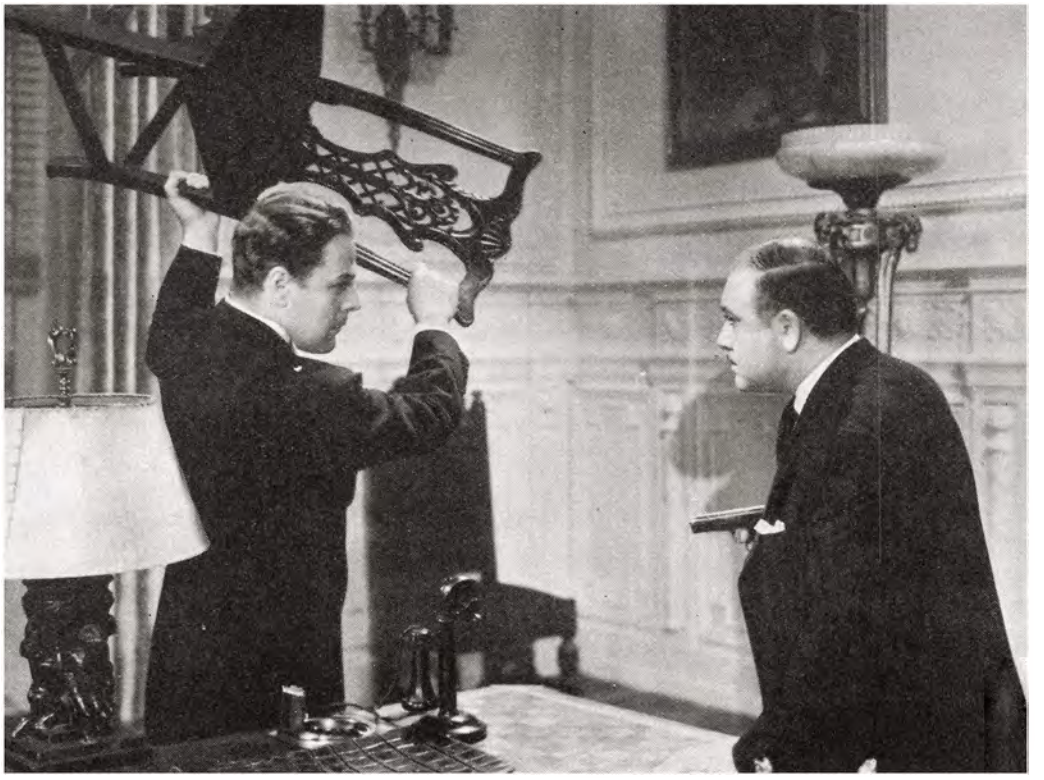
It is surprising, therefore, to discover in the same month two films that treat, with restrained fidelity, two other facets of American life, business and politics. Naturally, both pay proper respect to romance; for without this essential ingredient, photoplays would have limited emotional power. But behind the routine boy-meets-girl, boy-loses-girl, boy-gets-girl formula, is engrossing and powerful drama.

"Boom Town" and "The Great McGinty" hardly could be teamed on a theater marquee. It would be unwise to try and assimilate both the same evening; such fare would be too rich. But this department, not fearing God, man or indigestion, blandly couples them in one grand de luxe and colossal double-bill. They are the pictures of the month.

"Boom Town" is a fable of business. It is lavish, actually garish in its accouterments, with a cast headed by Spencer Tracy, Clark Gable, Claudette Colbert and Hedy Lamarr. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, its sponsor, has poured limitless money into the venture, as befits the standing of its stars. And a fast-moving, exciting and meritorious film drama has resulted that will repay anyone for an evening at the theater.

The story covers eight of the most exciting years of the oil business. It opens with the boom days of Burkburnett and closes with the first scratching of the desert earth at California's fabulous Kettleman Hills. During that span it follows the hysteria of the Mexican and Oklahoma booms; it shows fortunes won and lost and won again. Its characters wrest millions of dollars from the ground with their bare hands; and when their calluses have disappeared, so has their money.

The romance of the picture takes care of itself. Behind the love of Gable and Tracy for Miss Colbert, and the designs of Miss Lamarr on both men, is a panorama that is of documentary significance. It is the story of hundreds of men who have loomed big in the news in the last two decades, who have sunk to oblivion, and who have skyrocketed again. Aside from the battles of fists and brains, and the tussle between a siren and a wholesome American girl, is an interesting factual account of a raucous, wild segment of life that is familiar to that generation.



Written and directed by Preston Sturges (author of that great Broadway hit "Strictly Dishonorable") and produced by Paramount, "The Great McGinty" is a political satire featuring Akim Tamiroff, Brian Donlevy and Muriel Angelus.

and THE GREAT McGINTY

In short, "Boom Town" is a lusty, thundering and popular picture of the "San Francisco," "Test Pilot" and "Too Hot to Handle" school. You can't ask for richer entertainment than that.

Tracy and Gable, two drillers, with the fever of oil in their brains, meet in Burkburnett at the beginning of the boom in 1919. Their love of oil and battle is a common bond. They are men at home in this wild and clangorous part of Texas. With a few dollars and an ability to steal equipment, they drill their first hole—from which spouts salt water. With the sixth sense of oil men, they know that the structure is rich, and they try again, this time to bring in a gusher.

Betsy Bartlett (Miss Colbert), a school-teacher from "back East" with whom *John Sand* (Tracy) is in love, arrives in Burkburnett and is met by *John McMasters* (Gable). Their mutual appeal is instantaneous, and they are married that night. Tracy, naturally, is noble and understanding, and if Miss Colbert is happy, that is all he asks. (Remember, at the outset I suggested that Metro adhered to formula; at no point does the plot deviate.)

Well follows well. Both men are on the road to fortune. On the night a gusher catches on fire, Miss Colbert and Tracy find Gable in a honky-tonk. The two men quench the blaze, but not before they have a violent fist-fight near the well, surrounded by tins of nitroglycerine. They match for all or nothing; Tracy wins, and Gable returns home to find Miss Colbert packing. When she learns he has nothing, she clings to him more tenaciously than ever.

The two men separate, and from then on their paths cross frequently but they cannot be reunited. While one is rich, the other is broke; then their positions are reversed. Finally, when both are in the big time, Miss Lamarr enters Gable's life. Tracy tries to take Miss Lamarr from Gable to save Miss Colbert's happiness; when this fails, he determines to break Gable and himself as well.

Both men crash, and again Gable and Miss Colbert are reunited; and in the end, Tracy and Gable find themselves partners once more, drilling with their own hands on the famous Kettleman Hills structure, where you know both will again strike it rich, and inevitably resume their fighting.

No picture has fitted the performers more snugly. Tracy and Gable as hard-hitting drillers who, when they attain their millions, remain diamonds in the rough, are engrossing and likable. Miss Colbert as the wife who stands by her husband is, as ever, lovable.

Miss Lamarr, as *Karen Vanmeer,* alone remains an alien figure. When she says to Gable, "The independent *(Please turn to page 86)*

REDBOOKS PICTURES OF THE MONTH

Selected by

DOUGLAS W. CHURCHILL

A Few Episodes from "LIFE WITH FATHER"

ONE late afternoon when Father came up from downtown, he found his home much upset. Our cook had walked out and left us. I was a child of four, George was two, and there was a new baby besides. Mother was ill. She hadn't been able to leave us to go to an agency. And as she was herself no hand at cooking, the outlook for dinner was poor.

This state of affairs was unprecedented in all Father's experience. In his father's home, they never changed their servants suddenly; they seldom changed them at all; and as his mother was a past mistress of cooking, he had always been doubly protected. Since his marriage, he had had to live a much bumpier life. But this was the worst yet.

He asked Mother, who was lying in bed, what she was going to do about it. There were no telephones then, and she couldn't do anything at all, at the moment; but she said she would try to go to an agency in the morning and see what she could find. "In the morning? Good God!" Father said. "Where is the place, anyhow?" And he clapped on his hat and strode out again, over toward Sixth Avenue.

As I heard the story years afterward, it was late when he got there, and he bounded up the front stoop two or three steps at a time, and went quickly into the little office, where the gaslights were burning. He had never been in such a place before, and to his surprise it was empty, except for a severe-looking woman who sat at a desk at one side. "Where do you keep 'em?" he urgently demanded, his mind on the question of dinner.

She looked at him, got out her pen, and opened a large book deliberately. "I will take your name and address," she informed him, "and then, if you please, you may give me the details as to what kind of person you require and when you would wish her to call."

But Father had no time, he told her, for any damned fol-de-rol. "Where do you keep 'em?" he said again. She was standing in the way of his dinner. I can imagine how his face must have reddened and how his eyes blazed at her. "I am asking where you keep them!" he roared.

"Why, the girls are in there," the lady explained, to calm him, "but clients are not allowed in that room. If you will tell me the kind of position you wish me to fill for you, I will have one come out."

Before she'd half finished, Father had thrown open the door and gone in. There sat a crowd of the girls, young and old, sickly and brawny, of all shapes and sizes; some ugly, some pretty and trim and stylish, some awkward; nurses, ladies' maids, waitresses, washerwomen, and cooks.

The manager was by now at Father's elbow, trying to make him get out, and insisting that he tell her the position he wished her to fill. But Father was swiftly glancing around at the crowd, and he paid no attention. He noticed a little woman in the corner, with honest gray eyes, who sat there, shrewd-looking and quiet. He pointed his cane over at her and said, "I'll take that one."

The manager was flustered, but still she kept trying to enforce her authority. She protested she didn't yet know the position which he—

"Where is the place, anyhow?" He clapped his hat on and strode out.

"Cook." Father said. "cook."

"But Margaret doesn't wish to be a cook; she wants—"

"You can cook, can't you?" Father demanded.

Margaret's plain little face was still pink with excitement and pleasure at being chosen above all that roomful by such a masterful gentleman. Father had probably smiled at her, too, for they liked each other at once. Well, she said, she had cooked for one family.

"Of course she can cook," Father said.

He said afterward, when describing the incident, "I knew at once she could cook."

The manager didn't like this at all. The discipline of the office was spoiled. "If you are going to take her anyhow," she said acidly, "what day would you wish her to come, and will you please give me your name?"

"Yes, yes," Father said, without giving it. "Come on, Margaret." And he planked down the fee and walked out.

Margaret followed him through the door and trotted over to our home at his heels. He sent her down to the kitchen immediately, while he went upstairs to dress.

"I don't know why you make such a fuss about engaging new servants. It's simple enough," he said comfortably to Mother that evening, after Margaret's first dinner.

It was the first of a long series, for she stayed with us twenty-six years.

Father Feels Starved

IN the summers, when we went to the country, our usual plan was to hire a temporary cook to go with us, so that Margaret could stay in town. We hated to leave her, but the idea was that somebody must stay to take care of the house. There were no electric burglar-alarms in those days, and but few special watchmen Little Margaret made a pretty small watchman, for she was no size at all, but she had an indomitable spirit. So we'd leave her on guard while we went up to our summer home in Harrison with a substitute cook.

But this didn't work well. No matter how few the substitute's faults were, Father had no patience with them. One summer, I remember, there was a nice woman, Delia, who got on well with Mother because she was so obliging and pleasant, but who didn't suit Father at all. "I don't give a damn how obliging she is," he kept saying. "If she won't oblige me by cooking something fit to eat, she can go."

This didn't sound unreasonable, but Delia cooked well enough for the rest of us, and Mother hated to risk getting someone else who'd be temperamental. Our dining-room consequently became a battleground morning and night. At breakfast, Father would put down his coffee-cup in disgust and roar: "Slops! Damn it, slops! Does she call this confounded mess coffee? Isn't there a damned soul in Westchester County who knows how to make coffee but me? I swear to God I can't even imagine how she concocts such atrocities. I come down to this room hungry every morning, and she tries to fill me with slops! Take it away, I tell you!" he would bellow to the waitress. "Take this accursed mess away!" And while she and Delia were frantically hurrying to make a fresh pot, he would savagely devour his omelet and bacon, and declare that his breakfast was ruined.

Father's eyes blazed. "I am asking where you keep them!" he roared.

The longer Delia stayed with us, the more alarmed Father became. He ate heartily, as Mother kept pointing out to him, but he said he didn't feel nourished. He said it was no use to argue about it; he felt all gone inside. One night after he had had a four-course dinner, he fretfully got up from the table, went into the library with his cigar, and moaned that he was starved. His moans were, as always, full-throated, and they came from the heart. Every now and then, when his miserable condition seemed to strike him afresh, he laid down his book and shouted "Starved! Starved!" in a grief-stricken roar.

When Mother went in the library to quiet him, he told her he'd be damned if he'd stand it. "I refuse to be sent to my grave, do you hear me, by that infernal bog-trotting imbecile you keep in my kitchen."

"Now, Clare, a Japanese is coming tomorrow, I told you. This is Delia's last night. I do hope you'll like Tobo. He won't know our ways right at the start, of course, but he is a very good cook."

Father was appeased for the moment by

In her arms she had some bundles which Mother thought held clothes.

the dismissal of Delia. But the next night, when he found that the first dish was too Oriental, he said in an annoyed tone to Mother, "Will you kindly explain to your man Tobo that I am not a coolie?" And after eating the rest of his dinner, he pushed his plate away and went up to his bedroom, declaring vehemently that he was poisoned. He undressed, lay down on his sofa, and filled the air with deep groans.

From time to time he stopped and dozed a little, or listened to what he could hear of our talk. His feeling was that we shouldn't be talking at all. We ought to be sitting with bowed heads in silence until he recovered.

"Poisoned!" he suddenly boomed, to remind us. "Oh, God! I am poisoned!"

At this point, Mother, who was down in the library, laughed. Father heard her. He jumped up from his sofa and marched from his bedroom indignantly into the hall. "I'm a sick man!" he thundered robustly. "And nobody in this house gives a damn!"

Mother hurried upstairs to see what he wanted. He insisted on her rubbing his

"Take it away, I tell you!" he would bellow at the waitress.

back. Sick or well, that always soothed him, and he would have liked her to do it for hours. He loved to close his eyes, with someone's hand moving quietly on him, while a feeling of comfort flowed into his thoughts and his nerves.

Mother didn't think much of rubbing, however. She didn't like it herself. When anyone rubbed her, she stiffened and resisted at once. Consequently she had no idea of the right way to do it. When she had to rub Father, she always got tired of it in a very few minutes.

She gave him some hasty little rubs and digs as well as she could, but just as he was beginning to relax, she said, "There now, Clare, that's enough." Father was so disappointed by this that it reminded him that he was poisoned, and the only cure he could think of was the dismissal of Tobo.

The next day old Margaret was sent for to come at once to the country, and the house in town was locked up and left to take care of itself.

She came in a hack from the Harrison station. She was an odd sight. Her face looked familiar in her little black bonnet, tied under her chin, but she seemed strangely swollen and bulky; she stuck out in queer places; and as she crowded through the back door, she bruised me with her hard, bony hip. Only it wasn't her hip, it turned out; it was her favorite saucepan, which was tied to her waist under her skirt. Several large spoons, a dipper, a skillet, and two pair of shoes were made fast under it elsewhere. In her arms she had some bundles wrapped in newspapers, which Mother thought at first held her clothes, but when Margaret opened them we found they contained cheeses, melons, fresh coffee, a leg of lamb, some sweet potatoes, and other provisions. Margaret had no faith at all in being able to buy any supplies in the country. She had brought as complete a larder to Harrison as though we were at the North Pole.

"But didn't you bring any clothes with you, Margaret? Not even an apron?" asked Mother.

Little Margaret pursed her lips closely together and didn't answer at first. Then, as Mother stood waiting, she said unwillingly, "I have me other clothes on me."

She had wanted to have her hands free, it seemed, to bring us something good to eat. So under her street dress she was wearing two other dresses on that hot summer day, a collection of stiffly starched petticoats, three aprons, two nightgowns, and pretty much all the rest of her wardrobe.

As she was climbing upstairs to unpeel and unpack herself, Father saw her. "Is that you, Margaret?" he called, suddenly feeling much better. "Thank God!"

Father Thumps on the Floor

OLD Margaret was just the kind of cook that we wanted. Lots of cooks can do rich dishes well. Margaret couldn't. But she cooked simple, everyday dishes in a way that made our mouths water. Her apple pies were the most satisfying pies I've ever tasted. Her warmed-up potatoes were so delicious I could have made my whole dinner of them.

Yet even Margaret sometimes miscalculated. A large, royal-looking steak would be set before Father, which, upon being cut into, would turn out to be too underdone. Father's face would darken with disappointment. If the earth had begun to wobble and reel in its orbit he could scarcely have been more disapproving. He would rise his foot, under the table, and stamp slowly and heavily three times on the rug: *Thud—thud—thud.*

At this solemn signal, we would hear Margaret leave the kitchen below us and come clumping step by step up the stairs to the dining-room door.

"Margaret, look at that steak."

Margaret would step nearer and peer with a shocked look at the platter. "The Lord bless us and save us," she would say to herself in a low voice. She would then seize the platter and make off with it, to better it the best way she could, and Father would gloomily wait and eat a few vegetables and pour out a fresh glass of claret.

Father and Margaret were united by the intense interest they both took in cooking. Each understood the other instinctively. They had a complete fellow-feeling. Mother's great interest was in babies—she had never been taught how to cook. All she wanted was *(Please turn to page 77)*

The tremendous success of the stage version of "Life with Father" has created a new army of readers for that beloved book. By special arrangement with Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., we are reprinting on these pages a few episodes from Mr. Day's classic novel.

by

CLARENCE DAY

REDBOOK'S Encore OF THE MONTH

Illustrated by
JOHN FULTON

RIVER

An adventure in kindness and faithfulness—

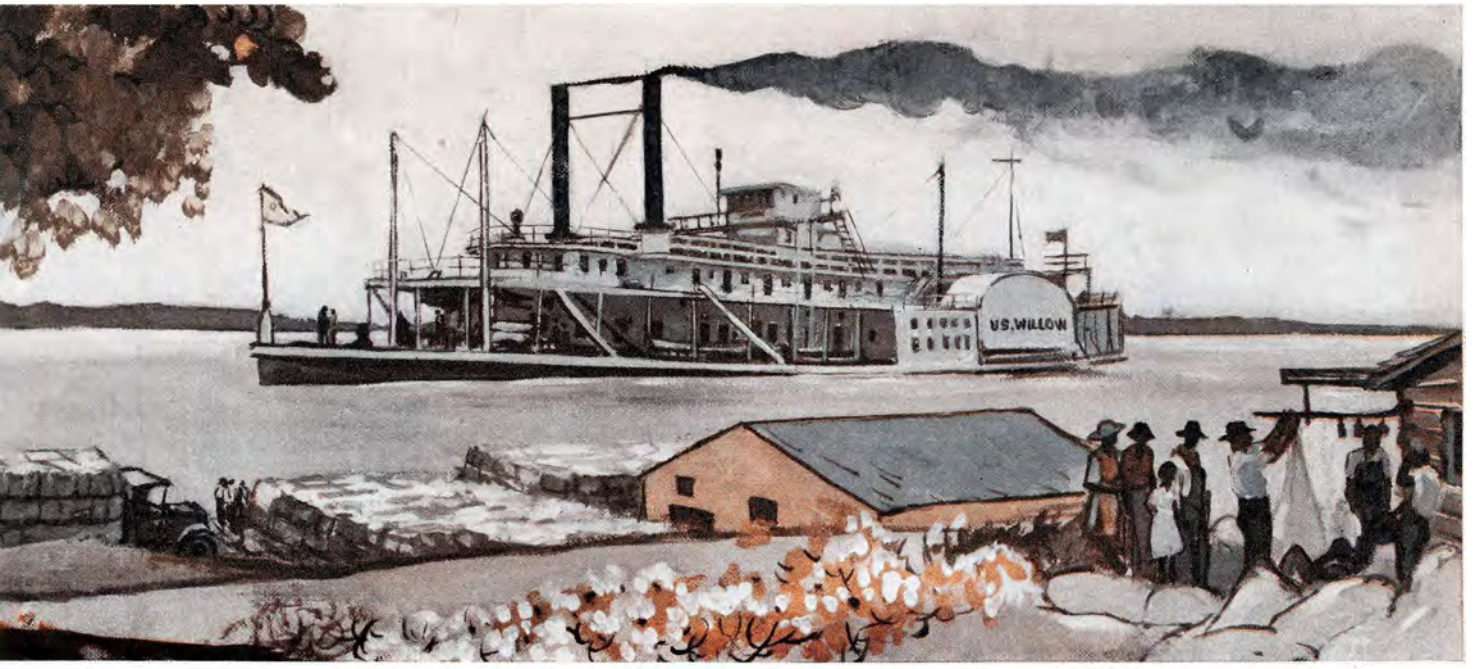
FROM history's earliest beginnings, when the skin-clad native woman stood by the sea with a flaming torch waiting for the return of her mate, the traveler on the water, whether it be fresh or salt, has regarded the light that guided him to the shore with a deep reverence that was almost worship. And with reason. I have lived in Africa beneath the old Carthaginian lighthouse that guided Hannibal's galleys up the mountain-fringed bay of Tunis; I have watched the twinkling beacons of Havre, and Brest, and Plymouth, and Sandy Hook; I have steamed past the lights glowing with a pale yellow flame at the edge of some reeking cypress swamp of the Mississippi. And everywhere there was a sense of the hidden, the mysterious. The lighthouse of Sandy Hook and the lighthouse at Tunis are known to a myriad travelers; but though there is scarcely a person of the millions dwelling in the great Mississippi valley who when driving near the water has not seen the river lights flickering sadly in the distance, to no one but the river men have they any meaning. These lights and their lamplighters are unknown stars and shadows in a little-known world, the world of the river.

From the bustling cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, where the blinker-lights flash in brilliant rhythm, to the green jetties far below New Orleans where a drowsy pelican sits on the post beside each polished lamp, the river lights mount their guard to protect the passing vessels from disaster. Their very names are touched with the strange and the bizarre—Hanging Dog Light, Dark Slough Light, Devil's Island Float Light; they are rich calendars of local history and legend. The work of the Coast Guard everywhere is a thing of fascination; but the river where the life of the lamplighter goes on in the same leisurely fashion as in the olden days, unaffected by the turmoil of an ever-changing world, is the region I know best, the lower river between Memphis and New Orleans. Here cities and towns are infrequent, factories almost non-existent; here are sunless woods where buzzards wheel, and tangled swamps where great cranes fly like ghosts and alligators crawl silently.

A river light is of an importance that no mere land-dweller can even faintly measure, an importance that may mean life or death to a crew, as well as the saving or destruction of a million-dollar cargo. I have been a cub pilot when a sudden fog descended on our boat at night, and I have stood beside the steersman, peering with him blindly into the gray mist, the vessel helpless, floundering. And I know that feeling of exultation when a faint ghostly blur finally appeared that meant we had found the light we were seeking. The lamplighter knows as well, and knows that his light must not fail. Whatever the risk, he must make his way to the wooden pole along the river-bank where a wind-proof lamp rests on a wooden bracket, and mounting the little stepladder fixed beneath it, keep the light burning.

The dangers of the lightkeeper's life are many. Though the wind is blowing a hurricane, lashing the river into monstrous waves that overwhelm his frail skiff and each instant threaten to turn it on its bottom; though there is a raging flood with wrecked houses, timbers, and broken bridges sweeping swiftly down upon him, there is no hesitation. Fog is his enemy as well as the pilot's. Though the mist is so thick he cannot see the oars in his hands, he must grope his way across the river, in constant terror of being crushed by the barges of some lost towboat. But his greatest enemy is the caving bank, a perpendicular wall sometimes seventy or eighty feet high, on top of which his light is resting. As he moors his rowboat below, he must watch with all the vigilance of an Alpine climber expecting an avalanche, lest the great cliff suddenly topple and bury him alive. Many a lamplighter has lost his life with only the crew of the lighthouse-tender and the superintendent in far-off St. Louis to know of his heroism.

The courage and devotion of the lamplighters is shared by their children. When the father grows too old and the mother is feeble as well, the son or the daughter assumes the responsibility. Near Natchez there lived such a child, Towhead Ettie, a beautiful flaxen-haired little girl who had taken over the duties of her sick mother and was the darling of all the pilots who passed. Then one spring there came a very high flood that washed out the lights everywhere. It tore away Towhead's light as well. But the child did not falter. Calmly she took the extra lantern with which the Government men had supplied her, and hung it in a tree near the water where the light had been standing. Each day, though the river here was particularly dangerous, she went out to trim the wick and fill the reservoir. The flood continued for weeks; and the pilots, the most sentimental, and the kindliest of men, nodded their heads in pride. Then one pilot of my acquaintance purchased a basket of the fanciest fruits he could find in Natchez, and sent them by an old negro lounging on the wharf to the little cabin that Towhead called her



LIGHT

by **BEN LUCIEN BURMAN**

who wrote "STEAMBOAT ROUND THE BEND"

and sometimes heroism—in the heart of America.

home. An hour later the negro returned, his wrinkled face gray, his hand still holding the basket.

The pilot looked at him in wonder. "What you brought that basket back for?" he demanded. "You going crazy or something? I told you to take it to the house and leave it."

The old negro shook his snowy head. "Captain, I tried to leave it, but I couldn't," he said. "That little girl done went out to fix her light, and a bank caved in and she got drowned. The preacher and the undertaker was all in the house a-waiting for 'em to find her in the river. I seen her mother a-sitting there, and I give her the fruit, like you said. But I don't know, seemed like she didn't want it, someways. It's sure mighty pretty fruit, Captain."

Besides caving bank and flood, the lamplighter has other, lesser enemies. There are the willow-bugs, great blundering creatures, according to legend born with no mouths, so that they are doomed to starvation a few hours after they are born, yet who live just long enough to drop into a light, and cause the glass to become smoky and dull. There are human enemies as well. There is the coon-hunter, who when out in the swamp, finds there is no more oil in the miner's lamp he is wearing on his cap, and replenishes his supply at the Government light, as a traveler fills his fountain pen in the writing-room of a hotel. Worst of all, there is the moon-shiner, who discovers that he has brought insufficient fuel for his bubbling mash, and considering his need greater than that of the passing steamboats, empties the reservoir of the lamp into his oil-can and carries it away to his still.

"They sure got mighty fine coal-oil in them Government lights," the overalled swamp-dweller will confide, as he sets out some jugs of his product for an expected customer. "Government always gets the best there is."

These latter practices are growing rare, however, for the secret service agents have been vigorous, and the too-casual woodsmen are in the penitentiary, pondering over the error of their ways.

For in difficult sections of the river, the lack of a light or the mistaking of a light is almost certain to end in disaster—though occasionally the results may be humorous instead.

"Funny thing happened round here a couple of years ago," my rusty drowsy-eyed friend Sandbar Jack will drawl as he pours some oil into the reservoir and shines the brass bowl. "A pilot got mixed up on a light at Ash Creek, and quicker than a bee-sting, the boat was stuck on a bar. Bad luck for the pilot; it was mighty late in the spring, and the water was a-dropping terrible fast. It kept on a-dropping till the boat was out of water like she was the Ark on Ararat. And pretty soon she was half a mile from the river, with the squirrels and chipmunks a-playing on her paddle-wheel.

"When it got thataway, the captain and the crew all left her, and wasn't nobody stayed behind except the engineer to look after things—Big Sam; I reckon you know him; comes from up White River way. Big Sam had a mighty nice time, talking to me and the other fishermen around here. But pretty soon he got tired, and he said he was a country boy anyways and always wanted a farm when he got off the river, so he figured he'd plant him a potato crop. A farmer around here give him some seed potatoes, and Big Sam planted 'em right by the rudder of the boat. Any time of day you'd pass there, you'd see him a-working, hoeing, and turning the ground, a-watching the river all the time, hoping she wouldn't come up till he got done. And then fall come, and he dug up his potatoes, and they was the finest ever seen in the Valley. Big as punkins, and sweeter than sugar-cane. Eating one of them potatoes was like eating a bag of marshmallows. Next day after he had 'em all in, the river come up and floated the boat away."

WITH all its responsibilities and perils, the task of lamplighter is one of the prizes of the river. Not only does it invest the holder of the post with the dignity of the Government he represents—and there is no more ardent patriot than the river man—but it provides him as well with a regular income of about ten dollars a month for each light that he tends. And on the river, where life is simple and money is rare, ten dollars is worth many times that sum in a great metropolis. In consequence, lights will remain in the same family for generations.

As the years pass, often a good keeper may acquire other lights, sometimes ten, even fifteen; and here he rises to the status of a merchant prince, a veritable captain of industry. And by some accident of fate should this fortunate individual be a woman, she becomes a queen, to be wooed assiduously by all her male neighbors of the river.

The life of the lamplighter is a happy one, filled with infinite variety. When his duties are not pressing, he can go out to fish in his pirogue, a dugout made of a single log, unchanged since the

Towhead Ettie did not falter. Calmly she took the extra lantern and hung it in a tree near the water.

days when the Indians paddling them were first sighted by the French explorers drifting down from the tributaries. He can chew tobacco and talk all day with the crews of the towboats who have come in to shore to remake their tows, or philosophize with the Government men. He may hear a word of some unfortunate drowned on a picnic up the river, and with rowboat ready will keep close watch of the passing drift. There will be a knock on his door, and it may be a neighbor come to bring him a wild turkey; or it may be a grim figure with hair clipped short and face scratched with briars, an escaped convict come to demand at pistol-point that he be rowed to the dismal swamp visible on the other shore. Life is full of adventure and uncertainty.

The ordinary lamplighter is a white fisherman. But there are a few who depart from the pattern. There are a score of negroes, all excellent keepers, and even a Filipino. Some of the keepers live in shantyboats anchored near their lights, some in shantyboats beached on the shore. A few live in "Choctaws," houses built on great hollow logs that when the high water comes cause it to float off with no damage to the interior, and allow the occupants to set it down again where they will. One lamplighter operates a little sawmill; one has a shantyboat store where he sells candy and pop to passing river travelers; another, whose lights are all on one side of the water, is the possessor of an old horse, and every day rides out with his lamp and supplies dangling from the animal's sides.

WHATEVER the lamplighter may be, shantyman or land-dweller, there is one important day in his life, the day of the arrival of the lighthouse boat. For the lighthouse boat is the keeper's link with the outside world, and its whistle the beginning and end of his calendar. There are a number of lighthouse boats, all picturesque, that ply the northern river and the tributaries, like the sturdy *Greenbrier* captained by my boyhood friend Red, that voyages up the Ohio and the winding Tennessee. Each of these vessels is the monarch of its own willowed kingdom. The proud mistress of the lights of the lower river is the white and shining *Willow*, with my friend the gentle soft-spoken Captain Berniard at the wheel that guides her on her way.

The *Willow* is a side-wheeler, one of the few remaining on the river, and is built like a battleship to resist the storms and floods that Old Al, the river god, sends against her. The master of the *Willow*, and the other lighthouse boats, must be far more than a pilot. He must be doctor, engineer, lawyer, draftsman, midwife, preacher, and a diplomat fit for service in a foreign land. For he must concern himself not only with all the usual worries of a steamboat captain, its operation, its fuel-bills, the troubles of his crew, but he must be intimately concerned with the life of every lamplighter along the bank. He must cure them when they are sick, free them from jail when they have run afoul of the sheriff, bury them when they are dead. And just as the captain must be a man of many talents, so must the crew. Not only must they be steamboaters, but they must be expert carpenters, swiftly able to fashion the wooden standards that form the lights' support; they must be expert laddermen, who can climb a seventy-foot perpendicular bank ready to collapse upon them.

The caving bank is the enemy of the individual lamplighter. But it is the curse, the consummation of all evil for the *Willow*. The individual lamplighter has only one caving bank to battle; the *Willow's* life is a voyage from one landslide to another, each worse than the last. All day long her crew are setting up their long ladders; all day the captain scans the horizon with his field-glasses to see if the light ahead has toppled into the river. Then he sees a telltale circle of milky foam on the water. And he sighs, for he knows that a bank is caving again.

Even the person who has been acquainted since his earliest days with the habits of the Mississippi, and knows how overnight it can change its course and leave a city—that was on its shore—twenty miles away, never ceases to be astonished at the stream's grim restlessness. It is this continuous change, this unceasing attack upon its banks, which occasions so much of the *Willow's* labor. The boat will start for Cairo and set all the lights two hundred and fifty feet from the bank, safe from the water's ravages; by the time she has reached Baton Rouge and started up the river again, scores of the lights will have vanished completely, and a myriad others will be at the water's edge, ready to dive like their fellows into extinction. They are grim spectacles, these caving banks, with great oaks and cypresses tossed about like toy trees in a child's fairy forest, and whole plains breaking up, like the world's end.

As the *Willow's* crew are expert laddermen, so must they be superlative woodsmen, for in a flash they must clear away the edge of an obscuring forest so that the lamp will be visible in all directions. For a single light I have seen them compelled to cut three hundred trees, and no tree less than four inches in diameter was counted, being considered mere brush. For the smaller undergrowth, the boat itself is sometimes used as the axman, a great loop of rope being circled around a section of the land to be cleared, while the other end of the line is made fast to the prow. The captain, waiting in the pilot-house, signals the engine-room. With a great crackling of branches, the boat begins to back away. In a moment the bank is swept clean, and a low mountain of broken willows is floating down the river.

It is during these timber-cutting operations that some of the more amusing phases of the *Willow's* colorful life come into evidence. A hornet's nest on a tree or a light-post calls for much consultation and strategy among the negro roustabouts, occasionally ending in rout and a panic-stricken run down the bank. Or Hominy, a lean thoughtful negro who is the boat's champion snake-smeller, will look gravely about him, and say: "I smells a snake." And the search for the reptile is instantly begun. If he is found, in a pile of brush, or beneath some rotting leaves, the black naturalist has scored another triumph.

The study of unnatural natural history is as intense among the roustabouts of the *Willow* as on any other Mississippi steamboat,

perhaps more so, because of the vessel's governmental and thus educational character. I personally had the good fortune to witness one extraordinary demonstration. The lanky Hominy one evening, ever-anxious to discuss scientific matters, declared that a frog would smoke a cigarette, and when the white members of the crew grew ribald, went ashore, and returned bearing a frog in his long black fingers. Borrowing a cigarette from one of the spectators, he broke it in two, and lighting it, carefully inserted the broken end into the frog's mouth. To our astonishment, the frog proceeded to smoke it with the apparent enjoyment of an old soldier for weeks deprived of his customary tobacco. The frog continued thus for several moments, then suddenly gave a gulp, and swallowed the cigarette, light and all. Apparently he suffered no ill effects from the unusual diet; for several of us, worried, kept careful watch over him for several days. But he was sprightly and agile as ever, leaping gayly over the decks of the boat, until at last, satisfied, we let him go bounding merrily off to the woods again. . . .

In addition to the care of the lights, the *Willow* is often called on to assist the other Government boats in an associated duty, the taking of soundings for the channel reports. In the ever-changing river, this is a task that never ceases. And here occurs a spectacle rare except on Government boats: the taking of double soundings. Two negroes take their places at the bow of the boat, one at the starboard side, the other at the port. Alternately they cast the lead, and call out the measurements. A third negro standing below the pilot-house repeats the calls to the steersman, and with a slow motion of his arm, indicates the side where the lead was heaved. So fantastic is the channel, that often in the narrow width of the boat the depth may vary ten feet. All the changes are noted with infinite exactness. And soon after, whether it is day or night, a yawl comes out from some passing towboat to obtain the mimeographed page where are listed Old Al's latest idiosyncrasies.

THE whistle on the *Willow*, like many others on the river, is a treasured heirloom. It was the whistle on the *Willow's* predecessor, the *Oleander*, and will in turn probably be handed down to a new heir when the *Willow* goes off to the paradise of good steamboats. So beloved is this whistle by the lamplighters, that on several occasions various keepers have declared in all seriousness that if the whistle were changed, they would refuse to answer it and resign their posts.

The *Willow* is away from her port for months at a time, with the result that even more than most steamboats, she must be a home for her crew. All the men aboard a river vessel live in a fraternity; aboard the *Willow* they become a close-knit family. Christmas is a gala occasion. A Christmas tree is erected in the cabin, and Spanish moss from the swamps is hung from the ceiling. Paper flowers are tacked up on the walls, and there are Christmas stockings everywhere for the keepers. Nor do they forget the *Willow*. There are presents for the crew of great bags of pecans and wild honey from the forests; there are rabbits, and great catfish, and beautiful fishing-poles made by some shantyman from the cane along the shore.

The faces of some of the poor river-dwellers when they first see the white-painted interior of the *Willow* with its windows where no glass is broken and its roof which has no cracks, are a study in the degrees of human ecstasy. I happened to be aboard one night when a mother and child who lived in a bleak little cabin on the bank, where their only furniture was a rickety old stove and a shattered bed, came up the gangplank for a visit. For several moments the woman stood in awed silence, gazing at the immaculate cabin with its long table set with shining dishes, and a white napkin folded neatly at each place. Then her eyes grew wistful. "I aint seen nothing like this since I been in the hospital," she said.

The lives of the crew of the *Willow*, like the lives of the lamplighter, are often troubled, and full of difficulties. They are pioneers, and must take the risks in the river so that others may follow. They are rarely near a large town where they can enjoy the pleasures of the civilized world; when they tie up at night, it is generally near a lamplighter in some tangled wilderness, with the cry of the wildcat their only company. Yet their life has many compensations. The mysterious swamps have no secrets for them, the muskrat, the raccoon, the occasional panther. And the pageant of the river is always moving before them.

There is a tranquillity in the life of the lighthouse boat and its lamplighters that breeds a rich mellowness and kindliness rare in a mechanized world. A cutoff in the river may eliminate the light of a faithful tender and threaten him with the loss of the monthly ten dollars which is his very existence; the captain of the lighthouse boat tries to find some other light near by and avoid a tragedy. For the lighthouse service is loyal to its loyal servants.

He must watch with the vigilance of an Alpine climber expecting an avalanche, lest the cliff topple.

SOME years ago up one of the small tributaries a group of pilots came to the captain of the lighthouse tender in the region, and asked that a light be moved from one side of the river to the other. The bank and the channel had changed, they declared, and the light was badly needed on the other shore if their vessels were not to be wrecked.

The captain of the lighthouse boat, an old man grown gray at his post, became troubled. "I'll move her for you next week," he declared. "But I'm sure mighty sorry it's got to go. That light's kept by a woman that's been having it for forty years, ever since her husband drowned going out to fix his lamp. The light money's all she's got to support herself and two grandchildren. I don't think she'll ever be able to cross the river. She's too twisted up with rheumatism. I reckon she'll just have to lose it, that's all."

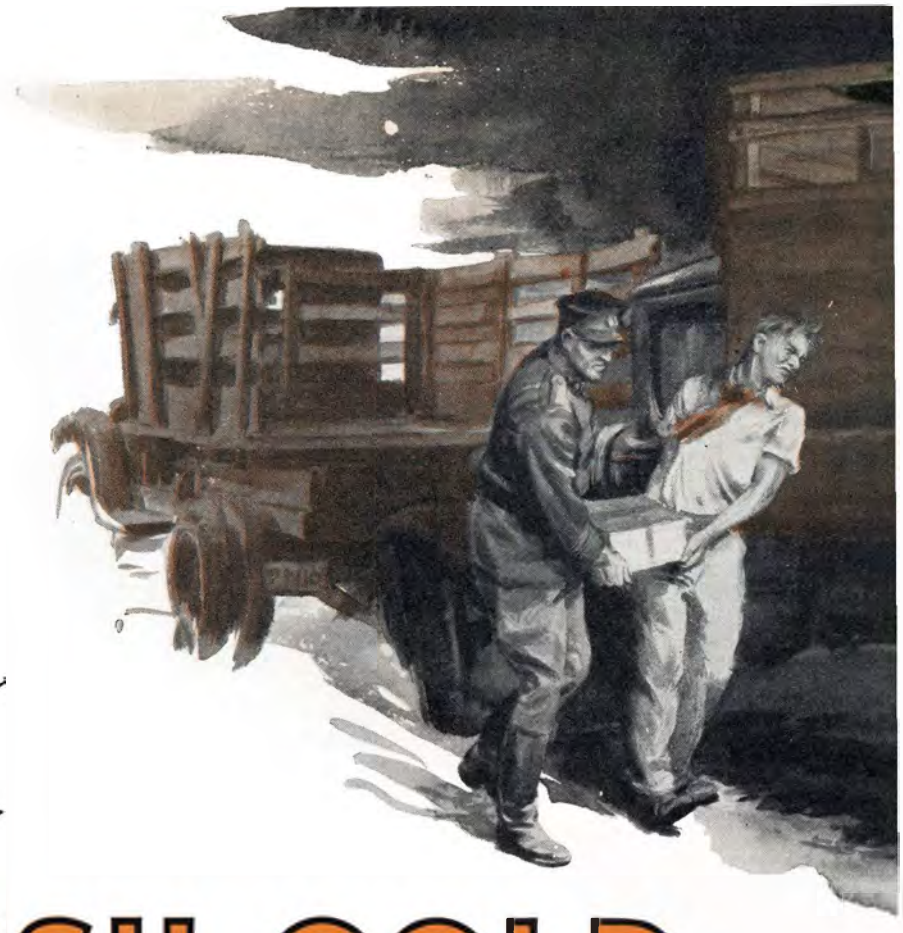
The pilots went away, looking very worried. They returned the next morning.

"Captain, we don't want that light changed," said the spokesman. "We'll get along fine with the light where she is."

The captain of the lighthouse boat smiled, and nodded. And the light remained until that old lady was dead.

For this is the code of the river.

The amazing story of thirty-one young Poles who snatched seventy-five tons of their country's gold —about eighty million dollars— out of the jaws of the German Army and raced across six countries, in two continents, in order to bring it to safety. Few "thrillers" can compare with this authentic report of one of the greatest adventures of our times.



The POLISH GOLD

By **ROBERT WESTERBY** *and* **R. M. LOW**

AS the Nazi armies thundered across the plains from the north and southwest, Berlin sent out the order to the High Command. The gold in Warsaw must be seized at all costs. In the Anschluss of 1938 in Austria, and in the rape of Czecho-Slovakia in the autumn of the same year, the beaten country's gold had been seized before it could be taken away to safety. This time also, the Party decreed, the spoils of the victory must be counted in gold. Ten thousand lives might be thrown away in the gaining, a hundred thousand in the defending; but the gold must be found.

By September 5th, Warsaw was crouching under the hail of shells, the roar of high explosives, and the constant drone of the planes. Frantically the people built fortifications and barricades in the streets of the city as raid followed raid. Life was lived in trenches and dugouts, in holes in the walls. The pressure from the enemy was intensified, and the armies moved in closer on two fronts like a pair of enormous steel pincers.

On the night of September 5th, Colonel Adam Koc, Director of the Bank Hadlowy in Warsaw, made a great decision. He knew the gold reserve had been placed in the Bank Polski vaults at the beginning of the war, and was equally certain that nothing had so far had been done about safeguarding it. The officials responsible for its welfare were not available. The Government departments were at Lublin. Communications were in a state of confusion, and neither orders nor authority had been given to anyone in the city.

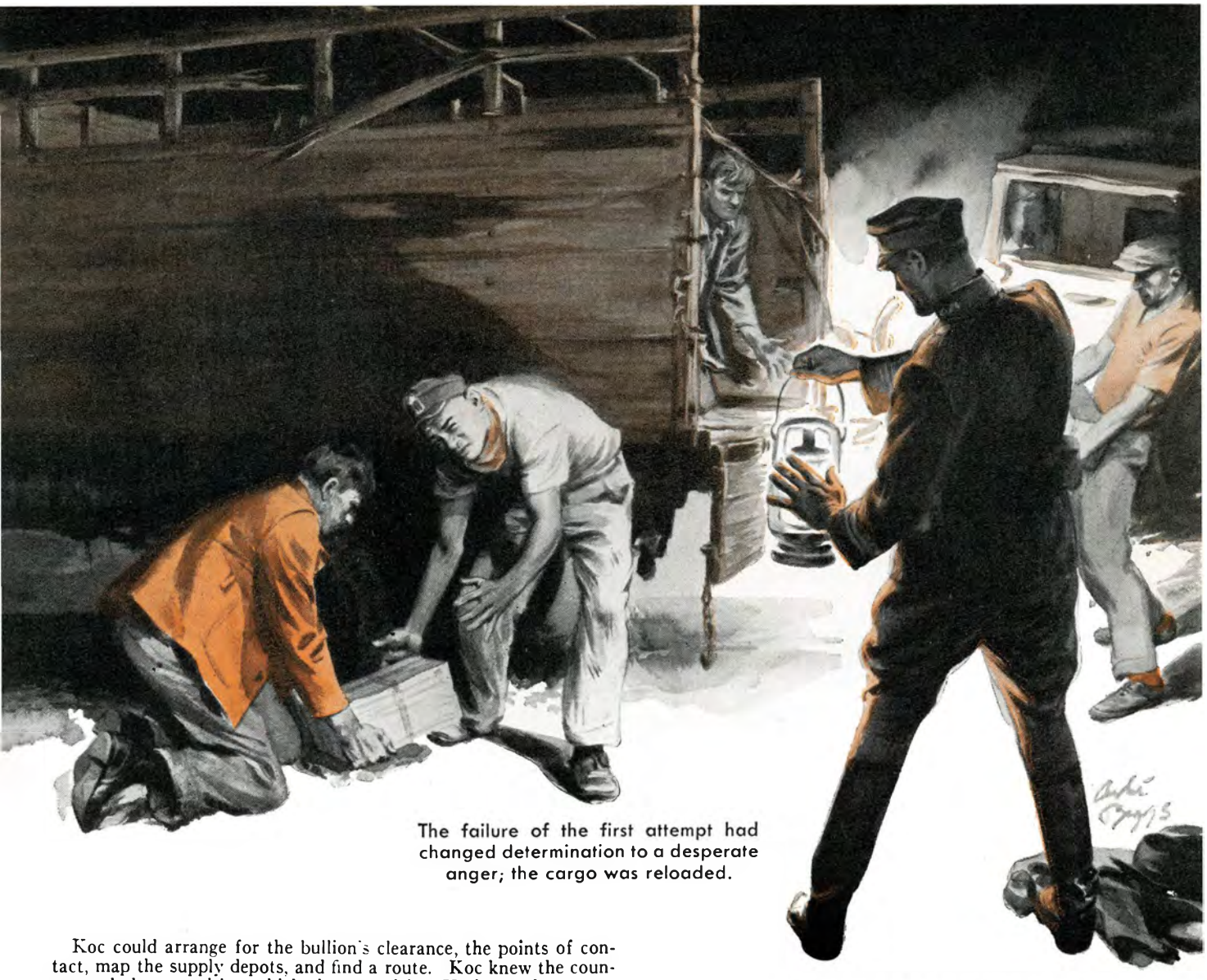
There was no sense, however, in theorizing on responsibility or rights. Delay allied with confusion had produced the problem in the first place, and that problem now presented itself as a simple equation. The gold was in the Bank in Warsaw; Warsaw was in danger of its life. Therefore the gold must be removed to a place of safety, outside Poland; and the sooner it started on that journey the better.

To organize the clearance of the bullion, and the points of contact between Warsaw and that bullion once it was on its way, the complications of transport at the frontier and beyond would be for Koc to see to. To organize and keep moving the actual convoy taking the gold away would have to be for another. That other would have to be a man who knew the country, who would realize the purpose and the implications of the undertaking, and who would drive that undertaking on to the end, ruthlessly and tirelessly. And in Warsaw was just such a man: Colonel Ignacy Matuszewski.

During the Pilsudski régime which rebuilt the country after the Great War of 1914-'18, Matuszewski had had his training, and had, for a while, been appointed Finance Minister as well as Colonel in the Army. He was known as a man of action, imperturbable and shrewd in his judgments; and that night he was to have those qualities tested in the highest degree. Koc got in touch with him by telephone, and on the telephone gave out what must be the most extraordinary order any soldier has received at any time.

"These are orders, Matuszewski," Koc announced baldly, "so listen carefully: In the Bank of Poland is the gold reserve, seventy-five tons of it. I have taken the responsibility of directing its removal. It must go from Warsaw to the Bank of France—to Paris. I have no idea yet how this is to be done. We can arrange the route when you have arranged the means of transport and a few volunteers to accompany you on the way. Meet me at the bank in an hour, make arrangements to leave the city, and get this convoy started tonight."

Matuszewski listened to the orders without comment. That the bullion was still in the city had not occurred to him, and now that it had been brought to his notice, did not, apparently, bother him. If Koc had decided to take charge of the matter, that was perfectly in order. It was time some responsible person did take charge. That Koc was ordering him to run the gold and his neck into a noose which was tightening every hour was beside the point. The gold must be taken to Paris, though there was not, on the face of it, any reasonable route over which it could travel, no obvious means of transport, nor any guarantee of safe-conduct even as far as the outskirts of the city. Ingenuity was needed, initiative and guts. Matuszewski not only possessed each one of these qualities, but he knew where he could find some other men who possessed them also.



The failure of the first attempt had changed determination to a desperate anger; the cargo was reloaded.

ILLUSTRATED BY AUSTIN BRIGGS

Koc could arrange for the bullion's clearance, the points of contact, map the supply depots, and find a route. Koc knew the country and the opposition which threatened it. He knew there were spies and Communists in the villages, refugees and soldiers blocking the roads for miles. Both of them knew that the Nazi forces were closing in on three sides, and that the only way through would be to try and reach Brest-Litovsk, two hundred kilometers to the east of Warsaw, and then turn south to race for the Rumanian frontier. If Koc could make a point of contact and information in Brest-Litovsk, and the convoy could get there in time to make it, the way out might be found.

But before routes, ways or means could be discussed, there were volunteers to ask for and select, volunteers willing to take a chance in a million, to gamble away their lives and their strength on a forlorn hope. And with the solution of that primary difficulty on his mind, Matuszewski started work.

HE reported at the Bank of Poland at the specified time; Koc, who was there already, saw that the first step had been taken decisively and well. With Matuszewski were ten young men, some of them soldiers from the defense forces, some clerks from the city, too young for the army at all. Each of these boys had volunteered eagerly, hating, as the two leaders had hated, the negative rôle of the defender, and preferring the positive action of the gamble and the chase which would follow it.

Colonel Koc looked them over as they came in to report for duty. And while Koc looked them over and approved, Matuszewski gave them exactly what he had been given himself: bare orders. As many as possible of the cases of gold which lay in the bank vault must be on the road and moving eastward before daybreak.

Somewhere in the city yards, garages and depots there were omnibuses, old or in the process of construction; derelict or workable. The lorries and the new buses were with the army in the south or the northeast. The cars had left Warsaw in the first evacuation. All now left would be the worn-out and the broken; from this residue a convoy must be sorted and forced into service.

There were ten men and Matuszewski himself. They would need five buses to start with. That would give them plenty of room to store as many as possible of the seventeen hundred cases of bullion on the first trip. If it proved possible to return from the frontier for a second load, so much the better. But however that might be, the first consignment must be on its way that night. Five buses were needed and had to be found, filled with petrol, made ready to drive under load, and be brought to the bank.

The orders given and received, the party divided. The ten boys went out into the city to begin their search, while inside the offices of the bank, Colonels Koc and Matuszewski studied their maps. There were twenty million gold pounds to be carried across a continent at war. There was everything to gain, and everything to lose. It would be the greatest story in the world, and once let the wheels of the convoy start rolling, it would come true.

The boys had worked fast to unearth what they had been sent to find. There had been many old derelicts to choose from, to test, to select, or reject before the necessary five had been discovered. But at last they stood in line, two-deckers with broken window-glass, torn seats and cracked springs; single-deckers with bent frames and worn tires, with cracked radiators and loose bearings; buses with no seats and buckled side-panels, with squealing brakes and groaning axles; five derelict vehicles and ten half-crazy young men to drive them away with as much of the country's wealth as could be stowed aboard.

THE next two hours were spent in loading; and with great energy and speed hundreds of the precious wooden cases were carried and dragged up stairways out into the street to be heaved aboard and roped down. Of the *(Please turn to page 98)*

WHITEOAK HERITAGE

A new Jalna novel

by MAZO de la ROCHE

The Story Thus Far:

HOME at Jalna from that other war, Renny was accepted as head of the Whiteoak clan: his ancient strong-willed Grandmother Adeline; his widower Uncle Nicholas; his bachelor Uncle Ernest; his sister Meg; his much-younger half-brothers Eden, Piers, Finch and the three-year-old Wakefield.

But his friend Maurice Vaughan came home to a lonely house and his illegitimate daughter Pheasant. Meg Whiteoak had been engaged to Maurice, but had broken off the engagement after his affair with a village girl. That Maurice could continue to love Meg after twelve years in such a situation was to Renny a miracle.

Renny found his younger brothers had run wild; he disciplined rebellious Piers, not too successfully, with a whipping; but Eden was too old for that. Eden spent too much money for clothes, too much thought in writing poetry—and too much time with a widow, Mrs. Stroude, old enough to be his mother.

However, in running the estate, and particularly in the effort to school his horses for the coming shows, Renny found an absorbing interest; in furtherance of this, he employed young Jim Dayborn, who—with his widowed sister Chris Cummings and her small son Tod—lived in a part of Mrs. Stroude's house. And Renny was beginning to find a further interest in making love to Chris Cummings, when he learned about Eden's infatuation for Mrs. Stroude. He went to see the lady, but his call was not very successful. Then at a family council it was decided that Uncle Ernest should solve the problem by making friends with Mrs. Stroude and cutting out young Eden. And it must be said that Uncle Ernest did his best.

Meanwhile Renny went to see Mrs. Stroude again on a different problem: the lady had rented part of her house to Jim Dayborn and his family; now she accused them of spying on her and ordered them to leave. Renny persuaded her to relent, however; the fact that he had discovered Chris Cummings was in actuality Dayborn's wife, rather than his sister, seems not to have influenced him against her.
(The story continues in detail:)

EDEN was in a state of not unpleasant lassitude that sometimes bordered on melancholy. His mind was filled with thoughts which he longed for the leisure to clarify. He wanted to write poetry; but each morning when he woke, the routine of the day lay ahead of him; the lying in bed to the last possible moment, the scrambling into his clothes and through his breakfast, the race for the train, the sitting through lectures that, more often than not, bored him, the return home, the snatched hours with Amy Stroude. There were so many books he wanted to read, so little leisure for reading them. He was not yet nineteen. He had grown fast. Sometimes as he hurriedly dressed in the morning, after too little sleep, he felt alternately excited and weary, elated and depressed. Above all, he felt a distaste for responsibility, a longing to enjoy the lovely autumn weather in his own way. He longed to spend hours each day with Mrs. Stroude. His triumphant if theatrical winning of her from Ernest, had made her more desirable to him, though less real. His feelings toward her, as toward himself and his family, were so subtle as to be apparently contradictory. Yet what he wanted was simplicity and freedom.

He resented his young brothers' accompanying him on the train. If it were not for them, he would be able to escape for an occasional day. Time and again he thought of plans, only to discard them as hopeless. But at last he invented a fellow-student whom he called Powell. He spoke of him several times, envying him his drive to

town in a motorcar. The car was Powell's own, and he was an earnest student. A little later Eden told Meg he had been invited to join Powell sometimes in the drive. There was no trouble at all with the family. Meg said she was glad Eden had found a serious-minded friend Renny observed that Powell's father must have more money than sense to give a boy of that age a car. Eden at once killed off Powell's father. He was the only son of an indulgent mother. The two lived in the country, so Eden would have to wait for the car on the back road.

ON the first morning when he accomplished this, he stood in a little thicket by the roadside till he saw Dayborn and Chris pass on their way to the stables. He then jumped over the fence and swung along the road to Mrs. Stroude's. He felt light-hearted and unscrupulous. He had told her the night before to expect him. He hated being surprised himself, so he would not surprise her, perhaps in a dusting-cap doing her floors. He wanted everything prepared for him.

The road was elastic and moist after a rain, and gay with the goldenrod and Queen Anne's lace growing by its side.

She opened the door, smiling.

"Oh, how naughty you are!" she exclaimed.

"And how happy!" he added.

They stood on the doorstep in the arching sunlight. She breathed deeply, feeling at the moment no older than he.

When they were inside, she asked:

"Do you know why your uncle doesn't come to see me any more?"

He looked at her blankly. "Doesn't he?"

"Never."

"How strange!"

"Have I offended him?"

"How could you?"

"I should think it would be easy. He's so sensitive. I was wondering—"

"What?"

"If he is—but that would be ridiculous."

"Jealous, you mean. But after all, I was here first."

"Have you said that to him?"

"Well, if you want the truth, we gambled for you. Threw dice."

Her expression for a moment was outraged. Her jaw dropped.

"How funny you look!" He laughed delightedly.

"But it's disgraceful!" Her puritanical past revolted at the thought. Then suddenly color flooded her face. Why—it was like having a duel fought for her! "And you won?"

"Yes, I won."

"And he isn't coming here again?"

"How funny you look! No, he isn't coming again. He's taken his defeat gracefully and settled down to his needlepoint. Aunt Augusta taught him it before she left. He works at it, and thinks about his book on Shakespeare. I really think he's relieved. It's no joke, you know, for a man of his age to have a love-affair on his hands."

"It wasn't a love-affair," she said in a trembling voice. "It was a very pleasant friendship, and I shall miss his visits."

"Powell didn't turn up this morning—" Eden began. "Don't lie to me!" Renny said. "Powell doesn't exist."

She sat looking at her clasped hands.

He knelt beside her and put both arms about her.

"Aimée, darling, I'm so sorry you're hurt. I've put the thing crudely. But the trouble is, we couldn't go on as we were. It stuck in my gizzard to have Uncle Ernest as a rival. He isn't capable of loving you, and I am. Don't you agree that that was a horrible evening we all had together?"

"Yes, but some day you will desert me. Then I shall be alone."

THE last word had its poignant effect on her. She began to cry.

"I shall never leave you," he said fervently. "It's been a wonderful experience, the times we've had together in this room, hasn't it?"

"Yes, but it's made me too emotional. I can't control myself. I find myself crying or getting angry, I scarcely know why." She laid her hands on his shoulders, pressing him close to her.

"Well, you're neither going to cry nor get angry any more. You're going to be happy as the day is long. I wish we had some way of getting out on the lake! It's as blue as a harebell these days, and as smooth as silk. My family have never enjoyed it as they should. They think that if they have two picnics on the shore in the season, they've done well. I wish I had a canoe. Oh, Aimée, I saw one advertised in the post office the other day! If only I had the money, I'd buy it for you! We'd paddle and drift about for hours, reading poetry and talking."

"*I'll* buy it," she exclaimed. "It would be heavenly! I have never been in a canoe in my life."

"No, I can't let you buy it. I'll get the money somehow." And he put his fingers against his knitted brows and thought deeply. "I'll tell you what. You buy it now, and I'll repay you when I can get hold of the money. It gets scarcer in our house every day since the war. Renny spends more and more on the stables. He's had new drainage put in, and now he's installing electric light. You couldn't believe how close-fisted he is in other ways."

"Tell me about him," she said quietly.

"That's just what I've been doing, isn't it?"

"I mean—what sort of man is he, really?" Eden hesitated.

"I don't know him very well myself. You see, he only came home last spring, and when he went away, I was a kid."

"He persuaded me to allow those people next door to stay on, just as you said he would do. Did he tell you?"

"He tells me nothing except his usual table-talk about his horses. But I wish you hadn't let him persuade you. I shall have to go on dodging them; and eventually, I suppose, they'll see me and give the whole show away."

"I detest Dayborn," Mrs. Stroude said almost bitterly.

"Then why did you let him stay on? I'll find you a new tenant—one who'll pay his rent. I wish I could take the place

myself! Wouldn't it be lovely if I lived there, Aimée?"

"Divine."

"If they stay on, the family will be sure to find out I'm not going in with Powell."

"What is this Powell like?"

"Like nothing on earth. He doesn't exist. I invented him. Don't you think I'm clever?"

"I think you're terribly reckless. How much is the canoe?"

"Sixty-five dollars. A beauty, and like new."

"How do you know?"

"The advertisement said so. Shall I go and look at it today? Will you trust me? Are you sure you want it? I can't bear to lead you into anything you'll regret."

"Of course, I want it."

EDEN had an idea for a poem in his head. He sat at the writing-table in the corner and stared at the clean sheets of paper she had laid in front of him. She went about on tiptoe, afraid of distracting him. But she need not have feared. The idea was flown. He drew a dog's head on the paper, then thought it looked more like a cow, and added horns to it.

After a while she cautiously came near.

He crumpled the paper in his hand. "It's no good. I hate it. I'll write another."

"But don't destroy it! Let me see it."

There was a small struggle between them for the paper. He exclaimed:

"Why, how fierce you look! I didn't know you *could* look like that."

At once she relinquished the paper, at the same moment smoothing out her face. He tore up the drawing and threw it into the wastebasket. . . . An hour later he left, with sufficient money in his pocket to buy the canoe.

She took the torn paper from the basket and pieced it together. She sat staring at the result. She felt angry at him, not only for deceiving her but for being such a boy. If only he were even five years older!

She delayed lunch an hour, waiting for him, then ate hers alone and without appetite. She hated the sight of the dishes she must wash and put away. She felt like smashing them. Unexpectedly, Dayborn returned to his house. He began to hammer loudly. What on earth was he doing? Something deliberately to annoy her, she felt sure of that. He was moving things about. She heard a small crash. She strolled to her gate, staring at the house, wishing he would come out so that she might tell him to leave the next day. Then she saw that he had broken a pane of glass in one of the windows. It seemed the last straw. She could hardly restrain herself.

She saw Eden coming along the road, walking fast. Dayborn would be sure to see him. She opened the gate and almost ran down the road to meet him. He held out both arms to her.

"I've got it!" he cried. "I've got it!"

"Are you insane?" she gasped, avoiding his arms.

"Absolutely. With joy! It's the loveliest thing you ever saw. Graceful and beautifully shaped. We must go out in her now. I persuaded them to take fifty-five dollars. Here's your change."

He thrust a ten-dollar bill into her hand. "Let's take some food with us. I've had nothing but a milk-shake. How I hate milk!" He beamed at her.

But she would not let him return to the house with her. It was arranged that he should wait at the nearest crossroad.

She flew up the stairs to her bedroom, feeling like a girl having a secret love-affair. She changed into a white flannel skirt, shorter than any she had yet worn, and white shoes. She had pretty feet and felt that the new style became her. She put on a striped shirt, knotting the tie carefully, and a white linen hat. She made sandwiches and hurried out to meet Eden at the crossroad.

HE strode quickly along the dusty road, talking the while of the hard bargain he had driven, not noticing how difficult it was for her, in her high heels, to keep up with him. She had never walked much and had little liking for the exercise. But, when they reached the boat-house where the canoe lay, she forgot her weariness and felt only pleasure when she saw awaiting her the fragile boat that moved gently on the ripples. Did she really own such a thing? For an instant her mind flew backward and she pictured her dead husband's dismay at the thought of such a purchase. She smiled recklessly up at Eden as he helped her into the canoe and placed the cushions for her.

She had a moment's trepidation as the shallow craft, like a living thing, skimmed forward into the deep water. She felt that the slightest movement on her part would overturn it. She sat very still, resigning herself to Eden's care. He had been on canoeing trips and could paddle well. He had rolled up his sleeves, his shirt was open at the throat. He had never looked more attractive to her.

"Don't go too far out," she begged. "I can't help being a little nervous."

"You'll soon get over that. We'll go out almost every day. I'll teach you to paddle. Isn't the air glorious?"

It was fresh and sweet in contrast to the air on shore, dimmed by dust, carrying the weight of pollen, the chaff from harvests. The shore looked mysterious and beautiful. Here and there a reddening maple burned against the blue of the sky. In the distance they could see a freighter, dark and purposeful, with its banner of smoke. Quite near there were two yachts becalmed in the still air. But the lake was faintly ruffled. Tiny wavelets gurgled beneath the canoe.

She had got a coat of sunburn when she reached home. She felt happy and reckless. Her qualms at Eden's deceiving his family had vanished. Let him do what he liked! They would drift as they had drifted in the canoe.

A WEEK passed; they had had three such outings, one of them in the evening. He had spent the day with her, he had written the best poem he had yet done, or so she thought; and at sunset they had walked to the lake to where the canoe was kept. She had bought heelless rubber-soled shoes and now enjoyed the walk. She was learning to paddle. She told herself that she had never been so happy in her life, then thought grimly that she had never been happy at all, until this summer. She was conscious, too, that her intensified emotions were reaching out for something more passionate than the affair with this boy which could never develop, and which might at any time be ruthlessly ended by his family. She felt something ruthless in them, else how could Ernest have dropped her as he had? That had been a blow to her pride, for she had felt in herself the power to fascinate him. Still, she did not regret him, for nothing Ernest could have given her would have equaled the delight of those romantic driftings on the lake with Eden. . .

Three weeks had passed since Renny's visit to her. She had a secret desire to force him to intervene once more on Dayborn's behalf She desired the pleasure of refusing him. Although their meeting had been amicable, she felt something antagonistic in him toward herself, something that had nothing to do with Eden. She could not forget his presence in the room, how it had obliterated all that had gone before.

"Why do you look like that?" Adeline demanded. "What mischief have you to tell, my man?" "Out with it, Rags," said Renny.

Deception, she told herself, was wearing her out; yet she had been so enmeshed by it, in the past months, that she wondered how she would ever exist without its stimulus. She had a leaning toward the belief of reincarnation and imagined that, in some earlier life, she had moved in the intrigues of a royal court.

The morning after her evening paddle, with Eden, the weather changed. She woke half-frozen in her bed, for she had fallen asleep with only the sheet over her. She could scarcely believe her eyes when she looked out of the window. It had been raining, and now a cold wind blew. The garden path was strewn with drenched leaves. She looked mournfully at the purple clouds and knew that autumn had come.

She ate her breakfast in this mood, but a flicker of sunlight on the floor cheered her. After all, there was Indian Summer still to come. She would look no farther ahead than that. She lighted a cigarette and settled down with the morning paper.

She heard voices outside and glancing out of the window, saw Renny Whiteoak at the gate. With him were the two children, Pheasant and Finch. He left them there and came toward the house. Her heart began to beat heavily. She folded the paper neatly, looked at her reflection in the glass and went to the door.

Her first thought on opening it was how impervious to weather he looked. It seemed that weather had done its worst to him, and its worst had no more than toughened him, whipped his skin to a high color, his frame to endurance, and given his eyes a look of wary pleasure in its companionship. This morning became him, she thought, seeing his bare head, the russet of his leather leggings. She invited him to come in. Then she called out to Pheasant:

"Good morning! Why do you never come to see me any more?"

"I don't know," the little girl answered slowly but there was reproach in her eyes. Mrs. Stroude was embarrassed. They both knew that her visits had been discouraged.

"Won't you come in now? And Finch too?"

"I think they had better wait outside till we have talked business for a little," said Renny. In the dining-room he said warmly:

"I want to thank you for letting Dayborn stay on. It's been most awfully kind of you, because I know you don't like him."

"That is putting it mildly. I detest him. I've good reason to."

"I know—I know. But he's been pretty good lately, hasn't he?" He looked anxiously into her eyes.

"Not so objectionable as formerly. But they can't stay on."

"Of course not," he agreed.

"I've been wanting to see you about that."

"And I've wanted to see you." His brown eyes still had that warm gleam in them. "As a matter of fact, I've heard of a place that will suit them, but they can't get into it for a few weeks. About three." He looked at her almost pleadingly.

It was beginning to rain again, a fierce squally shower.

"Do say yes," he urged. "This would be awful weather to move in—especially with a baby."

She looked out of the window. "How long do you think it will last?" she asked.

"About three weeks."

No canoeing, she thought, for three weeks! She said:

"Very well, I'll try; but if I send for you in the meantime, you mustn't be surprised."

"You'll not be forced to send for me, I promise you. I can't tell you how grateful I am. I should have come to see you about them before this, but I've been working hard and playing polo a good deal." His face fell. "Did you see that the American team beat us on Wednesday?"

"Yes," she lied, for she had no interest in sporting news. "I was so sorry. But you put up a splendid game, didn't you?"

"Yes, we gave them a run for their money. But we were up against superior ponies. I'm breeding some now which I hope will make a difference. I've got one grand pony. You could pull his head through his chest and he'd never lose it!"

"I wish I could see a polo-match."

He looked at her commiseratingly.

"What a pity! We've finished for the season, but you must see one next year." He knit his brow and then asked: "Have you been to the Horse Show?"

"No, but I'd love to go."

"You must come to our box. The Show's in November." He gave a start, exclaiming:

"Those kids! They're out in the rain! I must go." Before she could speak he was at the door.

She pressed ahead of him and threw open the door.

"Children!" she called gayly. "Come right in! You must be wet through."

Renny grinned approvingly as the two childen, who had been sheltering under a small inadequate maple tree, scampered along the path into the house. They were bareheaded. The wet had made Pheasant's hair wave over the top of her head, but Finch's was plastered down almost into his eyes. He smiled shyly at Mrs. Stroude, but Pheasant retained her air of gravity. The two made as though to sit side by side on the sofa but Renny stopped them.

"You're too wet," he said. "Sit on the floor by the fire."

There was a coal fire in the small grate. Mrs. Stroude was glad she had lighted it. It gave the room a homelike cheerful air. The children sat on either side of the fire, their innocent profiles giving them an air of aloofness.

Renny looked down at them indulgently. He looked, Mrs. Stroude thought, as though he were so used to children that he felt their presence only as an agreeable addition to the atmosphere. She herself felt some resentment at their coming, yet in a curious way she felt a new familiarity with Renny.

There was a scratching on the outer door. Finch said:

"It's Fan. She was at the back when we came in. Shall I open the door?"

"Yes, do," said Mrs. Stroude.

"She was my father's dog," explained Renny. "Now she's attached herself to me. She's almost always with me. I hope you don't mind."

(Please turn to page 78)

Book Suggestions For September

by HARRY HANSEN

EVERY one of us recalls good stories read in the past, and wishes for more like them. But they are scattered in hundreds of volumes and few of us have the time to dig them out of the libraries. That is why collections prepared by such enthusiastic readers as Alexander Woollcott and W. Somerset Maugham are so useful. This season a Harvard bookman, Henry C. Moriarty, and a New York publisher, Bennett A. Cerf, have collaborated to compile "The Bedside Book of Famous British Stories," packing eighty stories into 1256 pages.

Some of these stories are old friends—Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," for one. Others are stories you have heard about and hoped to read. Widely popular was A. Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of the Speckled Band"; less widely known is Liam O'Flaherty's "The Old Hunter." After Chaucer and Addison you come to P. G. Wodehouse, while stories by James Joyce, Katherine Mansfield and D. H. Lawrence represent the work of recent decades. English literature is rich: classic and modern, formal and informal, including Kipling's inventions, James Stephens' folklore, Thomas Burke's stories about Limehouse, all under one tent.

Next on my list is the story of a young man who never grew up—"Richard Halliburton: His Story of His Life's Adventure." Prepared from letters that he wrote to his parents, this book reveals the American college lad who never conquered his zest for adventure, made a profession of doing outlandish things, such as swimming the Panama canal, climbing the Matterhorn, following the trail of Ulysses. He enjoyed every minute of it, laughed at his failures, finally built a Chinese junk and (in March, 1939) disappeared in a storm in the China sea. In his story he remains unalterably boyish, eager, full of ideas for travels, books and lectures. Maybe he was the last romantic of our time.

("The Bedside Book of Famous British Short Stories," Random House, $3.) ("Richard Halliburton: His Story of His Life's Adventure," Bobbs-Merrill, $3.75.)

This noted critic will briefly review in each issue the recently published book he deems the most interesting

Song for Summer

When the temperature soars up and up—to 90 Fahrenheit,
And the weather men prognosticate there's "No relief in sight"—
Don't be depressed! There *is* relief! Just take a timely hint:
There's lots of cooling solace in Four Roses and some mint!

Unite the verdant mint leaves with this whiskey mellow-old:
Use ice, of course, aplenty—so your drink is frosty cold.
Ah! There's the grandest Julep man's hand has ever made!
A symphony of perfection for sipping in the shade!

A green-and-silver triumph that could make the Sphinx emote;
But as its fragrant coolness trickles down your grateful throat,
Remember well the moral with which this ballad closes:
To make the *perfect* Julep you *must always use Four Roses!*

• • •

Four Roses is ALL *whiskey—a blend of straight whiskies—90 proof. The straight whiskies in Four Roses are 4 years or more old. Frankfort Distilleries, Inc., Louisville and Baltimore.*

HOW TO MAKE A FOUR ROSES MINT JULEP

Place a few sprigs of fresh mint in bowl. Cover with powdered sugar and enough water to dissolve sugar. Crush the mint (or simply stir, if you prefer). Place the mixture in bottom of tall glass or silver Julep cup. Fill glass with shaved ice. Pour in Four Roses till glass is brimming. Garnish with mint and let stand until frost forms thick.

HILDRETH—HER STORY

(Continued from page 40)

what a good idea! Of course Geoff'll do it!" And Madeleine beamed. "He needs a job awfully; he hasn't had one since he finished college—so strange, because he's very bright; Hildy says he won gold keys and things. You must pay him a good big salary, Laura, because he needs it. I simply don't see how he lives at all on what he has."

"Don't you?" said Geoffrey. His pleasant hazel eyes were bright slits. He put a hand on the car-door. His voice was frighteningly quiet. "Don't you, Mrs. Carsidine? Let me explain: The cheapest foods are nourishing. I have a roof over me. It leaks, but I can always set a pan to catch the seepage. I have fuel, and a well that never runs dry, and books to read. What more does a man need? I don't need help from anyone. I have everything I need. Extra money would be bad for me. It would put ideas in my head. It might start me wanting things I've learned to do without."

He smiled—a rather ghastly smile; he didn't look toward Laura or at Hildreth's white stricken face. He walked rapidly up the beach road away from them all.

Pete roared: "Make Fergus take his damn' feet out of my face!"

Madeleine said weakly: "What a queer way for him to talk! Everybody can always use extra money. Do you suppose living alone has addled his wits? I wonder if there's any insanity in the family; there must have been something queer about Geoffrey's father—shooting himself the way he did, so distressing."

"Who shot himself?" shrieked Fergus. "What way? Where is he? Is he dead? I wanna see him!"

"You can't!" said Hildreth. She started the car with a savage lurch that cracked Fergus' head against Pete's. Fergus, worn out with his long day on the beach and the general bitter frustration of his life, burst into noisy tears.

"She spoiled it for him!" thought Hildreth. "My own mother. She humiliated him in front of all of us. His first real chance. He would have taken the job. She spoiled it. I'll never forgive her!"

Chapter Five

FOR three days it rained. The Saturday trip to the Port for supplies was postponed. A good thing, too, since they always invited Geoff to go along, and now she wouldn't dare ask him—she had seen and heard his dreadful humiliation.

"What am I going to do? What is there that I can do?"

The house was damp and chilly. Every time she put a stick of wood on the fire she thought of him. He supplied them with logs and kindling; he wouldn't take a cent; he had plenty, he said, plenty of wood; he got his year's supply on shares for the cutting.

"Isn't this cozy!" Madeleine hitched her rocker closer to the fire. Her crochet needle darted, picked and darted. "I do love rainy days down here. So snug. A nice fire, and all of us together. . . . Don't you want to read aloud, Hildy?"

"No," said Hildreth.

How could anyone be so insensitive as her mother was? She was an exuberant clumsy baby who smashed the cherished toys of other children and didn't even wonder why they wept.

"I've always picked up after her," Hildreth thought, "and forgiven her because she knew no better and meant no harm. But she's not a baby. She's thirty-eight. She ought to know better; she ought to have learned by now some respect for the feelings of others. She hasn't—and she never will.

"Nothing for myself, ever: No freedom, no solitude. No time or guidance to develop my own mind. No hope. She'll live another forty years, maybe. With all that fat around her heart, she may have a stroke, and be paralyzed, but she won't die. I'll take such good care of her that she'll live another forty years, more and more helpless. And I'll be old—old. My whole life wasted."

What was this monstrous thing taking shape in her mind? Was she wishing her mother would die?

"I'm going out! I can't stand being shut up like this any longer!"

She snatched her slicker from its hook and ran—away from her mother; away from her own monstrous thoughts.

She would go up and talk to the boys. She would talk with Regina. Fix her mind on somebody else's problems. Her own would drive her mad. It wasn't safe even to think about Geoff's, because they were her own. "We're both trapped," she thought, "he and I. Trapped by circumstance."

The rain beat against her face and ran down her cheeks like tears. "If I could have done something to help him," she thought, "to set him free and start him on a good useful life, I might have been able to bear my own uselessness with better courage. But there's nothing I can do either for him or for myself."

Something brushed against her trouser leg: Mr. Higgins, the cat, padding along beside her, indifferent to the rain.

Dillon, his face disconsolate against a window, saw them and rushed to meet them.

"I'm so g-glad the cat came with you!"

He gathered the lean tawny creature up, and Mr. Higgins, willing to be gathered, dug his curved claws into the child's shoulder and hung against him, purring hoarsely.

"Why, he likes you!" Hildreth was astonished. "He won't let even me pick him up, and he almost never purrs."

"He's thin," said Dillon worriedly.

Pete crashed out onto the porch.

"Aw, lookit the old cat!"

He made a snatch at Mr. Higgins' tail. Screeching, the cat escaped, but Pete went down with Dillon on top of him. When Hildreth tore them apart, Dillon's lip was cut, and both Pete's eyes were swelling.

"Dillon! You jumped on him! Pete is smaller than you!"

"Pete jumped first!" Dillon mopped his bleeding mouth. "And Mr. Higgins is s-smaller than him."

It was too much for Hildreth. She went in to see Regina. The nurse was up and dressed, sitting at the window.

"Are you really better?"

It infuriated Regina, always being asked how she felt. There was nothing wrong with her except that nagging ache in her heart. And her head bothered her. All this thinking. Hours and hours alone in this beastly place, with nothing to do but think. No wonder the children's racketing got on her nerves. It never used to.

"Much better, thank you."

"I told Mrs. Furnard I was sure you were better, well enough to travel."

The nurse's greenish eyes flared.

"She wants you to take a long vacation, Regina. The whole summer. I was shocked when she said you hadn't had a vacation in the whole eleven years you'd been with her."

("I never wanted a vacation! I had no place to go! And what business is it of yours?")

"Mrs. Furnard said you had a brother you might like to visit. Has he a home where you could be comfortable? Is he married?"

"Yes, he's married."

(Without a word to her. He might have told her. He might have said: "I hope you'll like her." He might have let her see the girl, or at least asked her to come and see him married. Not a word till it was all done. "This is my wife. This is Regina, my sister that I told you about."

(Had he told her that sister had washed and dressed and fed and supported him till Ma died, and then paid to keep him in a foster home because Clara wasn't to be trusted—she'd let poor dull Thomas play in the street and get run over by a truck?

(She didn't want gratitude. She'd done it to please herself, and because he was the only one worth saving. She didn't expect affection. She'd never given him any. She couldn't let him get too much attached to her, or he'd have missed her and been discontented in that foster home.

(But Robert needn't have been ashamed of her. Had he been afraid she'd try to break up his marriage if he warned her beforehand? Or afraid that the girl would? "My sister is a nurse." That's all he'd told her. Hospital nurse, the girl had thought, and had been embarrassed when she found out that her new sister-in-law was nothing but an ignorant nursemaid. Ignorant, yes; she'd had only a year of high-school, because she'd gone to work to earn a decent life for Robert.)

"That's fine." Hildreth tried to sound hearty, but she was beginning to understand why Laura had never been easy and intimate with the nurse. "And do you like his wife?"

"She's a smart sensible girl," said Regina briefly.

Very smart. Smart enough to persuade him to take a job a long way off. Sensible enough to live in a one-room apartment. No extra bed for an old maid sister-in-law who might stay too long and be a nuisance.

"I thought I might read aloud to the boys," said Hildreth.

MADELEINE said: "I'm going to make a batch of fudge—such a good chance, with Hildy out of the house."

Laura had always disliked the heavy odor of chocolate, cooking. It filled the

whole house. The place was stifling. That was the trouble with an open fire. Not warm enough, and then suddenly scorching hot. She stripped off her sweater and opened a window. The rain was a gray veil. How unutterably dreary!

"Mimi, you amaze me. You're never bored, are you?"

Madeleine's light blue eyes rounded. She lapped a spoon.

"Bored? I should say not! Why, I'm busy every minute! I have a perfectly lovely life. I plan the meals and cook—I love to cook; and I plan our clothes, though Hildy's discouraging to dress—she won't wear anything in winter but skirts and sweaters, and nothing in summer but sweaters and slacks. I knit for her. And I write letters—you were naughty never to answer last winter; and there's the radio, and crossword puzzles, and Russian Bank with Hildy, and bridge on Mondays—that reminds me, the old ladies are coming here Monday after next; you must help me think of something new and exciting to feed them; they do love a party, dear old things, and they're greedy as pelicans. Oh, and Miss Hinckley showed me a new kind of solitaire, two packs, very hard to win; I have to cheat a little; I'll show you how to play it, if you're bored, darling, as soon as this reaches the soft-ball stage."

LAURA stared through the window at the depressing grayness.

A lovely life, a busy life: the meaningless life of the manless, jobless woman! Just killing time until time got around at last to killing her. . . . "But I'm young!" she thought. "I'm only thirty-two! I've barely begun!" All those years spent having babies.

("We'll get the kids safely born and onto Regina's mind," he had said, "and then we can start having fun, darling, you and I.")

Madeleine said: "Of course last winter was terribly hard for me with Mamma gone and Hildy at school mornings; I did feel bad about your not coming to me, Laura. I think you might have stood up to Drake for once; I needed you so, more than he did. Even if he is dead, I have to speak a little ill of him: he was a terribly selfish, jealous, domineering man!"

Laura's voice was unrecognizable:

"You may speak all you wish. Why not? You always have. But I don't have to stay here and listen to you."

She went out across the porch and down the beach road, walking fast in the rain, not feeling it; and the familiar horror walked close beside her, keeping step, its closeness colder than the rain.

The tide was part way in. The hard-packed sand of the flats was good to walk on. She turned, by habit, toward the Point. Most of their walks had led that way. The other grew pebbly soon, bruising to the feet. Papa and she had walked every day. Mamma and Mimi had preferred to sit and rock and talk. Papa and she. And later, one or another of the pleasant boys who were a little in love with her but not too much. Just boys, too young and poor to think seriously of marriage, but old enough to think of love. Young lighthearted love, in summer.

On the other side of the Point was a shallower sand-beach. Across it, toward her, tall and big-shouldered in a yellow slicker, a fisherman's hat shielding his face from the rain and from her, came a boy who might have been one of those she had known.

"Hello, Geoff. Did you get sick of indoors too?"

He wasn't glad to see her. His face went stiff and blank, on guard against her. What was the matter? Why was he angry with her?

"What are you doing out in all this?" he asked harshly. "Without even a coat! Are you crazy?"

For three days and nights he had stayed cooped up in his damp lonely house, nursing his rage and shame, hoping never to set eyes on her again because she had seen and heard his humiliation. Never to see her again. And here, on a day like this, when he had felt it safe to venture out, sure of meeting no one, she had sprung as if out of the sand, to confront him.

She looked as startled and hurt as a child slapped for something it hadn't done. So young and hurt and bewildered that it made him wild. He could only go on yelling at her.

"Where do you think you're heading for, anyway? Don't you know the tide's coming in? Do you want to get marooned for six hours and maybe tear your hands and knees to pieces trying to climb up over the rocks?"

Her eyes were frightened and hurt; she pushed back her dripping hair, speechless, staring at him. She began to shiver. A chilly wind had sprung up, but her cotton dress was too wet even to flap. It was plastered to her, a wet blue cobweb clinging to her round breasts and small firm waist and thighs. She looked cold, but in a man's arms she wouldn't be cold; she would be warm and yielding, like Cathy.

"Not even a coat!" he said fiercely. "Do you want to catch your death?"

He dragged his slicker off and forced her bare arms into the sleeves and buttoned the collar under her chin. The coat was enormous on her.

He smiled. The forbidding stiffness went out of his face.

"You do look funny," he said.

"I feel funny," she said, "all my wetness carefully buttoned in."

He put a hand on her shoulder and swung her about to face the way she had come.

"Home! March!" he said; but his voice was light-hearted and warm. Not harsh any more. "What possessed you to come out in this rain?"

"I had to get away from Mimi's tongue. I don't mind her most times. I'm used to her. And very fond of her. But Hildy left us. And suddenly I had to have some air."

So she suffered, too, from her sister! And he had been fool enough to include her in his rage against her sister. Why, Mrs. Carsidine was only a blundering child, to be pitied and laughed at and endured by her sister and by him!

Any thought, any emotion, however troubling, changed into something good and warm and lovely when he could share it with Laura. She was sweet. And he had snapped at her, scolded her when she'd already been suffering from her sister's tactlessness! Why, he ought to have taken her in his arms and comforted her instead of yelling at her.

He couldn't very well apologize now. He could only put a compelling hand under her elbow and hurry her along home.

"Take a hot bath when you get back, and a shot of whisky."

Laura didn't answer. Whisky—Whisky and Soda, the brown-eyed setters: mournful liquid eyes and questing noses, searching, searching through the house, room after empty room. She knew how they must be searching now. They had never been happy when Drake was away even for a day. . . .

Geoffrey looked down at her anxiously. Her breath was labored. Her face was small and curiously pitiful with her hair hanging wet like that.

"Sorry to hurry you so, but I don't want you to get pneumonia."

He saw her eyes darken and glaze. What had he said? Then he remembered, she *had* had pneumonia. It had killed her husband. Less than a year ago.

Frantically he snatched at a safer subject, any subject to take that glaze of horror out of her eyes: "Have you told Hildreth that her father is at the Port?"

SHE came back from a long way off, came with obvious relief. He could see the relief. He could have cried, seeing it. It could mean only one thing: It confirmed his conviction that till now had been half wish. She couldn't possibly have loved her husband. She couldn't have; she hated to be reminded of him, even for a moment.

"No. I haven't told her. And I've been meaning to ask you: Why can't she go to college? Is it lack of money? Alec wanted to know."

"Oh, there's money enough," said Geoffrey. "The alimony, and what your mother left. No. It's Mrs. Carsidine. She

wants Hildreth with her all the time, and won't let her study or even read to herself. All last winter Hildreth had to do her school-work in odd moments between classes or when her mother was napping. She couldn't have graduated, even from a local school like Miss Gallop's, if she hadn't a phenomenal memory. But a good memory isn't enough to get you through college. She knows that. She's in a spot. She doesn't complain much, even to me. She's almost fanatic in her loyalty to her mother. I think it has something to do with the way her father treated her mother. I think she feels it's up to her to make it up to Mrs. Carsidine, and never let her be badly hurt again. Do you see?"

Laura did see, more or less.

Because he was happy himself, his anger and shame all gone, he had a tremendous urge to do something for Hildreth. She was his friend, and she was in a very tough spot. He said eagerly: "Look! Please don't think me impertinent. But couldn't you do something about it? You say you're used to Mrs. Carsidine, and most times you don't mind her. Well, couldn't you take her off Hildreth's hands for a while? Maybe just next winter? Couldn't you take Mrs. Carsidine with you in the fall when you go home?"

Home? She had no home. An empty house with the dogs searching through room after room and finding no one.

"I don't know what I shall do in the fall," she said.

Her lips were blue. She was shaking convulsively. He was overwhelmed with remorse. Pestering her with talk when she was getting a chill! He put his arm behind her shoulders and half carried, half propelled her up the road to the Carsidine door. He had promised himself never to stop at this door again, yet here he was. She fumbled with the buttons of the slicker. He said: "No. Keep it on. I'll come for it later." An excuse to come and see her. But she struggled out of the bulky coat and heaped it across his arm. He hated to let her go.

"Remember. A scalding hot bath and some whisky."

"All right," she said meekly.

It was wonderful, telling her what to do as if he had a right to; bullying her gently, taking care of her!

ALL the way home, all evening his exhilaration lasted. It had never been like this with Cathy. Excitement, yes, but depression afterward, even disgust.

He didn't go to bed all night. He didn't want to sleep. He was too happy to sleep. He lay on the couch in the living-room in the darkness, remembering how she had looked and what she had said, and what he had said, and the touch of her under his hand. Once he went into the kitchen and laid his hand against the clammy folds of his old slicker. He pressed his face against it. Nothing could have brought him down to earth with a harder thud. The oilskin felt repulsive and stank of fish.

He was a complete fool. The only comfort was that she wouldn't ever know it if he could help it. Hildreth mustn't ever suspect it. God! What would Hildreth think of him?

After that his depression and self-disgust were worse than anything he had known in Cathy's time.

Chapter Six

ON Wednesday the sun came out, brilliant and hot. The tide was high at midmorning, the ideal time for swimming. They always waited for it. Nobody wanted to trudge across half a mile of flats just for a dip.

Hildreth collected the boys after breakfast and went to the beach, hoping to see Geoffrey, afraid to see him. He was out on the float, sunning himself. The children shouted to him, and he waved, but stayed where he was. Hildreth was afraid to swim out to him. What if he wouldn't speak?

Laura joined her after a time. Madeleine, making a five-layer cake, had for once been willing to stay by herself.

"Nice to have the sun out for a change," said Laura.

Hildreth grunted.

"Time you got over your grouch, isn't it, Hildy? You've been cross as a bear for days. I blamed it on the rain."

"How like her!" thought Hildreth. How undiscerning she was! As bad as Mother.

"It wasn't the rain! Do you think I mind a superficial thing like weather? It's Geoff. Those awful things Mother said to him. A public humiliation like that, for a person with his pride, could be absolutely disastrous! Why, he might even commit suicide. His father did."

"Suicide isn't hereditary, is it?" asked Laura mildly.

"Sensitiveness is! And instability! Though Geoff isn't really unstable. He's just lost all confidence in himself. He's been knocked down so often that it doesn't seem worth the effort to get up again."

Laura didn't want to hear how bad things had been. She hated hearing about misfortunes. But Hildreth had been bottled up for a week, and she wanted to talk. She wanted, if she could, to shock her aunt out of what seemed to her an abominable smug indifference.

"There was the disgrace, to begin with. Something about money. It wasn't just losing it. Everybody lost money in the depression. It was something dreadful—stealing, I suppose; misappropriation of funds or something. It must have been awful because Geoff's mother took back her maiden name and wanted Geoff to change his, and he quarreled with her about it, and hasn't seen her since, or taken a penny from her or her people. He's like that. He has a lot of spirit.

"Well, that was the end of his freshman year in college, and he earned his way after that. He simply slaved. He turned his hand to any job he could get; he didn't care how menial it was; I admire him for that; he went short on food and sleep, and he didn't have time or money for any fun or girls or even friends; he just about killed himself to get his degree, with honors. And what good did it do him? I mean, there he was, degree and all, and what was he? Just one of the unemployed, with people treating him as if he were a bum. It wasn't the physical hardship that broke him down; a man can stand a certain amount of that; even park benches, and holes in his shoes, and dishwashing in Greasy Spoons for meals that would make you sick. It was the loneliness and the humiliation that ate into him. Bread-lines, and flophouses; charity

soup, and lice; and having to wash out his handkerchief and socks in the park pond when the cop wasn't around."

"Oh, stop!" Laura covered her ears. "I don't want to hear!"

"Well, you're going to hear!" said Hildreth. "It's time you found out the way things are! It's time you opened your eyes and your mind and faced facts!"

Yes, it was time. Facts like death. But she couldn't, yet. She wouldn't. Hildreth was dreadful. Perhaps all the young were like that; wanting to hurt, because they were hurt themselves.

"He'd probably be dead by now if his grandfather hadn't slipped on the ice and broken a hip, and old Mrs. Weirson couldn't afford to hire a nurse month after month, and she couldn't lift her husband and carry wood and do everything herself—she was over seventy and rheumatic; so she sent for Geoff. It must have seemed like heaven to him, this place, clean and safe, and enough to eat, after what he'd had. But now that he's buried both the old people, and is stuck here alone, it must seem like hell to him."

"I don't see why," said Laura helplessly. "It seems like a nice comfortable life to me."

"Oh, you have no sense!" Hildreth shouted. "No more sense than your own children! A man needs work to do!"

"I don't see why," said Laura.

Drake worked too hard. Too hard. Too hard. Making money for his family. All his resistance used up before forty.

"I think you imagine Geoff is a lot worse off than he is, Hildy. I don't think he was half as much upset by what Mimi said as you were. He was perfectly all right when I talked to him on the beach, that day I got so wet. When was it? The day Dillon blacked Pete's eyes."

HILDRETH stared. Her eyes were brilliant with hope.

"Sunday? You saw Geoff? He spoke to you? Why didn't you tell me?"

"There was nothing to tell," said Laura.

Nothing, was there—nothing out of the ordinary, except the way he had looked at her, there at the door, when she heaped the yellow slicker over his arm! That look. She had seen it in the eyes of boys she had known in other summers, boys a little in love with her. Oh, nonsense. She had imagined it.

There was one fact she'd better face. Geoffrey wasn't one of those boys she used to know. He was Hildreth's age. . . . Well, a few years older, but Hildreth's generation. He was Hildreth's friend. Friend?

"Hildreth. Now don't get angry. Are you in love with Geoff?"

The blood rushed up in blotches on Hildreth's forehead and thin cheeks and thin young throat. It was Madeleine's quick fluctuating color, and Madeleine's thin skin, but permanently darkened by exposure to sun and wind. There was nothing else of Madeleine in Hildreth, unless the girl had her soft heart.

Alec couldn't always have been cold-blooded. He had fallen in love with Madeleine. There must have been passion in him once. There was passion now in Hildreth's eyes and lips and voice, a passion of resentment and denial: "I'm not! You older women make me sick! You think about nothing but love!"

She checked herself, and forced herself to be quieter.

"Perhaps you can't help it, women like you and Mother, who were awfully pretty. I suppose when you were young, men fell in love with your looks before you had time to be friends with them. That's a disadvantage. If I were pretty, Geoff'd probably fall in love with me simply because I'm the only young girl he ever sees, and it would spoil everything; it would spoil our friendship; as it is, we're a satisfaction to each other, and no embarrassing self-consciousness mixed in. He isn't in love with me, or likely to be, and I'm not in love with him; and I'm very glad of it."

LAURA was hearing only part of what Hildreth said. ("You older women. When you were young.")

"Well," she thought, "I might as well get used to it. I'm thirty-two. When I was Hildreth's age, Alec was thirty-two and he seemed as old as God." But it was a funny feeling. Not pleasant, not at all.

"I suppose you don't believe me?" Hildreth was belligerent.

"Oh, yes, I do," said Laura hastily.

She did. And she was sure that the girl believed herself.

"I'm never going to let myself fall in love," said Hildreth stoutly. "You needn't smile. I know the way it happens. It doesn't hit like a bolt of lightning. That's an old-wives' tale. I'm not going to marry. I'd rather miss it, even if it's important, than have it and prize it and lose it the way Mother lost it, through no fault of her own. Nobody's going to do to me what Father did to her."

"But Hildy! If your mother had married a different sort of man, a man who was warm and affectionate and easy-going like herself, she'd probably still be married and perfectly happy."

"I doubt that," said Hildreth darkly. "Warm, affectionate, easy-going husbands are just the sort who run after other women."

Laura said: "But maybe it wasn't another woman. With your father, I mean."

Hildreth lost patience.

"What else could it have been? Mother was a perfectly marvelous wife; you know that! She loved my father, and she was a wonderful home-maker, and she was pretty and gay and sweet, and she gave him a child! What more could a man possibly want?"

Laura didn't know. The argument was getting beyond her, and it was making her uncomfortable. She was relieved to see Regina stalking toward them between the little dunes—relieved in more than one way. If the nurse was really better, perhaps she wouldn't want to take a vacation.

"Here's Regina!" Laura waved and called a greeting, but the nurse seated herself apart from them, stiff-backed, unsociable. She didn't want them thinking they had to include her in their conversation. She didn't feel up to being polite, even to Mrs. Furnard.

The boys were here. If she was going to be sent away from them soon, she could at least spend what time was left to her within sight and sound of them.

"This is a good time to speak to her about her vacation," urged Hildreth; but Laura lay back, hiding her eyes from the sun. For once Hildreth did not argue. Geoffrey had just made a beautiful clean dive and was coming toward shore. She watched him, fearful, eager.

Yes. He was coming straight up to them. He was going to speak. It was all right. It was wonderful. Her heart sang.

"Aren't you landlubbers coming in?"

He said it to Hildreth, laughing. He didn't dare look at Laura. He didn't dare. He could see her without actually looking at her. Seeing her, he spoke to Hildreth, laughing. She sprang up eagerly. She said: "I'll race you back to the float. You speak to Regina, Laura, while we're out of the way. Don't keep putting it off. You owe her a vacation. Come on, Geoff!"

He hesitated. But Laura said, "All right. I suppose I must," and went over to Regina. There was nothing for him to do but race with Hildreth, leaving his heart on shore.

"Hildreth says you want to visit your brother, Regina. Well, so you shall. It's natural you should want to be with somebody of your own for a while after putting up with us for all these years."

("Why put it in that crooked way?" thought the nurse. "As if it were my idea! Why not say right out that you want to be rid of me?")

"When would you like me to go, Mrs. Furnard?"

("Oh, Regina, are you so eager to leave us?" He had said: "She'll never leave us, darling! She'll stay forever!"

("I want her," Laura thought sadly. "But she doesn't want to stay. And I haven't any right to hang onto her. She's probably sick of us all. She has savings, and a brother. She wants a life of her own. It's natural.")

("If you wanted me, I'd stay forever," Regina thought, sick at heart. "If the boys don't need me, I'd scrub for you, cook, wait on table, mend, anything. I wouldn't care if you cut me to housemaid's wages. It isn't the money I care about. All I care about is belonging somewhere, having a home."

Not just any home, either. The Furnard home. She had been happy with the Furnard family for eleven years. She'd never be so happy with another family. Now she was older, and tired, and set in her ways, the thought of adjusting to a new family made her sick.)

"Would you be willing to stay through July, Regina?"

"Yes. I can stay till then."

Laura's spirits were low. She hadn't the courage even to swim. Hard exercise and icy water were all very well for youngsters like Hildreth and Geoffrey. . . . Young people.

She would go and find Madeleine. With Madeleine she always felt young.

GEOFFREY, reaching the float a little ahead of Hildreth, looked toward shore and saw Laura's white cape and her light hair blowing in the wind, drifting up the beach road with the wind, away from him. Hildreth, spitting salt water, dragged herself up on the float and stretched out beside him. If he was silent, she didn't mind. It wasn't a hostile silence. If he wanted not to talk, it was all right with her. She was happy just to be with him, friends again. Now that they were friends again, he and she, she could almost forgive her mother. —though not quite. . . .

Laura's thick-soled sandals clattering across the porch brought a frantic wail from the bedroom: "Hildy? Laura? Oh, come help me, somebody!"

Madeleine was in a fix. Her face was crimson with exertion and exasperation, her curls wet on her forehead, her stockings in loops about her fat ankles, her enormous body naked except for a step-in girdle of pink elastic which had her around the region of her solar plexus and was squeezing the life out of her.

"The harder I struggle the hotter and stickier I get and the tighter it clings to me; I tried to get into it feet first and I couldn't pull it up and Hildy wasn't here to help me, so I tried it head first and got it this far and now it won't go up or down and I can't get out!"

Laura tugged, and Madeleine, released, fell on the bed and lay heaving. She wasn't a pretty sight. She wasn't even comic. Not to her sister, at least, who remembered her too well at twenty. There was nothing amusing about the ruin of youth and beauty.

"It's Hildy who makes me wear the nasty thing," Madeleine moaned. "I don't care how I look, I just want to be comfortable; it isn't as if fussing would make me young and slim again or bring Alec back to me."

"Mimi—why did Alec leave you?"

MADELEINE didn't reply at once. She began to heave again, and Laura thought, "It's no use asking. She'll just cry and be incoherent."

Looking at Madeleine, Laura thought: Maybe there was another woman. Maybe it was Mamma.

Not ordinary mother-in-law trouble. Not that. But Mamma and Mimi had always been very close, and much alike, and closer after Hildreth was on the way. Laura began to think back. Yes, it was true. After Hildreth's birth Mimi had become middle-aged, all at once; middle age wasn't so much a matter of years or pounds or fallen arches; it was an attitude of mind; Mimi, in a year of marriage, had become Mamma's age. The long summers down here, with Alec alone in town, too busy to take a vacation. And Mamma insisting that Mimi stay where it was cool, for the baby's sake.

Three months' separation every year. And Drake had said that even twin beds could break up a marriage.

"Oh, poor Alec," moaned Madeleine. "I suppose I can tell you the truth now. He lost his mind."

She rolled off the bed and began to dress herself.

"You know he never relaxed, Laura, he brought work home nights and he'd be too tired to eat, he'd want nothing but tea and toast. I did everything I could think of, I tried all sorts of new dishes to tempt his appetite, and I filled the house with nice lively people to take his mind off his work, and I saved up every little thing that happened to tell him about, I'd talk for hours trying to amuse him even when he wouldn't even answer. I kept Hildreth from bothering him, he didn't like children, he ignored her and he practically ignored me and finally he burst out and said he'd go crazy if he went on living with me, I was driving him out of his mind, and then I knew he was crazy already, to say a thing like

that to his own wife, and I had to give him the divorce, I had to let Mamma think it was another woman, if she'd known the truth she'd have kept watching for the insanity to come out in Hildreth."

"Hildreth doesn't know, does she?"

"Mercy!" said Madeleine, slipping a silver bracelet over her dimpled hand. "Do you think I'd tell her her own father was crazy? Of course not! I'd rather she went on thinking he was unfaithful to me, though it's a terrible injustice to him, poor Alec, he wasn't a bit like that, he'd have made a good monk, I mean that side of marriage didn't matter to him any more than it did to me, except just at first, I suppose bridegrooms are always a little excited, but after the baby came and I wasn't so well we just got used to sleeping apart and it was so much pleasanter, his reading at night and all. What shall we have for lunch?"

Chapter Seven

THIS was the way it used to be in the middle of summer. A blue day, without wind. Time simply stopped. Even the tide seemed to have stopped. The breakers creamed against the creamy sand without excitement. Even the gulls, full-fed for once on fish and garbage, stood about lazily, sunning themselves, or floated on the air without haste or purpose.

Here, in this familiar place, it was easy to be young safe Laura Hildreth again. Easy. Except when Hildreth was around, so deadly serious about everything, saying, "Decide. Face facts."

If Hildreth weren't here.

If the little boys weren't here. Safe and happy, but out of her sight and off her mind.

"Hildy, see if Milly Coombs washed the green napkins, I want to use the yellow plates and amber glasses; do you think I could put a shot of rum in the punch, so flat without it—Mrs. Blades is a teetotaler, she wouldn't know the difference but she might have delirium tremens."

Decide. Face facts. All the important decisions in her life had been made for her by other people or by circumstance.

Coming to Mimi, and bringing the children with her, hadn't been a decision so much as a blind impulse. And now she was here and for hours at a time felt safe and almost happy. Except when Hildreth and the boys were near, destroying illusion.

"Hildy, where's Laura, don't let her slip away, she's always avoiding the old ladies and they're crazy to see her."

Laura's rubber soles moved soundlessly across the porch and down the steps. In a green field Mr. Higgins was chasing grasshoppers. All summer he ate bugs. Geoffrey told Dillon that was why he kept so lean. Insect diet upset his digestion or something. Geoffrey knew everything and he was wonderful to the boys.

"I'll go and see Geoffrey," she thought, drifting around his corner. "They'll never pursue me there."

He was working in the front garden and saw her coming. The blood began to pound inside his head. She was coming alone, without Hildreth. On purpose to see him. She must be, because this road didn't lead anywhere else.

He went to the gate to meet her. His legs felt hollow.

"Will you give me sanctuary? Mimi's old biddies are coming to play contract. I got away."

She didn't go up into the screened porch. She liked the sun. It was astonishing the way her skin kept that smooth whiteness no matter how much sun it had. She sat on the lowest step and smoothed her skirt slowly over her bare knees. She plucked a grass blade and bit off the end.

"Geoff, is there a school at the Port? A grammar school?"

His mind exploded. Nothing made sense. The Port school meant Cathy. Hildreth had been talking. He stared at Laura mutely. He felt and looked as if he had had a blow on the head. She said, "Am I interrupting something important? I just wanted your advice. But it can wait. I'll go away again."

"No, no, don't go. I'm not doing a thing. Please stay."

(Stay forever just where you are, where I can see you. You're so beautiful.)

(If he didn't say something, sound sensible, she would go away. Once he had told Hildreth to keep her off the premises.)

"Yes, there's a school, a pretty good one for a village that size. A bus collects the children from the surrounding country."

"Would it come this far?"

"There aren't any children here. The Coombs boys and Mrs. Diamond's daughters have grown up and gone."

"I was wondering about Cass and Dillon and Pete. If I should stay here this winter," she said. "Or what about boarding school?"

Stay here? Here?

"But you couldn't stay here!"

"Why not? You do. The natives do. I always wanted to. I hated going away on Labor Day. It was always lovely here just then. What's it like in winter?"

A month ago, or even yesterday, he would have answered savagely and truly, "A freezing hell of gray sky and water and unutterable loneliness."

He said, "Why, it isn't bad, if you've a good airtight stove, and plenty of wood in the shed, and provisions in the cellar, and books on the shelves."

"Like hibernating," she said. "It sounds like fun."

Fun. Fun for two people together, two people to share the fire and the food and the books and the warm bed. No fun alone.

"I'd make Mimi stay with me," she said. "That would set Hildreth free to go to college or do whatever she chose. You said she'd like that."

She was doing it to set Hildreth free! She was wonderful.

"You needn't think I'm being altruistic, though," she said. "I'm a selfish lazy person and I hate making decisions. If I stay here I won't have to decide anything. Just stay."

"You'll have to decide about school for the children."

"No," she said. "You can decide that for me. You know the boys better than I do. Are they too young to be sent away to school?"

"I was Pete's age when I went."

"Were you miserable? Were you homesick? I wouldn't want them to be unhappy. I'm not that bad."

"They wouldn't mind as much as I did. There are three of them."

"I wish you'd tell the boys about the school you went to. The games you played, and all. So they'd get a general idea what a boarding school is like. Then when I tell them they're going it won't seem such a leap into the unknown."

When she told them! When, not if.

"You're serious about staying? But you'll be bored! Even the Port is a cemetery in winter. No decent shops, no theaters, no beauty parlors."

"I've enough clothes to last me and I hate to shop," she said, "and I've been to theaters enough to last a lifetime. And I can wash my own hair."

Better to stay shut up here, she thought, with Mimi and the radio and Russian Bank and Mr. Higgins than shut up in a hotel suite in town with Mimi and Russian Bank and the radio. Because in town it would have to be a hotel. She could never go back to Mamma's apartment that now was Mimi's. Drake had made love to her there and told her, not asked her, told her that she was going to marry him.

Nothing here to remind her. He had never come here.

Nothing here to remind her, if the older boys went away, but Fergus, who was too little to go, of course. And he was too little to remind her much.

"I'll have to keep Fergus with me. Mimi will help me with him. He'll probably browbeat us both."

If only Regina would stay to manage Fergus. But Regina was tired, and not young any more. She wanted to be with someone who belonged to her, as Laura had wanted to be with Madeleine. No. She couldn't ask Regina to stay.

"You'd have to move up to Mrs. Diamond's for the coldest months." Geoffrey was forcing himself to be practical, to meet the objections Hildreth would be sure to raise at once when she heard the news. "You've only the fireplace. Mrs. Diamond has a furnace."

"Regina will have to stay long enough to get the boys' clothes ready for school," said Laura. That was a legitimate excuse for keeping Regina a month or two longer.

She sprang up.

"I'll ask her right away if she'll stay into September. But I won't tell the boys yet that they're going away to school. It might worry them, especially Dillon, and he has a birthday coming soon. I wouldn't want to spoil his birthday."

"Don't rush away," he begged.

But she wanted to see Regina and get her promise to stay longer.

He watched her out of sight. He hated to let her go. But she wasn't going far.

REGINA sat glaring at the waves through her smoked glasses. Her hatred of the place was becoming an obsession.

Hildreth came down between the dunes, her shoulders drooping with weariness, her hands jammed in the pockets of her dirty blue water-stained slacks.

"Hello, Regina. Have you seen Mrs. Furnard? She vanished. She always manages to vanish when the old ladies are coming. I wish I could, but Mother can think of a thousand things for me to do before a party."

"Hildy, look!" Cass brought a filthy handkerchief loaded with beach treasures.

"What kind of animal do you think lived in this shell? Geoff will know. I wish I could find one with the creature still alive inside. My, I'll be busy sorting all these things out when I get home!"

Pete had wrested a long piece of driftwood away from Dillon. It had a rusty nail in one end. It looked very sinister.

"Look, Hildy, I bet this was part of a ship. I bet it came out of a wreck and the people all got drowned. Did you ever find a body washed up here? They bloat something awful when they've been drowned a long time and sometimes fishes eat off their hands. I wish we'd find a body without any hands!"

He swung the board, slicing the air. Regina said, "Give me that!" with greater harshness than either Hildreth or Pete had ever heard her use. So she was weak and human after all, was she, with nerves that could be rasped? Hildreth felt kindlier toward her for that, but to Pete it was a challenge. He said pugnaciously, "It's mine! I found it!"

"I'll keep it for you," she said and held out her hand. He hesitated. She had superior force at close quarters. He could outrun her any time, but not weighted down by the board. He said, "Oh, hell! I don't want the damn' thing!" and threw it down and bolted.

HILDRETH said, "They're exhausting children. But you know how to get on with them. Have you worked with children long?"

"Nearly forty years. I had brothers and sisters to mind."

"I wish I'd had brothers and sisters," said Hildreth. "It's hard to be an only child, especially when you're a disappointment to your mother. I'd do almost anything to please her, but I can't change my nature. She'd like me to be the way she was at my age, awfully popular and gay. But I can't. I don't want to be."

Laura's voice, a little breathless, called: "Regina! Oh, Regina!"

She dropped down between them on the sand.

"Regina, don't tell the boys yet but I'm going to send them to boarding school, all except Fergus, so will you stay into September and get them ready? Oh, please. I promise not to try to keep you after that. You can go away then and stay as long as you like! And Hildy, you can go to college if that's what you want, because I'm going to spend the winter here and I'll make your mother stay with me. You'll like that, won't you?"

The older boys were far up the beach. Fergus was digging wells.

"Mummy, see, I dug a well, I dug ten wells, a hundred wells, they've all got water in them, see!"

He began a triumphal dance around and about and over his wells till his feet caved in the sand and he sat down hard. He said soberly, "Mummy, I swallowed my gum. Will it stick up my stomach?"

("It's the end of everything," Regina thought. "Boarding school. That settles it. I'm through.")

She hadn't known how desperately she had hoped until now there was nothing to hope for any more.

Hildreth thought: "It's the beginning of everything! If this can happen to me, if a miracle can happen, then something may come right for Geoff!"

She said, "I must see if Mother needs me. The party will be over pretty soon."

She galloped up the road toward Geoffrey's house.

The porch door banged behind her. He was standing at the stove, stirring something in a big iron pot.

"Oh, Geoff! I'm going to be free! I'm going to have a life, after all!"

In all the years he had known her, he had never seen her like this, radiant. The anxiety was smoothed out of her forehead, the habitual scowl wiped away. Her eyes and cheeks were brilliant, her mouth eager and lovely with happiness.

HE could have said, "Yes, I know. I knew before you did. She told me. She asked my advice."

But he didn't. If Laura hadn't told about her visit, then let it be their secret, hers and his. It would spoil it to tell about it. And it would spoil Hildreth's triumph in telling to say that he already knew. He asked, "What's all this?" and let her spill it out, sputtering with excitement.

"Oh, Geoff! If only you could get away, too, this fall! Both of us, starting a real life after all this stagnation! If only you had taken on the boys and had money to start on in September!"

He went on stirring. She snatched the spoon out of his hand and threw it down.

"Oh, stop that and listen to me! Geoff, you can get away from here in September! You can go with us! We'll be taking both cars. Laura will have to outfit the boys for school and I'll be buying clothes for college and getting Mother's winter things out of moth-balls and packing them for her to bring back. You can stay at our apartment, and after we've gone you can go on sleeping there. You can cook your meals there. Even if it takes you months to find a real job, the sort of job you're fitted for, you won't get discouraged if you're sure of a decent clean place to come back to at night, and proper food. You won't need money for anything but food and new clothes. You'll have to keep well dressed, applying for your sort of job. And I'll lend you the money. I have some Granny left me. I don't need it. Take it! People borrow from friends when the friends have any faith and any money. Geoff, let me stake you. I'd be so proud!"

The attack set him back on his heels.

"But I can't take money from you, Hildreth."

"You can, you can! Don't be pigheaded! Almost every business undertaking is started on borrowed funds! You can pay me back after you've got your job!"

"But I may never get a job. I've no security to give you."

"You'll be my security!" she said.

It didn't sound strange to her, or even to him. But it was strange, wasn't it? "You'll be my security." A strange impulsive thing for a girl to say to a man she believed in, but who didn't love her, and whom she didn't love.

But he couldn't leave here now. He didn't want to. Laura was going to be here. He would see her every day.

"Don't jump down my throat," he said irritably. He was confused, and excited, and pulled two ways at once. "I've told you before not to try to manage me. I'm not sure I want to go away from here."

Yet even with Laura here, within reach, what would he have? She wasn't within reach. She never would be. Why should any woman want his love? What had he to offer? Not marriage. Not security. (I love you but I can't take care of you!)

Hildreth's face was white. The tiny freckles stood out on it like scars.

"You're a coward! You're a defeatist! You're afraid to go back and try again! You'd rather stay here till you rot!"

Her outburst struck him like a vicious slap across the mouth. His own temper flared up. He said, "All right. If that's what you choose to think."

She screamed, "I'm through with you! I've wasted enough of my strength worrying over you! I don't care what you do! I never want to see you again!"

"Suits me," he said.

She ran all the way home, stumbling, the dust rising in powdery clouds that strangled and blinded her. Her mother was in the kitchen, washing up after the party, and Laura sat on a stool, watching her. Hildreth crept into her bedroom and locked the door, but the voices came in through the thin wall.

"But Laura, I don't want her to go to college. I'd adore having you with me for a whole winter, but I don't want Hildy getting a taste for higher education, I'm afraid she'd like it too much, she might get like Alec, she might even turn into a female professor or something ghastly and never marry at all."

"Oh, rubbish," said Laura. "Send her to a co-ed institution. There's no better place to find a husband, didn't you know? She may learn to like men even better than she likes books. It has happened. I know a woman who even got a doctor's degree, and now she's married and has more children than I have; five; and she dresses well and gives marvelous parties."

"Then what was the use of her getting a doctor's degree?" asked Madeleine.

Face down on her bed, Hildreth beat her fists against the pillow.

Mrs. Estes' prize-winning novel continues in the forthcoming chapters to reveal those fine qualities of humanity, humor and sympathetic understanding which have gained for it so many friends.

A PROPER YOUNG LADY—AND ANOTHER

(Continued from page 28)

freed her hand then, and began to fumble in his pocket.

"I've brought you a little present," he said. "It isn't much, but anyhow I think it's pretty."

He brought out a small white box. It bore an impressive imprint. When she saw the name, Felicity caught her breath, Rusty noticed and said: "I didn't rightly buy it there. I had 'em make it out of something I already had."

He handed it to her, and after looking at the box for a second, she opened the cover. Then she gasped. Staring up at her was the tiny face of a Texas longhorn steer. Its golden horns stretched out a full four inches on each side, and had tourmalines set in their tips. Its golden face had tourmalines set in it for eyes, and tourmaline chips for nostrils, and a tiny reddish tourmaline for a tongue. It was a pin. It was also beyond question the most gosh-awful piece of jewelry that a famous house had ever been bulldozed into making on order. For years the artificer who made it would wake up screaming in the night as it haunted him. Felicity Carpandon thought it was beautiful. For a full half-minute she stared at it, lips parted, eyes wide, then she recognized it.

"Oh, Rusty! Your beautiful, beautiful gold waistcoat buttons!" Touched tears of love and sentiment and sadness rushed down her cheeks. Murmuring in a choked little voice, "I'll wear it always!" she flung herself on the broad haven of his chest. His own eyes misty, he folded her in his arms.

The pin dropped unnoticed, to lie on the soft carpet, staring balefully out of its tourmaline eyes at Kenneth Carpandon, who had come in the front door just as Felicity had said, "I'll wear it always," and had hurried into the drawing-room in mortal fear of seeing a diamond ring.

His eye caught the glitter of the huge golden horns. He winced and took a step backward, saw the two on the sofa, Felicity crying unrestrainedly, Rusty trying to comfort her as he might soothe a day-old calf caught in a wire fence. He stiffened in sudden father-anger. Then as suddenly as it had come, the anger passed, and the scene seemed to him infinitely pathetic, and made him unaccountably sad. He wondered vaguely if young love that was doomed to frustration always did that to men who were too old ever to know again the sweet nostalgic heartache of it. He thought he ought to cough loudly, then do the stern father. Instead he tiptoed from the room, feeling he'd had no business walking unannounced into his own drawing-room. In the safety of his study he let out the breath he'd been holding.

"Damn it!" he said. "Why is it that guy always makes me feel *I'm* wrong! Tiptoein' around my own house!" Then he smiled. "I suppose," he said, "that gloomy animal must be some sort of fraternity pin." He paced the floor a few times. "Ought to go back there. I mean —that sort of thing in the *afternoon!*" He paced again. Then he shrugged. "Oh, well," he said, "what the hell! This is the end of it. He's given her his pin; now he's going away. It's always the beginning of the end when people give people pins—makes it so boringly prosaic. She'll feel bad for a week or two. He'll meet some pretty circus-rider or something. This is the end of it."

Chapter Three

RUSTY flew back to Arizona. With him flew tousled, jumbled memories. High in the night skies among the stars that he had told Felicity would make him

see her eyes again, she was close to him. The taste of her lips and the scent of her hair were still recognizable sensations. His heart was full of tears. He tried to pretend that the parting was only for a little while, that he would hit gold the first time out, and so be able to go back to her; but he had worked too many streams, burrowed deep into too many iron mountains not to have learned that gold only happens to a man once in a lifetime, and to most men never. He sat through the night hunched in his seat, tortured by the dull roar of the motors that were carrying him away from her.

But when day came and the sun raced up behind them and threw long shafts of red, then white, light over the snow-laden peaks of the Great Divide, and the plane began its long glide down the western slope, memories of the East and of the things that had happened to him there began to lose reality. The mountain ranges do that. Once passed over, they grow in size until in one's mind they become a solid wall reaching up to heaven dividing the East and the West. Even airplanes can't quite dispel the feeling, so by the time the sun had passed them and the glide had turned into a descent, and Sagamon City, glaring white, limned with green from the irrigated lands around it and flashes of silver from the irrigation canals and ditches, loomed ahead, Rusty's memories had become intangible thoughts. This was real—the endless desert, the mountains. Felicity was only a dream.

The plane touched earth, rumbled to a stop. Rusty stepped from it, and like all Arizonians setting foot on the native heath after a journey, looked up at the blue sky and breathed in until his lungs were crowded with clear air. Then having performed this ritual, he went to the Administration Building and called a doctor he knew at the Sagamon City hospital. The doctor told him his sister had gone home that morning with a girl named Helena Bentlon, who'd been riding the winter-resort exhibition circuit with her, and who had a little house out in Sagamon Valley. Rusty thanked him and took a bus to the garage where he had stored his ancient coupé.

The coupé was the nearest thing to a permanent home Rusty had. It had a huge luggage compartment, and a one-horse trailer hooked on behind. Both of these were filled with mining equipment. In addition to this they held blankets, the makings of a tent, two Dutch ovens, two lariats, a worn stock-saddle and a bridle.

TELLING the garage-man to hold his trunk when it came, he filled the tank with gas and set out on the twelve-mile run to the Valley. Half an hour later he turned off a concrete road onto a desert road that nobody except a native would have called a road at all. It actually was only a set of wheel-marks worn into the gravelly sand. Two or three miles away in the shadow of a mountain, surrounded by the amazingly green trees that spell water in a dry land, he could see a low white stucco house. As he felt the waves of the desert rolling under him, he became almost happy again in the melancholy manner of cowboys. He began to sing softly, "The Cowboy's Lament," as gloomy a number as a happy man could ask for.

HOW DO YOU RATE AS A "Lovely" Menace?

What every woman yearns to be! A lovely female menace! . . . an exciting threat to the most determined bachelor . . . and bad news to every other girl at the party. Do you qualify? Don't bother to search your wishful soul for the answer—here's a little chart that Tells All!

CHECK UP ON YOUR APPEAL!

	(Mark "yes" or "no" to these 8 questions—then learn your score from the answers on the opposite page.)	YES	NO
1	Do busy young men hold open the doors in public buildings for you?		
2	When you buy a new hat, does the salesgirl assure you that it looks "youthful"?		
3	Do you ever have to be introduced to the same man twice?		
4	Do your "blind dates" say you're a knockout at the beginning of the date, but forget your name before the evening's out?		
5	Are you versatile? Can you play a hard game of tennis with Tom in the afternoon and be Dick's glamorous dancing partner in the evening?		
6	Does forgetting your powder compact on an important date throw you into a panic?		
7	Do you ever go to bed with stale make-up on?		
8	Do men ever tell you that you remind them of their favorite flower?		

SEE OPPOSITE PAGE FOR *Good Fair or Terrible* NEWS

As Rusty neared the house, he saw that it was very neat and very small, so small that if it hadn't been for its neatness and its stucco, it wouldn't have been called a house at all but a shack. Behind it was a windmill and a big water-tank, and on the mountain side of the house there was a corral where four cow ponies were wandering in pleasant aimlessness. He grinned as he recognized two of them: His sister's rope-horse and the one she used for cowgirl's trick-riding contests.

"Cozy!" he said.

Then he saw Helena Bentlon. She was sitting on the door-step smoking a cigarette.

"And how!" said Rusty.

Helena was wearing whipcord jodhpurs and a flaming yellow silk shirt. The shirt was short-sleeved and open at the throat, and it set off her tan and olive skin. Jet-black hair that the setting sun shot with false bronze lights hung in waves to her shoulders. She had big black eyes and a wide soft mouth. As Rusty's tumble-down coupé rolled to a stop, she waved and smiled. The smile, bright with gleaming white teeth, lighted her whole face.

"Sis has good taste," said Rusty.

Helena Bentlon stood up. Standing, she was even more breath-taking, for there was a great deal of Helena Bentlon. She stood five feet eight in her stocking feet, and weighed a hundred and forty pounds. She filled the yellow silk shirt and the jodhpurs the way the Hollywood tailor who made them had dreamed they might be filled. Muscles rippled under the silk. There wasn't a gram of fat on her. Fat, and working with horses ten hours a day, don't get along together. Rusty, in spite of the fact that he no longer possessed a heart, was impressed. He climbed out of the car and walked toward her.

"Howdy," he said. "I'm Sis' brother."

They shook hands.

"I'm Helena Bentlon. I'm glad you got here."

RUSTY glanced at her sharply. He'd expected from her looks that she'd talk half Mex. She didn't. Her voice was low and husky and south-of-the-border, but her accent was straight American.

"How's it happen," said Rusty, "that I don't know you? I thought I knew everybody in Arizona, not countin' Injuns."

"I'm from Los Angeles," said Helena. "And I'm a hoss-wrangler, because in spite of my beauty, the movies weren't big enough for me."

"I was thinking," said Rusty, "that you looked like you might be in pictures."

She drew herself up to her full height, expanded her magnificent chest, stretched out her arms and then bent them, tightening her muscles so they bulged.

"I told you," she said. "I'm too big." She laughed. "They tested me once. I took up too much of the screen."

"Then they ought to make the screens bigger."

"Thanks, cowboy," she said. "Well, let's get your gear in the house. I'm just about to cook supper."

He lifted his suitcase out of the coupé.

"Sis is coming along swell," she said. "I brought her home because folks get well quicker out here." She gestured across the valley. Its floor had a faint

green carpet of fuzz born of recent rain, the mountains around it were pink in the sunset; it was very beautiful and soothing and full of the deep peace of eternity. It had been there, just like that, *for* eternity.

But for the first time, with all the beauty, it looked empty. Rusty sighed; he knew this seeming emptiness was because of Felicity.

"Come on, cowboy!" He snapped out of his trance. "Sis is waiting."

Chapter Four

WHILE Rusty and his sister talked, Helena cooked. She sang as she cooked, and made a great noise with pans and pots to show that she wasn't listening to the conversation that drifted out through the thin living-room door, where Sis Milforth lay in a trick hospital bed. A shrewd psychologist might have noticed that the banging of the pans occurred only during the pauses, which was an excellent indication that Helena wasn't missing a word.

Sis was a small replica of her brother: sandy-haired, blue-eyed, wiry and attractive. By dint of industrious dermatology she had kept her skin from getting leathery like his, and had maintained more or less of a peaches-and-cream complexion. Rodeo work is almost as tough for unattractive girls as chorus work. Unlike Rusty, Sis had quick emotions. Sunshine and rain chased each other in her thoughts; happiness and woe, love and anger followed one after another in rapid succession. Right now she was thoroughly angry at herself for breaking her leg, happy to have Rusty home, sad that her accident had forced him to leave his mineralogy course, and wildly curious about high life in Boston.

Unfortunately for Rusty, he was a little naïve in his telling of it. He hadn't talked for five minutes before Sis had discovered that in her big brother's mind, Boston possessed only a single street, and that the entire population of the city consisted of the Carpandon family and Doc Paley. He spoke so lightly of Felicity, but so often, that Sis couldn't help catching on. When he had ended, she floored him. Absent-mindedly raising and lowering her leg with the pulley-ropes and looking away, she said: "Rusty-Gulch, you're just a plain jackass to go fall in love with a girl like that."

Rusty manufactured a laugh.

"In love! Sis, you're crazy! Whoever said anything about my bein' in love!"

Sis turned her blue eyes on him.

"You did," she said. "Didn't you know?"

Rusty saw there wasn't any use pretending. For a long second or two the Milforths' two pairs of blue eyes locked. Then Rusty looked down.

"Sis, she *is* an angel," he said.

Sis sighed, audibly. In the kitchen a pan clattered noisily on the floor. It sounded a little as though it might have been flung there. Then the door opened, and Helena stuck her head in and said: "Wash up for supper, cowboy. It's ready when you are."

She withdrew her head. Rusty patted his sister's hand.

"Don't worry, kid," he said. "I'll likely get over it."

"We hope," said Sis. "Go 'long wash up now, and comb your hair pretty for Helena."

Rusty combed his hair very pretty indeed. Since becoming at least technically a Harvard man, he had attained in everything except his voice and gestures an actual polish. Then he and Helena had supper at the kitchen table, and Sis ate off a tray—but they wheeled her bed up to the door so the three of them were really together.

They had a fine talk. All about horses and rodeo gossip and the water-level in the big lake that fed the irrigation ditches. Helena tried to pump Rusty about Boston, but failed. At nine, way behind on sleep from his night on the plane, and feeling full of steak and comfort and the warmth that comes of good companionship, Rusty went off to bed. It took him a little time to get to sleep, however. Helena had moved into the living-room with Sis, and had given him her bedroom, which was, for all Helena's size, acutely feminine, and it made Rusty nervous.

At twelve, the sound of voices by the back door awakened him. Rusty propped himself on an elbow and listened intently, his senses sharpened by the natural feeling of alarm that comes with any disturbance in the still watches. A second later Helena passed by his open door.

"Anything wrong?"

She stopped and stood in the doorway. The moon was up, and its light reflected from the desert filled the room.

"Oh, hello. You awake?" she said. "Sure. Wire from the boss tying the can to me till May."

"Gosh, that's tough. If you're flat, I'll be glad to help out."

HELENA came into the room. Rusty saw that the flaming yellow silk shirt and jodhpurs had given way to pale yellow flannelette pajamas. In the reflected moonlight, with her loose black hair and the light-colored pajamas, she looked like a beautiful healthy ghost. The dim light, too, kept her from looking out of proportion to the room.

A motorcycle sputtered into life, roared, died to an echo as the messenger went his way. Helena, totally unconscious of her loveliness and of the signally disturbing effect it might have on a man who wasn't used to having it around, drifted over to the bed and sat down on the foot of it. Then she put her elbows on her knees and her chin on her hands and stared out the window.

"Thanks just the same, Rusty—I've got some stuck away myself. Being fired just makes me sore. Besides, I hate sitting around."

Rusty, also looking out of the window, said: "If I get that locater built, you can go prospectin' round here with me. Takes two to run it."

She turned; even in the half darkness, he could tell her face lighted up.

"Say!" she said. "That would be something. Do you mean it?"

He grinned at her.

"Sure do!" Then he realized that whereas on the trail he wouldn't have thought anything of a girl being in his tent, indoors it was different somehow.

"Doggone it!" he said. "Will you get the hell out of my bedroom?"

For a second Helena was embarrassed. Her lack of self-consciousness was utterly genuine. Then she turned her lovely black eyes on him.

She laughed suddenly, and rose.

"I really didn't realize where I was," she said. "After all, I'm sort of used to wandering in here. And it isn't your bedroom; it's mine. Besides—" She paused, looked down at him and giggled. "Besides, I forgot." Again she paused in laughter. "Forgot you were a tenderfoot."

His visible discomfiture rewarded her. Suddenly she leaned over and patted him gently on the cheek.

"Good night, Harvard."

Chapter Five

OF a March morning so warm and sunshiny and pleasant that anywhere else it would have been mistaken for midsummer instead of the tag end of winter, Felicity Carpandon and her father rode onto the trail that led from a new "luxury" hotel to the desert. The hotel, with its emerald-green lawns and its sky-blue swimming-pool looked quite unbelievable in that country. So did Felicity and her father. Instead of the customary exaggerated Western clothes most people who stopped at the hotel leaped into the moment they arrived, these two wore linen riding-things that would have looked outstandingly well-tailored even at Meadow Brook. Against the heat of the sun Felicity wore a white panama. Her father, as though to prove he was only a stuffed shirt up to where his brains began, sported a hideous plaited-straw one-dollar sun helmet.

Presently, after winding past white stuccoed outbuildings and gardens, the trail stopped. The Carpandons reined their horses. Neither of them had ever been in this part of the world before. The rolling dunes, colored now by millions of spring-wild flowers, breaking here and there against the spiked mountains, looked different than they had from the train. They felt different. It was the difference people accustomed to ocean liners feel when for the first time they go to sea in a small boat. The Bostonians caught their breaths. Then Felicity spoke in a small voice.

"Daddy, it's so beautiful and frightening!"

Her father smiled at her.

"Yes," he said. "It's beautiful—and it frightens me; but not for the same reason it frightens you."

The desert frightened Felicity because its sandy flower-speckled undulating bosom seemed to hold more wildly romantic possibilities than she had ever imagined. It frightened her father because this same undulating bosom held Wayne Rusty-Gulch de Vere Milforth and because he too sniffed in the air the romantic possibilities, and because he sensed that he was making another fatal mistake. He had thought seeing Rusty against a hot, drab, uncomfortable, third-rate cowboy moving-picture atmosphere might effect a cure for Felicity's heart that absence had failed to do. It had never occurred to him that the desert was romantic.

They kicked their horses into a trot then, and headed toward one of the spiked mountains. They had been told Sagamon Valley lay just the other side of it. Almost immediately civilization slipped away from them, the only trace of it being the occasional rusty tin cans and whisky-bottles, with glass purpled by the sun, that inevitably mark the places where men have passed. As they rode, and dust rose in gray spirals from the horses' feet and settled first on their shining boots and then their clean linen clothes, Carpandon began to feel acutely homesick. But Felicity was loving it, and her heart was singing in her and making her eyes shine. She was seeing again the picture she'd dreamed the night of her coming-out party, of herself on a white horse standing among the mountain-tops with her lover, also on a white horse. The dream was coming true. Of course the horse she was riding was brownish, and Rusty probably wouldn't have a horse at all, but that didn't matter. Her dream was coming true. In a little while now she would see him. It was almost too much to bear.

From the moment she had given him her heart, Felicity had never wavered in her love. She had written him regularly once each week. Like the great-grandmother she so resembled, she felt that to write more often would be unmaidenly. To have written less often, would have been impossible.

Rusty had answered, now and then, with letters, crumpled now from being slept on, that were as unlike him as black from white. They were as carefully written as a senior's graduation thesis in the too-perfect English of a man who knows his conversational grammar is appallingly loose-jointed. They told her he was living with his sister and a friend, and through all the letters the friend remained sexless. They didn't say anything about love, but Felicity knew that if love hadn't been in his heart, no man would have gone through the agony that writing letters obviously meant for him. Just before she left Boston, he'd almost broken his reserve. In a letter not as neat or as careful as the others, he had said the locater was finished, and as his sister was well enough now to get around on crutches, he and his sister's friend were going to do some half-serious prospecting in the neighborhood of Sagamon City. He had ended it with:

"In the unlikely event of success meeting my efforts, you will see that I have not forgotten the red coach and six horses with gold inlaid harness. I will buy them for you and lay them as a humble offering at your feet."

AFTER an hour of alternately trotting and walking, the spiked mountain which had given the illusion of remaining stationary on the horizon, no matter how long they rode toward it, loomed close. A narrow trail zigzagged up it for a few hundred feet and then disappeared in a pass. The Carpandons rode up the trail, their horses, wise in their work, putting each foot down carefully on sure ground between the rocks strewn about. Then the trail swerved, and they were in the pass which wound around the higher crags of the mountain. Presently the horses went sharply downhill, and a moment

later came out into the open and the valley stretched green-tinged and lovely beneath them. Once more they reined in, stopped and stared at the scenery, drinking in the loneliness and silence. After perhaps a minute the silence was broken by the dull rumble of a blast. It came from close by, to their right.

They turned, and saw a little way off the trail a dilapidated coupé. Attached to it was an equally dilapidated trailer. It looked grotesque there amongst the primal rocks, startling. But it didn't look half as startling as the dark-haired girl who was standing beside it, winding a long line of rubber wire onto a reel. She wore tan jodhpurs, and at first appeared to be naked from the waist up, because the yellow bandana she had tied around her chest wasn't visible at the back from a little distance. She turned the reel with quick nervous movements of her hands. It was obvious that she was intent and excited. She kept staring at the dark opening of a hole some five feet in circumference that slanted down into the mountain. Particles of dust were drifting like smoke out of the hole.

"I say," said Carpandon. "What is she? An Indian?"

"Daddy! But how exciting! Let's ride over and talk to her."

He laughed, and kicked his horse forward.

"We must be careful not to get scalped," he said.

"When we get close," said Felicity, riding after him, "hold up your hand and say, 'How.'"

They rode across the shale toward the parked coupé. It became obvious that the hole in the mountain was man-made, a prospector's hole. The girl continued to watch it. They rode a little nearer and saw there was a sign, white with black letters, fastened to the rock above the mine entrance. The letters on the sign, printed raggedly with a wobbling paint-brush, were something of a shock:

THE FELICITY MINE
W. R. de V. Milforth, Prop.

Felicity, reading, almost swooned. Emotions racked her. Seeing her name spelled out in the wilderness fascinated her. The idea of Rusty naming a mine after her was deliriously romantic. But it was such a shabby-looking sign and that hole in the ground didn't look like a mine; it looked like any old hole in the ground. The idea of somebody naming a hole in the ground after you was, somehow, disillusioning. She was so busy thinking about this that for a second or two she didn't connect the dark-haired girl with Rusty at all.

Then suddenly he came running out of the mine. Dust and sweat were matted in his hair, and on his faded dungarees. His bare bronze torso was gray with dust and streaked with sweat. His eyes were wild as a jaguar's.

"Helena!" he shouted. "We've hit it! That doggone ol' locater was right! There's a vein of gold! We've done it!"

"Oh, Rusty!"

It was almost a prayer, the way Helena said it. She dropped the wire, and as he reached her, their arms went around each other in a giant bear-hug. Then Rusty did a strange thing. He dropped to the ground and sat staring at the mine, and sobbed; and unchecked tears ran rivers through the dirt on his face. Gold hits people in funny ways. It hit him like that. Rusty was thirty. He'd spent over half his life dreaming of this moment. When it came, it was too much for him. Helena understood. She dropped to her knees and began talking to him as though he were a baby, patting his back, smoothing the matted hair from his forehead.

Kenneth Carpandon, sitting his horse like a statue, understood too a little of what was going on in Rusty's soul. It made him feel catchy in the throat. He didn't quite understand about that girl. Her being there didn't gee with Milforth's naming the mine after his daughter.

Felicity, on the other hand, didn't understand at all. Right now, Felicity only understood that Rusty bore no faint resemblance to the lover she had carried in her heart; that he looked dirty and awful, and had kissed that awful half-naked Indian woman, and that she wanted above everything else in the world to get back to the luxury of the hotel.

She turned, pressed her heels into her horse's flanks, and cantered back to the trail. Her father followed her. For the first time Helena noticed the sound of hoofs.

"Rusty!" she said. "Haul yourself together—there're people around!"

Rusty, emotionally empty, half-turned his head, and was vaguely aware of the figure of a girl in a white-linen habit riding toward the pass, and of a man following her.

AT the hotel, Felicity, after the manner of her great-grandmother, went into retreat. She locked herself in her room: "To sit down and think the whole thing out." All the rest of that day and through dinner she stayed there, sometimes pacing the floor, but mostly sitting in a chair drawn up to the window staring at the desert and the gray spiky mountains in the distance, and hating them. Three times her father softly knocked on the door and spoke to her, only to be told in a calm, tearless, surprisingly grown-up voice that she was all right, and just wanted to be by herself.

During the afternoon, Carpandon did a little detective work. Among other things, he learned at the local assayer's office that Rusty's claim to the Felicity Mine was valid. He learned that Rusty and his partner, H. Bentlon, who owned a third of it, were worth, as a result of their morning's work, an amount of money that seemed to his business standards incredible. He asked what people did when they struck gold, and was told they most generally got drunk. Pressing further, he learned that they usually sold their mine to one of the big corporations for a small fortune in cash and royalty payments. That sounded fine. The partner, H. Bentlon, didn't sound so fine. He had an idea he'd seen H. Bentlon, and that she was almost dangerously beautiful.

Around nine that evening Felicity's thinking was over. She got up from her chair, went to the bathroom and washed her face, and then carefully made it up. She used much more make-up than she did in Boston. She slipped on a wool dress, a felt hat and a topcoat; then she walked down the hall to her father's room. He was still at dinner, as she had hoped he would be. She hurried to his dresser and began searching through the drawers, and presently she found what she wanted. It was a revolver, a tiny silver and mother-of-pearl affair. With trembling fingers, and not even investigating to see if it was loaded, which wouldn't have mattered since no one she was likely to meet would have been afraid of it either way, she slipped it in her pocket and went out the door. The female Carpandons of Boston had, since Revolutionary days, been scrappers.

At the desk in the lobby she hired a car. She knew Helena Bentlon's address from Rusty's letter, though she didn't know her name. She told the driver to go there.

The moon had risen, and grief had risen with it, and hope had sunk. It was so very beautiful here. She would have wanted to stay here forever if Rusty had been with her. She'd dreamed so many nights of a place that looked just like this—of being there by his side. It was with an effort she stayed her tears when a few minutes later the car rolled to a stop in front of the white stucco house with the windmill and the corral. Lights shone from the front windows. It looked so cozy it made Felicity want to weep with anger.

She climbed out of the car and stood for a second looking around her at the desert. Presently she took a deep breath, and clutched the gun in her pocket with her right hand. Then she walked across the gravel to the front door and knocked on it. Her heart, which always did an unusual amount of skittering around, pounded. Too late she realized that beyond coming there, she had no plan of campaign at all. In her panic she let go of the gun and turned to flee. Then Helena opened the door, took a step back in surprise at seeing a smartly dressed girl standing on the threshold and said: "Won't you come inside?"

Helena had on extremely well-made lounging pajamas; and her black hair, held back with a yellow ribbon, was neatly brushed. She didn't look the least little bit like a half-naked Indian woman, so Felicity was inside the house before she recognized her. When she did, she was completely flustered. It is one thing to start off into the night with the idea of telling a half-caste squaw to lay off your fiancé, and if necessary enforcing the point with a pistol. It is something else again when the squaw turns out to be a nicely dressed girl not much older than yourself, who stands smiling down at you out of amiable black eyes.

Felicity blushed crimson. Then she said: "I—I came to see Rusty Milforth. Is he here?"

Helena's smile broadened.

"Have you come a very long way to see him?" she said.

Felicity nodded. At the same time she saw another girl, who looked like Rusty, sitting in an armchair. Her right leg was in a plaster cast; crutches lay on the floor beside her. Felicity sensed that they knew who she was. Somehow it made her even more uncomfortable.

Then Helena laughed. "I'm sure glad you got here!" she said.

"You're *what?*"

To her amazement Helena reached out and patted her shoulder.

"Sister," said Helena, "if you'd ever nursed a moon-struck calf, you'd know what I mean." She laughed again. "Hell's delight!" she went on. "I *might* have fallen for that dude-wrangler once, but not after I got to know him. No sir."

"He's been a mess," said Sis Milforth. "I've been scared he'd blow himself up while he was daydreamin' and dynamitin' at the same time."

Felicity wasn't normally slow, but Helena's soft answer was not only turning away wrath; it was bewildering. She looked from one girl to the other.

"Why, what's the matter with him?" she said.

"You," said Helena.

"It's why we're glad you've come," said Sis.

THERE was a silence while the full significance of this sank in. Outside, one of the horses whickered. Then the sound of a car sliding to a stop drifted in through the open windows. Felicity didn't hear either of these things; she was too deeply moved, and she was thoroughly ashamed of the things she'd been thinking about Rusty, about this girl. She felt suddenly small. The next second she stopped feeling anything, because Rusty had swept into the room, and in one gesture had swept her into his arms and was holding her close. He didn't kiss her; he just held her as though she were too precious for anything else. Presently over her shoulder, he said: "Sis—Helena, does she know? Did you tell her? About the mine?"

The girls shook their heads. Felicity pushed him a few inches away and looked into his eyes.

"I know about it," she said. "You see, I—I just happened to be riding by when you—exploded it."

"Felicity!" Rusty's eyes were agonized. Hours of being with her had been withheld from him! "But why didn't you stop?"

Felicity took another deep breath of determination. She was going to say why. These people were square-shooters; she wanted to be like them; but before she could answer, Rusty, blushing to the roots of his hair, snapped his fingers and said: "Golly! 'Course you didn't stop!" He looked at his sister. "Why, I didn't have any shirt on, or anything. She couldn't have stopped!"

There was another silence. By means of that strange female grapevine telegraph system, Sis and Helena knew then the reason Felicity had ridden on, and Felicity knew they knew. She looked at them both, started to speak. Helena said: "Skip it, kid, it's O.K." And Felicity smiled at her.

Rusty had the odd feeling that something had almost gone wrong, hideously wrong. Then the feeling passed, and a sensation of warmth and friendliness came over him. His face twisted, and he looked as though he were going to collapse again the way he had that morning after the gold strike. Rusty had fought his way in the world against odds for so long that he was allergic to happiness; and Felicity, looking love at him, was at that moment giving him more happiness than he had thought the world contained.

A FEW EPISODES FROM "LIFE WITH FATHER"

(Continued from page 49)

to keep Father pleased somehow; and if it was too difficult she didn't always care about even that.

At table it was Father who carved the fowl, or sliced the roast lamb or beef. I liked to watch him whet the knife and go at it. He had such a fine, easy hand. To a hungry boy, he seemed over-deliberate and exact in his strokes, yet in a moment or two he had done. And usually the cooking had been as superb as the carving. Sometimes it was so perfect that Father's face would crinkle with pleasure, and with a wink at us he'd summon Margaret with his usual three measured thumps. She would appear, clutching her skirts with both hands, and looking worried.

"What's wanting?" she'd ask.

"Margaret," Father would tell her affectionately, "that fricasseed chicken is *good.*"

Margaret would turn her wrinkled face aside, and look down, and push the flat of her hand out toward Father. It was the same gesture she used when she said "Get along with you!" to flatterers. She couldn't say that to Father, but she would beam at him, and turn and go out, and stump back down the dark little stairs without ever a word.

ONCE in a while, when the household bills were getting too high, a platter with three tiny French chops on it would be placed before Father, and a larger dish full of cold corned beef or of Irish stew before Mother. At this sight we boys would stop talking and become round-eyed and still.

Father would look over at Mother's dish to see if it seemed appetizing, for he often said there was nothing better than one of Margaret's stews. The stew usually seemed possible enough to him, yet not quite what he wanted. He would then ask Mother if she'd have a chop.

Mother always said, "No."

"They look nice and juicy," Father would urge her, but she would say again she didn't want any, and turn her eyes away from the platter.

Father would then look around at the rest of us, doubtfully. He had four sons, all with appetites. He would clear his throat as though getting ready to offer a chop to each boy in turn; but he usually compromised by saying, "Will anyone else have a chop?"

"No, Clare," Mother would quickly and impatiently reply, "they're for you. The rest of us are going to have stew tonight." And she'd smile brightly but a little watchfully around at us boys, to be sure we were making no fuss about it, while she hurried to get the thing settled.

We boys would then earnestly watch Father while he ate the three chops.

Not that we didn't like Margaret's stew, which was the best in the world, but we regarded dinner as a special occasion, and we often had stew for lunch.

If some of us had taken up Father's offer, and left him with only one chop or none, I suppose that he would have asked

Mother, "Where are the rest of the chops?" and been very cross about it when she told him there weren't any more. But his offer of them to us was sincere, though it cost him a struggle. He wanted plenty of food bought for everyone. His instincts were generous. Only, it made him cross if he suffered for those generous instincts.

Long after Margaret died, Father was speaking one night of how good her things always had tasted.

"I wish she could hear you," said Mother. She smiled tenderly at the thought of that gallant and dear little figure. "If anybody ever was sure of going to Heaven," she added, "I know it was Margaret."

This struck Father as a recommendation of the place. He took a sip of cognac and said casually, "I'll look her up when I get there. I'll have her take care of me."

Mother started to say something but checked herself.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Well, Clare dear," said Mother, "Margaret must be in some special part of Heaven, she was so good. You'd be very fortunate, Clare, to get to the same part as Margaret."

"Hah!" Father said, suddenly scowling. "I'll make a devil of a row if I don't!"

The stories which form "Life with Father" originally appeared in The New Yorker. *Describing the way they were written by the late Clarence Day, Harold Ross, the editor of* The New Yorker *says: "Day wrote them one after another, with no attempt at continuity, except such as was inherent in them. I doubt if we ran them in the order he wrote them, although he certainly had in mind book publication from the start. I'm glad that* Redbook *is reprinting some of the pieces. I think a wonderful selection could be made."*

WHITEOAK HERITAGE

(Continued from page 60)

The spaniel entered with an air of assurance. Silence fell in the room. Then Mrs. Stroude said:

"I'm trying to see a resemblance between any of you brothers. I can't find it. It's extraordinary that no two should be alike."

Renny answered with vivacity:

"Well, it's not so extraordinary. I'm the spit of my grandmother, as they say. Eden looks like his mother. Piers resembles our father. Meg is like him too. Wakefield is very like a picture of Uncle Nick at that age. Finch is just himself."

"He looks as though he might be musical." She did not dare quote Eden.

"That's clever of you, to see that," answered Renny. "There's quite a lot of musical talent in my family. My sister can sing and both my uncles play the piano. Uncle Ernest has taught this fellow to play 'The Blue Danube.' Play 'The Blue Danube' for Mrs. Stroude, Finch. —Would you like to hear him?"

"I'd love to." She smiled encouragingly at the little boy.

Color suffused his face. He began to tremble. "I can't," he muttered.

Mrs. Stroude leaned toward him, her eyes compelling. "Just to please me!"

"Go on, Finch," said Pheasant, poking him with her elbow.

He shook his head, staring at his hands.

Renny stretched out a long arm and drew Finch to him. "Play it, and I'll give you a quarter," he whispered.

Finch tried to draw away; his breath came quickly. "I can't," he repeated.

"Play it, or you'll get a good hiding," Renny whispered in Finch's ear.

Finch sat on the stool, swallowed up in misery. He stared dumbly at the keyboard. As he stared, he forgot the others in the room. He began to play. He played the waltz through, delicately yet boldly, with a kind of innocent fervor.

Mrs. Stroude clapped her hands. She gave Renny an expressive look. She formed the word *wonderful* with her lips.

"It is pretty good, isn't it?" Renny said with pride. "Considering that he doesn't know one note from another!"

"Perhaps he'll be a great pianist some day," she said.

"God forbid!" said Renny. "But it's nice to be able to play the piano. My uncles have had a good deal of pleasure from it."

The squall had ceased. Pale sunshine threw the shadow of a branch on the wall.

Renny got to his feet.

"We must be off. Come, kids."

"Oh, don't go yet!"

"We must. We're on our way to the church to inspect a leaking roof."

At the door he thanked her again for what she had agreed to, concerning Dayborn.

When she returned to the room, she stood thinking with crossed arms, her chin in her hand. She felt sure that she had attracted him. She felt in herself the power to draw him closer—to hold him. What if she could win him—become his wife, the mistress of Jalna!

Chapter Eighteen

Discovery

FROM the church, Renny turned homeward with Finch. Pheasant had run along the road toward Vaughanlands.

At home Renny found that his grandmother was still in bed. She disliked this sort of day and had a slight cold. She was not, however, feeling ill or depressed. She was propped up with pillows and had a bed table across her knees on which she had laid out the cards for her favorite form of Patience. Her parrot, Boney, was in his cage, for it was one of his irritable days. He was systematically throwing the seeds out of his seed-cup with a sidewise jerk of his beak. Each time he threw out a portion, he cast a piercing glance over the bottom of the cage and muttered an imprecation in Hindustani.

Adeline ignored Renny's presence, except by a nod, continuing to turn up the cards in threes, glancing across the board each time she did so with an expression ludicrously like her parrot's. Renny, ob-

serving this, gave a chuckle of delight and seated himself on the side of the bed.

"Glad you think it's funny," she said.

"I wasn't laughing at you, but at Boney."

She peered at the parrot. "He's disgruntled. He gets that way. He bit your uncle Ernest this morning, so his tonic must be ordered from the chemist."

"That's not the way I treat horses that bite."

"What do you do to them?"

"Sell them, if I can."

"Ah, I couldn't part with Boney. Could I, love?"

He gave her a glassy stare, then went on throwing out his seeds. She began again to shuffle the cards.

"Something's got to be done about Eden," she remarked.

"I don't think he often goes to Mrs. Stroude's now."

"Doesn't he? Doesn't he?"

"Who says he does?"

"Never mind. I have my ways of knowing what my grandsons are up to."

Rags tapped on the door, then entered, carrying a glass of hot cinnamon-water on a tray. Adeline sipped it cautiously.

Rags stood watching the old lady with an expression of deep commiseration. Looking across the tumbler she examined his features and demanded:

"Why do you look like that? D'ye think I'm shaping for influenza?"

"Ow, naow, ma'am. You'll soon be fit again. I was just thinking wot a pity 'twould be to give you anything to worry about."

Her eyes gleamed. "I'm used to worry. I've worried for over ninety years. What mischief have you to tell, my man?"

Rags bowed gravely.

"There's no young gentleman," he said, "I admires more than Mr. Eden."

"Out with it, Rags," said Renny.

"I've nothing to tell of against Mr. Eden. It's 'is friend, sir."

"The lady friend?"

"Nao. The gentleman. Mr. Powell, 'is nime is."

Renny frowned. "What about him?"

"Just that 'e daon't exist, sir."

"Stop beating about the bush, Rags!"

"Well, sir, it was like this: I 'ad to go on a message to the Rectory the other day. I saw 'im walking a'ead of me toward the back road where 'e was to meet Mr. Powell. But Mr. Powell wasn't there. Mr. Eden just marched straight on to Mrs. Stroude's."

"The young whelp!" exclaimed Adeline.

"Go on," said Renny.

Rags warmed to the disclosure. "'E went in. As I'd been sent out on a message, I didn't dare waste my time watching outside the 'ouse but the next day, when 'e set out to meet Mr. Powell, I set out after 'im, 'aving explained to my missus that I was off on a mission relating to the family welfare. Mr. Eden went straight to Mrs. Stroude's like 'e 'ad before. I 'adn't long to wait. They came out together, she very smart in a white costume, and made down the road, me following. They never stopped till they reached that boat-'ouse at the end of the road. There they got into a canoe and paddled out of sight. The next time I couldn't get away but yesterday I did. It was such a weary wait that I came 'ome again. But toward evening I took

another stroll in that direction and saw them set out again."

"You did right to tell me," said Adeline. "You may go now."

Rags out of the room, she turned her eyes inquiringly to Renny.

"What shall you do?" she asked.

Certainly, he thought, not what he felt like doing! He must be careful not to anger Mrs. Stroude or she would probably send Dayborn and Chris packing. He could not do without Chris for two reasons. First, he loved her. Second, Launceton loved her and worked for her as for no one else. If he ran in the Grand National, Dayborn was to ride him. He must be cautious, and he hated caution. His voice was hard as he said:

"I'll attend to this, Gran. Don't say anything of it to the uncles or Meg."

"Bring the boy to me! I'll lay my stick about him!"

"There's nothing I'd like better. Oh, damn that woman! But I must go carefully. There's Chris to consider."

Adeline, staring at him, muttered:

"Yes, yes, we must be careful! Go slow but certain. Why didn't Ernest manage things better?"

He bent and kissed her, then went out.

In the hall he met Meg and asked her if Eden had taken the train that day. He had, she said, and looked glum about it.

FOR the next three days Eden went to town each morning with his brothers. Gales and rain scarcely ceased during those days. Renny's anger intensified. At breakfast he would ask Eden, solicitously, if he were going by train or with Mr. Powell. His tongue lingered almost affectionately on the name. On the fourth morning, stormier still than the others, Eden returned casually:

"I'm going with Powell."

"Filthy morning," Renny remarked.

Eden gave a resigned shrug. "Yes, I envy you at home."

As soon as he was gone Renny shut the dogs in the sitting room, put on his own hat and coat and strode swiftly in the direction Eden had taken. He saw him ahead, walking leisurely along the path.

Renny was stopped by one of the stablemen and stood talking to him for a moment, in case Eden looked back. But he moved steadily on, his head bent to the rain. He took his time, as though the day were fine. Renny stopped behind a tree as Mrs. Stroude's house came into view. Eden passed it, however, on the other side of the road, without a glance. Renny inwardly cursed Rags and expected to see Eden picked up by a car at any moment. Added to his anger against the youth he had a sudden resentment at his responsibility for him.

Eden at last turned into a tiny shop, kept by a Mrs. Brawn, in the front of her cottage. Probably he was going to buy cigarettes.

At last he came out and retraced his steps in the direction of Mrs. Stroude's. Renny had a mind to stop him before he reached the house, so that he might be obliged to put less restraint on himself, run less danger of antagonizing her. But Eden was now walking so fast that he would have been forced almost to run to overtake him. And he was turning into a meadow, evidently intending to approach the house from the back.

Now he had disappeared. Renny stood motionless, watching the house, grimly giving them time to get their greetings over. Then he went to the door and knocked.

There was silence inside the house.

He knocked more loudly. No answer. This was something he had not been prepared for. He went around to the back door and knocked on it with his knuckles.

The door opened, and Amy Stroude stood there, her lips pale but curved in the semblance of a smile.

"Are you alone?" he asked.

"Yes."

He stared at her steadily, through the rain dropping from his hat. She drew herself up. Her lips quivered but she returned his stare without flinching.

He said, in a restrained voice: "I saw Eden come in here less than ten minutes ago."

She gave a quick exhalation, then a little laugh. She said:

"Then you've found him out, poor boy! Mr. Powell did not come along this morning, and Eden was left stranded. He came in here for shelter. When he saw you at the door he begged me not to answer it. He thought you'd be angry. But now we're discovered, you'd better come in, hadn't you?"

He stepped inside the little porch and shook the rain from his hat.

"Do come in," she said leading the way to the living-room.

Eden was standing in the middle of the room, his face flushed, his hands trembling.

"Powell didn't turn up this morning—" he began.

"Don't lie to me!" Renny said. "Powell doesn't exist."

Eden drew back as though he feared a blow, but he smiled and said:

"Oh, he doesn't, eh?"

Mrs. Stroude put in: "I'm afraid I've been terribly to blame."

Renny ignored her. He said to Eden: "Put on your hat and coat. I want to have a talk with you."

She interrupted: "But I must take my share of the blame. I should not have let him come here as I have. But I was so sorry for him."

Renny turned. "Why?" he asked.

"Because it's hard to see a poetic nature harnessed to routine." She was regaining confidence.

Renny looked at her. He considered her words. "Good God!" he exclaimed.

"It's true!" she said passionately.

"It may be, in your opinion, Mrs. Stroude. In mine, Eden has been acting like a young fool, wasting his time and my money. I don't know how much pleasure you have in his company, but I must ask you to forego it until the holidays. By that I mean that I forbid Eden to come to this house again during term."

"What are you accusing me of?" she demanded, her eyes flashing.

"Nothing, except being too attractive," he returned coolly. With a glance at Eden, he wheeled and left the house.

EDEN and Amy Stroude were left facing each other.

"What are you going to do?" she breathed.

"Go, I guess. There's nothing else to do." He went to where his coat was hanging and began to put it on.

"When shall I see you again?"

"He didn't say we couldn't meet outside the house. We'll have to meet at week-ends. What damned bad luck!"

She put both her arms about him and pressed his cheek to her lips. "Poor boy! Was what I said all right?"

"You were splendid!"

There was a sharp knock on the door. They started apart; then, with a wave of his hand to her, Eden followed Renny. In the road he asked:

"Was it you who knocked on the door just now?"

Renny returned grimly: "Yes, and I'd rather it had been on your head."

They walked in silence along the muddy road. The wind was now so high that it tore the words from the mouth of a speaker so that it was impossible to talk.

When they reached the point where the path branched to house and stables, Renny turned toward the latter. He raised his voice above the wind.

"We can talk in my office."

THE door opened and banged behind them. They were in a different world. Here the storm was almost inaudible and the streaming small-paned windows gave a sense of isolation.

Renny took off his coat and hat and threw them on a chair. To Eden the room felt damp and chill. He felt utterly wretched. "It's Dayborn who has got me into this," he thought.

Renny seated himself on the corner of the desk and looked sternly at Eden.

"Are you such a fool," he said, "as to imagine you could get away with this sort of thing?"

"I've only done it a couple of times."

"I want you to tell me what sort of woman that is."

"She's my best friend."

"Your best friend! Yet she'll let you waste day after day in her company. She was the cause of your almost failing in your exams. She connives with you to deceive me. She is making a liar and a fool of you. Yet you call her a friend!"

"She loves me."

"I'll bet she does. She loves anything in trousers whom she can try her charms on. She'd love me, if I'd let her! Now I tell you: you're not to enter her house till the Christmas holidays. Perhaps by that time she'll have cooled off or found some other youth to pet."

"You don't understand her—or me. I don't expect you to."

"I understand you better than you understand yourselves. She's a woman without experience who's struggling desperately to get some. You're a young ass who thinks the first experience he has is important! . . . Well, now you know what to do. The first thing is to catch the train into town. You'll be in time for your afternoon lectures."

"Good heavens, must I go in today?"

His outraged expression implied that the punishment far outweighed the crime. An instant later he found himself in a steel grip. He was being shaken, then given a push against the door.

"Yes, you must," Renny said shortly.

Eden gathered himself together, threw a look of fury at his brother, then flung out of the office. Scarcely seeing where he was going, he strode from the stable and toward the house. He got out his

bicycle and rode in the direction of the railway station but, when he reached a certain path, turned aside and went swiftly to Mrs. Stroude's. He knocked at the door. She opened it.

"Eden! What's the matter?"

"I should think you'd know."

"But what has he done?"

"Given me a shaking and thrown me against the wall."

"My dearest—are you hurt?"

"A little—not much. It's the whole thing. A fellow can't get over it in a moment. God only knows what he'd do if he knew I'd come here. I'm supposed to be on the train."

She drew him in and tenderly helped him to take off his coat. He poured out the details of his encounter with Renny.

When he had finished she sat down on the floor at his feet and laid her head against his knees, in the attitude which was usually his prerogative. She began to cry softly.

"Oh, Aimée," he said, pronouncing the name in the way she loved. "Don't! I can't bear it."

"Everything is over for me. I'll be so lonely."

"But you mustn't cry!"

"I can't help it. What am I to do, in the long wet days? Then there's the canoe and all we'd planned for Indian Summer!"

"But I won't stay away!"

"He'll have Dayborn spying on us. Dayborn is at the bottom of this!"

"Put Dayborn out."

She raised her head. "I will. He'll go tomorrow. I'll bear nothing more!"

She sprang up and walked resolutely to the door.

"Wait!" said Eden. "Don't go yet."

She wheeled. "Why not?"

Eden wavered between the desire to see Dayborn punished, to get even with Renny, and the fear of consequences to himself. He said excitedly:

"What had we better do? Let's think! Don't be in too great a hurry. Listen—if we turn Dayborn out, it means—" He winced, pressed his hand to his shoulder.

She came to him. "What's wrong?"

"It's my shoulder. I wonder if it's dislocated."

"Take off your coat."

He took it off, undid his collar and drew his shirt from the shoulder. The golden-brown smoothness of his flesh, its elastic firmness under her hand, went through her like an electric shock.

"Look! Those marks!"

"That's where he gripped me, the red-headed devil!"

"Oh, I'll get even with him!"

She pressed her lips to the marks. She closed her eyes and seemed scarcely to breathe, but rage and sensuality seethed within her. She longed to give herself to Eden. Yet, looking into his eyes, her own suffused by passion, she saw no answering desire, but only his boy's mouth pouted in self-pity.

WITH all her emotions concentrated into hate of Dayborn, she covered Eden's shoulder and almost ran from the room. He saw her hurrying through the rain, opening her gate, opening the neighboring gate, heard her knocking loudly on Dayborn's door. He listened, bending his head by the partition.

He heard the words: "This is the end. You leave this house tomorrow. . . . Contemptible spy!" Then such a confusion of voices that all sense was blurred.

She was in the room again, her back against the door, panting, her wet hair plastered on her forehead.

"That didn't take long," she gasped. "I wish you could've seen their faces! To think that tomorrow that house will be empty? Aren't you thankful, darling?"

"I wonder where they will go."

"They can sleep in a ditch, for all I care! She's no better than he is. When I think how kind I was to them—but it's all over. I hope to God I shall never see their faces again—nor their starved-looking bodies! I've never told you this before, Eden, but I'll tell you now. They're man and wife! A woman in England pays him a hundred pounds a year to stay out here."

"Does Renny know this?"

"Yes. She told him. She's in love with him. Anyone can see that. They'd better be careful! They've got me to deal with. If this woman in England finds out Dayborn's married, the remittance will stop. . . . Oh, how happy I might have been here if it hadn't been for them! Never mind, honey, we'll be happy still. I know we shall."

She walked up and down the room, her arms stiff at her sides, her hands clenched.

As Eden watched her he felt repelled. Her short strong figure with its ungraceful movements, her damp hair flat on her forehead, her face blotched by passion gave him a feeling almost of repugnance. He began to feel tired and dejected. He wanted only to get away.

She came to him and put her arms about him.

"You must come and lie down," she said. "I'll read to you. We'll put all this out of our minds. Tomorrow they will be gone!"

Eden said: "I can't stay. There'd be the devil to pay. There's no use in our making things worse than they are. I'll be back tomorrow."

He made her see the reason of this. He found himself out in the rain again. Pushing his bicycle, for it would have been impossible to ride in the downpour that had now set in, Eden pulled his hat over his eyes and plodded homeward.

In the house, the voices of his grandmother and uncles came from the sitting-room. Rags was laying the table for the one o'clock dinner. Eden went softly up the stairs. As he passed the door of Renny's room, Renny came out of it and stared at him astounded.

"What are you back for?"

"I didn't go. I couldn't. I wasn't well. There's something wrong with my shoulder." His eyes fell. His lips shook.

"What's wrong with your shoulder? Do you mean that I hurt it?"

"I don't know. Something has. I can't lift my arm. I'm going to lie down."

"I'll have a look at it."

He followed Eden into his room. Eden undressed. He was wet through.

"There's nothing wrong with your shoulder," Renny said, after examining it.

It seemed to Eden that Amy Stroude's kisses might well have left a visible mark. But there were only the marks of Renny's fingers. He put on his dressing-gown and lay on the bed.

Renny looked down at him curiously. The boy did not look sullen. He did look ill. Well, he was one of the highly-strung sort. Let him sleep it off; no use in being too hard on him. He unfolded the quilt that lay on the foot of the bed and threw it over Eden. He said:

"I'll send Rags up with some lunch."

"I don't want any."

Eden's voice broke. He threw himself across the bed, his face to the wall. Sobs shook him. Renny looked down on him. Then he said, not unkindly:

"I hope this means that it's all over between you and that woman."

Eden did not answer. The dinner-gong sounded and Renny went downstairs.

Chapter Nineteen

Hospitality

DAYBORN sat sipping a glass of steaming toddy, a faded traveling-rug about his shoulders, his eyes watering and his usually pale face flushed and feverish. A cold was prevalent in the neighborhood, and he had got it. Tod also had the cold, and Chris had not dared take him out that morning. She looked from one to the other in dismay. How was she possibly going to get ready to move the next day, and where could she find shelter for them?

She repeated what she had time and again said in the last two hours:

"What can have happened?"

"The woman is mad, I tell you. It's just come to a head."

"Nonsense! It was something you did."

"Good Lord! I've done nothing. But you'll heap the blame on me!"

She scowled, and went on with the sorting of things in suitcases. There was silence, except for Tod's chucklings over his building-bricks, and occasional sneezes. Then Dayborn asked sarcastically:

"Where do you think you're going?"

"I don't know." There was a childish tremor in her voice.

Dayborn looked at her inquisitively. Was she going to cry? But she bent her head so that her straight fair hair fell across her eyes. Tod came and offered her a brick with a picture of a duck on it, as though to comfort her.

"Thanks, Tod!" She smiled at him.

"What a pity," said Chris, "that Renny is in town! He'd do something."

"He may be back. Look here, you had better go to Jalna right away. If he isn't there, you can leave a message for him."

"Right. I'll do that." She rose, eager to do something different. "Look after Tod. Don't fall asleep."

Chris was glad to be out under the sky, even though it sent rain and wind to drench and buffet her. She bent her head and tramped doggedly along the road through the deepening puddles.

As she neared Jalna, her heart leaped ahead of her. She longed for the sight of Renny, and for Launceton too. Tod, Renny and Launceton! She smiled as she thought of the contrast between the three beings she loved. Yet they had one quality in common: There was a reliability, a stanchness, in the heart of each.

In the stableyard she met Scotchmere.

"Hello," she said. "Is the boss back?"

"No. But he's on his way. He telephoned half an hour ago. Aint this weather fierce?"

"You bet. I think I'll wait for him in the stable."

"You're looking peaked. What's the matter?"

"Scotchmere, don't tell any of the others. But Mrs. Stroude is on her high horse again. We've got to move out tomorrow, and I'm damned if I know where we're going. To make it worse, my brother and the baby both have colds."

"It was me that told Jim to go home. And the poor little feller, he's caught it too, has he? You'll be the next. Don't you get sick. Golly, your face don't look much bigger than my hand now!"

As they turned toward the stables, Scotchmere suddenly stopped. "I've got an idea: There's empty rooms over the garage. It's to be turned into a flat for one of the married hands. But money's been too scarce to finish it. You could put your furniture in there, and make shift until something better turns up. Come; I'll show you." He led the way.

Chris was delighted with the rooms. The fact that they were cold, the windows veiled in cobwebs and that there was no bathroom, mattered nothing. It was a haven. She and Scotchmere were as excited as two children over the project.

While they were still there, Renny returned. He came running up the steep narrow stairway. His face lighted when he saw Chris. She told him what had happened, and of Scotchmere's suggestion.

"But it's a wretched hole," he exclaimed.

"It looks lovely to me. And I'm used to discomfort. I'll set right to work to clean it." She began to take off her short leather coat, then added: "That is, if you'll let me have it?"

"Of course you can have it. But don't take off your coat. One of the men will come in and clean it. Go and send one of them, Scotchmere."

Scotchmere disappeared down the stairs.

"How could you think I would let you undertake such a job?" Renny asked reproachfully. He put his hands inside her coat, against the warmth of her body, and pressed her to him. "Give me a kiss, Kit."

She kissed him with passion, clinging to him as though desperately. He said:

"You must come to the house. My sister will give you tea."

"Will she? How nice of her!"

She walked about the bare rooms. "This looks heavenly to me. And there'll be no rent to pay, will there? I wonder why Mrs. Stroude went off the deep end like this, after being peaceable for weeks."

"To get even with me. I had an interview with Eden in front of her."

"Anyhow, we've got a roof over our heads. If only Jim and Tod hadn't got those colds!"

"Come along," Renny said, almost impatiently; "you must have some tea."

THE house was very warm. The thick walls, the drawn curtains, the sound of talk and laughter, the three dogs stretched on the floor about the glowing stove, gave a sense of remoteness, not only from the stormy weather but from the outside world.

Renny left her and returned with his sister. She shook Chris warmly by the hand. She was being a kind sister, for Renny had asked her to be her nicest to Chris.

"I hear you've got to move," she said. "What a nuisance! And in such weather!

Renny's been telling me," Meg was going on, "that your baby and your brother both have colds. They must not be exposed. You must stay with us while you settle in the flat. You and the baby can sleep in the spare room, and we'll fix up your brother somehow. There's an attic room with a cot bed in it. Do you think he'd mind that?"

"Oh, how kind of you!" Chris' mouth was distorted like a child's who is trying to keep from crying. "I never was so kindly treated in my life. Are you sure we sha'n't put you out terribly?"

"Not at all. I'd love to have you."

Chapter Twenty

Swift Currents

THE following day Eden remained in his room. He was in a mood of deep dejection. He felt lonely in his spirit, and that in his life he was going to be a failure. When he tried to recall the poetry he had written, it seemed to him worthless. He looked forward to the study of law with abhorrence. No study of any kind attracted him.

He could not bear to think of Amy Stroude. Her sudden exhibition of violence, her changed face coarsened almost beyond recognition, her amorous kisses on his shoulder, had shocked something fastidious in him. He felt afraid of her.

Meg told Renny that Eden was listless and looked feverish. Should they send for the doctor? Was Renny sure that he had not injured him?

"The shaking I gave him wouldn't have injured Wakefield. He's just feeling sorry for himself. Let him sulk for a day or two. He'll get over it."

But the days passed, and still Eden refused to come downstairs. He ate next to nothing. Finally Renny came to him.

"How are you feeling?" asked Renny, sitting on the foot of the bed.

"Rotten."

"Where do you feel the worst?"

"I don't know. I just feel rotten."

"Want me to send for the doctor?"

"No. I'll be all right."

"You're wasting a lot of time, you know. You'd feel better if you got up."

"I can't." Eden's voice broke.

"I've a letter for you. It just came. I have an idea it's from Mrs. Stroude." He handed Eden the letter.

Eden glanced at it, then thrust it under his pillow. "Just leave me alone," he said petulantly. "I'll get up tomorrow."

Renny gave him a penetrating glance. "Would you like me to return that letter to her unopened?"

"Lord, no! I couldn't do that."

"But you'll not know what to say to her. You can be sure she's begging you to come and see her. You know damned well I'll not stand any more of that."

"I don't want any more of it," said Eden hoarsely. "I wish to God I could go away somewhere for a while!"

"Look here—I've an idea! How would you like to go into residence in the University? That would settle things. I'll write her a letter. You need not have any responsibility. Will you do that?" There was an unexpected warmth and understanding in his tone.

Eden rolled over, burying his face in the pillow. He got out, "Yes," in a strangled voice. His hand touched the letter. He thrust it blindly toward Renny.

"Take the letter," he said. "Write to her for me. I can't see her."

"You just leave the lady to me," Renny said. He stuffed the letter into his pocket, and went to his office in the stables.

Seated in his swivel-chair, he considered the situation. He was not ill pleased with what he had done. He had found a roof for Chris and her child. One of his farm wagons had brought the scant load of furniture to the flat above the garage. It was installed there. The curtains were up. The place looked habitable, though not fit for a girl of Chris' breeding.

Dayborn and Tod were still under the weather. The little family was thought much of at Jalna. His grandmother had taken a fancy to Chris. Jim was making himself agreeable to Meg. Everyone loved Tod at sight. Wakefield and he played happily together. Now it seemed that the problem of Eden was to be settled. Renny had a moment's pride in the thought of how he had handled the boy. He'd been firm but not harsh. He'd considered the nature he had to deal with.

Slowly he took a sheet of notepaper from a drawer. He hesitated a moment to admire the business heading. Then he wrote, in his small crotchety hand:

My dear Mrs. Stroude:

I do not think I need explain to you why I am returning your letter. If Eden read it, it might make things worse than they are, and I can't risk that. He is anxious that his acquaintance with you should come to an end, and has agreed that your letter should be sent back to you. He is going away for a time.

Yours faithfully,
R. Whiteoak

He put both letters in an envelope and gave it to Scotchmere to post.

Meanwhile Amy Stroude was in a state of excitement that made her days tense and her nights restless. She could not understand why she had had no message from Eden. She had expected him to appear at any moment, and kept herself in readiness to receive him.

Her one consolation in these days, her one calming thought, was the thought of the extreme discomfort in which Dayborn and his family must now be living. She had found out, from the men who had moved the furniture, that it was going to an unfurnished flat above the garage at Jalna.

By the third day she began to wonder if Eden were ill. She endured a day of this new anxiety, then set out to call on Miss Pink and find out what was happening—she knew that Miss Pink was intimate with the family at Jalna.

The door was opened by a neat maid.

"Is Miss Pink at home?"

"Yes'm. She's busy teaching, but if you'll come in, I'll tell her."

The little parlor was overcrowded with the furniture Miss Pink had brought from her former home. She herself came in, looking nervous and somehow not friendly.

Amy Stroude forced a smile to her lips and gave her low musical laugh. She said:

"I hope I don't look as awful as I feel. What weather! How do you manage to pass the time?"

Miss Pink appeared not to see the extended hand. She answered stiffly:

"I find plenty to do. There's the church organ. And giving music lessons. I teach little Pheasant Vaughan, too. She is with me now. I am afraid I can't ask you to stay."

Her small pink face was blank as she regarded Amy Stroude.

"Well, then, I must be off." She managed to control her hurt and anger. "I hope dear old Mrs. Whiteoak is well. This weather must be trying for a woman of her age."

Still with that blank look, Miss Pink returned: "She is very well. I had tea there yesterday. I have never seen her better. She is having great pleasure in her visitors."

"Her visitors?"

"Yes. The people who lived in your house. The ones you turned out. They are staying at Jalna."

"At Jalna! In the flat above the garage, you mean."

"Oh, the family would not allow that in such weather. They are staying in the house. They are very welcome, I can assure you."

"How nice! And Eden—" She must find out about Eden, no matter at what cost to her pride. "Is he better?"

"I didn't know he'd been ill. I believe he's going away for a time. Really, you must excuse me." She moved toward the door.

Out on the road again, Mrs. Stroude ground her teeth at the thought of the indignity she had just experienced; she pictured herself slapping Miss Pink's face.

But as she trudged on, this anger was swept aside by the bitter chagrin of knowing that Dayborn and his family were snugly ensconced at Jalna, in the house where she had twice been as a welcome guest, and where probably she would go no more. She must try to retrieve her position. Above all else, she must see Eden. She did not believe he was away.

WHEN she reached home, she found Renny's letter awaiting her.

She read it carefully, twice over, then sat with it crumpled in her hand. She considered what her next move should be.

Her own letter, returned to her, caught her eye. She took it up and sniffed its scent. She then tore it into small pieces and threw them into a waste-paper basket. Renny's letter she put in the pocket of her jacket. She stood a moment savoring the contact of this letter against her person, as though it were some sort of talisman that would keep her from wasting her energy in futile anger, and at the same time intensify her bitter resentment.

She thought she heard a noise in the next house. She went in there.

It was empty, cold and desolate. Certainly she must get a tenant for it. It was a dead loss, standing vacant.

As she turned to leave the house, she saw that there was something in the letter-box. She opened it, and found an old-country newspaper and a letter. She took newspaper and letter and went back to her own house. She saw that the kettle was boiling. She took the letter, held its flap over the steam. After cautious experiment, she was able to open it without marring it. It was just what she had expected, the quarterly check from Dayborn's benefactress. She would put an end to all that, Amy Stroude thought. She

read the letter accompanying the check, then went to her desk and wrote:

Mrs. Gardiner,
Dear Madam:

I know that you are interested in James Dayborn and his welfare. I know that you send him a cheque every three months on the understanding that he keeps steady and does not marry. His wife told me this. She too is English, and they have been married for some time. They seem to think it a joke to obtain money from you under false pretences, but I take a different view of the matter. They are known here as brother and sister. I once heard Dayborn say, (I happened to be in the same house at the same time) when he received one of your cheques: "Thank God, the old girl has ponied up again!" I think you are an honorable woman and I consider it my duty to inform you of this deception and ingratitude. As I don't like anonymous letters, I am signing my name to this. I shall give you the name of a near-by solicitor, in case you should want to make investigations. I am also sending you the name of a detective agency.

She added the name of the solicitor and of a detective agency once employed by her husband. She found mucilage and sealed the letter she had opened. She then sealed her own and took it to the post office, which was nearly a mile distant, and combined with the small grocery-shop. As she was leaving, she saw Finch Whiteoak buying a chocolate bar.

Outside he began to run in quick, uneven spurts, like a lamb gamboling. She called out to him:

"Finch! Wait a moment."

He waited, looking shyly up at her.

"How is Eden?" she asked.

"Better, thank you."

"Has he gone away?"

"He's gone to live at the University."

"Oh! Was he really ill? Did the doctor see him?"

"No—just Renny."

She forced a smile to her lips. "Surely you saw him! Did he seem unhappy?"

He gave her a puzzled look. "No—not unhappy—at least—I don't know—"

"Are Mr. Dayborn and his sister and the baby still at Jalna?"

"Yes. Please, I must hurry." Touching his cap, he almost fled along the road. She saw him climb a fence, as though to make certain his escape. She muttered: "Another one turned against me! It will not be Dayborn's fault if I am not completely ostracized."

Next month Mazo de la Roche will bring "Whiteoak Heritage" to its colorful climax in scenes memorable indeed.

REDBOOK'S PICTURE OF THE MONTH

(Continued from page 47)

operators' convention in Washington begins tomorrow. There's something in the air about price-cutting. I thought you might want to be there too," you just don't believe it. But that is what is nice about Miss Lamarr; she might be giving a recipe for a meat loaf, or explaining a problem in trigonometry, and you don't have to listen to a word she says. You just look and are content.

"Boom Town" is by James Edward Grant, and John Lee Mahin wrote the scenario; Jack Conway directed, and Sam Zimbalist produced.

"THE GREAT MCGINTY" is of more cynical stripe. It is the story of a bum who is lifted from the bread-line because of his peculiar ability to vote often and right without being caught. For this meritorious service to his party and his boss, he is paid two dollars a vote. In a few brief years he progresses from the soup-kitchen to graft-collecting, to a job as alderman, to the mayor's chair and finally to the Governor's mansion.

The yarn was penned by Preston Sturges, who also directed the picture for Paramount; Paul Jones produced. In the opening sequence Sturges sets the mood of his derisive tale of American politics in a foreword:

"This is the story of two men who met in a banana republic," reads the sub-title. "One of them was honest all his life except one crazy minute. The other was dishonest all his life except one crazy minute. Both had to get out of the country."

Brian Donlevy, as *McGinty* the bum, wins the admiration of the ward boss Akim Tamiroff, through his courage and an ability to use his fists.

When Tamiroff decides *McGinty* shall run for mayor, he compels the ex-bum to marry; and *McGinty's* secretary, who is in love with him, offers to go through with the formalities. You know, a wife in name only. The girl, Muriel Angelus, who was recruited from Manhattan's "Boys from Syracuse," believes that in *McGinty* is the spark of greatness and tries to fan this into a flame.

McGinty realizes that he loves her, and she begins reshaping him. She inspires him with a determination to do something for the poor rather than loot the public treasury. When he becomes Governor, he tries to throw off his corrupt past, and for one fateful moment he is honest. That is his undoing; and with Tamiroff, he flees to a republic in the tropics.

The honest man mentioned in the subtitle is Louis Jean Heydt, to whom *McGinty* tells his story over a bar. Heydt was a bank cashier back home with a great future. For a single minute he succumbed to temptation and had to run.

"The Great McGinty" is a great character-study. While its plot is based upon a political fable, in addition to bitter satire it derives strength from its characterizations. There are more unbelievable and fascinating lowbrows in the picture than have graced any film in a long time.

While melodramatic, it has the flavor of realism about it. Such things have happened in America; and in any first-rate democracy, they will continue to happen. Sturges has captured the essence of this struggle between rascals and honest men, and has turned out a rare photoplay.

The cast is so convincing that you are inclined to say of such an allegory: "This actually happened."

ORDERS ARE ORDERS

(Continued from page 43)

faded Sunday jacket and an old-fashioned bonnet. In one hand she was carrying a bundle of keys, in the other a miserable little straw suitcase, which she put down. Her eyes were alive with fear. Behind her stood a policeman, and back of him Herr Prinkel, the brother of the janitress.

The officer saluted. "She wants to talk to you, Herr Herder," he said, and then with a contemptuous glance at Prinkel: "I have nothing against it, only we have to be at the railroad station at half-past eight." Prinkel leaned, immovable, against the banister.

Thérèse began sobbing. They all stood there, and it was quite some time before she could speak. "Yesterday," she wailed, "yesterday they took my good lady away, and now they have come to get me. I'm to cook for the Polish barracks. They say it is my patriotic duty. But do I have to go—really—whether I want to or not? Tell me the truth, Herr Herder. Can they do what they want with me? I've got to look after the apartment till my good lady gets back."

At first Herder did not know what to say. But then he answered: "Orders are orders. We all have to do the work that is required of us, Thérèse. This is war."

"War," repeated Thérèse. For an instant it was deathly still; then she whispered: "Since the last one, I've been alone."

Elsbeth, in the hallway behind her husband, turned involuntarily toward Hertha, standing straight back in the room, her face in the shadow. She could not see whether the girl was listening, or what she was thinking.

"Give me the keys, Thérèse," said Herder. "We'll look after the apartment." He reached out a hand. "You must be sensible."

"Sensible," she repeated, and still quiet, gave Herder the keys. Then all at once she began screaming hysterically. "Sensible—why, you're all crazy, crazy!" She tore herself away from in front of the officer, with one leap reached the banister, and would have thrown herself down the stair-well if Prinkel had not reached out and held her back. The officer came to his assistance, and they dragged the screaming woman down the stairs. Herder closed his door quickly.

He gave Elsbeth the keys. "Don't give them to anyone without a written order," he said. She glanced at him, and he reached for his coat. When he had it on, he went to look into Martina's room. The child was still asleep.

HERTHA came out to the door that led into the hall. There were two sheets of writing-paper in her hand.

"The letters," she said.

Herder, lying awake in the night, had heard her typing. He had wanted to get up and go to her to talk it all over again. But there *was* no more to talk about. It was too late for talk about anything any more. How that girl stood up under it! He could take lessons from her.

He went to the desk and added a bold signature to the letters. When he got back into the hall, Elsbeth was waiting for him with tears in her eyes. Quickly

he put his arms around her. Both of them were trembling. "I know what you are thinking, Elsbeth," he said, "but I have to do it. They are forcing me."

In front of the door as he hurried out stood Thérèse's little straw suitcase. He kicked it out of his way.

Toward ten o'clock it was announced on the radio that all listeners should stand by for an important proclamation. Martina had, as indeed she did every morning, tuned in soft music; children's songs had sung through the apartment; then all of a sudden they had broken off to give way to the excited voice of the announcer. A few minutes later there was a call from the headquarters of the Maedchenbund. Hertha was to come over immediately; there was to be a demonstration that evening.

Worriedly Elsbeth asked what could have happened. "Something good," answered Hertha briefly. "They don't make a fuss over disagreeable things." There was a cynical note to her voice. And without another word she hurried from the house. Almost at once, though, she came back to get the letters which she had forgotten.

WHEN she got out into the street, she stopped and took a deep breath of the spring wind, the first real spring of the year. The Harstadters had always called it "Paris air," and the old expression came automatically to mind. But then she corrected herself, changed it to "German springtime wind," as the teacher in the propaganda course demanded. The propaganda course! From now on she would have to attend again. She was no longer interested. Things were not what they used to be.

Everything was changed. Perhaps she was too much like her parents. They were sentimental and romantic. No wonder they were unable to find themselves in this new world that was being born. But then Dr. Schien was as old as they and he knew what he wanted. No self-pity in him. She, herself, as one of the new generation, hadn't quite gotten it out of her system. Yesterday, for example, how sorry she had felt for herself. She made things that happened to her too important. And how ashamed she had been. Why, after all? Had she expected him to go down on his knees in front of her?

Of course Father felt insulted. But hadn't the Lieutenant been even more than decent? Many girls in the Bund never heard another word from their lovers. Lovers! How misconceived a notion that was. Maybe her physical condition was to blame for the way she felt. She had long ago noticed how the outside world grew less and less to have any importance for her. Oh, there were so many things she had not known about, things you never heard in the Party school.

If only her brother weren't away! He too was a man who knew what he wanted. Even more so than Dr. Schien. Paul wanted to lift the world off its hinges. There was something big, something inspiring in the way he talked when he explained it to her. If she could only talk to him now. He would know how to help. Then she would find out why she was suffering so, why inside her there was such a stony anger. All night past she had felt and feared that her whole life had already gone by.

"Hertha, don't run so fast."

The voice she heard behind her made her stop. But she did not turn around. She heard the steps coming closer; her heart started pounding, and the blood shot into her cheeks. "If he touches me," she thought—then—then—she didn't know what. It was stupid to lose one's head that way.

Then the footsteps ceased, and the loud-speaker on the marketplace boomed over and over again an admonition to be prepared for what was to follow. She pressed the letters which she had not yet mailed, tightly to her breast.

Von Drossen did not touch her. He had caught up to her and stood silently beside her. He knew now as he looked down on her shining, wind-tossed hair, the delicate lashes over her downcast eyes, the flush that covered her cheeks, he knew at last why he had not gone away. Not only because he felt he had done something wrong and wanted to make it right, not because a memory brought him back to *this* girl. There were so many girls, and a soldier on leave wasn't particular. No, there was an innocent something in her that made his heart warm and brought out everything in him that was good.

"I've been waiting an hour across from your house, and even so you almost got away from me." He was talking nonsense. That wasn't what he wanted to say. But she seemed not to hear him.

When Hertha finally did lift her head she was pale.

"Why didn't you go away?" she asked.

Von Drossen stared at her and found no answer. All of a sudden anything he could have said seemed wrong. Her eyes, questioning, were full of pain and hopeless as if everything had been decided long ago. And he seemed to himself dreadfully banal and frivolous. It was all so much more serious than he had thought. For a moment he was sorry he had stayed; then he said more than he had meant to: "I wanted to see you again. I hurt you. I couldn't go."

Passers-by turned to look at the young officer and the Herder girl. The two of them were standing in the middle of the sidewalk and staring at each other as if they were mad. There was a peal of jeering laughter, and Hertha cringed. Von Drossen took her arm, but after a few steps he let her go again. She strode along as if he were no longer beside her.

"What do you want?" She asked the question without even looking at him.

There was nothing he could say. He did not know.

They passed a cigar-store. A queue of old men and little boys was standing in front of it. A placard in the window announced that there was either a pack of cigarettes or two cigars on hand for every purchaser. They went past a butter-and-egg store, and had to edge out into the street to get by. A long line of waiting women crowded the sidewalk. "One egg a month," said a weary voice. The loud-speaker on the marketplace roared out: "At ten forty-five, Minister Goebbels will speak to you in person." Crowds were collecting.

"What do you want?" The longer Von Drossen waited with his answer, the more inexorable, exposing all his secret desires and half-wishes, did he hear the question ring. The more uncomfortable he grew, the farther away the girl, walking faster and faster, seemed to draw. And he, all the while running along beside her, down the streets of a miserable little town which two days ago he hadn't known existed. Was she waiting for him to ask her to marry him? How did she feel about the whole thing, anyway?

"I want to get to know you," he said. "Couldn't we start now—as—as if—we'd never met before?"

Hertha turned into a broad, well-groomed avenue. Down a way he could see, hanging three stories from a gable, an enormous swastika flag. She slowed up. There was a crowd collecting in front of the house. When they got to the edge of it, she turned to the young officer. The pain had gone out of her eyes. On her face was the same expression that had touched him so deeply the night before in the station restaurant, when she had tried to keep him from the danger of helping the Polish prisoner.

"It would be nice to get to know each other," she said, as if to herself. Then, after a pause: "At Christmas you said: 'Tomorrow I'm off for the front. I cannot let myself be bound by any sentimental ties.' I can still hear those words—and they're still true."

He wanted to contradict her, but she went on, unswervingly: "It—it was decent of you to come—and I'm glad you didn't go away yesterday."

The loud-speakers in front of the Brown House interrupted her: "This morning the armed forces of the Third Reich, by land, sea and air, moved into Denmark and Norway. The capitals of the two countries, which we have taken into protection, are in our possession."

A great rousing cheer burst out in the crowd. Von Drossen thought of his comrades at the front and snapped to attention. Deeply moved, he listened to the announcement of the great victory. He knew better than anyone around him what it meant: The attack on Britain. Soon he would be flying his bomber in real earnest over that English island over which he had made so many trial flights.

"Tomorrow I'm off for the front," he thought.

When he turned to Hertha, he found that she had disappeared. To his surprise there was a letter in his hand. Quickly he tore it open. "My daughter holds no one responsible for her condition, and has no claim of any sort to make on you."

Von Drossen stared at the short note. There it was in black and white—that was what he had come to Harstadt for. But what was the use of it now?

The crowd surged up joyously into the national anthem:

"Deutschland, Deutschland über alles—"

Von Drossen pulled himself together and stood at attention.

THE news of the occupation of Denmark and Norway shook Harstadt into the narrowest alleyways of its poorest quarter. Flags were unfurled from the roofs of all the houses, and fluttered gayly out of many windows. The crowds waiting in front of food-shops cast off their moods of depression, and took on a happy, hopeful air. The terrible winter

was passed, and the promised time of victories beginning. For the moment they forgot hunger and deprivation.

In the sanitarium, Dr. Schien explained to the assembled patients amidst an atmosphere of general enthusiasm, how they were to be re-introduced into the productive scheme. Many of the sick, who that morning would have grumbled secretly like impotent slaves, felt all at once as if from despised outcasts they had grown into heroes of labor, as the new chief, Herder, had called them in his opening address. They could hardly wait to be taken out to the immense dump where the town children had heaped mountains of scrap metal. It was to be their first task to put things in order there, iron with iron, zinc with zinc, brass with brass. In one week the job was to to be done. Then Harstadt was to present tons of metal to the Fuehrer for his birthday, so that he might carry his battle, which had now become the nation's battle, on to a victory.

Herder, drunk with his victims' cheers, had experienced one glorious happy moment. All doubts lay suddenly behind him. Yes, if they won this war, then all the wrong that tortured him would be right; it would be true at last that the end justified the means. Schien congratulated him on his speech.

ELSBETH heard the announcement on her way to market; her first thought was about her son in Bohemia. He wrote seldom, and then only brief, laconic notes, but Elsbeth felt ("You're always seeing ghosts," said Herder) that the boy was unhappy. Perhaps—she had never dared say it out loud—perhaps it was harder to rule a country than to conquer it. She remembered the French in the Ruhr, and wondered how the Danes and Norwegians really felt.

On the way home she went past Martina's school, and came upon the former actor, their old friend Holbein. He was standing in front of a shop-window and peering covertly down the street. Elsbeth went up to him quietly, undoubtedly just as Martina did at one of *her* clandestine meetings with "Uncle Holbein." He pretended not to see her.

"How are you?" she asked. She saw by his reflection in the window how he shrugged his shoulders.

It was the first time she had seen him since Paul had forbidden him the house. "I'm sorry you can't come to see us any more."

He interrupted impatiently: "Are you enthusiastic too about the new stroke of piracy?" He spoke sharply and bitterly. The loud-speakers on the marketplace boomed on.

"We have to win this war," answered Elsbeth, quoting Dr. Schien against her will.

"Must we? Who is *we?*" Holbein laughed in a way that made her afraid. She looked carefully around. Stormtroopers were marching up the street, singing the Horst Wessel song.

Holbein edged closer to her. "Do you hear them singing? I tell you, the greater your victories, the deeper will be your defeats. And if you conquer the whole world, you'll lose your own souls."

Herr Prinkel, the informer, was coming toward them on the sidewalk. Els-

beth saw him quite some distance away. how he slunk along in front of the houses. Her heart went into her throat, but she dared not move.

"The rat!" said Holbein, who also saw him.

They stepped away from each other. Holbein was about to go when Prinkel turned and went back up the street.

"We had a visit from the Gestapo yesterday. They're suspicious of us," whispered Elsbeth. "I have a favor to ask of you: Don't wait for Martina any more. We have to be very careful now."

"She was the only person I could still talk to. Everything you take away from me," he whispered, and swayed, haggard and thin as a dry, old tree in the wind. "Kiss her for me—every day." He turned away. Elsbeth saw his reflection slowly move from the window, and disappear.

LIEUTENANT VON DROSSEN went from the Brown House to military headquarters where he had to report if he wanted to stay in the city more than twenty-four hours. There he was informed that he must keep himself always within reach, for there was a possibility that leaves for aviators might be canceled. In his present mood he was almost willing to return to the front even before he was called. But the adjutant, a veteran of the Polish campaign, lifted the stump of his arm at him. "Don't worry. You'll get there in plenty of time," he said.

Hertha was working at the Maedchenbund on the organization of the torchlight parade that was to take place in the evening. She carried out a hundred orders, tirelessly ready for any service. "The warning worked," thought the Bund leader, a member of the Gau Administration.

Toward evening it was announced over the radio that all aviators on leave were to return to their stations without delay. When she heard it, Hertha sat motionless for a while. Then she left her place, so quietly that no one noticed. On the street she walked into the soft twilight.

Another episode of the Herder family will appear next month.

OH, THIS IS LIVING

(Continued from page 23)

"None of your business," he replied. Claudia smiled. She liked him when he was in one of his "Shut-up-none-of-your-business" moods. It was the same thing as calling her pet-names without passion.

She didn't dream, however, what he was actually up to. In no time at all Dr. Mackler was standing before the bed. It was a funny thing about Dr. Mackler. He was always very busy, and yet he was always in his office. It was one of the nice things about New York—no matter where you lived, there was always a doctor on your nearest corner, like a drugstore, or a laundry.

"WELL, what have we here?" said Dr. Mackler. He was the kind of doctor who always said *we*.

"My husband's crazy," Claudia replied, glaring at David. "The pain's practically gone. And I'm not going to take castor-oil," she gave warning. "That's final."

Dr. Mackler slipped a thermometer between her lips.

"I haven't any fever, and the pain is gone," she grumbled.

"So the pain is gone," the Doctor repeated, with raised brows. "And when did it go?"

"All of a sudden. I'm all right."

He sat down beside her, and ran his hand over her abdomen.

"All that's wrong with me, I ate too much bacon," she volunteered.

"Keep your tongue on the thermometer."

"It's in more than a minute."

David frowned at her. "You're hell," he said.

Dr. Mackler removed the thermometer, and looked at it.

"What is it?" Claudia was inquisitive.

For answer, Dr. Mackler shook it down. He had a little black mustache, and wore glasses, and looked as if some day he were going to be very successful. He said: "Where can I rinse this off?"

"In here," David told him, and quickly led the way to the bathroom.

She heard the door close behind them. After a little while she opened her eyes to see Bertha getting down something from the top shelf of the closet. "What are you doing with my suitcase?" Claudia asked.

"*Ach!*" cried Bertha. "It's all right, I just get down the suitcase."

David walked in. He said, very casually: "Look, darling, let's hop over to the hospital. Dr. Mackler thinks your appendix is acting up."

"Me? Appendix?"

"Yes, you, appendix. Lie quiet. We'll move you just as you are."

"You'll move me nowhere," Claudia retorted mutinously. "Why, I never heard of anything so asinine in my life!"

The door-bell rang. "We're going to lift you on a stretcher," David broke it to her gently. "There's a nice big car waiting for you downstairs."

She frowned. A lot seemed to have happened in a few minutes. Where was Dr. Mackler? Where was her mother? David mustn't frighten her mother. . . . Her mother. Her mother was dead. How strange! For a moment she couldn't seem to orient herself—the present, the past and the future seemed to be an inextricable unit. "There isn't any past or future," she discovered in wonder. She told David about it. She said: "I have the most wonderful thoughts."

He said: "It's because you're running a little fever, dear." His voice was very low and quiet. He didn't seem as panicky as when she smashed a finger, or got a crook in her back. David was like that—strong in an emergency. "Is this an emergency?" she queried.

"A little one," he admitted. . . . "Now don't talk any more. Try and sleep."

"Where are we going?" she asked. "What are all those lights?"

"We're driving through the park."

"Driving?"

"I told you it would be a nice, quiet car."

"It's an ambulance, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Fancy me in an ambulance!" she said.

The next thing she knew, a sharp point jabbed at her. She cried out, and opened her eyes. A man in a white coat was sticking a needle in her arm. "Stop that!" she commanded.

"I'm just taking your blood-count, Mrs. Horneledge," he said soothingly. He was quite stout—he looked like a Kewpie doll.

"Who gave you permission to take it? Really! Sneaking up on a person who's asleep—"

He laughed. David stepped forward, from nowhere. "It's all right, darling."

"Where am I now?"

"At Saint Theresa's."

All at once Dr. Rowfield was there. Her mind worked with difficulty through layers of gauze. Behind the gauze there was a bright light, but it was hard to reach the light. If she could only think through to the light, everything would be clear. "Am I having a baby?" she asked very slowly, and very clearly.

"Not this time," Dr. Rowfield told her.

"Then what are *you* doing here?"

Dr. Rowfield smiled in a cheerful way. "Oh, I thought I'd take out your appendix for a change," said he.

"I think you're mistaken," she assured him politely. She tried to make him understand that she wasn't the sort of person to have an appendicitis. An appendicitis meant an operation, and a lot of people died when they were operated on. She wasn't afraid of dying, but she didn't want to leave David—or Bobby—or Matthew. . . . She wanted to go back to the farm with them, and smell the lilacs, and hear the cock crow in the early hours of the morning. . . . "David!" she cried out. "Don't let them do it! David!"

"I'm here, darling."

"I don't want an operation—I'd rather we spent the money on something else."

"But it's all over, dear."

GREAT weights seemed to hold down her lids. She raised them with difficulty. There were a lot of people in the room. No, there was only David, and somebody in white, who rustled. The world was made of pain.

"I hurt—" Claudia whimpered.

"The third day's always the hardest, Mrs. Horneledge."

Claudia's eyes opened all the way. "Third day?"

"Yes, it's the third day, and you're doing very nicely." The person who rustled had turned into a nurse.

"Where did the other days go?" Claudia asked, bewildered.

"You slept a great deal of the time. Doctor's given you something to make you sleep."

"I didn't sleep," said Claudia. "I haven't closed my eyes." She wanted to weep. People thought she'd slept. Everything came back to her. She'd been operated, and they hadn't given her enough ether.

"I felt everything while I was on the table," she complained. Her voice trembled. "I tried to tell them that I could feel everything that they were doing, but no one heard me."

The nurse laughed. "Everybody thinks that."

Claudia retired behind a hurt silence. She wasn't going to argue about it. "Where's my husband?"

"He was here this morning as usual, and he usually runs up around noon-time."

"Not in the evenings?" Claudia demanded, more abused than ever.

"Oh, yes, in the evenings too."

"Does Julia know?"

"Who's Julia?"

"My sister-in-law."

"Certainly. She telephones regularly."

Claudia's lips quivered. "She should have sent me flowers."

"Oh, she did. A lot of flowers have come. But you've been much too sick to have them in the room."

"Really?" Claudia expanded with pride. A person had to be pretty sick if they couldn't have flowers! It was probably just the next step to getting them in wreaths.

"Why was I so sick?" she queried, trying to be modest about it. "Is everybody that had an appendix operation so sick?"

"Mercy me, no; not unless it ruptures."

"Mine ruptured?" Claudia breathed on a long note of awe.

She could hardly wait for David to come. "David, did you know I had a ruptured appendix?"

"Did I know it? You blasted little fool, you damn' near up and died on me." His face was all twisted up as he spoke. She saw suddenly that he had peeled off pounds of weight.

"Oh, David," she whispered, "that would have been a dirty trick."

"You bet it would have been a dirty trick."

"It doesn't sound like me, does it?" she meditated. "It just goes to show you."

"Show you what?"

"That anything can happen to anybody any time. You just have to be prepared. Thank goodness I'd straightened up my bureau drawers the day before."

"That was a blessing," David solemnly agreed.

Still she couldn't get over it. "I bet Bertha's been upset about this."

"Very."

"Hartley upset?"

"Very."

"Everybody upset?"

"Roosevelt ordered an hour of silence while you were on the table. Like Armistice Day."

"Oh, that was nice of him. When can I see my scar?"

"What scar?"

"From my operation, of course. After all, if you've got a scar, can't you show it off a little?"

"Well, not to everybody," David judiciously demurred.

LATER, she knew that she'd had a bad week of it. "Around the fifth day," the nurse told her, "you had us scared." Miss Haskell spoke with relish; she loved serious cases like double pneumonias and streptococcic infections, and she was a little pleased because an appendectomy

had turned out to be a stiff challenge to her capabilities.

"She's a thousand times better than the night-nurse," Claudia confided to David.

The whole thing was, Claudia reflected, that he'd never been really ill, thank heaven, and didn't realize how one's values changed from a sickbed. Tender and adoring as he was, he was nevertheless surrounded by an aura of robust well-being that imbued him with a quality of remoteness. When he left to go home in the evenings, it was as if he departed for a different world. In that world, Claudia knew that there was Bobby and Matthew and Bertha. She asked about them regularly: Did Matthew have any more teeth? Had Bobby ever come down with that cold he'd started? Was Bertha as marvelous as ever? But actually, her questions lacked the salt of real anxiety. Bertha and Bobby and Matthew were but shadows outside the real world of the hospital.

They felt it no less than she, when they came to see her for the first time. There was a little sign on the door: *"No Visitors,"* and Bertha's knock was timid. Her step across the room was timid, too. The floor creaked beneath her hardy weight. Bobby clung to her hand, staring at his mother as if she were a stranger, unable to bridge the invisible rift of illness that lay between them.

"You look wonderful," Bertha cried, not really meaning it, because there were tears in her voice. "Say something to your Mamma, Bobby," she prompted.

"Hello," Bobby mumbled. He looked distrait and unhappy, and painfully well dressed.

"Such beautiful flowers," Bertha approved, with a proud glance about the laden room. "Fritz sends his love. Every day he writes, how are you?"

"That's lovely of him," said Claudia. "Is everything all right, home? —How's school, Bobby?"

Bobby cleared his throat to speak, but decided it was easier just to nod his head. "The cat has got his tongue," Bertha explained apologetically.

Miss Haskell came hurrying in. "I think we've had enough for a first visit," she ordained in her brightly competent voice.

"Take home that basket of fruit, Bertha—" Claudia urged. "And there's a box of fancy cakes I'll never eat."

Bobby revived a little at this turn of events. He said, "I'll carry the cakes!"

And in a few moments, they were gone. Claudia felt exhausted.

"It's an effort," Miss Haskell sympathized, lowering the shade. "Now come, here's your medicine, and then we'll take a nice nap."

Claudia sighed with gratitude.

"She's a little tired." Miss Haskell was quick to forestall David that evening. "She had her first company."

"Then I'd better not stay long."

CLAUDIA wanted to tell him that he needn't hurry away, but there wasn't very much to talk about,—except that the woman in the next room was operated on for gall-stones. "She's not out of the anesthetic yet, poor thing."

"That's tough," said David, not feeling too dreadfully about it. He bent over her. "Well, I'll toddle along now," he offered, as if he expected her to say, 'No, stay.'"

But she didn't want him to stay. She was tired. She patted his cheek. "Good-by, darling."

SHE was much stronger the second week.

"I don't feel so abused, and weepy," she told him.

He said, grinning a little: "That was the medicine you were taking."

"Oh was it? That's a relief. I couldn't imagine—"

Julia was her next visitor—looking very healthy and busy, as if she had just come from a committee meeting. For the first time in their years of knowing each other, Claudia felt as if they had a great deal in common. They sounded like two old ladies, talking about their operations. "Whatever you do," Julia cautioned, "don't overtax yourself; it doesn't pay. I took it easy, for months—I'm still careful," she added. "Though of course, I had a much more severe time of it—I had practically everything removed."

"But you had no complications," Claudia pointed out, a little coldly.

"Anyway," said Julia, blowing a kiss, in lieu of defending a completely untenable position, "behave yourself, my child; I'll see you when you get home."

Home. Claudia hadn't thought of going home. "When can I?" she asked, when Miss Haskell brought in the luncheon tray.

"Dr. Rowfield says in about ten days from now, if everything goes well." She broke a baked potato, and mashed a pat of butter into it.

Claudia lifted a silver cover without enthusiasm. "Chicken again," she said listlessly.

"You ordered chicken. It's very good. It's the best thing they serve."

Claudia gave a slight shiver. She remembered back to the time when she'd thought that three trays a day, with anything you wanted to eat selected from a varied menu, would be close to heaven. But it wasn't. Food was no longer a delight—it was merely a necessity.

"The nurse tells me you're not eating properly," David chided her.

"The meals are awful."

David seemed surprised, "I ate here a couple of times and I thought the food was pretty good," he said.

There came a day when Claudia sat with her legs dangling over the side of the bed.

"Your wife was up," Miss Haskell reported to David. "She stood it very well."

"You ought to see my legs," Claudia boasted. "They're toothpicks."

"How far did you walk?" asked David.

"I just dangled," Claudia elucidated.

The next day she sat in a chair for fifteen minutes, and the day after that, she took a trip around the room.

"Tomorrow," Miss Haskell planned, "we'll be wheeled out to the sun-parlor."

When David came that evening, he went even further. "Sunday I can take you home!" he cried, with a note of jubilance in his voice. "And Dr. Rowfield says you won't even need a nurse!"

"Oh," said Claudia.

"Aren't you happy?" he demanded.

"Of course I'm happy," she agreed. But secretly, she felt the nearest to stage-fright that she'd ever felt.

It was odd to leave the hospital without a baby. "You're the baby this time," said Miss Haskell, leading Claudia's arms into the sleeves of her one-piece wool dress.

"It seems queer to be in clothes, too," said Claudia.

"It seems pretty good, I should say," David put in. He looked as if he'd just had quintuplets; he couldn't get the grin off his face. Claudia wished that she could feel equally happy about it. She had an all-gone feeling in the pit of her stomach, and her knees felt as if they were made of rubber. "You must get right into bed, and take a nap the first thing you get home," Miss Haskell instructed. "You'll see to it, won't you, Mr. Horneledge? After all, we've been pretty sick, and we don't want any relapses."

"I'll see to it," David promised. "The house is very quiet. Bobby won't even be there when we come; he's at his aunt's."

"I think that was a good idea," said Claudia. She was ashamed to confess the relief that flooded through her. Bobby was awfully good, but he was pretty obstreperous.

Miss Haskell did not go off duty, in a manner of speaking, until her patient rolled down the street in the taxi. "She's going on a mastoid case this afternoon," Claudia informed David. "But she said if I wanted her back—"

"Why should you want her back?" David interrupted. "You're well again, darling!" His hand sought hers. It was warm, and firm, and big. But it spelled no security after Miss Haskell's brusque, firm touch.

The taxi-ride was bewildering. "I didn't realize there were so many tall buildings." Claudia marveled. "And everything's gone on just the same."

"Not for me, it hasn't," David said.

BERTHA was waiting, with the door open, long before the elevator reached the fifth floor. *"Ach!"* she cried, in inarticulate welcome.

David picked Claudia up, and carried her into the bedroom. "Wait," Claudia exclaimed. "I see a lot of flowers in the living-room!"

"Not now, later."

"Who sent them?"

"The Dexfords, and Nancy Riddleton."

"Oh, that was darling of them."

There were flowers in the bedroom, too. Roses. "Who sent those? They're simply gorgeous; what long stems—"

David grinned. "Your new night nurse."

"Into bed, now," Bertha ordered.

"I think I'd like to walk into the nursery and see Matthew first," Claudia suddenly decided.

But David was obdurate. "I promised Miss Haskell," he said.

"Phooey to Miss Haskell! I feel wonderful."

Matthew was fast asleep. Claudia hung over the crib. "He's enormous!" she whispered. "He's grown twice his size!"

She walked back to the bedroom, feeling stronger with every step. "What high ceilings," she said softly.

"And three exposures," David added.

"It hardly seems like a furnished apartment—it seems like home."

"It was an awful lot of furnished apartment for the last month," David said.

"And the bed," he mentioned boldly, "was an awful lot of bed."

"It seems just right now," said Claudia shyly, "not a bit too big." She sniffed. "What's that I smell?"

Bertha pulled up the blankets and deftly arranged the pillows. "Chicken," she said. "Fritz sent down chickens from the farm especially for today."

Claudia's tongue ran over her lips. "With rice or dumplings?"

"Dumplings," said Bertha.

"How long to wait?"

"Almost any minute. So soon Bobby comes, we eat."

The bell rang at that very moment—rang and rang. "Little devil," David muttered, "I told him he'd have to be quiet!"

Bertha, clucking, hurried to the door. Her hasty caution was too late.

"Mother!" Bobby shouted jubilantly. "Mother! Are you home?"

"I'm home!" Claudia shouted back.

His steps sounded, fast and eager, up the hall. He stood at the door. His socks were tumbling down, and his hair was rumpled—but his world was safe! Claudia sat up in bed, and flung her arms out toward him.

"Oh, this is living!" she thought.

OUR READERS SPEAK

(Continued from page 7)

"Stop and Think" . . .

I have just finished "Child of Compassion" by Cronin. Before I go back into the world of today—before I look at the screaming headlines of the paper—I want to take this moment to thank REDBOOK for such an author. Never before have just plain words moved me so much. The tenderness, the bitterness, and the sorrow he writes seems to leap into my soul. He can do with a few words, what we should all be made to do—"stop and think."

W. F. Gorman,
Portsmouth, Virginia.

Texas and Beauty

Why, REDBOOK asks, do so many of America's fair women hail from Texas? It's largely because of its geographical location.

The typical Texas girl has that greatest of all beauty requirements—a radiant complexion. For that she can thank the science of geology and her proximity to the Gulf of Mexico. Texas ranks first in oil and gas production. Using gas for fuel, the result is smokeless, grimeless air with enough moisture from the Gulf to prevent dry skin and lusterless eyes and hair.

Mrs. E. M. Stapp, Jr.,
Tulsa, Oklahoma.

A Voice from Hongkong

Here's one from the other side of your world. REDBOOK is sold *at $1.20 a copy* here, quite a luxury to me while we have a war going on. But I'd rather do without other indispensables than REDBOOK.

Please print some war stories. I'm all for them, so long as they are in favor of the right course. Why should you Americans be afraid of war stories even when you don't have a real war of your own?

How about a story of war in China? Come on, don't be an ostrich!

V. T. Lee,
Hongkong, China.

Two Letters from North Carolina

Is it possible for a North Carolina reader to get a letter printed, regarding her views on REDBOOK and its writers?

I have yet to see one printed, although we Tar Heels are extensive readers and, as a general rule, fans of REDBOOK.

My husband and I seldom enjoy the same type of stories, and it is gratifying to find a magazine which pleases the taste of both. Give me more Claudia and David, also more about the family at Jalna.

Mrs. E. R. Thomas,
Charlotte, North Carolina.

The series "Prelude to a Tyrant," by Pierre van Paassen, is most entertaining. However, I wish he, or one of your other able writers, would write a series of articles on Americanism; not the "Star Spangled Banner" kind that makes you salute the flag, don a uniform, grab a gun, and march off to fight; but the "God Bless America" kind that makes you so proud of it, and grateful to it, that you are ashamed to give America anything short of right living, good citizenship, and a cheerful loyal heart.

Annie Lou Rogers,
Fayetteville, North Carolina.

"I Live in the Hills"

I think I am a fair critic of a magazine. My qualifications: I live in the hills and depend solely on magazines for my entertainment. I am confined to a chair and have many hours to fill with reading.

REDBOOK's arrival is a red-letter day. The stories are varied in subject and style, and as I like all kinds, that suits me. However, I'd like to know more about the authors. When you introduce a new one to your magazine, couldn't you also introduce him or her to us?

And more mysteries, please.

Marguerite Hummert,
Mountain Home, Arkansas.

We Like You, Too . . .

REDBOOK presents more real writers than any magazine I have seen. Not mere "authors," who write trivial stories of trivial people and whose finished manuscripts are masterpieces of glossing over; but men and women who know life, and what people think, and who tell us about it so vividly and understandingly that we grow as we read, entering into a new tenderness and compassion for all humanity.

Give us more of Nancy Hale, Richard Sherman and Katherine Mansfield, less of Rose Franken and Philip Wylie. No, you aren't perfect. But I like you.

Doris Layer,
Silver City, New Mexico.

Thanks, a Lot!

REDBOOK acts as no political sounding-board for candidates eager to save the country from a fate worse than death—the election of another candidate! REDBOOK features no "Blitzkrieg" of acrid political articles followed by savagely written replies! It is the only popular magazine upholding the primary purposes of a fiction magazine—entertainment and information without recourse to partisan political articles.

Orlando G. Rodman,
Indianapolis, Indiana.

NOT FOR JUST A YEAR

(Continued from page 29)

get to San Antonio. Things like that always happen to me."

So things like that always happened to him? Well, what did he think happened to her? Nothing except having someone you loved walk out of your life forever. And he could be casual about it, and discuss air-conditioning, while she sat there feeling faint and hollow. Oh, he was a smooth one, all right! And she thought back to the night almost two years before when her phone rang and a voice said: "You probably don't remember me, but my name's Mike Warlen, and I met you at the Sears' open-house last New Year's Day. I told you I'd give you a ring when I got to New York. Remember?"

Remember? Would she ever forget? But she said: "Of course I remember you." And she did. She remembered coming into the Sears living-room and he was standing at the other end of the room, very tall, very dark and very lean; and when he saw her, he came toward her. "Hello," he said. And she said, "Hello," although her eyes said things like, "Where have you been all my life?" So now he was calling her up and saying that he had a job in New York, and that he'd like very much to see her. And she said that she'd like to see him too. And she put down the phone and sat there trying to picture him in her mind. His voice and the way he held a cigarette and the color of his eyes and whether his hair was straight or wavy.

And that was some two years ago; and now, sitting close to him, she realized that she would always remember him. Even if she lived to be a thousand years old, she would still remember him. But now it was ending. Ending at dusk in Grand Central, this thing that had begun on a winter's day while she stood in a crowded room that looked out onto snow-covered fields glaring in the hard bright sunlight —ending sharply and cruelly.

He was taking her hand. "I'm going to miss you, Sylvia."

("So he's going to miss me!" she thought. "As if I were a favorite pipe or a pair of comfortable slippers. And what am I going to do? Study the flute or dance in Central Park at dawn? What am I going to do? Just tell me that. He touches me, and I melt. I look at him and—") But she smiled and said: "Don't worry. You'll have plenty to keep you occupied. A new job and things to see. Oh, you'll get along."

"I hope so." And then the cab was turning in, and the redcap had the door open and was waiting for them to get out so that he could take the luggage.

"You'll write to me?" he said.

"Of course I'll write. I'll let you know who punched who at all the night-clubs—everything else that happens." He took her arm as they went across the station.

"I certainly hope the air-conditioning doesn't go on the fritz."

"It won't," she said. When she smiled, she tilted her head and he saw the clean sweep of her brow and the shadows her lashes cast on her cheeks. "Oh, is that your train they're calling?"

"Buffalo, Cleveland, St. Louis? Yup, that's mine."

"You just about made it." She tried to sound light.

"We-ell," he said. "Aren't you going to kiss me goodby?"

She nodded and held up her face. He leaned down and kissed her politely on the cheek. "We-ell," he said again, "that's it, I guess. 'By, Sylvia." He took her hand and held it.

"Good-by, Mike. Be careful of the señoritas!" She felt his fingers loosen on her hand. She stood there watching him as he went through the gates and along the platform. ("Good-by, darling," she said, but softly and to herself.) She put her fingertips to her lips and waved a kiss at his back. And then, sighing, she turned and walked slowly out of the station. People passed her, but she did not see them. She saw only him. Blind, stupid—But not so blind, really. And not so stupid. He could tell, all right. He didn't want to tell, though. That was the story.

"HEAH you are, suh." The porter set down his luggage in the train.

"Thanks. Here." He handed the porter a coin.

"Ah hopes you has a pleasant trip to Mexico City, suh." And the porter closed the door behind him.

A pleasant trip? Yeah. Sure. The pleasantest trip imaginable. Why the hell did she have to be so polite about it? Why didn't she be honest about it? Be careful of the señoritas? Oh, sure. What was the matter with her, anyway? Why did she let him talk about air-conditioning? What did he care about air-conditioning? Was she blind? Or stupid? Couldn't she tell by the way he looked at her? Oh, she could tell, all right. She did not want to tell: that was the story.

His fingers closed around the knob on the door and cradled it for a moment, and then they turned the knob and opened the door. He stepped out into the aisle and began to run. He ran down the aisle and pulled open the heavy door and clanked down the iron stairs and onto the platform. He saw the porter who had taken his bags into the compartment. "Redcap," he called to him, "get the luggage out of my compartment. Check it for me. I'm not taking this train." And then he began running again, along the sooty platform and through the gates and out onto the slippery, gleaming marble. He could always take a plane, couldn't he? If she should laugh at him or refuse him politely or turn him down flat, he could take a plane, couldn't he? And the worst she could say was no, wasn't it?

HELP US BELIEVE

(Continued from page 35)

cut air rose to incredible pitch, and then inexorably higher and still a little higher, and the roots of his nose began to ache with it. The decks of the ships, straight ahead, grew and spread and filled his whole vision, and he had time to see details like motionless running figures, and the black vaporous holes of funnels, and a seagull with raised wings just off the cap of a flagstaff. And then he felt Bates let go all in a bunch, and he counted *"One, two,"* and pulled out of it; and the harbor whizzed like something in a movie when the film slips off, and he steadied on a slowly tilting horizon; and then ahead of the nose of his plane was a wheeling sky filled with smoke-flowers fading into tatters. He leveled; away off and unexpectedly to the right, the squadron leader was scudding, low and fast, toward home.

Ron glanced at his compass, fixed his memorized course and started after him. But a disturbance dead ahead—a pom-pomming burst of shells, making a solid rounded hedge of smoke, like a queer hell-flowering bush—veered him off seaward.

As he kicked his rudder over, he saw two fading lines of light, one a little ahead of the other, come down from above; and then for a breath there was the whirl and dodging of combat planes in front of that expanding billowy darkness of smoke. Straight ahead of him was the hard, clean sea-horizon, and then the plane lifted and slanted as if they were riding a big hissing sea like the ones at home, come all the way across the North Pacific from the China Coast; and there were ragged screeching holes lined with torn metal all around him in the body of the plane, and the left wing crumpled ever so quietly. It was curious: he saw the metal tearing in a quite leisurely way along the lines of the plates, and he had time to consider how to balance the ship flying in with a damaged wing, as far as the Holland Coast, at least. . . . As he made the quick guesses at height and speed and what limping powers his plane might have left, he was conscious of shame at thinking of internment, and Cathy waiting in England until— And then the girder-structure of that left wing buckled a little, about halfway along, and then a little more; and the air began tearing splinters from the bowed crack, as a demented child might tear feathers from a chicken's wing. She slewed around a bit; and it was time to leave her.

HE felt Mac, the machine-gunner, crawling toward him as he opened the slide; and he looked back, but all he saw was Bates, and he looked dead. And then he was kneeling on the right wing, his head butted into a solid wall of air, with a vague idea of waiting for Mac, but Mac didn't get there, and there wasn't any time left. Then he was alone in space, a bright space of sunshine; and tilting back his head, he looked at the earth above him: all hazy and pale patterned blue, dotted with sunshine, revolving slowly above him. His feet were free and loose, but still alive with the feeling of the lost solidness of the wing; and he sensed the shadow of the rudder as it flashed whirlingly across his feet.

THE barbed-wire netting was very high, above the mud. Probably twelve feet high; and above it, between the tall slim poles, the copper strands of the high-voltage lines had a burnished deadly sheen in the stormy light of late afternoon. The tips of Ron's crutches sank deep in the mud, but he had left the slatted wooden walk to stand on this little patch of withered grass to watch the sun go down—over England. It was a pale and frosty light, under windy clouds.

A measured squishy thudding of boot-heels on the duckboards made him turn his head and look with tired curiosity. Just wheeled off from the main wooden walk of the prison-camp, the old fat German they called Our Pa was coming toward him, trying, even here, to walk as the Prussian Guard had walked in its day.

Our Pa clicked his heels, bent slightly but at an angle which would have been precise if it hadn't been for his stomach, and wheezed something with the throaty respect due enemy officers who were prisoners of war, but still officers.

Ron watched him blankly. Our Pa pointed toward the middle of the camp and said something else, nodding vigorously. He patted Ron's arm with a heavy friendly hand.

"Oh! Whatever you say," Ron said. He turned awkwardly on his crutches, Our Pa helping solicitously with a hand under his elbow, and they got back on the duckboards.

When they reached the oval of concrete in front of the commandant's office, Ron saw four or five of their officers standing on the steps of the modernistic little concrete office building, between the potted shrubs now black with frost. To one side, under the blank gleam of a plate-glass window, a couple of men in humble flapping civilian overcoats were fussing around two cameras with a rather apologetic official bustle. Our Pa lined Ron up in the middle of the oval, facing the officers, and saluted. Ron tried to act unconcerned as if holding a cigarette.

The knot of officers moved toward him, staring him up and down, and Ron felt Our Pa effacing himself into the distant background; but he was looking steadily at the boiled colorless eyes and the little blond mustache of the commandant. The photographers came hurrying up, their overcoats flapping more than ever in the wind while they exclaimed back and forth in intimate anxious gutturals. One of the officers wore the uniform of their flying corps.

One of the photographers pointed toward the steps and went into a long respectful speech to the commandant, who nodded curtly and made a jerky motion with one hand to his side. The aide saluted, grabbed Ron's elbow abruptly, and some other hand snatched his crutches away. They hustled him to the steps, and he was propped up with his good leg against one of the tubs of shrubbery. Then their pilot stepped forward with military precision and came to stand in front of him with a blank face. The photographers scrambled and grunted in earnestness while they lugged their cameras out into the oval and set them up there, throwing black cloths over their heads. A stolid sergeant began striking matches, one after the other, above Ron's head for them to focus on. The pilot standing in front of Ron was at attention, and his eyes were glazed in the sunset light, but the knuckles of his fist loosened and tightened nervously while he waited for the photographers to be ready. They stood there with their lapels stirring and their fingertips freezing in that bitter east wind.

Ron realized what it was about, but after an instant of disgust, he thought: *"What harm can it do? And if somehow Cathy or the Major might see it published, maybe in some paper in the States, they'll know that I'm still—"*

Then the commandant barked, and the pilot lifted a hand to his breast, and with a harsh straight-armed gesture thrust out a package of cigarettes toward Ron. Ron leaned a little on his good leg, and made as if to take one. The flashlights went off almost together; and then before Ron had his fingers on a cigarette, the pilot had jerked the package back and was tucking it into his front.

"Oh," Ron said. "Sorry, old man."

Someone shoved his crutches back into his hands, and while the officers stalked past him into the doorway, thick fingers took his elbow again, and Our Pa's voice wheezed secretly. They walked slowly away together. When they had turned a corner and were out of sight of the commandant's office, Our Pa fumbled uncertainly at his breast and finally brought out a frayed paper packet. It was limp, and mashed nearly flat: there were two cigarettes left in it.

"Oh," Ron protested. "But really, I couldn't—" Then he looked at Our Pa's eyes, and without any more hesitation took one of the cigarettes. "Thank you, sir," he said.

Our Pa came to attention—the sort of attention that the Prussian Guard once stood to.

"Ja, ja," he said.

Ron went on, and turned the corner. He thumped along a bit until he came to the patch of withered grass from which he could see the sun set beyond England.

WHILE he was gone the clouds had dropped; now there was only a streak of dull orange along the flat horizon to the west. Somewhere, there, was Cathy. Perhaps she would be looking westward too, watching the sun go down behind the mists of the Thames, thinking of an island beyond the seas that they had talked of.

But still trying to believe, Cathy would be. To believe that out of this calculated confusion, out of this shrewd madness of nations, might come a time when small unknown people like them, the unimportant young of the earth, might find time to themselves for dignity, and love, and a life that wasn't make-believe.

With his crutches propped beside him against the barbed-wire netting, with his fingers enmeshed and straining among its manufactured cruelty, Ron looked at the bar of light in the west.

And lifting a blank face, he whispered: *"Cathy. . . . Help us believe."*

WHOM HITLER REASSURES—HE WILL DESTROY

(Continued from page 31)

of the Reich's hangars, and orders had been given that under no circumstances would Germany be allowed to construct even a commercial air-fleet. In addition, a string of small countries had been set up around Germany, and alliances concluded with these to keep the Reich forever enclosed in a ring of steel and concrete. Germany's navy had been surrendered and scuttled, her colonies distributed among the victors. And her civilian population had been set to work to make good the enormous damage done by the German armies in the invaded regions of France and Belgium. The six million troops with which Germany had concluded the war were demobilized, and permission had only grudgingly been given for the retention of an army of one hundred thousand men for police purposes exclusively. But it was stipulated that this new army be allowed neither artillery nor tanks nor airplanes.

Germany was impotent at last. She was finished. The defeat of 1918 had reduced her to a second-class power. The menace that had hung over Europe for half a century and that had exhausted Europe's resources in armament campaigns had been obliterated. Never again would the Teutonic fury disturb the peace of the continent. Moreover, the man who had been looked upon as the most insatiable land-grabber, Kaiser Wilhelm II, had fled to Holland. His dreams of world empire had been shattered on the plains of Champagne and Flanders.

Yes, the Kaiser had gone. But the generals had stayed behind. And with the generals had stayed the enormous staffs of economic and industrial planners who sat in the bureaus of the Geopolitical Institute, the War Academy and the offices of the *Konjunkturforschungs Institut.* These men had not discarded one blueprint of their projects to dominate the world. They did not abandon their dreams for a moment. As a matter of fact, they looked upon the defeat of 1918 as a blessing in disguise. For in that conflict the military chiefs had clearly seen the mistakes of their strategy and had learned their lesson. It was now obvious to them that Bismarck's advice never to fight on two fronts should have been heeded. The next time Germany must have either France or Russia on her side, or observing a strict neutrality.

Next time! Hardly anyone with whom I spoke in Germany failed to say something about that "next time." All lamentations over the war ended up with a grim threat about the next time. "Oh, it'll be different the next time. . . . You just wait till next time." There could be no doubt that the German people, before as well as after Hitler came to power, were waiting with ill-concealed impatience for the next time, the next world war.

The defeat of 1918 and the ensuing humiliation had been recognized and worked as most fertile ground for the preparation of the new attempt to knock out Europe. The deeper the humiliation of the after-war years, the better they

liked it. They encouraged the up-and-coming Nazi party and other ultra-nationalist groups to call the Treaty of Versailles a violation of human rights, and the German nation a people of slaves. They never mentioned that it was the plotting and scheming and mistakes of the General Staff, and the economic brain-trust's aim to dominate the world, which had plunged Germany into disaster. Day in and day out, for years on end, it was dinned into the German people's heads that it was only England's selfishness and America's "treachery" which had reduced them to the status of serfs.

Right then and there the brain-trusters who paved the way for Hitler laid the groundwork for the inclusion of America in the general hate campaign. For the first time was heard the cry *"Die Amerikaner sind unsere Erzfeinde!"* The Americans are our arch enemies! Scholars, journalists, so-called humanitarians and even churchmen joined in this anti-American clamor, which found expression in innumerable pamphlets, books, newspaper articles and pseudo-scientific dissertations. All these outpourings had a common denominator, which can be defined in a few words: Envious admiration and covetous hatred of American wealth.

I GIVE but one example, which is not taken from any militaristic or chauvinistic nationalist source, but from a book called "Letters from America," a volume disseminated in huge quantities. The author, Gustav Frenssen, may be remembered as the gentle portrayer of peasant life in the lyrical epics "Hilligenlei" and "Otto Babendiek," which were best-sellers not only in Europe but in America as well.

This is what Dr. Frenssen wrote:

"For four years the German people defended itself with reckless courage against vastly superior forces. Its enemies had to draw nation after nation into the fight against us. They won these allies partly with promises of territory or money, partly through lies. . . .

"The Anglo-Saxon intelligentsia in England and America now began a ruthless, coldly calculated campaign against the German people. German *Kultur* is nothing but barbarism and evil, they declared. This, of course, was the exact reverse of the truth.

"America, whose fresh vigor and solemn promises had brought us down in defeat, left us, a people starved and bled white, to the mercies of our other foes. . . .

"France and England did not defeat us; nor was it God's will that they should vanquish us. We should have been the victors. For we were the better men, the more alert, purer in heart. And victory was in our grasp. BUT THEN AMERICA CAME IN—WITHOUT REASON, WITHOUT PURPOSE, IN DEFIANCE OF GOD. AND AMERICA CRIPPLED GERMANY AND BATTERED AND VIOLATED ALL EUROPE.

"Do you think I believe matters will remain as they are? That God in His justice will permit American children to watch peaches rot on the ground while the shivering hands of German children are empty of bread? WHICH NATION WON THIS WAR IS SOMETHING WE WILL KNOW IN FIFTY YEARS."

Outwardly, in the years following the Versailles Treaty, Germany looked to be definitely on the road to becoming a

democracy. Freedom of assembly and of speech were guaranteed. Labor temples were arising in the workers' quarters of all the great cities. There was a Socialist president, and the parliament functioned as smoothly as in London or Paris. Political leaders came forward with plans to make Germany one of the great sister democracies of France, Britain and the United States. They thought that all the old rankling differences with the victor nations could be smoothed out in a decent democratic way, in the conference-room and in a neighborly spirit.

Germany's greatest proponent of democracy and international coöperation at that time was Walther Rathenau. He was a statesman of exceptional ability. He had pinned his hopes on coming to a reasonable understanding with the Allies. He wanted to show the world that Germany had abandoned all aspirations of revenge and conquest, and cherished but one desire, to enter the community of civilized nations as a full equal. Rathenau hoped that in return for this new peaceful spirit the Allies would relent and alleviate the burden of reparations which the Reich was compelled to pay under the stipulations of the Versailles Treaty.

Rathenau's policy represented an immense danger to the plans of revenge and conquest which the General Staff had never ceased perfecting.. It was the poverty, unemployment, starvation and general misery of the German people which served as grist in the mill of these long-distance planners. If the German people were to be led into the paths of peace, and were to place their hope for recovery on harmonious coöperation with the other nations of Europe, the dreams of world conquest would have to evaporate entirely.

Just when Rathenau was beginning to get the ear of London and Paris, he was murdered. His assassins were members of a secret society of ex-officers, the so-called Black Reichswehr. The Black Reichswehr, it was later shown, belonged to the group of planners in the War Office. This same group had a year earlier foully murdered Matthias Erzberger. the minister who had negotiated the armistice. Erzberger, a man of the people, had dared to buck the military caste, and wanted no part of its ideas of revenge. Both Rathenau's and Erzberger's murderers were later glorified by Herr Hitler.

With the death of Rathenau, Germany's most influential after-war democrat was removed. True, other prominent Germans ostensibly followed in Rathenau's path. Gustav Stresemann, the Reich's foreign minister, officially proclaimed that Germany's future lay in a *rapprochement* with France. But Stresemann was a typical Prussian. In his youth he had been one of the leaders of "Neo-Germania," a chauvinistic Prussian student organization which supported Kaiser Wilhelm's arrogant policy of the mailed fist in foreign affairs. Rathenau's successor was an opportunist who merely skillfully covered up the manipulations of the military academy. Aristide Briand, the French foreign minister, believed in Stresemann's sincerity, however. Briand too was an opportunist, and a victim of his own brilliant oratory. While the embers of the peace treaty were smoldering, and Europe was sitting on a volcano that threatened to erupt in the near future, Briand mounted the tribune in Paris and Geneva and delivered scintillating speeches about the United States of Europe.

The friendship between Stresemann and Briand inspired many day-dreamers and coffee-house politicians with great hopes for a permanent understanding between France and Germany. In reality they were filling the rôle of a vaudeville team engaging in funny dialogue in front of the curtain, while scenery is being shifted on the stage. And the scenery on the stage of Europe was being changed rapidly.

While Briand and Stresemann were being photographed in brotherly embrace at Geneva, it was common knowledge among the newspaper correspondents in Berlin, where I was a frequent visitor, that the German General Staff employed more officers than at the height of the war. For one thing, the buildings housing the various army bureaus had been enlarged to ten times the space they occupied in the Kaiser's days.

ON the day that Briand and Stresemann issued a joint communiqué about the prospects of Franco-German coöperation, sixteen hundred new telephone numbers were listed under the War Office in the Berlin telephone book. Scarcely any military uniforms could be seen in the streets or cafés or parks of Berlin. The remilitarization of Germany went on behind an opaque curtain. After Briand lost his vaudeville partner in 1929, he carried on a monologue for three years. When he passed away, less than a year before Hitler came to power, even the pretense of talking peace came to an end.

As soon as Hitler stood at the helm in Germany, and announced the fight against Bolshevism as his chief aim, France and Britain at once relaxed their vigilance. They no longer felt themselves menaced by Germany. Time and again Hitler announced that he had no quarrel with England or with France. but that his ambitions lay in an easterly direction. He made it clear that he was out to conquer Russia. "If we had the resources of Russia," he once said, "we would not trouble anybody for centuries to come."

With his anti-Bolshevik slogan Hitler hoodwinked the Allies completely. Instead of opposing German military expansion, the British and the French began to encourage it. England permitted Hitler to build a new navy on the presumption that he might need battleships to cover the landing of an army on the shores of the Gulf of Finland, in the vicinity of Leningrad. Nobody opposed him when he re-introduced universal military service in the Reich. The German war machine was now hitting on all cylinders. The rest is too recent history.

The old German dream of world-conquest had become reality at last. In the short space of half a year Hitler overran Poland, Norway, Denmark, Holland and Belgium and France. In the German plan, the defeat of Britain is considered an accomplished fact only when the entire Anglo-Saxon race—including America—acknowledges the economic, military and political world-mastery of Nazidom.

Hitler has not published the sequel to "Mein Kampf," which will deal with the war of the continents. But it would not surprise me if the manuscript lies ready in his desk. In the meanwhile—that is, while his armies were smashing France and Britain—he has pursued with respect to America the same diplomatic strategy he used so successfully in lulling the British Empire to sleep. Any and every hint from the United States that this hemisphere might be next on the program has been countered from Berlin with declarations that Germany has no designs on the Americas, and only desires a Monroe Doctrine for Europe.

Hitler seeks to reassure America both by his words and by his silence. But the new foreign policy which comes into effect as soon as the European conquest is completed is being forged day and night in the Geopolitical Institute at Munich and the *Auslandsorganisation* of the National Socialist Party at Berlin. While the American department of the Reich's foreign ministry in the Wilhelmstrasse is a very modest, unpretentious set of offices, a staff of experts is already directing the preparatory work for the integration of the Western Hemisphere into the Nazi economic world order. The control system of the world-wide network of Fifth Columners, secret agents, consular representatives and troublemakers is already functioning at top speed in Munich and Berlin. The blueprints for the conquest of America are ready to be put into execution at the proper time.

Next month Mr. Van Paassen discusses in detail the Nazi plot against the Americas—and us.

THE POLISH GOLD

(Continued from page 55)

twenty million in the bank, the first part of the convoy could take just over five if it were to start immediately—and that was essential.

In each bus there would be a crew of two, driving in turns. The five buses would travel in line, keeping in close formation; the men not busy driving were to keep watch for the arranged signal for breakdown or distress—one flash of light. In no other circumstances could any light be shown. Débris, shell-holes, or the chances of running down refugees on the road would have to be ignored. Any man who fell behind or had to give up through injury would be a man thrown away, an insignificant component rejected. The convoy was a whole, an entity, and only as such would it stand any chance of getting through.

The crews listened to the instructions. Matuszewski went in the first bus of the column and gave the signal to start. The gates swung open; the motors roared and spluttered, and the five old machines lumbered out onto the streets of the battered city.

There were only a few hours of darkness left as the convoy drove slowly from the outskirts of Warsaw into the open country. There was no moon, and driving without lights kept the machines in close formation for fear that any driver might lose sight of the bus ahead. The average speed was the speed of the slowest machine; and once that had been discovered, Matuszewski took it to the front of the column to set the pace, for fear that if it tried to hold a place at the rear it would be overdriven, and then fail. The road was terrible, pitted by artillery fire and bombing, barely possible to negotiate.

The first sign of daylight was the signal of the column to leave the road and find shelter in the woods and thickets. But though the first hours of driving were done, the work was just beginning. Branches and shoots had to be cut down and roped onto the vehicles to disguise them from view, and the camouflaging had to be made permanent, strong enough to withstand the jolting of the road.

All that day, as the convoy lay hidden in the woods, the bombers were out looking for them. Machine-gun bullets were sprayed at random, and sometimes a bomb was dropped on the already pitted roadway as though in baffled spite. Sleep and rest were difficult; and all day long the drone and whine of the machines continued overhead, searching for the column which was on its way, looking for the gold which might even now slip through the net spread by the converging armies. Somewhere, there had been a leakage! The chase had begun in earnest.

At nightfall the engines were started up, and the column jolted back onto the road to lumber on through the crouching, darkened villages.

Matuszewski was deaf to all excuses and pleading. The convoy had to keep moving; and to keep moving, it had to have fuel. So he took fuel where he could find it, begging and plundering the means of keeping the wheels rolling eastward toward Brest-Litovsk and safety.

Now that Warsaw had been left behind, the roads were crowded with the remnants of the northern divisions and the slow-moving, pathetic mass of refugees, old men, women and children from the towns. At the roar and vibration of the column of buses, the wandering groups staggered to one side to let them pass.

THE first night's driving covered almost ninety kilometers; and on the second night, putting up the average in spite of the stops for fuel, the mileage had been increased to one hundred and fifty, the second stopping-place being Terespol, on the banks of the River Bug, five kilometers from the city of Brest-Litovsk. Behind them the road had been bombed and the railway had been cut. The trap was closing.

At daybreak, Matuszewski and Jan, his relief driver, commandeered a car from Terespol and went on to the city, taking with them a woman and the child they had found on the road and carrying them to the city hospital. And at the hospital Matuszewski discovered that communications with Warsaw had been as uncertain during the past twenty-four hours as the transport routes. Since the German announcers were broadcasting news on the Warsaw wave-band, all information was

suspect. Rumor was persistent that the Capital had fallen.

The leakage first suspected when the Nazi planes came out to look for the convoy now seemed definite. Village after village along the road they had taken had been smashed to pieces. And as they reached Brest-Litovsk, the radio voices from Germany mocked at them, announcing that it was well known the gold was on its way. The route had been followed, and would be destroyed ahead of them. The amount of gold they carried was known, the way it had come, the hour it had left, the direction it was planning to take next. Every kilometer traveled had been followed across the map by the finger of the Gestapo.

Matuszewski announced the situation and its seriousness to his men as soon as he got back to them.

"So far, we have been run into a corner," he said. "The communications have broken down, and it seems to be impossible to find out whether or not Warsaw has fallen. If it is still in our hands, we might try to get back there, pick up the rest of the bullion, find some more transport, and try another way to the frontier. But until there is some way of finding out about the Capital, we stay in the corner. Somehow we have to break out, and quickly, for in a few days it may be too late. Within the next twenty-four hours I will have to find some way of getting in touch with Colonel Koc."

A PLANE was the solution, but a plane was also the problem.

The Air Force squadrons were as cut off from communication with Brest-Litovsk as Warsaw, most of them being stationed in various parts of Galicia, the southeast corner of Poland—where, it was said, they were awaiting possible Allied assistance. And Brest-Litovsk itself had no plane available.

A report came into Terespol that two miles outside the town a Polish reconnaissance-plane had been shot down some days before to a forced landing. And hearing this, Matuszewski, climbed into a car to go and examine its possibilities.

He found the plane lying at the edge of a deserted flying-field. The undercarriage was smashed and buckled, the motor half buried in the ground by the force of its landing-impact. But disabled or not, it was still a plane.

Matuszewski sent his driver back for the others, and within half an hour the five old buses were started up to be driven along the road toward the wreckage. There was good cover around the edge of the field, and once work was started on the plane,—if there was a chance of repairing it.—keeping out of sight would be even more essential than before.

As soon as the column had been driven to cover, Matuszewski led the way toward the plane. The wreckage was examined carefully; then some of them began heaving at the buckled fuselage while others tried to dig the motor from the ground.

One of the boys who had served an instruction course in flying and aëronautical engineering at the Mokotow airdrome in Warsaw, and five others who were mechanical engineers, were set to make a detailed survey of the engine damage and assess the chances of reconstruction. In the meantime Matuszewski went across the field to the deserted and part-wrecked buildings which had been the workshops of an aviation-instruction school. And inside the sheds, hanging against the walls, screwed onto plates and diagrammed chartboards, were airplane motor parts. Sectioned and labeled for the education of students hung cylinder-blocks, cranks, pistons, connecting-rods, a propeller—all unused and unspoiled except for dirt and rust. There was a chance, Matuszewski thought, that replacements might be taken from there and adapted for the damaged motor lying out there on the field.

So they started work. For twenty-six hours a crew of six mechanics worked in relays of three.

The old motor parts were taken down from the dusty walls, stripped and unscrewed from the plates, and carried to the workbenches. All through the night and the next day the teams of boys worked against every minute of every hour until the motor parts were cleaned, greased and polished ready for assembling.

Petrol had been brought from Brest-Litovsk. The tanks were filled, the ignition switched on, and the propeller swung to turn over the motor. And as the small group of tired boys stood watching in the early light of the morning, the motor spluttered, misfired, then burst into life. The jigsaw puzzle had been solved!

While the other mechanics switched off the ignition to make hurried and last-minute adjustments to the timing, Karl the pilot pulled on a pair of goggles—and at eight o'clock on the morning of September 9th the rickety, patched-up plane staggered drunkenly across the field and wabbled up into the sky. Warsaw lay 175 kilometers to the west. The sky might be filled with searching German planes. The little motor, so hurriedly built in, might burst and end the attempt in death and destruction. But as the plane rose and droned away into the distance, none of them spoke of that. They all believed the plane would return, because it *had* to.

THE hours passed slowly all that day until hope was practically abandoned. But just before nightfall the weary and almost incredulous little group hiding in the trees beside the camouflaged buses heard the spluttering roar of the plane's motor in the sky to westward. The light was poor and the ground swathed in mist as the pilot skirted the edge of the field. He passed it as though uncertain of his exact position, banked a mile away, and came in again. This time Matuszewski risked a short flare to guide him. The pilot straightened out, throttled back his motor, and dropped down to pancake heavily onto the field from which he had set off thirteen hours before.

On the outward trip he had had to fly very low as the plane refused to climb above a thousand feet. And reaching the Mokotow airport two hours later, he discovered that an air-raid on the city had only ceased twenty minutes before his arrival. A second and more violent raid began half an hour later, and by reason of the destruction and chaos caused in the city by that, it had been some hours before he had been able to locate Colonel Koc. The Colonel's relief had been considerable. He had been trying for two days to get in touch with the convoy. The report Matuszewski had written out had been handed over, instructions given in return, and the flight back to the east started. Once more the plane refused to climb, and though at first a thousand feet was attained, after an hour and a half it began to lose height rapidly until it was almost hedge-hopping as the power of the motor grew less and less. Somewhere near Siedlce, too, a Polish anti-aircraft battery opened fire, Lewis-gunning the plane as it flew past. The landing-field had not been reached a moment too soon.

The pilot climbed stiffly down from the cockpit, his eyes red-rimmed and bleary with lack of sleep, his face blackened from the wisp of flying oil-spray. But he waved as he climbed down, and shouted:

"Warsaw is still holding out, and we have to get back there immediately. They'll be ready for us with reinforcements, fuel supplies, and a new route. The main road is smashed all the way along as far as I could see. If we go back, we'll have to use detours."

On the night of September 9th the dust-smeared column rumbled in through the burning ruins of the Warsaw suburbs, intact but weary, and reported to its base.

Colonel Koc, as the dispatch had said, was ready for them. Ten more buses and trucks had been driven from the depots to be serviced as well as possible. Stores of fuel had been prepared ahead for a new route to the southeast. Food, drink, money for expenses, reports on the state of the roads, instructions concerning communications, everything was ready and waiting. The failure of the first attempt had changed determination to a kind of desperate anger, and while the enemy was still bombing and searching in the eastern corner of the Lublin Province, a new start could be made.

While the cargo was reloaded and evenly distributed amongst the fifteen machines which the column now comprised, twenty more volunteers were selected from a crowd of about fifty; and once selected, were instructed in their duties.

On the evening after its arrival back in Warsaw, the convoy took once more to the open road. And on the same evening as that departure, the rains fell from the low-hanging clouds which all day had been gathering along the valley. And though the rains had come two weeks too late to be any assistance to the hard-pressed and retreating Polish armies, they built a screen around the gold-convoy and gave it a chance to get away.

In spite of the rainfall and the suddenness of the fresh start, the lead built up by the convoy set it only a short jump ahead of its pursuers. The espionage system and the counter-moves of the Nazi secret police had spread a network of agents right through the western provinces. The word was passed along the line, the chase called off in the east, and after the first night's driving, the enemy began to strike after the retreating column in its new direction. Sometimes the road ahead was torn into cracks and fissures by high explosives, forcing the long column into detours of slime and mud.

DRIVING long hours through the darkness and the blinding rain, the convoy kept obstinately on its way. As the rain and the damage done to the road grew worse, the old machines slithered and became bogged in ditches and at the

roadside, settling heavily while the crews dug frantically against the mud which sucked at imprisoned wheels and sinking axles. Ditched machines were hauled back onto the road by tow-chains, only to become ditched again within a few hours. And as the rough detours and pitted roads took their toll, the buses began to break up under the hammering. Wooden struts, wire, lengths of rope were lashed to the sagging wrecks to hold them together. The tires burst and were mended again—the soaked and weary boys having to build foundations in the mud before the jacks could be forced under the axles.

Tires began to be more and more a problem as the speed was increased. The patches and the spare tubes gave out one after another; and old covers which had been mended before, burst wide open. But in spite of breakdown and sabotage at the roadside, the convoy moved doggedly southeastward.

Lublin was reached safely, and that was the first point at which their effort and Koc's planning ahead made contact. Food and drink were picked up, and fuel poured into the tanks.

But reports coming in from the surrounding towns told more and more of a renewed and savage activity on the part of the Gestapo. The time for resting and refueling had to be cut down, and small repairs would have to be ignored.

Worn engines had to be run at their limit as the last lap on Polish soil was reached. The column strung out as the faster machines went to the front, and on the evening of the 13th the mud-smeared procession rolled into the frontier town of Sniatyn. In the last five kilometers they had heard nothing from the enemy. The bridges had been crossed, and the road was undamaged. But the unusual silence, far from reassuring the drivers, made them suspicious and alert.

SNIATYN was the contact-point Koc had arranged for them. As the column arrived there, a train was waiting.

Matuszewski had arrived first in the line, driving the last hundred and fifty kilometers single-handed, and found the instructions waiting with the train. The gold had to be unloaded from the buses and trucks and packed aboard the train immediately. The train was being organized by the Polish Military Authority as far as the frontier; and from there, the Rumanian officials would take charge. The route arranged for, ran from Sniatyn to Czernowitz, then on to the port of Constanta on the Black Sea.

The unloading was started at once, each crew being responsible for unpacking the vehicle they had driven, until the seventeen hundred heavy cases of bullion had been transferred on to the freight-cars of the train. It was nine o'clock and almost dark when the last case was carried across and roped down. The entire cargo had been reloaded in just under ninety minutes of desperate working. And still there was no sign nor sound from the enemy.

The thirty Polish boys climbed aboard the train as Matuszewski gave the signal to the sentries and the guard, and the train began to move out of the town. There still remained a few kilometers to cover before the frontier was reached, and the train moved slowly. The darkness had fallen very quickly, while the

rain fell as hard as ever; and though the last lap was practically over, there was still a chance that something might go wrong, for the Gestapo was an adversary which never gave up.

For ten minutes the train went slowly forward while Matuszewski hung from the side of the freight-car, looking for the signal that the frontier had been reached. And as he looked, the signal and the warning came both together. At the beginning of the bridge across the river, lights were flashing; and as the train ground to a stop, soldiers ran up to it to report the discovery of mines and a time-bomb among the trestles of the bridge.

Matuszewski listened to the report and made up his mind quickly. That there were probably more bombs on the bridge —even if the mines had been removed— was almost certain. A time-bomb could be small and easily concealed. But the convoy had arrived ahead of schedule and expectation. It was possible there still was that much time in hand, and such a margin might well be the last chance offered.

The orders were given without any hesitation. The soldiers on the Polish side of the bridge stood back as the last instructions were shouted to them; and, slowly at first, but with gathering speed, the train swung onto the bridge and crossed the valley from Poland into Rumania.

The chance Matuszewski had gambled on had succeeded. After twelve hundred kilometers and eight days' driving, Poland had been left behind. Thirty minutes after the gold had crossed into Rumania, the bridge at Sniatyn crashed in ruins.

FOR eighteen hours the train steamed southward across Rumania. The young soldiers aboard the train slept most of the time—their first long sleep for over a week. At Constanta the train halted for the last time. And as it rolled through the town to the dockside, the Polish consul appeared with information and instructions, and news of a ship.

Since the night before, the German consul had been at work raising objections against every possible quarter of assistance. Apart from the diplomatic opposition, however, there had been signs of a more definite action: A few hours before the arrival of the train at the port, a plane had flown up and down the coast a short way out to sea for almost an hour before vanishing into the clouds. Waiting at the dock was a small oil-tanker, American-owned, but in the strange manner of oil-tankers in those waters, sailing under the British flag, with British officers in command of her. She had sailed in ballast from Istanbul on instructions received from Warsaw via another source, with a crew of Rumanian and Bulgarian sailors.

It was probably the air of suspicion and desperation which surrounded this undertaking that caused the further complication in the already tangled pattern of events. But whatever the cause, within a few hours the secret was common knowledge in the port. The tanker which had arrived the day before was loading gold!

By the time the last of the cases had been dragged down from the train and stored aboard the ship by the Polish boys, the reaction of the tanker's Balkan crew was certain. And two hours before the time scheduled for sailing, every man of the crew had deserted.

On the night of the 17th, the position was dangerously clear. The ship would not be able to sail on schedule, and as a new crew would be impossible to sign there in Constanta, another ship would have to be sent from the south. But that same night the rumors which Matuszewski had first heard outside Brest-Litovsk the week before, the same rumors which had been coming into Rumania, suddenly came true, canceling any idea of reinforcements. The Red Army, without warning, had begun to carry out the threatened advance.

The bitter despair at this new invasion of his country, allied to the frustration of his plans, decided Matuszewski. The new action in the north made the need for haste even more frantic than before. The crew had deserted, but the ship must sail.

With a detachment of ten of his thirty Polish boys, the ship's captain, the engineer and the mate, Matuszewski went ashore. He had armed the party with engine-room wrenches, with clubs and with guns, and so equipped led them to scour the waterfront. Dead or alive, whichever way they preferred to go aboard, a crew was going to be "pressed" that night, whatever the consequences.

For two hours Matuszewski and his men battered their way in and out of the waterfront bistros and dives, searching for a crew. And in two hours, at the price of bruises and cuts, enough stunned and intimidated men had been collected to serve the purpose, to get the ship clear of the harbor before daybreak and get the gold on its way again.

The captain went to the harbor officials for his clearance papers, and from them received some fresh news which altered the situation once again. The official warning of the port was that it would be inadvisable to sail. There was a new adversary in the European struggle, and there were submarines out in the Black Sea. The Russian Government, had entered also into the chase. They as well as the Germans had their eyes on the gold-ship, and apparently intended to get their hands upon its cargo.

After returning to his ship, the captain reported this information to Matuszewski. The situation was serious. Sailing under the British flag, and with a maximum speed of only eight knots in her engines, the tanker stood little chance of getting away should a submarine sight her.

As far as the captain himself was concerned, the cargo was no more a responsibility than the ship, and he had no intention of losing either. Though he made his report, and discussed with Matuszewski, the possibilities, his intentions from the outset were clear. Unless the Poles decided strongly against it, he planned to sail at the time arranged.

The decision was made without more delay. The moorings were slipped, and an hour later the little tanker put out from the harbor and panted away into the darkness. Offshore, behind and ahead of her, were the Red submarines, waiting for her passage, just as inland in five capitals men watched for the progress of the gold whose capture spelled ruin to one nation and a war of profit to another.

Holding a zigzag course, the ship ran at full speed through the slight fog which had come up. The chance had to be taken of running into the normal coastal shipping; but the fog was a godsend, and though an occasional siren was heard, no other craft was sighted until morning.

All through the day the ship held its erratic course southward, and late in the afternoon a plane could be heard quite distinctly, cruising to and fro at what sounded like a very low altitude. But the fog held, though lifting for short intervals, until nightfall, and the sounds of the plane were lost.

For twenty-nine hours the voyage continued. The radio periodically rattled with incoming messages and warnings, but no answering calls were sent out to give away position. The darkness, as the fog-banks were finally left behind, was full of possible menace of attack, capture or destruction. The course was set for the entrance of the Bosporus, and as the first shore lights at the entrance became visible, the watchers on the ship realized that the gantlet had been successfully run.

In the early hours of the morning of September 19th the little tanker slipped quietly into the harbor at Istanbul to take up her moorings.

After the necessary harbor formalities had been dealt with in the morning, Matuszewski went ashore to report to the consulate in Istanbul.

The orders had been received on the 17th, the first day of the Russian invasion, and read: *"Proceed by train from Scutari after cargo has been unloaded Istanbul. Report to Beirut in Syria. Contact French warships expecting you there."*

Shortly after one o'clock in the morning of September 28th, eight lorries drove from the Gare St. Lazare to the Bank of France. And as the night officials at the bank watched dispassionately, the process of unloading was carried out for the last time. After journeying across six countries, in two continents, the gold had reached its appointed destination. The entire wealth of the nation had been carried to safety by a handful of men.

BY FOUR o'clock in the morning the last case had been unloaded and taken into the strong-rooms. And as the thirty-one weary, unshaven Poles assembled in the office of the senior official, a formal bank receipt for the deposit was made out and handed to Matuszewski.

When the party left the bank there still remained four hours to wait until the Embassy opened to receive them and the report of their arrival. Each man was filthy and tired from traveling, and they were all foreigners in a strange city of blacked-out and deserted streets. Their task was finished, and they were hungry.

The solution was ironical but practical, and half an hour later they lined up with the refugees and the penniless at the Gare de l'Est, where by the goodness of charity, free soup and bread could be had for the asking. The journey had taken twenty-three days, and the funds they had taken for their expenses had long since been exhausted. And though they were carrying a bank receipt for a deposit of three hundred and forty million francs, they had no money at all. . . .

Later that same morning the wires sent out the message to the world, curtly and crisply; the greatest understatement in the history of journalism:

Paris. The Gold Reserve of Poland arrived here this morning from Warsaw and was deposited in the Bank of France.

FAME IS THE SPUR

(Continued from page 19)

and turned his back on the spectacle and looked across the grim prospect to the sky that the night was now invading with swift strides.

He stood there till Gordon took him by the hand to lead him away. Then he saw the saber lying on the clay, and he picked it up. It made him think of the Old Warrior not as he now was, not even as he had been in his last years, sagging into his sagging chair by the kitchen fire, but as he had been on that morning of which his great story told. He looked up into Gordon's face and asked: "What was the good of it?"

"The good of what?" said Gordon.

"All his fighting."

A sad smile played about Gordon's kind mouth. "Well, between you and me, he didn't do so much fighting."

"But that day. Was it any good?"

And now that it was so long over, and this last tardy survivor passed beyond the possibility to recall it, one might indeed ask: was it any good?

Gordon looked at the darkened sky, drew his muffler closer as the wind rose to a keener note, and shuddered a little. "Who can say?" he asked. He looked at the saber in the boy's hand. "Are you taking that thing with you?"

"I'd like to, please."

"Very well, then."

ELLEN was having no truck with grief. So long as the Old Warrior lived, she had looked after him, because it was Gordon's wish that she should do so. Now that he was gone, she would make no pretence of undue regret; nor, if she could help it, would Gordon be plagued by recollection. "Come on in," she repeated briskly; and then caught sight of the saber in John's hand.

"Whatever made you bring that thing back with you?" she demanded. "I thought we'd seen the last of that."

"I like it," said the boy. "It's a symbol, and Father says I can keep it."

"Well, don't keep it where I'll have it under my eyes all day long," Ellen commanded him. "Keep it upstairs in your bedroom."

The boy pushed the saber for the time being on the floor behind the hat-rack. Ellen unwound the muffler from Gordon's neck, assisted him off with his coat, and led him into the front room. "I thought we'd have tea in here for once," she said. "It's more cheerful. You must be fair clemmed, and yon cemetery's a cold place at best o' times. Hark at t' wind! It's getting up proper."

John was packed off to bed soon after the meal was over. "Good night, son—don't forget your prayers," said Gordon. "And thank you for coming with me today."

Ellen took him upstairs. He carried the Old Warrior's saber with him. He was tired now, and it trailed, clanking against the cold, oilclothed steps. "You see," said Ellen, "I didn't waste much time while you were away."

The big bed that had housed the Old Warrior was gone. John's little pallet had the whole space to itself. "This'll be your room now. Do you like it?"

He didn't. But he wouldn't say so. For the first time he realized that he would be alone. The old man's groanings and snorings and mutterings in his sleep had sometimes been frightening, but it was always a human sort of fright that you could take hold of and deal with. This loneliness in the bleak room, so different from the warm room downstairs, was another matter. He glanced furtively to the window, saw with satisfaction that the curtains were tightly drawn. "Yes," he said firmly, "I like it."

Ellen put the candle on the chest of drawers, and the draft from the open door sent the light dancing and her shadow flickering hugely across the ceiling. "Very well," she said. "Say your prayers now."

He knelt by the pallet, and she waited till he had done, and then waited till he was undressed, robed in his long nightshirt, and in bed. She tucked in the blankets and kissed him. "Good night."

THEN she and the candle went. The door closed; for the first time, he was alone in the dark. It was long before he went to sleep. He could hear the comfortable rumble of voices coming up from below, overcome now and then by a fiercer lamentation of the wind. Thoughts of the Old Warrior obsessed him, and of the saber which he had thrust under the bed. To keep his mind from fear, he resolved to think steadily of the old man's fight and to repeat over and over again: "Peterloo — Peterloo — Peterloo." And again and again the wind hammered at the window, hammered at his thoughts, till it seemed to him to have the voice of a wolf-pack hunting hungrily through the night. "*Loo—oo! Peterloo—oo!*" . . . .

It was not often that little John Shawcross heard old Jimmy Spit-and-Wink. When he did, he did not hear the clatter of Jimmy's clogs breaking the silence in which the stars still shone, because Jimmy did not wear clogs. Years before, he was standing upon a lorry, and a heavy bolt of cloth, dropped from a warehouse landing several floors above him, missed the usual precision of its throw, and smashed his leg. The leg went, and Jimmy's job went, and his nerves went, leaving him with the melancholy affliction that gave him his nickname. The whole side of his face would jerk his eye into a wink, and, as if by reflex action, he would then automatically spit.

They gave him a wooden leg, and on his other foot he wore a big hobnailed boot, not a clog. For as long as most people could remember, he had been knocker-up, spitting and winking through the morning with none to see him, carrying his little bunch of wires upon a pole, and playing with this a tattoo upon the windows of his clientèle.

There was no reason at all why John Shawcross should hear old Jimmy Spit-and-Wink, because he did not rise till eight. But he heard him on the morning after the Old Warrior's funeral.

The morning was black, cold and still. In the stillness the rattle of Jimmy's wires on the windows could be heard, and the shrill sound of the witticisms which cheered himself and his victims:

"Coom on theer, Mrs. Hannaway. Buzzer'll be goin' afore thee's got thy corsets on. Never mind *what* thee's doin'. There's bairns enough in t'world already."

Then off he went, *thud-clatter, thud-clatter,* down the empty street, punctuating the darkness with that raucous clearing of the throat that preceded expectoration.

The boy listened till the street was quiet; but he could not sleep again.

AT SEVEN o'clock he heard his mother stirring in the bedroom across the little landing. His own room by now was full of wan light.

Soon he heard his mother raking out the kitchen grate and Gordon preparing to follow her downstairs. He put on the overcoat which was both dressing-gown and quilt and crept to the chest of drawers. The two small drawers at the top had housed a few possessions of the Old Warrior. John saw that his mother's clearing-up of the day before had not got as far as this. The old man's things were still there, a pitifully small accumulation for so long a pilgrimage. The boy turned them over curiously. There was a volume of the poems of Sam Bamford, and a Bible, a few clean handkerchiefs, heavy gray worsted socks, a box containing a few English coppers and some foreign coins. There was another box full of seashore shells, and a bigger one containing simple tools: a hammer and chisels and screwdriver. Beneath this was a little package, carefully tied with string. The knot was covered by a small red blob of sealing-wax, like a holly-berry. On the package was written in a beautiful flowing hand the one word: *Peterloo.*

The boy closed the drawers and stood for a moment with the package in his hand. He got back into his bed, and sitting up with the overcoat on his shoulders, weighed it thoughtfully on his palm. It was very light. Its contents might be nothing more than a few feathers.

He tried then to break the string, but could not. It was cobbler's waxed thread. He leaned out of bed and under it, and rubbed the thread along the edge of the saber. The paper came off in such stiff folds that clearly it had been undisturbed for years. Inside the paper was a small cardboard box, such as might have contained cheap stationery. Inside that was tissue paper; and impatient now, John pulled it carelessly out of the box, and found himself looking at a corkscrew curl of dark brown hair, tangled round a red ribbon.

He knew what it was, but he looked intently to make sure. He could hear the Old Warrior saying of that berserk dragoon: "He had cut through her hair at the side of her head, the bit she had tied the ribbon on. I picked it up and put it in my pocket." He looked closely, allowing the curl to fall round his finger with the grace of a tendril. There were dark brown blotches on the red ribbon.

SWIFTLY, so as not to be caught in the deed, he put the hair and ribbon back in the box, and the tissue-paper on top of it. He wrapped it in its old paper, and leaping out of bed, thrust it beneath the clothes in the chest's long bottom drawer. That was his own. No one would find it there.

He heard the front door bang. It must be ten to eight. Always at ten to eight Gordon left the house. It would take him ten minutes to walk to Birley Artingstall's shop in Great Ancoats Street. Even if Gordon had not worked there, John would have liked Birley Artingstall's shop. The smell of new leather that came from it filled all the street, and the windows were decorated with brass and leather in every possible combination.

Over the window were the words: "BIRLEY ARTINGSTALL: LEATHER"—and when John had first learned to read, he thought that this was a piece of information intended to leave no one in any doubt as to what Birley Artingstall was made of. There was some reason for the child's misconception, for Birley Artingstall was a man of most leathery aspect. His face was of the lean and cadaverous sort traditionally associated with vikings: long-jawed, hollow-cheeked, decorated with a yellow pendulous mustache and thatched with unkempt corn-gold hair that strayed down into his bright blue eyes. His skin was mahogany-colored leather, and he always wore a leather apron.

On what had once been the garden, or yard, behind the shop there now stood the large shed which was the workroom. Here Gordon Stansfield had begun to work when he was a boy in the days of Birley Artingstall's father. He and Birley had grown up together; they liked one another; and Gordon's was a rather more privileged position than that of the other worker who shared the big shed with him. For one thing, he too was a Wesleyan, and it often happened that after some special service he and Birley Artingstall would find much to discuss concerning the choir and the sermon and the satisfactory or unsatisfactory amount of the offertory. So Birley always called it, though Gordon used the simple word *collection*. "Remember, Birley," he would say, "First Corinthians, sixteen, one: Now concerning the collection for the saints."

They were very happy together.

JOHN, as soon as he heard the door bang, dressed quickly, ran downstairs to the scullery, washed his face and hands in a tin bowl under the tap, and went into the kitchen. He always breakfasted alone. His mother ate with Gordon, and then prepared the boy's breakfast. They wanted him to get as much sleep as possible, because he was not strong. . . .

Neither Ellen nor Gordon ever spoke of the first two years of John's life: the years when the seeds of weakness were planted in him, when he had lacked food and care and love. He had had all that for so long now, his life had been so set about with sheltering wings, that he could remember, as older people remember a cataclysm, the day when his mother struck him.

It was two years ago. He was a child of ten. The day was raw, damp, midwinter foggy, and Gordon had gone to work coughing. At eleven o'clock Ellen made a jug of cocoa, put it in a basket stuffed round with straw to steady it, and told John to take it to his father at Birley Artingstall's. Gordon did not bother as a rule with eleven-o'clock drinks; this would show that she was thinking of him.

The child rebelled. He was busy with something that seemed important to his infant mind; and he said: "Don't bother me, Mother."

Ellen looked at him in surprise. "Take this to your Father, at once! Do you hear me?"

"Yes, I hear you. But why should I be bothered?"

"Bothered? Is it a bother to do a little thing for your father?"

"Yes," said the child.

She struck him, a smarting blow, flat-handed across the face. He did not cry, but recoiled with a look of astonishment and mental pain. Ellen, surprised at the intensity of her own emotion, snatched up the basket. "Stay there," she said. "Don't leave the house. I'll take it myself. It's no bother to *me!*"

She switched a shawl round her head and shoulders and went out into the street. The fog was thicker. She could hardly see a house-length in front of her, and memory came about her sharp as pain.

IT had been like this, eight years before, except that then it was night. The fog had seemed friendly to her desperate intention. On the preceding morning she had arrived at her new place. It had been difficult to get, because of the child. She wore a wedding ring, and she said her husband was dead. It was pointed out to her that a child about the house was inconvenient. Sitting on the extreme edge of a chair, nervously twisting her fingers together, she faced the façade of black satin, decorated with a gold chain, on which the firelight flickered. She raised her eyes to the heavy face and agreed that of course it must be inconvenient.

"Especially here, where all our children are out in the world long ago. We don't want to start hearing crying at nights all over again."

Oh, but the baby was a good baby. It did not cry at nights, and if someone did not give her work, what could she do?

The next day she was kept at work. She cooked the Sunday dinner, and she gave an extra Sunday polish to the master's boots. She did these things with a strange resignation, that was almost peace, about her heart, because she believed that she would never do them again. . . .

At six o'clock the pair were dressed for church. "By the time we are back, be out of this house," said the woman.

Ten minutes later Ellen followed them into the street. She left everything: her old tin trunk and her child; that was all she had, and she felt she would not want these things any more.

The fog was thick. As she breathed it, the cold of death seemed to pass into her body. At her table in the basement kitchen, she had sat with each meal of the day before her, but she had eaten nothing, and so she felt hollow, and the fog now seemed to fill her. She was like a foggy wraith herself, without human volition, following a blind instinctive command to have done with a world that, for her, had been without hope and without mercy. . . .

Ellen knew where she wanted to get to, but soon she became puzzled by her failure to get there. The darkness was absolute except where street-lamps were like pale flowers blooming without stalks, high up, achieving a useless poetry that defeated the plain prose purpose for which they were intended. She could not read the names of the streets; she had turned and twisted toward the direction in which she knew that the canal lay; but now, chilled and shivering, she found herself completely lost. She could neither find what she sought nor make her way back whence she had come.

When at last she saw again a light, she was ready to give up, ready to throw herself upon any promise of mercy.

WHAT she had come to was a small street-corner chapel. She pushed open the door and staggered within, unaware of the incongruity of her intrusion into the very end of the service. She slumped down upon a back seat, and the warmth, reviving her a little, permitted her to see what a mean interior this was, and how small was the congregation dotted here and there: fifteen or twenty people—not more. A few oil lamps made all the light there was, and they burned each in its own pale aura, for the fog had penetrated here. The people turned and stared at her, but she was beyond caring.

The man in the pulpit was not a parson. He looked like a working-man, and his homely enunciation as he gave out the last hymn confirmed her guess that she had strayed into a Wesleyan chapel served by a lay preacher. She tried to stand with the rest as the hymn was sung, but her legs failed her, and she was too exhausted and indifferent to be annoyed by the glances that fell upon her as the little

congregation went past her into the raw night when the benediction had been said. She rested her arms upon the bench in front of her, laid her head upon them; and presently was aware of a hand upon her shoulder.

She looked up warily. It was the preacher, and the woman who had played the harmonium was standing by him. "You seem done up, lass," he said. "Tell us what's the matter."

There was something in Gordon Stansfield's tone that the weary and unhappy could not resist. It seemed to wake Ellen from the stupor of grief into which she had fallen, but to wake her to a half-crazed state in which she did not yet discriminate thought from action. "My baby!" she cried, not knowing clearly whether she had killed it.

The chapel-keeper was putting out the lamps. Gordon and his sister took each an arm and led Ellen through the fog to the house in Broadbent Street. They lived alone there. The fire, which had been damped down, was stirred to a blaze; the lamp was lit; food was placed upon the table. Not till she was warm, and had eaten, did Gordon say again: "Now, lass."

And this time she was able to tell them, and when the recital was over, he said nothing but snatched up a shawl and went out of the house. Three-quarters of an hour later he was back; and Millie Stansfield, who had guessed his errand, had warm bread-and-milk waiting for the child whose pale face was peeping from the shawl upon his arm.

Ellen was too bemused by the events of the night to notice the flush in Millie's cheek, the cough that tore her, as she took this strange girl to her own bed. Thence Ellen soon moved to other work, untroubled by the problem of the child; for the child stayed with Millie and Gordon till Millie went out a few months later to whatever reward there may be for those who tend the widows and fatherless.

On all these things Ellen was pondering as she walked through foggy Broadbent Street, carrying a jug of cocoa to Gordon. She could hardly see across Great Ancoats Street, but trusting to her ear, made the plunge and came to Birley Artingstall's shop, which was a joyous golden smudge of light in the gloom.

"Some cocoa for Gordon," she said to Birley.

"Take it through, lass, take it through." Birley said. "Cocoa's good, but a sight of you'll do Gordon more good than cocoa on a day like this."

THERE was no fog in Broadbent Street on the day after the Old Warrior's funeral. The wind of the night before had swept the air clean.

As John sat at his breakfast, Ellen, unseen, considered him critically. He was never ill, but he never looked strong. The veins on his forehead and wrists were startlingly blue; his complexion was pale. His apparent fragility kept her palpitating with anxieties that were never justified.

He put on his coat and his cap. "Where are you going to?" Ellen demanded.

"The croft."

"Well, mind you stay at the croft. Don't go wandering away. And be back in time for your dinner."

The croft was a small space of hard-beaten open land. Away from the street, a back-yard wall was its limit; on either hand were the raw ends of houses, that looked as though someone had intended to finish them off some day and had forgotten all about it. The fourth side was open to the street.

Tom Hannaway and Arnold Ryerson were already there. Tom with his wide humorous face, his thick black curls on which, even in winter, he never wore a cap, was busy with colored chalks freshening the notice which he had inscribed sometime before on the back-yard wall. The letters were immense. No passing eye could miss them.

T. HANNAWAY,—MERCHUNT
BRING YOUR RAGS, BONES, BOTTLES, JARS TO THIS PITCH.
HANNAWAY IS HERE EACH SATURDAY 10 TO 11 A.M. FINEST RATS IN EXCHANGE, PERSONALY BRED BY THOMAS HANNAWAY, WHOSE DECISION IS FINAL. OLD IRON, LEAD PIPING, ANYTHING

Arnold Ryerson, as fair as Tom Hannaway was dark, with a sensible unsmiling face, stood by with his hands in his pockets as Tom framed this announcement in arresting arabesques of red and green and blue. Tom was the youngest of many Hannaways. It was unlikely that there would be any further use for the dilapidated perambulator which he had wheeled onto the croft. John stole up silently behind the other two and lifted the apron of American cloth which covered the pram. A scuffling and squeaking bespoke the presence of the rats. They

were in the well that pushed down through the floor of the perambulator—the well in which many small Hannaway feet had pounded.

John watched the rats with mingled delight and repulsion. He would have loved to have one, but Ellen's decree had been uncompromising. "No vermin in this house, my boy—especially vermin from the Hannaways! The Lord only knows what you might bring home on rats from that place!"

The well seemed full of the creatures—all white, with eyes like rubies. He tried to count them—there must be a dozen at least. They were clambering over one another, squeaking frantically.

TOM HANNAWAY completed his work, stood away and regarded it with an artist's eye, added a touch of yellow, and then produced a couple of small cheese-dice from his pocket. He dropped them through the wire netting.

"Well, Charley," he grinned. "You having a rat today?"

John straightened his back. "I can't," he said. "I'm not allowed."

Tom's impudent grin widened. "Allowed!" he scoffed. "I'm not allowed to do anything. I'm not allowed to have this pram. I'm not allowed to chalk on the walls. I'm not allowed to go near Darkie Cheap. Allowed! You just got to do things—not wait till you're allowed to do 'em."

"That's all very well," said Arnold Ryerson in his grave way. "When they don't allow me to do things, I reason with 'em. My father said I was never to come on the croft, so I just asked him why not. And then I proved to him that he was wrong about it, so he said I could go. You want to get things changed like that—not just fly off and do what you like."

Tom Hannaway's white teeth flashed between his fleshy red lips as he said: "Takes too long, Arnold. And I'd like to see you reasoning with my old woman. She reasons with a smack in the mouth, and all you've got to do is dodge it."

Tom and Arnold were of the same age—fourteen. They would soon be leaving school. Tom was burly for his years, heavily built as a young bull, and Arnold was tall and slight. They both regarded the twelve-year-old John Shawcross with tolerance. He was always hanging round.

Tom Hannaway's trade by barter was soon in full swing. This was his fourth Saturday morning on the pitch at the croft, and the fame of his white rats had had time to spread. It had spread so far that his original stock was all but exhausted, and there was no longer any truth in the claim that the rats were "personaly bred." That had been true enough at first; and now that he was buying the rats, he saw no reason to alter the wording of his announcement. It looked well, and he had the commercial wisdom to let well alone.

With a shock, John saw approaching him across the croft the head of the brass-knobbed bedstead on which the Old Warrior had slept. It was carried by two small boys, one holding each end, and even so, both were staggering beneath its antiquated weight. John knew that his mother had given the bedstead away. Now he saw how the gift had been appreciated.

"Lean it against the wall," Tom commanded the panting youngsters. He looked at it with a despising eye. "Junk," he said. "Rubbish! Not worth carting away. What d'you think that thing's worth?"

"Two rats, please," piped the bolder of the two children; and the younger nodded vigorously and produced from his pocket a canvas bag in which he proposed to take home the fruits of his deal. "We've got a cage for 'em," he volunteered, "with a treadmill."

Tom Hannaway looked at John and Arnold Ryerson. "Two rats!" he said. "Did you hear that, boys? Two rats! They'd ruin a man. Two rats for half a rotten bedstead that's not worth taking to the marine-store dealer. Can you kids read?"

The boys looked at him with pinched little faces. They nodded.

"Well, read that," said Tom Hannaway "—'whose decision is final.' My decision is one rat. Give us the bag."

By the time the rats were all disposed of, there was a miscellaneous litter on the ground at Tom Hannaway's feet: worn-out coats and trousers, rags that had never been any garment that could be named, odds and ends of brass and lead and iron, jam-jars, bones, bottles and bundles of newspapers.

Now that the perambulator was empty of rats, Tom piled in his booty. The bed-end, resting precariously across the top, threatened either to flatten or capsize the crazy little vehicle. "You coming to Darkie Cheap's?" Tom demanded.

Arnold Ryerson shook his head. "Going home to read," he said briefly.

"Reading! You're always reading!" Tom shouted after him. Arnold did not answer. In a moment he had turned the corner by the raw house-end and disappeared.

"You come, kid," Tom said, for he wanted someone's hand to steady the bedstead on the perambulator while he pushed. "Hold on to that. Don't let it wabble."

John was delighted. Never before had Tom Hannaway invited his company. He took hold of the bedstead with his puny hand—the bedstead whose monstrous brass knobs had for so long been so familiar; which did not prevent it from having, out here in the street, under the light of this red wintry sun, an alien air.

They went trundling on through the glum unbeautiful thoroughfares, and suddenly Tom said surprisingly: "D'you know what I'm going to have some day? A racehorse!"

"Where will you keep it?" John demanded, his mind occupied with an incongruous image of a polished, slim-legged horse confined in a Broadbent Street back-yard.

"Where d'you think? In my racing stables," Tom answered. "Come on."

GORDON STANSFIELD came home, as he always did, to the midday dinner, but as this was Saturday, he did not go back to Birley Artingstall's. He said:

"Get your cap, John. Let's take a walk to town."

He did not ask Ellen to go with them, because he knew that she would not. It would take a lot to shift Ellen out of her house, but she was glad to see John out

of it occasionally. Gordon knew that, and took the boy out whenever he could, so that Ellen might be alone.

So John set out with this placid, commonplace man to whom he owed so much.

It was no great distance to town. They went through Oldham Street, where, on that tragic day of high summer so long ago, the Old Warrior had hidden the saber in his brother's barber's shop. Now grand new shops were there, and when they came out into Piccadilly, John thought he had never seen so much exciting life crowded together into one place. Hansom cabs dashed by, and four-wheelers went more soberly. There were horse-drawn omnibuses, and splendid private carriages, and horsemen jogging quietly along till release from the press should permit them to go more gayly.

Gordon was a persistent walker. He did not dawdle to allow John to look into shop windows. He went forward at his steady pace across Piccadilly into Mosley Street, and through Mosley Street to the Free Trade Hall. It was only when he got there, that he at last paused, on the other side of the street, and looked across at the heavy solemn building that stood on the spot where the dragoons had ridden down the people.

"That's where it was, John," he said, thinking of the old man whom, yesterday, they had laid in the grave. "That's where your grandfather picked up his saber. But it was morning, with the sun shining, and there was green grass where you see that big building now."

"And that's where Emma was killed," the child was thinking. *"That's where the soldier cut off her hair with the ribbon on it."*

He did not tell Gordon about the hair and the ribbon. To withhold this small piece of knowledge even from Gordon made it secretly and excitingly his.

DAYLIGHT was draining out of the sky, and the air was keen as they turned and made their way to Albert Square. The gas-lamps were lit and shining fitfully on the white façade of the Town Hall. They stood right back across the square to look at it soaring up into the night, its towers and pinnacles dark perpendicular smudges on the greater darkness of the sky. They had often come to watch it rising there at the heart of the city, with all its ropes and cranes and pulleys and scaffoldings, its workmen scaling the raw and dizzy cliffs of masonry, its noise of hammers, saws and chisels. And now it was finished, a virgin building, so soon to be befouled by the smoke of the very prosperity that had called it into being.

Then on they went by Cross Street to the Shambles, leaving the last strident note of progress and finding themselves among the little crooked streets and leaning inns and houses that clustered where Manchester from the beginning had clustered, whether Roman camp or Saxon village, alongside the Irwell stream.

Here were cozier streets than those they had till now been treading: streets whose shops had windows bulging outward, patterned with many tiny panes; whose public-houses had a friendly look, red-curtained, and a friendly sound as laughter and applause bespoke a sing-song; whose life seemed as much underground as above it. It was underground that Gordon now plunged, down a flight of rickety wooden stairs, into a catacomb of books.

John had been there before and knew what to expect. A call upon the second-hand bookseller was never omitted from a visit to Manchester. It seemed to the child that you could lose yourself in the place. You turned right, and you turned left, and whichever way you turned, you could turn again and still find yourself confronting a vista of books rising on either hand from floor to ceiling. In each of these corridors a gas-light burned, enclosed in wire; and the smell, compounded of decaying paper and leather, gas-heated air and some aboriginal earthy flavor, was one he was never to forget.

Somewhere, at some time, if you went on exploring long enough, you would come upon Mr. Suddaby, a dusty old spider at the heart of his amazing web. Perhaps you would come upon him in his own special nook, where a fire burned, though by what tortuous means its smoke was conveyed to the outer air it was difficult to imagine. As likely as not, he would have a meal, sent in from a neighboring eating-house, on the table before him, and with his carpet-slippered feet extended to the fire, he would be dividing his attention between that and the *Manchester Guardian*, propped against an ale bottle. He was an old man made of parchment with a white mustache and little pointed beard, that somehow emphasized the ironic cast of his yellowish face. He wore a black

velvet skullcap from beneath whose edge an outflow of white curly hair escaped; and a coat and waistcoat of black velvet, stained and dusty.

"Here's a serious case, Mr. Stansfield," he said, recognizing his old customer. "I've caught a Tartar, a lawyer, a great argufier. We've had it out all ways, this boy and I, and now I'll turn the case over to you. What you say, I shall accept. This boy discovered a sixpenny book—namely, this battered copy of the 'Idyls of the King'—in the tuppenny box. He argues that a book in a tuppenny box costs tuppence; and I maintain that a sixpenny book costs sixpence, wherever it may have fallen by accident. What do you say?"

Gordon tucked his holly stick under his arm, took the book, and allowed the pages to flicker through his fingers. Presently, he read, half-aloud:

"Then from the dawn it seemed there came, but faint
As from beyond the limit of the world,
Like the last echo born of a great cry,
Sounds, as if some fair city were once voice
Around a king returning from his wars."

Gordon's murmuring voice ceased, and in the silence the four of them could hear the gas-flame singing like a gnat. Then Arnold Ryerson, his face lit up, said: "You like it too, Mr. Stansfield?"

Gordon nodded; and Mr. Suddaby, without the book finished the quotation.

"I don't know what's coming over boys in these days," said Mr. Suddaby severely. "They want that sort of thing for tuppence—immortal verse for tuppence. What d'you say, Mr. Stansfield?"

"I've only got tuppence," Arnold Ryerson intervened.

"Pay your tuppence," said Gordon, "and I'll pay fourpence. Then everyone will be satisfied."

"No, no!" said old Suddaby, lifting his skullcap with three fingers and scratching his head with the little one. "If there's generosity about, I can be as generous as the next man. We'll all pay tuppence each."

Suddenly John piped up: "Arnold, let me pay a penny."

At that Suddaby's face creased in an ironic grin. "Nay! Damn it all," he said, "this is becoming preposterous. Take the book, boy, and have done with it." And he thrust the "Idyls" into Arnold's hands.

Five minutes later Gordon was walking home with the boys. For himself, he had bought Hugh Millar's "Old Red Sandstone" and for John a coverless copy of "The Pilgrim's Progress."

NO ONE was ever asked into the Stansfield house on a Saturday night; when Gordon and John returned, high tea was ready in the kitchen, and John well knew the unvarying routine that would follow. This was Gordon's sermon-writing night. As a local preacher, he was not called on every Sunday, but every Saturday he worked on a sermon.

As the hands of the clock touched nine, he did not need to be spoken to: he rose quietly, and Ellen rose too, ready to steal out of the room with him, no word spoken, no good-night said. But that night, for a wonder, as the boy got up, Gordon laid down his pen, removed the steel-rimmed spectacles from his nose, and smiled at him. "Good night, John," he said. "Yon Arnold Ryerson's a nice lad. See as much of him as you can."

Chapter Three

WHEN John Shawcross was fourteen years old, he signed his name for the first time *J. Hamer Shawcross.* It was not till later that he omitted the J.

He had followed Gordon's advice and was seeing much of Arnold Ryerson. His little piping offer of a penny toward the "Idyls of the King" had tickled the fancy of the elder boy, who began, whenever he met John, to talk to him with a grave, humorous condescension; and this attitude soon gave way to one of unconditional friendship. Arnold was walking home from school one evening during the week after that encounter in Mr. Suddaby's, puzzling his honest head over a poser in arithmetic. It was dark, and he paused under a street-lamp with the textbook open in his hand. John Shawcross, walking home by himself, found him there and said:

"Can I help you, Arnold?"

He had never before called this bigger boy Arnold, and a surge both of shyness and pride went through him as he uttered the name. Arnold was taken aback, and looked at the youngster, not knowing whether to reprove his cheek, to burst out laughing, or to accept his offer. John's embarrassment deepened under the stare. He pulled off his cap and nervously swept his hand through his hair that drooped upon his forehead. "I think I could," he said.

"It wouldn't be fair," Arnold answered, "—even supposing you could do it. I'm expected to do these sums myself."

John brightened under the friendlier tone. "Perhaps I could show you the idea," he said. "You come round to our house tonight."

Arnold said that he would, and John ran home, strangely excited. He felt sure that he could help.

But there was more in it than that. He had no friend. He had often enough been proud of this. He had read of heroes whose lives were lonely because of their greatness. No one understood them, because there was no one of their stature; and so he walked with a dragging gait, and was lonely and misunderstood, and enjoyed it. For the first time he had asked someone to "come to our house."

From the beginning, Arnold Ryerson was all that a man could ask of a friend.

"Something new, isn't it?" Ellen demanded when John poured out in one excited breath, as soon as he was over the doorstep: "Mother, I've asked Arnold Ryerson to come round tonight."

"Oh, you have, have you? And what d'you think your father's going to do with a lot of chattering boys around him?"

John remembered in time. "It's Father's class night," he said. "I thought of that. And Father told me to see as much as I could of Arnold."

"Seeing's one thing," said Ellen. "Asking him here's another. Well, go and wash yourself."

When Gordon came home and they were all seated at the table, she said: "My Lord, here's branching out—asking people to the house, if you please!"

"It's Arnold Ryerson," said John. "We want to do sums together."

Gordon looked at John and at Ellen and at the well-provisioned table that was spread with ham and tongue, cake and jam, bread and butter. "It's a pity you didn't ask him to eat with us," he said. "That lad doesn't get too much to eat."

"If you want people to eat with you," said Ellen, "you must ask the fat 'uns. Them as haven't got enough are backward to admit it."

Gordon sighed. "There are too many of those Ryersons."

"Six children," said Ellen. "I don't know where they all sleep."

Gordon took a drink of tea. "There's room enough here. I shall be out tonight; but whether I'm out or in, there's room enough. If the lad's anxious to work, he won't find much room or much peace in that house. Let him come here."

"Well, they won't worry me," said Ellen. "I'll only want a corner of the table for my ironing."

GORDON looked at her with the smile that meant he had a plan. "No, they won't worry you, lass," he said. "They won't be near you."

"Nay, they can't go in the parlor and catch their deaths. There's no fire there."

"It's possible to light a fire," said Gordon, "but not in the parlor. No. Listen. Do you know what I always longed for when I was a boy, and never could get? A room of my own!"

"There's no room in this house going begging. Two up and two down don't leave much to spare."

"There's John's bedroom. There's nothing in it now but his little bed and a chest of drawers. I'd like him to turn it into a study."

Gordon brought out the last word diffidently. A study was an unusual thing to talk about; but it was a thing he had been thinking about. It was something wrapped up rather obscurely with all the intentions he had cherished for the child ever since his decree: "No mill for John."

He looked rather anxious at Ellen and the child. "You know," he said, "nothing terrible, nothing drastic. Just a place where he can keep his books as he gets them, and read them; and perhaps some day he'll want to write something."

"Well," Ellen burst out, "if the kitchen's good enough for you to write in—"

"Ah, yes—me. That's all right," said Gordon modestly. "My little bits of sermons and so forth—that's one thing. But I'd like to think of John working away up there. We could fit in a little writing-table and a bookcase, and that old chair could go up." He waved toward the Old Warrior's relic. "That would be cozy alongside the fire."

"Fire!"

It was the first word John had interposed into the conversation, the first idea to set his mind alight. A fire in his bedroom! This was revolutionary.

"Can we have a fire tonight when Arnold comes?" he asked excitedly.

"Why not?" said Gordon. "Thank God, we're not so poor that we can't manage that. I'll see to it now." He wiped his mouth on his handkerchief, the signal that his meal was ended, and Ellen and John bowed their heads. "Bless these mercies to our use and Thy service, for Christ's sake. Amen."

Ellen was up before him. "Nay," she cried, lapsing into the dialect that she tried hard to overcome. "Tha'll not lay t'fire. If we're to have this nonsense, tha can leave it to me. Though what'll happen when Ah lay match to t'sticks, Ah don't know. That chimney's not been swep' sin' Ah don't know when. Full o' crows' nests or summat."

"It's a long time, lass, since crows nested in Ancoats," Gordon reminded her.

"Ay, but it's longer sin' that chimney were swep'."

She bustled off upon the job, and John cried: "Can we take the chair up now, Father?"

"Of course we can," said Gordon. "You take the cushions. I'll take the rest."

AFTER the job was done, Ellen, practically, went down to her washing-up. John stood with his back to the fire, entranced, excitedly sweeping the hair off his forehead. Gordon looked about him with a slow, tranquil satisfaction. He felt that he was nearer to something that had been in his heart—he hardly knew what, but something important, and something that had been entrusted to him alone.

When Arnold Ryerson arrived, Ellen answered the door. "You'd better go upstairs," she said. "The room's on t'left. Nice goings-on."

Arnold hung his cap on a peg in the passage and went upstairs, mystified. Gordon shook his hand. "Well, lad," he said,

"I'm glad you've come. I hope you'll come again. Come a lot. Come whenever you want to. Well, now, I've got to go. I'll leave you and John to get on with your work."

But he did not go. He hesitated and fidgeted in the doorway, then came back into the room. "I think I'd like to say a word of prayer," he said simply.

John felt the blood rush into his cheeks. He looked at Arnold Ryerson aghast. For the first time Gordon's religion had cut into a personal relationship, and the child felt shaken. Arnold Ryerson said quietly, "Yes, Mr. Stansfield," and without invitation kneeled on the meager rug before the meager fire. Then John knelt too, and Gordon Stansfield knelt between the two boys.

The next day, as soon as the child was gone to school, Ellen went out, bought a penny bottle of ink, some pens, pencils, sheets of blotting-paper. When she got home, she made up a rag cushion for the kitchen chair. She dug out two old tin candlesticks and put candles in them, and having furnished the writing-shelf, she placed these upon it.

There seemed to be a conspiracy to do things in John's room. Arnold arrived that night with a jam-pot, a brush and some crystals of permanganate of potash. Soon all the shelves were stained. Gordon had put a glue-pot on the fire during his evening meal. When he had eaten, he took the pot upstairs, and then produced a fine piece of thin red leather, just the size to cover the writing-shelf. He had tooled a gold design into the edge, and he applied the skin to the wood with a craftsman's loving care.

This was not all. He had brought strips of scalloped leather, also beaten with a design, and little brass nails with finely wrought heads to fasten the strips to the edges of the bookshelves. When all was done, the writing-shelf and the bookshelves looked very different from the raw job of the night before.

"You've got Birley Artingstall to thank for that," Gordon said. "I told him what we were doing, and he said he'd like to do a bit toward it."

So the first "study" that Hamer Shawcross ever knew came into being. Gordon and Ellen, Arnold Ryerson and Birley Artingstall: these had a hand in it. Hamer Shawcross alone did nothing but accept the good-will and the good work of them all; and there he stood, pushing back his long shining hair, full of pride, looking at the shelves and the books and the curved cold symbol gleaming on the wall.

THE walk to Manchester, the call on Mr. Suddaby, and the buying of a book or two had long been a Saturday ritual with Gordon and John. Now Arnold Ryerson began to join them. Arnold, at nearly fourteen, was unusually tall for his age: he was nearly as tall as Gordon Stansfield. John was small. If you had seen these three from the back, going along Great Ancoats Street on some cold winter afternoon, you would have thought you were looking at two brothers, taking out a son and nephew. They strode along with John always in the middle, sometimes holding Gordon's hand, but never Arnold's. Small as he was, he never felt that Arnold was a superior or protector. Through that small matter of arithmetic, he had established an ascendency. Arnold seemed to recognize it, and occasionally even acknowledged it, taking John's advice about the books to be bought at Suddaby's. In the catacombs, Gordon left them alone. He went his own way, looking for books that would give him things to point his sermons; and the two boys went theirs, whispering, rustling over the pages, looking at pictures. More often than not, the final choice for them would be made by Mr. Suddaby. He had come to expect them, and he would have a few books put by. It was thanks to him that they bought no rubbish. Of course, it had to end. It ended with brutal violence.

ON a Saturday toward the end of July they were walking home at five o'clock, when Tom Hannaway, breathless with running, met them. "Hurry up, Arnold! Hurry up! Your father's dying!" he shouted, and hooking his hand into Arnold's elbow, he snatched him from the other two and whirled him away. John and Gordon quickened their pace, and when they got to Broadbent Street, there was a little crowd leaning on the canal wall outside the Ryerson house, looking open-mouthed at the doctor's gleaming victoria and polished horse, that made John think of Tom Hannaway's racehorse, and at the coachman sitting aloft.

The doctor came out, top-hatted for all the sultry warmth of the day, just as John and Gordon reached the house. Gordon knew him—one of the Emmott Street upper ten who never stayed behind to the prayer-meetings—and asked for news. The doctor shook his head. "He's finished."

A little gasp went through the crowd, and a small boy who had seen it happen, kept on telling his story again and again:

"I seen Mr. Ryerson walking down the street, and he met Mr. Hannaway and said, 'Hallo, Mike!' an' then he fell down dead."

Gordon thought of the florid Ryerson, so different from his thin, diffident son: bloated, self-confident, with the face full of purple veins. He had driven a dray, and sometimes, watching him haul on the reins to bring his two great horses to a standstill, you would think he would go off in apoplexy there and then. And now that sultry day, that excessive touch of sun, had done it; and there was Mrs. Ryerson, as the neighbors pityingly said, with all those children. . . .

When they had finished their high tea, Ellen began to prepare the table for Gordon to write. "Not tonight, lass," he said. "Don't bother. I'm not preaching tomorrow, and that can wait. I'm going along to see Birley. He might know of something for Arnold. You can come with me, John."

The shop was shut, and Gordon banged the polished brass knocker on the door that led to Birley Artingstall's private apartments.

Leather and John Wesley seemed to be the dominant things in that room. As Birley and Gordon discussed the case of Arnold Ryerson, John prowled about. On the mantelpiece was a white bust of Wesley with curls of hair falling down to his shoulders and a parson's bands under his chin, and over it hung a large steel engraving of the itinerant saint still at last, lying on his deathbed, surrounded by disciples. Among them, an old gentleman

was holding an ear-trumpet composedly to his ear, in the apparent hope of catching some last salutary words. Standing by him was a child, who looked younger than John himself, staring at the mounds made under the bedclothes by the dying man's feet.

The leather interested the boy more than the Methodism. Birley's trade was also his private joy, and he had surrounded himself with fine craftsmanship of his own devising. All his chairs were splendidly upholstered, and all his books had been taken from their original bindings and bound anew, in splendid jackets.

There were boxes of leather, a pen-tray of leather, a stationery-rack of leather, and upon the panels of the door Birley had applied skins tooled and gilded into charming patterns.

With half an eye as he talked with Gordon, he saw the child's interest; and when the discussion was ended and Gordon rose, Birley said: "You come in the winter, my boy. Then you'll see how all these things should look. And take this now. There's a lovely thing for you. You won't pick up a thing like that every day. You take that home now, and when you look at it, just think: 'I must go and see that old chap in the winter.' Remind him, Gordon."

All the way home John hugged the beautiful leather box, rubbing his fingers over its embossed configurations, looking with satisfaction at its gilded embellishment. He knew what he was going to do with it. He was going to make it a casket to contain a brown curl and a piece of stained red ribbon.

In that immense new Town Hall that John and Gordon had recently circumnavigated, Alderman Hawley Artingstall found a casket for his own magnificence.

Watching him standing there looking down from a tall pointed window upon the people walking languidly in the heat across Albert Square, you would never have guessed that he was the brother of that blond and bony viking, Birley Artingstall. Hawley was puffed out—in the face and the belly and the pride. He had a habit of puffing out his cheeks and puffing out his big mustache, and when he spoke in public, as he loved to do, of puffing out his words. He had never succeeded, as Birley had, in overcoming his Lancashire speech, and as he had not been able to cure it, he intensified it, and carried it off as a matter of pride. "Nay, what Ah says Ah means. Ah'm not soft in t'speech or in t'brain, like some."

He had always hated the leather shop that his father had founded. He had always hated Ancoats with its dirt and misery; and when, a young man in his twenties, he had started his draper's shop in Oldham Street, he couldn't understand why Birley declined to join him. Looking back on it all, he thought Birley was daft, sticking over a shop in a noisy, soot-smothered region, with no one to look after him, and no one to talk to at nights.

"Birley Artingstall: Leather." Hawley smiled sometimes at the quaint inscription. As for him, he needed neither a Christian name nor a word to describe his trade. *"Artingstall's."* That was all it said over his shop at the beginning, and he had taken care that Artingstall's stood for something. Then there were two shops, then three, and now four, with *"Artingstall's"* right across the whole lot of 'em; and if anyone in Manchester said "I got it at Artingstall's," you didn't need to ask where that was.

Hawley made money and married money. He had lived over his own first shop, and now goodness knows how many assistants were living over them all. As for Hawley, he had moved out to Fallowfield, to a fine stucco-fronted house with lime-trees in the garden—so many lime-trees that on a warm June day the scent of the flowers came into the house. No wonder it was called the Limes. You wouldn't believe, out at the Limes, that this was the same city which comprised Hulme and Ancoats. In the springtime Hawley's garden was full of flowering trees—lilac and laburnum, cherry and hawthorn—a dazzling spectacle. . . . Walking there and thinking of Birley, he couldn't make the chap out. Why, the whole Ancoats outfit could be put here in Hawley's stables, and Birley's living-quarters weren't half so good as those which Briggs and Haworth, his groom and coachman, had in the loft over the horses.

Very delightful it was on one of those mornings of early spring to sit in the phaëton behind Haworth's broad back and spin through the streets to Artingstall's. He entered the building on the dot of nine, a paragon of punctuality, and it pleased him to see men set their watches by the passing of what some of his friends called with affectionate raillery the Artingstall diligence.

(Continued on page 122)

OUR COUNTRY

by ANGELO PATRI

WHAT is our country?

Countless villages of white houses shaded by old maples and ancient elms; houses and barns dotted over a continent; millions of people who stem from every nation, every race on earth, living in peace and unity.

Churches great and small, each with its spire pointing to the sky; some wear the Roman cross, some the five-pointed star; some the severe slim pointing finger of the spire; but all of them point to God.

A patchwork of fields set about with old stone walls, every stone a monument to the man who set it there, evidence of an indomitable soul that feared no labor, neither anything that walked, crept or crawled on this earth, so long as he felt himself a free man in a free land.

Huge cities set by magnificent waters, their buildings towering to the skies; multitudes of people creating, selling, buying, crying their wares in every market of the world; docks in endless lines from which sail the ships to carry our goods to all the nations abroad. Workers toiling hopefully, secure in the strength that liberty endows.

Vast plains stretching to the feet of vaster mountains; farm joined to farm, great gardens to feed the workers; swift splendid rivers flowing to the seas, each bearing its burden of ships; messengers of peace and plenty; cattle outnumbering the herds of Abraham that grazed on a thousand hills; men in overalls tending, tilling, tasking themselves like giants, rejoicing in the strength of independence.

Shops and factories, great storehouses of the tremendous power that goes into the life of this prosperous people. These are the seat of labor, on whose shoulders rests the great weight of national responsibility.

Children, like a mighty army, on their way to school—shouting, laughing, playing children; they will stand erect and salute their flag, scarce knowing the import of their words, yet feeling, as we all must, the depths of the emotion they evoke. They are the promise of the continuity of our country in the American way.

All this and much, much more, goes into the making of our country. Each of us sums it up in the word *home*. Home covers so much, so many big things, so many little ones, so great an emotional force, that words are weak to express it. The familiar clutter of intimate belongings, the children, the family, the dog, the radio and the newspaper; the lights at night, the sound of the car coming into the drive, the trees, the feel of the sky overhead. Our way of life.

All this was bought with a price, a price that must be paid again by each generation. The Founding Fathers told us that "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." Lincoln said that it was for us to see "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from this earth."

Freedom, the American way of life, must be defended if it is to survive this generation. We intend that it shall survive; and to that end men and women are dedicating themselves anew to the service of their country. It is the time, the day, the hour. On guard, America!

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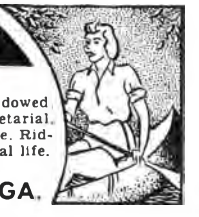

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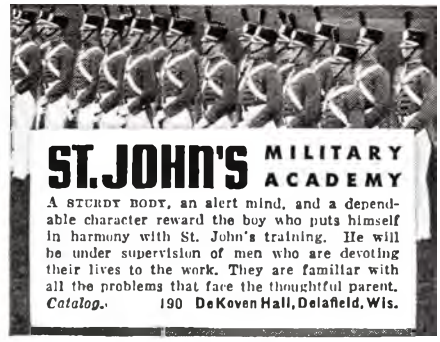

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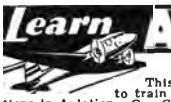

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(Continued from page 113)

Hawley had long since given up his Methodist allegiance. The Church of England was an altogether more respectable shrine for the devotions of one who, already an alderman, would infallibly be mayor and not inconceivably a knight. And so, driving on Sunday morning in a capacious two-horse equipage toward his customary worship at the Cathedral, Hawley, with these pleasant dreams in his head, would turn his puffy face to the thin hatchet-face beneath the lilac parasol beside him, reflecting that Lillian at least would know how to carry it off. Ann? He glanced at the girl riding with her back to the coachman, and a doubt clouded his mind and his countenance. Irresponsible. That was the word that always thrust at him when he thought of Ann. All that he had done for her, all that he had given her—and she seemed to value it at two pins! Reluctantly he admitted that she was too much like that damn' fool Birley.

EIGHT to eight were office-hours at Artingstall's, but Arnold Ryerson at least did not have the mortification of "sleeping in." That was the fate of the elder men and girls; but Arnold, engaged after one of the rare colloquies between Birley and Hawley, was too inconsiderable a cipher in the Artingstall machine. He did not have to be subjected to Artingstall beds and food and general domesticity. He was a mere sweeper of floors, duster of chairs, runner of errands; and when on the morning of Arnold's first appearance Hawley breezed with a blowing out of the mustaches into the shop, he did not even know who this tall thin boy was, holding open a door for him, with awe. Errand-boys came and went. There was no reason why he should associate this one with that talk he had had with Birley.

Gordon Stansfield, pleased that Arnold had found work, was unhappy because John was now deprived of friendship. By the time Arnold had walked from Artingstall's to Broadbent Street and eaten his supper, it was nine o'clock, John's bedtime. Gordon thought the matter over, and was ready when Birley raised the question of Arnold.

"How's that lad of Mrs. Ryerson's getting on, Gordon?" he asked one day when August was ending and the workroom was insufferably hot, choked with the smell of tanned hides.

"He'll be all right," Gordon said confidently. "He's the sort of lad who'll make something of his life, give him a start. But I wish he and John could see a bit more of one another. The boy says nowt, but he misses Arnold."

"There's Sunday," said Birley. "Take 'em along to Emmott Street."

"Ay, there's that," Gordon admitted. "But I was thinking of getting 'em both to join my class. That's seven-thirty on Thursday nights."

Birley was doing some fine sewing. He

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looked quizzically at Gordon over the steel spectacles he used for close work. "And what will my lord the alderman say to that?" he asked.

"Well, Birley, I was hoping that would be where you'd come in."

"Look here, lad," said Birley. "An alderman in the family, especially an alderman married to one of them sour-faced Sugby lassies, is a bit of a responsibility. D'you know that when I go to the Limes, I knock my forehead on the doorstep, crawl on my hands and knees into the parlor, and lie full length till all the family've wiped their boots on me? Well, not all of 'em. Not Ann."

"You're piling it on, Birley."

"Maybe I am. But it's more or less like that. Me a Wesleyan, too. That doesn't help. And now you want some of Artingstall's precious time off, just so that an errand-lad can go to a Methodist class meeting. Time's money, Gordon, time's money, especially at Artingstall's." He took up his work again. "Ah, well. I'll see him at the shop. I'll miss Lillian that way. Lillian! One look from that lass is enough to turn her own brass rusty."

Hawley was annoyed at receiving a second petition on behalf of an errand boy. His interview with Birley ended on a note of temper. "Eh, well! Have it any damned way you like," he said, and with that ungracious permission Birley must be content.

AND so, on the following Thursday, a scrubbed Arnold, with hair down-plastered by water, and attesting his wage-earning status by wearing a pair of his late father's trousers miraculously brought to an approximate fit by Mrs. Ryerson—this Arnold, his face shining with joy at renewing an old intimacy, presented himself at the Stansfield door.

John too had been scrubbed and purified like a sacrifice. Ellen had never become a "class member," and so, though she attended services at Emmott Street, she was not a member of the Methodist Church. But she knew with what seriousness Gordon regarded this night's proceedings, and while he was assembling the class register and his Bible and hymn-book, she slipped a penny into each boy's hand.

"What's it for?" John demanded in a whisper. "Do we have to pay to go in?"

"You'll see," said Ellen. "Put it in your pocket."

It did not take them long to reach the Emmott Street chapel. Railings, as formidable as a prison's, shut it in, a blackened fortress, fashioned all of stone on which for years the clouds had wept sooty tears, so that from the basement disappearing into the earth behind the railings to the sharp apex of the spire lifted upon a sky flushed now with pink, all was black and funereal as crape. Within the railings there was nothing green. The path to the front door went through sour-looking earth as hard as though no spade had turned it since "Emmott Street," as its devotees called it, was built.

There was no one in the small room to which they presently came. One window of opaque glass lighted the place and opened onto a wall divided from the room by nothing but a yard-wide path, so that the place was both dark and stuffy. Gor-

don stood on a chair and threw up the lower sash of the window. Then he lit the solitary gas-burner. The blue flame, uncovered by any sort of guard, sang with a high tiny whine.

"No one here," said Gordon. "Good! I like to be first. I like to greet them as they come in."

At the end of the room away from the window was a table with a wooden armchair behind it, and on it a cloth of red rep. Whoever sat in the chair would look across the table at an array of straight-backed and uncomfortable cane-bottomed chairs. Gordon placed his register, his hymn-book and Bible on the table in front of the armchair, and then took his stand at the door.

One by one, Gordon's class-members assembled. They were all poor people.

For each one Gordon had a handclasp and a cheerful appropriate word. When they were all in, he took his place behind the table and asked them to sing a hymn. He read the first verse:

What shall we offer our good Lord,
Poor nothings! for His boundless grace?
Fain would we His great name record,
And worthily set forth His praise.

The little congregation sang with gusto. The tune was easy, popular, harmonious. Gordon had a thin but true tenor voice. Darkie Cheap and the other men achieved something adequate in the bass, and the women sang with the soulful fervor of the poor who find consolation in rich promises.

Stand in the temple of our God
As pillars, and go out no more

—they concluded, and then there was a scraping of clog-irons on the boards as they got awkwardly down on their stiff knees. John did not shut his eyes. Through the bars at the back of his chair he stared at one of those pictures that remained printed forever on his photographic mind. A head bowed down, cowled in a coarse shawl, a back bent in worship that for so many years had been bent by labor, a pair of rough woolen stockings and clog-irons shining like a horse's shoes.

He glanced sidewise and saw that Arnold Ryerson had laid his arms along the chair-seat and buried his face in them. He could not do this. He was alert and interested. He heard Gordon begin to pray, quietly and simply, with none of the emotional fervor to which Birley Artingstall could screw himself up. Gordon's prayers were conditioned by the circumstances of the people kneeling with him. He knew them all and knew their needs, and he sincerely believed that he was laying those needs before someone who listened from a Mercy Seat. Still on their knees, they repeated the Lord's Prayer together, and then they stood and sang another hymn.

"Now," said Gordon, "we are met to testify to the power of God in our lives. There are two new members in this class tonight, and they should know that John Wesley himself founded the class-meeting as the very bedrock of his church. He founded it as a place where little companies of those who love the Lord could come together to comfort and sustain one another. It is a place for personal confessions and personal testimony. It is not a place for sermons or long addresses, and so I shall not make either. I shall lay before you and before God my own desire, which is that the two lads who are here tonight may receive of God's blessing full measure, pressed down, and running over. I ask your prayers for them, that this means of grace may work in their hearts like a leaven; and I ask your prayers for myself, that I may be a worthy shepherd. Now, if any brother or sister has any confession to make, or any need of our prayers, or any testimony to give, let us hear it."

IT was evidently a well-understood routine. Gordon's eye rested on the first woman in the back row of seats. She stumbled to her feet and recited in a gabble: "Thank the Lord, Mr. Stansfield, and forget not all His benefits. I've felt the benefit of my religion all through this past week. I've needed the help of God, and I've had it."

She sat back, greatly relieved, into her chair, and Gordon said: "Amen, sister, amen. Praise God for that." Then his eye passed on to the next woman. She was mute. She slowly shook her head to and fro, as though suffering from some affliction that prevented her from keeping it still. The next woman praised God that her husband had found work. She had prayed for it long and ardently. "Let me have your prayers," she said, "that he will bring the money home."

So it went. Some were silent; some uttered a few naïve words; and John began to apprehend that his turn would come. A sweat broke out in his palms. He no longer heard what the people behind him were muttering or gabbling. He felt as panic-stricken as he sometimes did at school when the master, stick in hand, was questioning round the class. He glanced at Gordon, listening with a rapt expression to these poor people, an expression charged with pity, too, as though he wished he were God, so that he might himself bring some comfort to their lives. But Gordon was not looking at him: there was no help there.

And then deliverance came. It was Arnold's turn, and Gordon did not turn his eyes upon him. Instead, he took up the register. He called his own name first and laid a penny upon the book. One by one as their names were called, most of the members came up to the table and laid down a penny. But some had no penny to lay down, and Gordon laid it down instead. There were no arrears of "class-money" in his class.

"Arnold Ryerson." Gordon wrote the name in the book as he called it. Arnold went forward with the penny that Ellen had provided.

"John—Hamer—Shawcross." Gordon split the name up, his voice dwelling lovingly on each part of it as he wrote. He looked up at John, and on his face was a smile so radiant that the boy, arrested on the other side of the table, for a moment did not stir. He stood there with the penny clutched in his moist palm. It seemed as though no one was present but him and Gordon, and as though between them were passing currents of love and understanding beyond belief. He did not know that Gordon felt in that moment as though he were literally bringing the boy to God. John came to with a start. He opened his hand to drop the penny. Sweat stuck it to the palm. He shook it off and walked back to join with the others in the closing hymn. Most of those present thought it a strange hymn for a class-meeting. How could they guess that Gordon had chosen it with care?

Jesus, who calledst little ones to Thee,
To Thee I come;
O take my hand in Thine, and speak to me,
And lead me home;
Lest from the path of life my feet should stray,
And Satan, prowling, make Thy lamb his prey.

How could they know that Gordon's thoughts were ten years back, on a night of fog and bitter cold through which he had run with this child's head resting on his arm, to find Millie comforting Ellen, and to see Ellen's face alight again with hope that had seemed gone forever?

Though Mr. Spring's poignant novel begins with an earlier generation, in the next installment (October) it moves toward its vital present-day scenes with a depth of power and purpose that steadily augments its fascination.

AN UNPOSTED LETTER

(Continued from page 37)

my bank. They're not to open that envelope until I tell them. Then if the time comes when—well, when I feel you need to be reminded, I'll send the bank that message. And there at your club will be this letter, written on the last night of her honeymoon by one who loved you, with her whole heart, utterly. Will it alter your course of action? How can I tell that? But this I know, and know for certain, you *will* feel differently. With this letter in your hand, it will be impossible for you to shrug your shoulders over the things we've shared; whatever may have happened since, you'll say this *was* a miracle. As long as you remember that—

Dear one, the minute-hand is moving round to the half-hour. I've no more to say; and even if I had—already I've begun to miss you, to grow impatient. . . . How long is there still to go? Four minutes. Just time to scribble the covering letter, to seal the second envelope. Three and a half minutes now. . . . And then—oh, darling, the last night of our honeymoon, the night that will sum up, will concentrate. . . . I can't find the words for what I mean. There are some things that can't be said. Only two minutes now. Darling, I think it will be the loveliest of all our nights. Oh, darling, I do so pray you never read this letter!

Should you be on the lookout for Diabetes?

SOME FOLKS should be especially on their guard against diabetes, as a tendency to this disease seems to run in certain families.

▶ Furthermore, the people it strikes are usually overweight and between the ages of 40 and 60. Diabetes occurs most frequently among people who lead inactive lives, and is more common among women than among men.

So, if you have reason to be on the alert for diabetes, it is particularly important for you to have complete physical examinations at regular intervals.

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▶ Naturally, definite symptoms should call for immediate medical attention.

It is encouraging to realize that a healthy, active life is not only possible but probable for most diabetics who promptly discover their ailment and follow competent medical guidance. They easily become adjusted to the four vital conditions necessary for diabetes control: 1. Proper diet, 2. Insulin as prescribed, 3. Exercise, 4. Cleanliness.

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THE FIRE AND THE WOOD

by R.C. Hutchinson

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THE FIRE AND THE WOOD

by R. C. HUTCHINSON

IN the Moltke Hospital at Hartzinnfeld the Director's office is now on the ground floor, directly to your right as you go in by the main entrance. This is obviously the sensible arrangement. It is one of the innumerable minor achievements of the present régime. Before 1933 the Director had his quarters on the second floor of the west building. There was no lift. You had to go up about fifty steps, then the whole length of the northward corridor; or rather, you were taken first along the southward corridor and round the corner to the waiting-room. This was a long, very narrow room which looked like a piece of the passage chopped off: it had, in fact, been constructed in that fashion.

This was where Josef Zeppichmann waited for his first interview.

"The Director will be ready for you in a few minutes, Herr Doktor," the porter said.

A little too casual, the man's voice: he would have used the same tone for the patients' visitors. But the "Herr Doktor" gave Josef Zeppichmann a prick of pleasure. Of course, they had called him that all up and down the wards at Zornenwalde, but it made a difference, now, to feel that the title really belonged to him. "Doctor Zeppichmann." It was like wearing his first long trousers: knees patched—Max had already worn them two years—but long trousers all the same. Leaning against the table, he took out his father's letter, received that morning, and read a part of it again.

Franz and Moses and old Frau Wagner were in last night just after I had closed the shop. I told them that my son Dr. Zeppichmann had been given a post. My son Dr. Zeppichmann, I said, Doctor of Medicine with full diploma, my son the Doctor has an important post in the Moltke Hospital at Hartzinnfeld. Many candidates, I said, dozens of candidates, but Josef of course beats the lot of them.

But you haven't told us yet how long this career is to be. You know, Josef, my darling, how Mamma and I hope that very soon you will come back to work among your own people, here at Richterhausen. Ahi, what a proud day that will be! You won't forget, laddie, that so many of our own people here, in the factory quarter and round about the old market, are always wanting a good doctor. Typhoid there was, last summer. And bad limbs they get at the factory, and often there are sore places and much jaundice now that food is so bad. Poor people, yes, but so many between them can give a doctor what is right for a man of such good education who gives up his life to them. Dr. Sponholz has a little motor-car, ten horsepower, not so bad! But he is getting old. I have heard people say that he would like a young assistant. . . .

Back to Richterhausen! Staring at the bare wall of the waiting-room, Josef saw the street where the shop was, the pump at the corner. You turned left there—to the right the road only led into Bieber's yards—and for three or four straight kilometers you were held between the railway siding and a drawn monotony of workers' houses. Everything infected by the stench of the tanneries, which flavored even your food. Sometime he would go there for a few days; later on, when he had saved for a good overcoat and smart shoes, when the last skin of Richterhausen accent had been stripped from his speech. But stay there—devote the rest of life to that copse of crouching houses?

He would have to write very carefully to Papa, very affectionately. Papa, after all, had set him going—done without tobacco for fourteen years.

"The Director is ready to see you now."

Along the corridors again. . . .

"Doctor Zeppichmann, Herr Direktor!"

"Just sit down a minute, Doctor. I want to get this letter off."

Dr. Wildelau shifted his pince-nez, moved a paperweight to uncover a letter from the dean of the Zornenwalde medical school. *"I have found Zeppichmann a most industrious student, of high intelligence, thoroughly conscientious in all his duties. I have no hesitation in recommending him."* Just so, just so! Old Plünnecke fastened the same encomium to every graduate he dispatched. Character, that was one of the things Plünnecke did not fully understand; the others were biology, anatomy, diagnosis. . . . And yet, oddly, one of the finest teachers in Hanover. This time he had sent a raw one—a lad from the coalpits, you'd have said, done up to imitate a suburban gentleman.

"Well, Doctor Zeppichmann, I've had a most glowing account of you from Doctor Plünnecke."

"Yes, Herr Direktor."

Certainly the eyes were alive. Not intellectual, no, nothing of subtlety; but intense, devoted, like a setter's eyes.

Wildelau pulled another letter from the typewritten pile, altered a word and signed it. He said slowly:

"You are very fortunate to have studied under Plünnecke. A splendid teacher. If I had a son of my own, that is where I should send him. Without a doubt. Without any hesitation at all. But perhaps I ought just to say this: A man who gives up so much of his time to tutorial work cannot—in the nature of things he cannot—keep so well abreast with current medical practice as we are obliged to in our work here, for instance. You will realize that you are now passing on to another stage in your education. You will learn here many new things; you may find that our practice—indeed, our theory—differs in many particulars from what Doctor Plünnecke has taught you. That is inevitable. I would say: Observe, compare, appreciate—criticize, if you like, mentally. But to begin with, reserve your judgments."

"Indeed, yes, Herr Direktor; I understand that."

"Are you interested in politics at all?"

"No, Herr Direktor, I have never concerned myself with politics."

"Ah, so! That is very wise, I think. Of course, we must always remember first of all that we are citizens of a great nation. We must be ready at any moment to devote ourselves, everything we have, to our national duty. But men who want to get on in their profession have no time for political ebullience."

HE glanced at the clock. Twenty past four already, and he had to see a visiting surgeon at half-past. A pity. He must have another talk with this boy later on. Something might be made of a creature with such earnest, hungry eyes; if not a doctor, at any rate a wholly reliable wardman.

"To begin with, you will be working under Doctor Röstel. His surgery is over there in the north building—the porter will show you. Eight o'clock, will you be there, please. And if any questions arise about your work, they should

go to Doctor Röstel in the first place; he will consult me if there's anything he can't settle himself. Well, Zeppichmann, I hope you'll be happy here. I'll give you just one hint: I have found that one's happiness in life depends on a single condition: on knowing that one has done one's duty."

HE held out his hand. Josef rose as if to take it; stopped short, fumbled.

"May I just ask something?"

"Certainly, certainly."

"It's just—it's this way: Doctor Plünnecke was kind enough to give me facilities for some private research. I—he encouraged that. I—I was wondering if perhaps you would have no objection to my continuing that research—in my own time, of course. I thought that possibly you might grant me the use of a small laboratory—I mean, a bench, just a bench in the bacteriological laboratory."

Wildelau stretched his lower lip.

"As to your carrying on private research—well, I suppose there's no harm in that, so long as it doesn't interfere with your work. And possibly Doctor Dittmore will not object to your being in his laboratory sometimes, if he knows exactly what you're doing. In what branch are these—researches of yours?"

For a moment Josef's mouth wouldn't open. This was one of the cues for which he had rehearsed, but the sentences which came so fluently in a hotel bedroom would not take shape before Wildelau's fixed, inquiring eyes.

"I am on the track of something important," he said abruptly.

"Yes?"

"A new polyvalent tuberculin."

Wildelau turned his eyes away.

"Doctor Zeppichmann," he said, staring at his blotting-paper, "I don't want to be in any way unsympathetic, but I think—I think you ought to know this: of some twenty thousand revolutionary discoveries in medicine which young men announce each year, something like thirty-five per cent are new and perfect antitoxins for tuberculosis. I suppose that at this very moment hundreds, literally hundreds of scientists who have spent their whole lives in research are at work on just that problem. In America there are huge laboratories with fully-trained staffs engaged on nothing else. Do you—do you really think that your chances of success are very rosy?"

This time there was no hesitation.

"I think I am on the way to success, Herr Direktor."

From the loose jacket came a long, dirty envelope crammed with manuscript.

"I have a record of all my workings up to date. I have used Schulze-Manz's formula as my basis, but I've introduced two new elements which I call Psi Plus and Psi Minus. I've been experimenting to determine the exact coefficients, and I think now—"

Wildelau cleared his throat. "Yes, yes—"

"—I thought perhaps you might care to glance through my tabulations. It wouldn't take you more than an hour—some time when you're not particularly busy. This top sheet gives a brief explanation of my system—I've divided the data into five groups corresponding with the five hypotheses which I've detailed—"

"Yes, yes; sometime, sometime I should be very much interested." Wildelau folded the sheets and slid them back into the envelope. He rose. "I'm sure Doctor Röstel will be most interested to see these—these papers. Well, now, I have an appointment at half-past four—it's past that already."

But the youth did not move. Grave, awkward, determined: like a dog asking to be taken for a walk, Wildelau thought.

"There is just one more thing I wanted to ask you, Herr Direktor. I thought that you might have some cases here, some cases in the tuberculosis department, which are not responding to any standard treatment. I thought—it seems possible that one of those cases would prove to be exactly what I'm looking for. I thought—I mean, when you've had time to go through my analysis of results—I thought you might be willing to hand such a case over to me—for a limited period, of course—"

"Do I understand you to mean," Wildelau asked slowly, "that you want to try out your theories on one of my patients?"

"Well, yes. I don't mean, of course, one of the paying patients—"

"Doctor Zeppichmann," Wildelau said, "when you have worked under me for twelve months or so, you will probably have learned something about my ethical position, about the creed on which all our work here is based. You will learn that we here regard each single life for which we are responsible as something of inestimable value. . . . When that is learned, we may perhaps discuss your proposals again. In the meantime, Doctor Dittmore may be willing for you to make some experiments on his animals. I can't promise that, of course—"

Josef said, politely: "I have already made experiments with two hundred groups of tubercle-infected rats—"

"And how many of those are still extant?"

"In my last, what I call the M.44 group, the negative results only came to 17.6%."

"Which means, on a broad hypothesis, that you want me to give you a seventeen per cent chance of killing one of my patients?"

"I think I could put it at only fifteen per cent, given a suitable subject. And of course I'm not asking for a good case—not to begin with—only a case which has passed the line already."

Wildelau went to the door and opened it.

"In a year's time," he said, "I hope you will have shown me that you are not only a conscientious, reliable house-surgeon, but also that you have grown a little more mature, that your sense of proportion has developed. It can, I think, develop a good deal."

Chapter Two

FROM the station, where he had left his bag, a narrow road curved up to the Bülow fountain. The working quarter was on the other side of the river. He went down that way, shifting his heavy bag from hand to hand. The sun was in his eyes now, making the roofs black and forlorn. He had an address to go to; he had seen it in an advertisement panel at the station: "Handelstrasse 149. *Accommodation for Professional Men and Families.*"

It was a Number 4 tram that Josef wanted, the policeman said.

This Dr. Dittmore, Josef thought, he was evidently the man to be cajoled first of all. Dittmore, presumably, was head of the Research Department, and would have to be placated before one could use his tools.

The street narrowed. Here, standing between two houses in the row, you could place your hands on both front doors. The tram slowed to a walking pace, squeezing through a crowd which spread across the roadway: a crowd staring at the wreckage of a little shop, chairs with the legs torn off, broken china all over the footpath. With furious clanging the tram ground on, a message chalked on a wall slipped past the window and was lost. *"This happens to traitors."* An elderly man, a clerk from one of the factories, followed Josef's gaze and smiled.

"Communists, you see! The young men hereabouts are that way. Sunday nights, they have to smash something to keep themselves amused." Looking hard at Josef's face he leaned a little closer. "Let me just tell you: You're a stranger to Hartzinnfeld? Well, people of your—people of your kind, they want to keep quiet as much as possible. I'm only being friendly, you understand?"

Josef smiled.

"Yes, yes, I thank you. But I never meddle with politics. I've too much else to think about."

Handelstrasse was built in the eighties, but it incorporates, at the end farthest from where the tram stops, a lane that once ran between two farms. One of the farms still stands, much chopped about; Number 149 was once an inn. It has been, from time to time, a storehouse and a box factory. Windows have been altered, and on the street side there is an ugly wing, built with bricks left over from one of the factories. But at the back its charm remains: the tiny dormer windows, the little gallery on two sides of the courtyard. The Spühlers, when they occupied the place a few years after the war, restored so much of its homeliness as their means and taste allowed.

A student's cap was hanging just inside one of the front windows. The door-bell was out of action. Both these details were satisfactory to Josef as he stood by the door, sweating, sizing up the place: it had the air of genteel pa-

tronage, and a smack of comfortable inefficiency. One got on best by employing slightly inefficient people. Then the window above his head was jerked open, and Frau Spühler's round face, topped with a crimson dust-cap, was staring down at him.

"If you please?"

Josef took off his hat.

"I understand, madam, that you have a room to let? I mean, for pension-accommodation."

Frau Spühler screwed her eyes, thinking hard.

"I'll come down," she said at last.

WHEN she opened the door, she stared at him as if his appearance there were a fresh phenomenon—stared in silence, until her voice, in its irresponsible way, said suddenly: "Twenty-four marks a week. That doesn't include a midday meal."

Josef regarded her earnestly.

"I didn't mean to pay more than twenty," he said.

Not more than twenty! And he looked like a vigorous feeder. Why did he stare at her so reproachfully, as if she were trying to cheat him? She said:

"I can show you the room."

Following her along the cracked linoleum, smelling faintly the afterglow of the last meal, his eyes went up and down from the fine gray hair leaking out of her cap to the awkward movement of her huge hips. Something reminded him faintly of his mother, though she was small. But this was a gentlewoman, comparatively; one who had fallen a step or two. Incipient rheumatoid arthritis, possibly. Twenty-four marks! And he had hardly hoped to pay less than twenty-five at a place of this kind.

"There," she said, "this one."

But he had stopped a few paces back, where an open door showed him an L-shaped room, half as big again as the one to which Frau Spühler was inviting him.

"May I look in here?"

It was empty, and he went across to the window. This was the sort of room a student of the better class had; a smart pair of shoes stood by the bed; there were pictures which he vaguely recognized as being in respectable taste. But what really mattered was that here one had room to work: a bench over there by the long window, with shelves—he could put them up himself—against the adjacent wall. Bring the light over to this corner with a two-way connection and a long flex, and the room would be a laboratory in embryo. The picture that his mind suddenly made went on through time: long evenings at his bench there, hundreds of hours of contented patience. To work as Koch did, alone and utterly confident: that was happiness.

"This is not a bad room," he said. "Of course, it's in rather bad repair."

"But this is Herr Heisel's room."

"He is here for long?"

"Oh, yes, there's no talk of his leaving us."

Josef went to the window again. Here, to the left, he could fix up a level table that would take his balance.

"But perhaps Herr Heisel would be willing to change his room?" he said.

Frau Spühler stared at his face, puzzled. You didn't ask lodgers to change their rooms.

"No," she said at last, "no, I don't think he would."

"How much does he pay for it?"

"Well, I don't know. Let me see. Herr Heisel came to us in 1929. Yes, we were charging twenty-two marks then. Meat was a bit cheaper then, you see. The price of meat in Hartzinnfeld, it's become something terrible. We just had to put up our charges."

"But Herr Heisel still pays twenty-two marks?"

"Well, you see, we couldn't put up the charge to the lodgers we had already, could we?"

He said seriously: "Yes, I quite see that; I quite understand. But if I were to offer you twenty-five—no, twenty-four marks, it would only be fair for me to have the best room. Herr Heisel would surely understand that."

"I don't think he'd like to change," she repeated. "You see, all his things are here."

"But they could be moved. It wouldn't take five minutes." He was calculating swiftly. One could get a good laboratory balance for a deposit of about seventy marks. Instalments, say eight marks a week. He ought to send home nine marks a week—that was more or less agreed. It would be cutting things close, but—

"Twenty-five marks," he said. "For this room. That's a definite offer."

Frau Spühler turned her head away. She was very unhappy. Twenty-five marks, it wasn't to be sniffed at. The room at the end of the passage had been empty for three months. It was now six weeks since Herr Heisel had last paid his bill. . . .

"I must ask my husband," she said, and went vaguely away, leaving him in the passage. She knew that August would be no help at all, but it gave her a little more time.

Josef stood still, calculating. The house was very quiet, he heard only the crackle of a board recovering from Frau Spühler's steps, very faintly the murmur of her voice somewhere downstairs. Suddenly a new sound came from below, the sound of some one coughing. A harsh, uncontrolled cough. That was interesting.

He went down and got his bag.

When Frau Spühler returned, Josef's bag was in the middle of Herr Heisel's room, his coat and hat on one of the chairs.

"Well?" he asked.

He was like a hungry man with bread just out of reach.

"I was thinking," she said slowly, "—I mean, my husband says you ought to ask Herr Heisel yourself. You could explain to him."

"Just so. I can quite easily explain to Herr Heisel. Perhaps if we put one or two of Herr Heisel's things into the other room, he would see how comfortable he'll be in there. These pictures'll show better in the smaller room."

Chapter Three

IT took less than fifteen minutes to get most of Herr Heisel's belongings shifted. Josef did the greater part of the work himself. When it came to moving the wardrobe, that mahogany wardrobe which Herr Heisel had had sent from Berlin, Herr Spühler had to be called up to help.

Shorter than his wife, massive in neck and shoulders, Herr Spühler looked a very bullock for strength. Yes, like one of the young prize bullocks Josef had often seen in the Richterhausen market. "Ah yes," Herr Spühler said, rolling up his sleeves, "when I was in the Navy—a warrant officer, understand—I could carry three men on my back."

He walked all round the wardrobe, as if it were a city to conquer.

"Now this," he said, "I shall take upon my back. With my arms going round behind, like this." He took up his stance, back to back with the wardrobe, leaning forward, his big behind pressed against it. "Now I just want you, Hilde, to tilt it forward till it rests on my back. And you, Doctor, would perhaps support the bottom a little."

"But your heart, August! You know what the doctor said about your heart. You, Doctor, I ask you to forbid him. His heart, you can see what it's like."

Josef could only see Herr Spühler's behind. But he thought endocarditis was not unlikely.

"Perhaps if I took out some of the things—" he began.

But Herr Spühler, getting impatient, had succeeded in pulling it on to his back; now he was moving to the door.

"I doubt if it'll go through the door that way," Josef said gloomily.

"Go through?" Herr Spühler panted. "Of course it—damn and blast it! Hilde, for God's sake! Doctor, get hold of it, can't you! Hold on to her stern!"

"This is the end!" Frau Spühler said.

Yes, it was going, it was through! The moulded top came hard against the passage wall, but somehow Herr Spühler had got it clear, the stern only scraping the lintel. On again, straight on along the passage, Herr Spühler creaking and grunting, his wife damp-eyed, while Josef in sullen exasperation fidgeted uselessly behind. Up the two steps Herr Spühler climbed, a pygmy Atlas in gigantic motion. But the next doorway beat him. Josef cried a warning but it was long too late, the wardrobe came against the lintel mouldings with such a crash that Herr Spühler himself was almost taken off his feet.

"Now he is destroying the house," Frau Spühler said.

Herr Spühler stood shaking like a snapped spring, the wardrobe still aloft.

"Sideways," he jerked out, "just go—sideways. Have goodness—fetch Professor Rupf!"

The trouble, as Professor Rupf and his wife saw it when they arrived, was to turn the wardrobe sideways from its present position. The top of it was jammed now between the ceiling and the architrave, the bottom wedged into the skirting where the passage narrowed. Tall and kindly, Professor Rupf surveyed the situation, measured the distances with his grave eyes.

"If you were to come out, Herr Spühler—"

From downstairs came the sound of glass jangling in a loose frame. That was the front door.

It was characteristic of this house, Erich Heisel thought as he stood gloomily in the entrance hall, that the front door should rattle like that. Characteristic, perhaps, of the whole of Hartzinnfeld: a ramshackle outpost of the provinces, where nothing ever happened quite to time, nothing ever fitted. He called, "Minna! My house-shoes!" but there was no answer. The silly girl in the kitchen was alternately coughing, and singing at the top of her voice.

He sat down, suddenly feeling his tiredness. The whole day, from breakfast, on one plate of soup. And he must have walked twenty kilometers. That did not seem so much; for on his holidays, three years ago, he had done as much as forty kilometers in the day, with nothing but bread and cheese for lunch. He was an athlete, Erich Heisel, trained to endurance. But the hard pavements, the eternal stairs to top-floor offices, worked more severely on that spare, narrow-chested body. It was unlucky to have been born in 1912, to have lost one's father three years later. The thin tightness of his face showed that. They were marks of aristocracy, Erich himself thought, emblems of Junker blood: the high cheek-bones he saw in a mirror, the deeply recessed eyes. But his forbears had mostly been stout-faced.

He would not have said that he was lonely. But there is a congenital disposition to loneliness, and spirits suffer from that affection as constantly as certain bodies from asthma. The attacks come less from solitude than from the sense of being a stranger. And in Hartzinnfeld, Erich was a stranger still. Oh, yes, he had his friends, he would meet them in the club this evening: lads of decent intention, honorable, if not of his own rank. But his thoughts were going back over the day's wanderings, and he realized that since leaving the house this morning he had spoken to no one as to a fellow-man. "Good morning! I understand that you have a vacancy here for an assistant in the advertising department." "Good morning! You promised to tell me if you had notice of any openings for a shorthand writer. . . . Oh. Oh, I see! Then you will let me know through the post?" That is not conversation.

FOR more than a month, now, this had been the daily routine. Life sloped downward from the Tuesday, three years ago, when an army medical board had refused its certificate. That was the day when his spirit's growth had stopped. But the time in which hope and dignity had flickered out together was the moment when he last stood in Birnegarten's office: the fat Birnegarten leaning back in his chair, heavily suave, a little nervous: "This new combination involves the fusion of the two publicity departments. I'm sure, Herr Heisel, you will appreciate the fact that the more experienced men have first claim. I needn't tell you how much I regret that the increasing severity of competition makes these measures necessary." Dust swimming in a column of sunlight, the smell of new calcimine, and a door swinging. Then a stocky youth with a big nose and a Hamburg accent asking if Herr Heisel would be so very kind as to show him his record-books.

He had told no one, written to none of his friends. In a letter to his mother he had said that the quiet provincial life suited him, that he was too busy to spend a week-end in Berlin as she suggested. It was pride's last refuge, to keep his wounds in hiding, not to cry out.

Where was Frau Spühler, what was everyone doing in this damned house? He took off his shoes—one of them had a nail sticking up—pushed them into a corner and limped across the hall in his socks. The girl Minna, meeting him there, thought: "How angry Herr Heisel looks today!" Like a leopard, she thought, a wounded leopard. Yes, he was just like a leopard, thin and self-contained, with a rather surreptitious pride, the small eyes scowling.

He stopped abruptly when he saw her.

"Didn't you hear me call? I want my house-shoes."

"I put them in your room, Herr Heisel. Yes, I did clean them—this morning."

"Where is everybody?" he asked. "Where's Frau Spühler got to?"

She started to answer, but a fit of coughing took her and made her speechless. Oh, damn the girl! Was there no one in this place who could even answer a plain question. "You ought to see a doctor!" he said, but she didn't hear him. He went on upstairs.

THEY had the wardrobe athwart the passage now, and Frau Rupf, jammed in a corner behind it, was uttering explosive little sarcasms as quickly as her hard, small mind could form them. Herr Spühler was still in the same position, fixed like a figure of stone in the attitude of one about to dive through the floor.

"If only you could move just a few inches to one side," Professor Rupf said reasonably, "then we could cant the thing over and slide it forward obliquely."

"I am not standing like this just to admire the view," was all Herr Spühler answered.

A quiet, stiff voice asked:

"Just what is happening to my wardrobe?"

The silence that came was the silence of schoolboys at the special jerk of a door-handle. Josef, twisting round, saw a young man with the figure of a delicate boy, a face of almost middle-aged maturity; eyes whose stare was like a flat, wide beam of light.

It was the Professor who first got his tongue loose:

"You might say, Herr Heisel, that everything has happened to your wardrobe except what we want to happen. It persistently objects to going through this door."

"And why should it?"

"Ah, that is Herr Spühler's affair."

From the stiff, doubled trunk of Herr Spühler, a voice said uneasily:

"You must ask my wife; it's something she fixed up."

Heisel's eyes, moving round upon Frau Spühler, set her into speech some five seconds before she intended; and the words came wrong:

"I thought—I thought perhaps you would like the other room. It gets the sun—it gets the sun in the early morning. Just a change, I thought—I knew you wouldn't mind. At least, I thought perhaps it was more suitable."

"More suitable?"

She opened her mouth again, but nothing came at all now. Erich Heisel said coolly, carefully:

"So you've decided to move me into another room? Wouldn't it have been more courteous to consult me before shifting my things?"

Frau Spühler had been given time to arrange her mind now. "It's nothing to do with me," she said boldly. "It was the Doctor's idea."

"The Doctor's?"

"That gentleman."

Josef saluted. "Doctor Zeppichmann!"

Erich had barely noticed him. Dr. Zeppichmann, good God! A flourishing senior boy from the agricultural laborers' orphanage!

"So you think my health requires the early morning sun, Herr Doktor?"

Josef smiled. He liked a joke, even when he couldn't quite get his mind round it. Amiably, a little nervously, he said:

"This room here, you see, it's specially suitable for some research work I'm doing. I have agreed to pay Frau Spühler a special rate to secure my choice of room, and I felt certain you would see that the new arrangement is—quite reasonable. Actually that room is in some ways a better one. As Frau Spühler says, it catches the early sun."

He stopped there, because you cannot go on talking to a man whose back is turned to you. And Erich was already addressing Herr Spühler.

"You know, this is by no means a perfect boarding-house, but as places of this kind go, I've always thought it was run on fairly sensible lines. Perhaps I'm overscrupulous, but isn't it rather surprising, after lodging here for three years, to find that a total stranger has jumped in from nowhere and helped himself to my room? Or is it just your ordinary practice to get hold of your guests' private property and bundle it about? Possibly you're under the impression that I only hire a room to sleep in! As for my wardrobe, which happens to have been built by one of the finest cabinet-makers in Germany, I suppose if it gets in your way at all, you're at liberty to pitch it into the street! Or have you any reasonable explanation to offer?"

Herr Spühler spoke then.

"Herr Heisel," he suddenly barked, "when you have paid the six weeks' rent you owe me for your room, it will be time enough for you to insult my wife and myself. Meanwhile, this is a house, let me tell you, for respectable guests. It is not a charity-home for ruffianly paupers."

A moment of stillness, a moment when the noises from the street seemed to be still. White and shaking, Erich made a step toward Herr Spühler. But a hand stopped him: Josef's.

"One moment, Herr Heisel," Josef said. "Listen, please! If I was to advance something toward your arrears, that would make everything all right, wouldn't it? That would be a reasonable settlement, don't you think?"

Erich stared at Josef for an instant, their faces only a few inches apart—said nothing—pushed through to the small room at the end and slammed the door.

Along the passage, shuffling in her loose slippers, came the girl Minna.

"Herr Heisel was saying he wanted his house-shoes. Shall I get them and take them to his new room?"

No one answered her.

Chapter Four

DR. WILDELAU sent down a note to Dr. Röstel:

"The young man I mentioned will report to you tomorrow morning. His name is Zeppichmann. I have already interviewed him."

Dr. Röstel showed the note to Dr. Dittmore.

"I hope he will be tidy," Röstel said.

"Yes, yes," Dittmore agreed, "I think tidiness is the one really important thing in all scientific work." And he went away to his own regions, where he could laugh out loud.

The Moltke Hospital catered for all the ailments recognized by medical science, and even for some which, refusing classification, are not recognized. But the staff suffered from one disease, virulent and infectious, an encompassing mania for tidiness.

Dr. Röstel had come to the hospital on a six months' appointment in 1922, and still meant to find a less exhausting post as soon as he had cleared up an interesting pyelitis case in Ward 14, a hobnail liver in Ward 6. He suffered from the disease in its most acute form. Dr. Röstel had a motto of his own, "Only the patient matters," and its application kept him in a smoldering frenzy. With his intense shyness, he never looked at a patient's face, seldom addressed one except conventionally; but as he passed through a ward a little moan, a catching of the breath, would make him pull up in a kind of panic distress. "Sister! Nurse! That man's head is too high. You must take one pillow away. No, that's too low now, you must find a shallower pillow." And then: "This record-card, it's not been entered up this morning. Nine o'clock. Where's the senior nurse? That window's too far open, there's a draft along these beds. What's that over there? Look, my girl, look! That clout. Who left it there? What's it doing there? A cleaning-rag on a patient's bed! I've never heard of such a thing—don't you realize these things are alive with bacilli!"

So this what's-his-name, this new young man Zeppichmann, about whom Röstel saw nothing at all remarkable one way or the other, this Zeppichmann had got to be tidy.

"I am sure," he said, "I am sure, Doctor—Doctor Zepp—Zepp—I am sure, Doctor, we shall work very happily together." Washing his hands once again, his knees bent with rheumatism, his round, cozy little stomach pressed against the basin, he smiled in his friendliest way at the cold tap. "All I ask is that you should be methodical. Methodical, clean in your work, wash hands between the wards, not leave things about, you know."

So that was this man's kink, Josef thought. Tidiness. Ah, well!

And four days later Dr. Röstel found that all the drawers in his instrument cabinet had been elegantly labeled, and a separate hook had been screwed onto the door for Zeppichmann's overall, and on Zeppichmann's table stood a wooden box, neatly homemade, with the rudiments of a patient's index.

It was observed in the wards also that the new doctor was a tidy person, in the Moltke tradition. For a day or two this awkward, overscrubbed young man in the new overall was seen to trail after Röstel as somberly as an aged sheepdog. But presently the creature began to move a little way from his master, to straighten somebody's bedclothes, push a chair into its proper place, dust some crumbs off a bedside table. That was significant: Dr. Röstel would have found crumbs on the blades of an electric fan. And presently the new doctor was calling, nervously but not unobtrusively: "Nurse, this medicine glass—it's empty, I think. I thought—perhaps you didn't realize it had been left here." Yet no one could deny that young Dr. Zeppichmann was a worker. Solemn, officious, he had a way of slipping into one of the wards without being noticed. A nurse tidying a patient at one end would suddenly hear his flat, chesty voice: "I'd better leave the leg as it is. If it goes on hurting, I'll come back and do it this evening." And there was the new doctor, bent over a bed with the examination-lamp fixed on the headrail, swiftly undoing a bandage. And then, standing awkwardly with his eyes toward his boots, he would pay out a string of instructions.

In the staff mess it was the same. At luncheon the recruit sat earnest and silent, methodically enveloping forkloads as if he were fattening himself for market, always with Schraube's *"Cases in Phthisis"* on the table beside him. If young Ahlwarth asked, "What's on your mind, Zeppichmann? Your sins or your kidneys?" he answered gravely, "It's a case in the throat ward; I'm very worried about it." And afterward, when Röstel was having his one treat of the day, twenty minutes' chess with Dittmore, he would feel a tap on his shoulder.

"You must excuse me, Doctor; I wanted to consult you about that membranous croup in 14. I want to inject again, but I don't care to do it without your permission. Perhaps if you could just run up and look at it now, then you could give me your advice before you go over to the surgical wing."

"WELL," Dittmore said, when he met Röstel again, "that new tool-sharpener of yours, is he tidy?"

Röstel nodded gloomily.

"Tidy? Yes. Yes, there's no doubt about it. The neatest man I ever had. Never forgets anything. Always returns my instruments when he borrows them."

"Aha," Dittmore said, nursing his thin hands, "then you're in luck's way! Gracious Providence has looked favourably upon the good Doctor Röstel, his prayer for a tidy man is answered at last."

"Yes," said Röstel, with unusual energy. "Yes, damn and blast it!"

"Indeed? Indeed? Can there be some unheard-of failing in this divinely tidy boy?"

"There can. He treats the patients as if they were cows."

"Is that—technically undesirable?"

"All research people talk like you do," Röstel said grumpily. "You think that real doctoring's just a joke; you think the only important thing is to marry bacilli and watch them multiplying in your dirty little tubes."

"My dear Röstel, why such acerbity?"

Gathering his words laboriously, as one whose tongue is his least responsive member, Röstel said:

"That Zeppichmann, that great bull-calf that His Majesty Doctor Wildelau has plumped down on my stomach, he thinks of nothing but his work."

"My dear Röstel," Dittmore protested, "you really must be more selective in your use of metaphors. Just now you said that he treated his patients as if they were cows."

Röstel grunted. This Dittmore, this well-meaning trainer of bacilli, had a single fault: he was forever knitting up the most incomprehensible jokes.

"Thinks of nothing but his work!" he repeated.

"That is terrible!" Dittmore said. "A new assistant house-surgeon in the Moltke Hospital, a young man with all his professional life before him, he ought to be thinking about wine, about the color of his tie, about horses and girls. To think about his work all day long, it's unforgivable! You, for example, my dear colleague, I know you spend all your time thinking whether you can afford an electric horn for your motorcycle."

"You don't understand me, Karl. Of course, yes, it's quite right for a young man to think about his work. But he should—I don't know, I can't put it into words—he ought to have some other interest, some philosophy. A man ought to be a human being, when all's said and done."

Dittmore frowned.

"That is rather a daring hypothesis. The house-matron on the medical side, if she proved to be a human being, I should lose all faith in divine taxonomy."

"No, but don't you see, he ought to think about his work as part of his life. The most important part, of course. As it is, he only thinks of life as part of his work. He eats his dinner just to give him strength enough to pull out somebody's tonsils."

"Dear me! And I suppose if he ate a very big dinner, his strength would be such that the patient's bowels would be dragged up too?"

"I shouldn't mind if he took some sort of interest in the source of the tonsils. He just doesn't notice the patients at all; they are merely specimens of dilapidation for him to practice on. Why, you—whose whole business in life is to juggle with bottles—I believe you would be less detached than he is. Yesterday he came to tell me about a gangrened finger in Ward 10. I asked whose finger, and he said Herr Güttler's. I said, 'Do you mean *Frau* Güttler's?' and he said, 'Oh, yes, now I come to think of it, it is a woman.' Just fancy that!"

"It shows a wonderful purity of mind," Dittmore said. "At any rate," he said, "the boy is tidy. That is a great virtue."

It was a virtue not much exemplified in Dittmore's own regions. He himself had started the research department at a time when the Moltke Hospital had still regarded bacteriological research as the eccentric trade of long-haired chemists at the universities. He had been given an old laundry at the very end of the north building and three thousand marks to spend on "such tables, chemicals, etc., as may be proved necessary for such investigations." The department cost thirty thousand a year now, but Wildelau still thought of it as an extravagance, perhaps justifiable because it gave the hospital publicity of a fashionable kind. It was still in the laundry, the benches converted from ironing-tables were still used, the drying-racks and one of the old boilers had never been moved.

It was a little after eight o'clock when Josef, paying his first visit, carefully closed the laundry-door behind him to make it whine as little as possible.

"Can you tell me," he asked politely, "if Doctor Dittmore is by any chance still at work?"

The man he spoke to turned round slowly and took off his pince-nez—a stout, lugubrious schoolboy of forty, with his chin a week unshaved.

"Be careful where you're standing," he said. "Those flasks are full of nitric, and that box by your left foot has got Dittmore's favorite rats. They hate excitement. Dittmore? Well, he was messing about not long ago. I saw him—when was it? Look here, if there's anybody charting readings over there, by the boiler, that would be him."

Josef went over there, and found Dittmore in his shirt-sleeves: a man stretched out to five foot ten, with hair like a puff of smoke, whose gray eyes looked at the world with a tourist's tolerance.

"If you've come to wash the floor," he said, without looking around, "I can tell you straight away it doesn't want washing! Now look here," he continued, "this is rather interesting. This curve, look—you see the way the bumps come? Now the odd thing is this: every bump corresponds with an injection; but only alternate injections give the fluctuation. Why? There's no sense in it that I can see. Can you tell me? Who are you, by the way? Oh, yes, you're Röstel's new assistant. . . . Where was I? Yes, this one, temperature at the fourteenth injection, Thursday 6:30 P.M. . . . D'you mind standing back a bit, you're giving me a shadow. I can't see why someone doesn't rig these lights so as you can see something. Now you're stepping on my vial-rack. Never mind!"

"PERHAPS I could visit you sometime when you're less busy," Josef suggested.

Dittmore frowned.

"Forty-eight-point-seven, fifty-one-point-three. Oh, yes, what was it you wanted?"

"I—I have Doctor Wildelau's permission to ask if you would be so kind as to allow me to come here occasionally. I mean, to work here. I mean, I thought I might possibly be of some use to you in odd ways, scrubbing the benches, that sort of thing." He saw Dittmore shudder, and skidded on: "No, I don't mean that; I never interfere with things. But I thought I might learn how to prepare nutrient media for you; that might be helpful, I thought; and then perhaps later on I could have part of a bench to do a few experiments of my own. I am—I am just a bit interested in the tubercle bacillus."

"You'd better go over to Doctor Vollmuth and ask to have a look at his patients," Dittmore said. "You can see T.B. in action there. And my God, how it acts! A pleasant afternoon-off for you."

Next day the telephone rang in the Research Department, and Dittmore, having moved a stack of cases to get to it, unraveled the receiving wire.

"Hullo-hullo-hullo!" he said.

The precise, courteous voice of Dr. Vollmuth answered him.

"There is a young man here; his name seems to be Zeppichmann. He tells me he is doing some work for you, and that you have sent him to examine some of my cases in order to prepare some kind of thesis for your inspection. Is that correct?"

Dittmore let off three great barks of delight.

"I beg your pardon?" Vollmuth said. "I fancy there is something wrong with my instrument."

"It's not me that sent him," Dittmore roared. "It's the devil himself who sends Herr Zeppichmann to try the virtue of honest doctors. Put him to bed, I should; give him some of your open-air treatment! He'll probably make a first-class case for you if you work at him patiently. God bless your efforts, worthy Doctor Vollmuth!"

OH, well, the trouble was practically over, Frau Spühler thought. They had bought a reading chair to go in Herr Heisel's room. Herr Heisel had said "Thank you," though not very graciously. And Frau Spühler had wept a little, reminding Herr Heisel that she had lost her only child in infancy, and that it wasn't easy for honest people to get along nowadays, with meat so costly, and something would have to be done about the damp patch over the door in the dining-room.

Since then, Herr Heisel had gradually come out of his sulks. He talked a little at meals now, in his oldish, knowing way: there were things going on in the country that they knew nothing about, he told them. Ah, yes, he heard things when he went to his club, that club of his where he spent so much of his time. And once more Frau Spühler was warmed by a little pride in having this young Berlin gentleman as her guest, this young man of excellent family who seemed to know all about what was really going on.

But when Dr. Zeppichmann was about, Herr Heisel did not talk. His eyes, gripping the cracked vegetable dish, were the eyes of a man unjustly in the pillory.

Happily, it was Dr. Zeppichmann's custom to hurry through his meals, excuse himself, and bound away to his own room; where, having locked the door, he did unimaginable things with the tubes and bottles which seemed to multiply every day.

"It is not my idea of a doctor," Herr Spühler said.

"Still, he seems to be a hard-working young man," Professor Rupf said.

His wife raised her shoulders.

"It's one way to get a reputation for industry," she said. "To shut yourself up and lock the door. Probably he's reading the feuilletons."

"I am sorry to disturb you!"

Herr Heisel's voice was that of a departed spirit, a weary spirit whom an unpracticed medium has summoned by mistake.

"I am sorry to disturb you, Frau Spühler. I'm not asking for any favor, any special treatment, but on an evening when I happen to have a fairly severe headache, it is really quite impossible to stand this noise."

"Noise?"

"You may not be aware that for the last twenty minutes the man who took my room from me has been hammering nails into the wall."

It was arranged some minutes later that the girl Minna should be sent to Dr. Zeppichmann with a message. She was to say politely that Herr and Frau Spühler presented their compliments, and would be much obliged if Dr. Zeppichmann could refrain from his carpentering in the evenings, since it troubled some of the other guests.

So Josef was disturbed.

He was using the time between two readings to finish putting up a tube-rack, when he felt a draft at his back and found the girl standing behind him, her weight on one

leg, hands crossed on her dirty wet apron, foolish eyes pointed stubbornly at the wall.

"Well, what in hell is it now?"

She started coughing. This creature always coughed explosively when you asked her a question, stopped to grin at you in a silly, confiding way and then went on until you could have thrashed her.

"Please," she got out at last, "Frau Spühler sends her kind regards, and you're to stop making that filthy row; it's driving Herr Heisel cracked."

Apparently he did not hear her. He was regarding her face as if she had spoken in a foreign language. He said:

"Here, come over here a minute! I want to look at you. How long have you had that cough?"

Chapter Five

DR. DITTMORE'S regard for his animals was akin to that of the prize cattle-breeder. He kept a big cage of rats, beauties, in reserve for future use. And as long as they were not required for experiments, they had every luxury he could contrive for them. On Sundays he made a special journey to feed them, not trusting the lab-boy. Sentimentalist or brute as you please, he was naturally upset when one morning he found three of them dead.

He did make some inquiries; and learned from Proske, the lab-boy, that Dr. Zeppichmann had been arriving very early several mornings lately. At what time? Oh, about half-past five, when the cleaners came. Proske himself checked in at six o'clock, and three times in the last week he had found Dr. Zeppichmann already at work. At work, whereabouts? Over there preparing nutrient media—or so Proske thought.

"Nowhere near the rats?"

"Not that I remember, Doctor."

Later on he tackled Josef himself.

"Well, Zeppichmann, you seem to find my poor little department beneficial to your health. I hear you are bounding in here when the cock crows."

Josef smiled.

"Yes, Doctor; yes, I like to get a little laboratory work done before my daily duties begin. You'll see, I've done three more tubes of your delta-four; I thought they might be useful."

"Ah, yes, yes, that's possible. Thank you. I was going to ask you—have you noticed any of my rats looking at all out-of-sorts lately? Bismarck IV—you know, the big dark fellow—you haven't noticed anything peculiar about him?"

Josef hesitated.

"Well, I did wonder whether he was shedding a bit when I saw him the other day—I was over there using Herr Korbenhaus' balance. But of course I didn't think anything of it—I know the animals there are under your own supervision."

"You've never given them anything to eat? A bit of sugar or something?"

"To eat? No, Doctor Dittmore, no—I shouldn't think of doing such a thing."

Josef Zeppichmann was thinking of the problem of Dittmore's rats. Those three rats ought not to have died.

His object had been to see how far the percentage of his Theta agent, which he had proved to be favorable to tissue instauration, could be increased. In his final experiments at Zornenwalde he had got the figure up to 2.65, and he had hoped to advance it as far as 3.50, which would allow the Kappa to be reduced proportionately. The actual proportions he had used with Dittmore's rats were 3.00, 3.25, 3.75; half-fearing that the last might be lethal. But that 3.00 had proved lethal was a bitter disappointment. It meant, on a rough mental calculation, that his safety index would be reduced to 22 degrees. And old Sinsteden at Zornenwalde, lecturing on Elements of Bacteriology, had laid it down that to proceed from animals to the human subject was not ethically justifiable with an index lower than 30.

In short, he was not yet ready to experiment on the human subject.

He would have to find a new Theta agent, or else in some way modify the Kappa. Probably he would have to try both. With luck, he might stumble on a satisfactory Theta in two or three hundred experiments—say three months' work. Much more likely it would be six months. Six months—and somewhere else a man working on a similar hypothesis with all the proper equipment, might announce a formula tomorrow.

He thought it advisable to see Frau Spühler about it first of all.

Once a week she made a formal call in his room, bringing the bill: she liked to do this in person, feeling that by a tactful charm she could make the commercial transaction into one of social pleasantness.

"It's just a suggestion I wanted to make," Josef began. "Of course I don't want to interfere with what's no business of mine—"

"But you don't understand," she said. "It's just that Herr Heisel had a headache that evening; otherwise I'm sure he would not have made any objection to your construction-work."

"Herr Heisel—a headache?"

"You see, really Herr Heisel has a very nice nature; he comes of a distinguished family, one of the oldest families in Berlin. Herr Heisel is going through a very difficult time; even the finest brains are left idle nowadays; the Government does nothing. And he is so young. I wish you could have heard the charming things he has said to me sometimes—when he is quite well, I mean—such a sweet thing he said once when he was in bed and I took him up some soup. When you think of his living all this long way from his mother—and naturally he had grown fond of this room, the outlook is so nice."

"Indeed, yes!" Josef agreed. "I am only sorry that there aren't two rooms with the same outlook. . . . It was about your servant-girl that I wanted to speak to you."

"Minna?" she said. "I tell you, Herr Doktor, I can do nothing with the girl. You can't imagine how it vexes me, her slovenly behavior, her carelessness over the visitors' rooms. But you see how it is, the child has no mother, when I first took her she couldn't even sew properly, and in these days there's no one to teach a motherless child the proper way of addressing educated people."

"I've noticed that she has a little cough," Josef said.

"Her cough, yes! Of course it's not easy to teach these things to a child who's had no proper schooling, but in time I shall get her to put her hand up. I constantly tell her—"

"I was wondering," Josef persisted, "if I could do something for it."

Frau Spühler nodded.

"Why, yes, Herr Doktor, if you were to tell her—"

"I'd like just to examine her," Josef said woodenly.

"Oh, but if it goes on, I can get Doctor Wohlfahrt to see her. Doctor Wohlfahrt attends to all the working people; he has special rates."

"But it would be a pleasure to me to give my professional service without charge. It would—it would allow me to show some appreciation of what has been done for me in this house. You have been most kind—in arranging about this room, and sometimes giving me supper at special hours."

IT was as if Minna had only just arrived in this room, for a short visit. Her small traveling-box stood open in the middle of the floor, her belongings tumbling over the sides; everything else was on the bed or the floor, clothes, cigarette-ends, cracked ink-bottle, a crumpled copy of *Der Westöstliche Divan*. Her cap lay in the pool of gray water which a dip in the boards had collected from a little roof-hole; and amusingly, a giant spider which had found this island refuge, stood fast at Josef's entrance, seeming to glare at him resentfully. Only the tight, damp-woolen odor of the room suggested her four years' occupation.

It reminded Josef of his own room at Richterhausen. That, of course, had always been beautifully clean; even in a woodshed his mother would not have allowed this jungle of webs, the green mold on this flaking plaster, the basin rimmed with brown soapstains; but the shape was similar—a minute window where the wall was shallowest, the way the rickety door, half-opened, came against the side of the bed.

He shoved his way along the wall to the head of the bed, where the roof's slope let him stand upright.

Minna, sleeping, took her place in the room's carelessness: the cotton slip flung down at one end of the bed, the girl at the other, with one arm hanging down to the floor. The thick dark hair sprawled across her face like a wild horse's mane, the small face was white and damp. She

breathed quite steadily, not coughing at all. Only a small movement of the muscles in her eyes and cheeks showed that some pain had followed her into sleep.

He had not been able to study her so closely before; and now he felt the same sharp excitement that buying his own stethoscope had given him. All those hours of work, that lost sleep, the tedium of meticulous checking: and this was the climax, perhaps the gateway into triumph. For an instant as he watched the face, the lips, dividing in a curious smile, sent his thoughts in a new direction: the chance of danger. . . . But his resolution shut that door at once. She had, after all, so little to lose. *"The individual does not matter."*

"Minna!" he whispered.

AS soon as her eyes opened, the cough, like an engine started with the throttle wide, began to shake her with continuous violence. The attack went on for half a minute. Josef had been ready for this. He slipped his arm around her shoulders, pulled her up and a little forward, seized a tooth-mug standing on the floor and held it for her. When it was over, he straightened the bolster and put her back against it, carefully. He said: "There, that's over now; that's better; just keep quiet a minute!"

His voice might have been the voice Dr. Plünnecke reserved for his patients.

"You told me, didn't you, that the cough started about a year ago, as far as you remember?"

The girl looked at him stupidly.

"Did *she* tell you to come up here?"

"Yes," he said, "yes, Frau Spühler thought I might be able to make you a bit more comfortable. It makes you feel tired, that cough, doesn't it?"

"I'll come down when I'm better," she answered hoarsely. "I've got to feel bad sometimes, haven't I! I'm not trying to get her money for nothing. I felt bad all last week but didn't say anything. I can't make Herr Heisel's boots shine when they're wet, whatever I feel like."

Josef said: "You're not going to do any more work, Minna, until I give my permission."

"I'm going to do as I like," she said, and turned to face the other way.

Josef moved a pair of shoes, sat on the end of the bed, and pulled out the exercise-book: brand-new, a week ago, for only forty pfennigs. They had offered him one with a stiffer cover for fifty, but he had decided that he could strengthen the cover of the cheaper one with cardboard. The first page was already headed, *"First Test with Human Subject: Minna Wersen,"* with a list of spaces marked for primary data.

"Do you know," he said, "I used to have a room just like this. At home, I mean. I lived in a place called Zornenwalde; my father had a little hardware shop there. Yes, I never slept anywhere except that little room till I was seventeen—I'm twenty-four now. How old are you?"

"I don't know," she said.

He wrote against AGE: *Estimated nineteen.*

"What part of the country do *you* come from?"

"I don't know."

But he was neither disturbed nor vexed. His eyes were searching the room, imagining an enlargement of the window, a little homemade table slipped in beside the bed for tools and medicine. They fell on another exercise-book which protruded from under the bolster, grubby and dog-eared but the twin of his own. So Minna also kept a note-book! What in the world would she write in it?

"I suppose you don't remember the war? You're too young for that."

"I remember the French soldiers," she said. "One of them came into our place. I went and bit his leg."

"So you lived in the Rhine country?"

"That was ever so long ago. I don't remember anything about it, except biting the French soldier."

"Oh, your parents moved later on?"

"Not unless some one dug them up."

"I see." He was looking around for a towel, anything he could use to cool her face. "Well, I hope you gave up biting people later on."

"I bit a girl at school."

"Good heavens! Why?"

"She said that Fräulein Rother was a pious humbug. That wasn't true. Fräulein Rother was kind to me, she was the only decent one there."

"You didn't like school?"

"No, I only liked Fräulein Rother. When she died, I bunked."

"What sort of school was it? A religious school?"

"I don't know. Yes, they had religion; they had a Pastor to do that. It was a thingummy school—a dump. They had all of the bad lots, stealers, dirty-minds, balmies, kids with no parents."

"Which bunch did you come in?"

"No parents, of course. 'Unfortunates,' that's what they called our lot. That meant orphans and illegitimates."

She had turned to face him again, speaking with a small animation that changed her curiously. With a little blood in her cheeks, hair pushed back and eyes coming to life, she might have been a normal subject under a bout of common fever. So much that for a moment he was scared, thinking that his longing had forced his imagination. It might be some ordinary bronchial affection, severe, but of no interest whatever.

"That cough's a nuisance, isn't it!" he said. "I know—I had one just like it—went on for months. I could give you something for it if you like."

Even as he spoke the animation faded out. He waited for another salvo of coughing, but it didn't come. There was just a silent struggle, all the motions of a man tied to a stake. She whispered:

"It gets—it gets my breath—sometimes!"

"Let's look at your chest, may I?" he said.

When he saw the body itself he wanted to shout. The condition, for his purpose, was almost as good as it could be; perhaps dangerously good: the flesh so thin that it showed the pectoral structure like a window, the left mamma shrunken to an empty pocket, the left chest-wall collapsed upon the upper lobe. He had seen a similar formation twenty times in middle-life cases; never so perfect an example in adolescence. Move this girl up to the hospital, put her under Vollmuth's standard treatment, and her chances of getting back to normal life were perhaps one in ten. Say, to be fair, one in five. And under his, the Zeppichmann treatment? Well, six months would settle it. Yes, from carefully weighed calculation he was confident that in only six months she would be safe; or, of course, dead. The excitement was so urgent that he could not resist it. He felt for his pencil, which had dropped into a fold of the bedclothes, and began to write.

When case first examined, disease already well advanced . . . . deepening of supraclavicular fossæ . . . . flattening of the mammæ . . . . râles everywhere . . . . whispered pectoriloquy . . . . cavitation at the left apex . . . . superficial examination indicated left lung too far affected to respond to any treatment.

A hoarse whisper:

"Can't you—do anything—better than that!"

The smile he had let drop came back again.

"I'm such a stupid fellow," he said, "I always have to write things down, otherwise I forget everything."

"What d'you want to remember?"

"The way your chest goes when you cough. Wait a minute, I'll get you something."

HE covered her and slipped away. Within ten minutes he was at the attic door again, arms weighted with paraphernalia.

He found her sitting up, staring with a child's ignorant expectancy. (Like Dittmore's rats, he thought.) She said:

"Oh, you've come back!"

"Yes. And I've got you some medicine. Quick, wasn't I? I made it myself. Quite nice, you try it!"

"I'd rather have something from the chemist's. They know how to make it right."

"I used to be a chemist," he told her.

(Near enough.)

"Oh, well!" She drank it off, with the air of closing a poor business deal. "Just the same as Frau Spühler's!" she said. "Is that all you want?"

He said quietly, in the Plünnecke voice: "I'm going to tidy you up a bit." And slipped one of the towels under her shoulders.

It wasn't easy, working from the other side of the bed where a capricious joist prevented his kneeling upright, with nothing to stand the basin on but the bed itself, the soap collecting plaster and cobwebs the moment he put it down. But that was in the way of the trade. And he felt the pleasure of good workmanship as, without one motion of

roughness, he cleaned the crust of grime away from the forehead, leaving the pale skin quite soft and fresh; as with delicate strokes of twisted cotton wool he purged the cavities of the eyes. Now a smear of vaseline where the skin was rough, now a clean handkerchief to dry the creases under the chin. Gentle, gentle, but quick, while the passive state lasted.

She did not interrupt him, however, she didn't wriggle or say anything. He became ambitious, and hating that a patient of his should have her hair left in such a tangle, he set to work to comb it out and then shampoo it. "I've got to pull a bit," he said. "You've let it get in such a state. . . . Did that hurt?" "Not much." And a little later, kneading the soapy mass and glancing at the face upside-down, he noticed the lips faintly smiling.

"Do you like this?" he asked.

"Fräulein Rother used to do it," was all she said.

He was eager to start a more thorough examination. It might be some days before he could get hold of a portable X-ray apparatus from the hospital, and in the meantime his verbal account of the pulmonary condition must be so meticulous as by itself to parry all skepticism. But the girl must have a rest first, he had to go carefully, he was not sure how far he had overcome her ignorant hostility.

"There now! Don't you feel more comfy?"

He looked round for something else to do, and realized that it had been a waste of time cleaning up the girl if the room was to stay in this condition. No, he wouldn't allow it. He went downstairs to the passage cupboard where the household things were kept and came back with another load: a brush and pan, a pail of hot water, scrubbing-brushes. With the same care that he had used on Minna, but without the gentleness, he set upon the room.

"Don't you want to sleep a bit?"

"No," she said, "not when there's something to watch. I can sleep when you've gone."

Curious, he thought, how self-assured she was, with nothing of an invalid's demeanor. Seeing her sitting up like this one could hardly believe that she was living with practically no lung at all.

"The room's looking better, isn't it!" he said.

"Yes. But it's not worth bothering. I only sleep here, no one ever sees it."

"Well, you'll be seeing it a good deal at present."

"D'you mean I'm going to be ill?"

"Yes, you're pretty ill. That chest, it's in a bad state."

"Yes," she said, "it hurts a lot. When I'm coughing, mostly." Then, "Am I going to die, do you think? I mean, fairly soon?"

That took him off his guard.

"You—you'll have to go carefully," he said. "You'll have to do what I tell you, take things easy." He got up and sat on the bed again, for the first time rather nervous; it was delicate and important, this, getting the mental attitude right. "Listen, Minna; I've taken on the job of getting you well again—quite well again—and I'm going to do it if you'll only help me—"

"I don't see why I can't die if I want to," she said obstinately. "What's it got to do with anybody except me?"

He had to begin again.

"Now, listen, Minna!"

A little afterward it occurred to him that she had, at least, taken away the last of his scruples. What harm in gambling with your neighbor's money if your neighbor had no use for it?

Chapter Six

FROM Bruddestrasse, shabby and foul-odored, a flight of worn steps cuts between the workshops to go down in zigzags to the ferry. In summer work-people go that way at the dinner-hour to sit on the narrow terrace halfway down and eat their sandwiches, with the steam barges plodding below to amuse them.

That river breeze which makes the terrace so pleasant in summer, turns by October into a damp and bullying wind: a wind such as you can enjoy, in a hardy way, when you face it on wide moorlands. In a town its vigor is only spiteful, rattling windows, scattering rubbish as it cries through narrow streets; and to have it whipping about the face, as Erich Heisel had that night, is a trial of the steadiest temper. He was going home this way partly because it was dark and unfrequented; he had formed the habit, these last weeks, of avoiding casual encounters with his friends which might mean the price of drinks; and now, wretched with the chill and solitude, he wished he had gone through to the Drenkerstrasse and taken the tram.

TEN minutes before, he had been sitting in the club—that was the place to be on a winter night! Nothing but an old storeroom, with two glaring lights which were always flickering, a rusty stove belching smoke through its cracked lid; but it was warmed with the breath of thirty men, made cheerful by their loud voices and brave songs. Nobody there as a rule but clerks and shopkeepers; yet they had the right spirit, those tradesmen, the old nation-spirit, believing that a man's worth lies in his own right arm. In that place he caught something which had belonged to his fathers, a comradeship of soldiers. There he could lose himself, forget the dinginess of Hartzinnfeld, the kitchen odors and the smell of polish which the draft took all along the corridors at Handelstrasse 149. Tonight there had been two men of his own stamp, delegates from divisional headquarters at Frankfurt, one of them a general's son whom he had known in Berlin. They had gossiped a bit, he and Karl von Schüttenwalde, about the old Academy days. And Fuldenkraus' speech, promising victory over their persecutors far sooner than they imagined, had whipped the fighting blood in him till he had seemed on fire with courage. They had broken spontaneously into the party song, Karl gripping his hand; with one great shout they had reaffirmed their oath of loyalty. In that high moment he believed he could never be lonely again.

That was barely fifteen minutes ago. And now he was in his deepest loneliness.

He had left the meeting before it closed, whispering some excuse. Karl would have wanted to take him somewhere afterward, one of the hotels, and he couldn't face that: this suit, he had worn it every day for more than two years; and there was the eternal question of paying for drinks, tipping waiters. Yes, it would have been a glorious end to the evening: Karl and he together, affectionate and rather rowdy, with the bourgeoisie of Hartzinnfeld staring at them in envious disapproval. But the price was too high.

He had to clutch his hat, the wind was so capricious here. And with his other hand he held to the rail, frightened of stumbling; in the evening's excitement he had forgotten his hunger, but he felt the weakness now.

The ferryman had gone off duty; he had to go and thump at the ferry-house door. A woman with a candle, opening the door an inch or two, said that her husband had gone to bed in pain with rheumatism: no doubt his honor would be willing to go round by the bridge. It was always like that in Hartzinnfeld: no one ever lacked an excuse for laziness.

"The ferry service is supposed to operate till eleven-thirty," he told her. "I can wait while he dresses."

It was nearly twelve when he got home. As usual, a light was showing in his old room, the one which the Zeppichmann creature had stolen; the door was open, and as he went along the passage, he noticed that the room was empty. A sudden curiosity made him turn and go inside.

So this was Zeppichmann's idea of elegance and comfort: shelves and basins, shabby textbooks, bottles all over the place. Well, Erich had expected nothing else. Bottles with neat little labels, they were the boundary-posts of such a fellow's mind. It was not even a doctor's room; it was a cheap apothecary's.

The neuralgia was beginning; the warmth of indoors seemed to spur its attack. He crossed the room to look more closely at the line of bottles on the wall-shelf: among all these, surely there might be something to give him relief.

Most of the labels had only formulæ which were meaningless. But one small bottle, standing out of its place, was marked *Tinctura Opii*. He knew what that was.

Laudanum; how did you take it? The usual dose was very small, he fancied, not more than a drop or two. Dangerous to take too much. And yet, what was the danger? With this stuff, so he supposed, you slept, slept deeply, passed unknowing into the deepest of all sleeps.

He took the top off the bottle and sniffed.

A board rattled outside, that loose board which Frau Spühler complained of once a week and her husband never remembered to nail down. He tried, in one movement, to put back the stopper and shove the bottle into his pocket,

forgetting that he wore an overcoat with the pocket entrance vertical. When Josef appeared at the door, the bottle was still in his hand.

He did not try to conceal it now: he wouldn't play schoolboy to this fellow. Hardly glancing at Josef, he held up the bottle and turned it round to read the label again. He said, carelessly:

"This is laudanum, isn't it?"

He was strolling toward the door, but Josef came round and stood in his way, still smiling.

"Excuse me, Herr Heisel, but I'm afraid—I can't—that, you see, is a dangerous drug; it mustn't be in the hands of anyone who doesn't understand these things—"

"I understand it all right. I'm not an ignoramus—"

"No, but please, Herr Heisel, that drug must only be used by qualified doctors—"

Erich, standing with his feet apart, caressing the bottle, surveyed Josef with a leopard's eyes, taking his time. He said softly:

"Just listen a minute! A young hobnail from the slums who comes into a house like this at no one's invitation but his own has got to learn a few things— Will you please get out of my way!"

Smiling again, Josef stood aside. But as Erich passed, he grabbed at the bottle.

Erich said between his teeth:

"Let that go, will you, you young—"

"No, please, Herr Heis—"

The blow of Erich's fist, delivered at such close range, would have broken the jaw of a nicely nurtured man; but not the jaw of Josef, who had fought the pick of his contemporaries in all the alleys of Richterhausen. Josef simply dropped back, surprised and smarting. But the bottle crashed on the floor.

Erich laughed. The sting in his knuckles had, for the moment, driven the neuralgia right away. He went on to his own room, laughing copiously.

BEFORE making the first injection, Josef smoked a cigarette in his room: not to steady his nerves—they never gave the smallest trouble—but to satisfy a certain instinct for drama.

The cigarette was starting to burn his fingers. He crushed it and put the stump away in a little tin he kept for cigarette-ends. On to battle!

The girl grinned when he came in. She always grinned nowadays. So: he was not such a bad doctor!

The psychological side of this case had been tricky. From his first visit to her room, he had understood the girl through and through: she was an empty adolescent without any kind of mental ability; she had acquired, for self-protection, a special insolence made out of certain poses picked up in the schoolroom; she had a cheap armory of gauche polysyllables, borrowed apparently from this Fräulein Rother for whom she had once conceived a *Schwärmerei*. It was the *gamine* type, the would-be adventuress serving in a beer-garden: you found it in all the textbooks of psychotherapy. But it had proved a harder type to break down than the textbooks said. This Minna had answered his cheerfulness with sulks, his gravity with something like mockery. She lived in some foolish daydream.

But he had brought her as far as acquiescence. He had been so patient, always treating her as if her own wishes were paramount. "You will let me come and attend to you again tomorrow? Just to make you comfortable!" At first her answer had been "If you want to!" And now it was "Yes, Herr Doktor, that's all right." The grin she gave him now, that was another advance. It meant that she recognized him as a human being of some kind. He had, in professional terms, made psychological contact.

"This new window," he said, sitting down on his home-made stool, "it makes a difference, doesn't it! Makes the room fresher."

"Yes, I suppose so."

"Look, I've got you a book, an adventure story. You told me you'd like something to read."

"Oh, yes, yes. Thank you."

She took his gift with a trace of pleasure; but when she read the title her face was puzzled, disappointed.

"Do you think it's too hard for you to read?" he asked. "I don't think there are any difficult words."

"No, I suppose not. I haven't read a book like this before."

"Oh! What sort of books have you read?"

"Only what Fräulein Rother gave me."

That Rother woman again!"

"What were those?"

"Poetry, most of them. There was a book called *'Hermann und Dorothea.'* Have you read that?"

"We did bits of that at my school," he said. "Now listen, I'm going to try something new today. The way you're breathing—that pain in the chest—it won't ever get right if we don't go for it. I've got some stuff here I've made specially; it's a kind of medicine, only I put it into your arm. A bit of a prick—it hardly hurts at all."

As he got out his tools, chatting like a conjurer, he was eying her obliquely for general condition: often one saw more in these sidelong appraisals than in the formal examination which followed. He was lucky, he thought. The color in the face was good, the texture of the pupils normal. He might have waited a month without getting a better day for her to resist the primary reaction.

"I'm going to listen to your heart," he said.

She said rather fretfully: "You did that yesterday. It can't sound all that different."

"Oh, can't it!"

The day's excitement slightly affected his muscles, making his movements a little clumsy; but his brain was going as neatly as a jenny, noting and holding every detail for the record: pulse, respirations, resonance. Pulse was interesting, down to 98.

"What are you thinking about?" he asked.

She said: "Guinea-pigs. Frau Spühler says you've got guinea-pigs in your room. What do you do to them?"

"Do to them?" The ratchet of his brain slipped; it was a physical sensation. "I give them medicine," he said; and then the rest of the lie came easily. "Yes, they're sick, poor things—they belong to a friend of mine; he asked me to look after them and try to get them better."

"But one of them died, Frau Spühler told me."

"Yes. Yes, I was terribly upset about that. But it was in a very bad way when it came to me; I couldn't do anything for it."

She nodded. She seemed quite satisfied.

"Does he pay you—your friend?" she asked.

"Pay me? Oh, well, no—no, nothing to speak of. A trifle—just what their food costs me."

"But you can't go on doctoring everybody for nothing. How can you live? I wouldn't do Frau Spühler's filthy work for nothing."

He said quickly: "Oh, but I get paid at the hospital. That's where my real work is. I only do these odd jobs because I like it. It helps me, you know; it's good practice."

"I see," she said; and then, with perfect simplicity: "Am I good practice?"

Oh, damn and blast the woman!

No, he would not consider any sentimental point of view. If you took the standpoint of every patient who came your way, you would never get anywhere in research, would always be wondering and doubting. He said gently:

"No, Minna; I only give you my treatment because I like you. It's nice to work for people you like occasionally. Well now, let's have that arm of yours."

He held her arm very tenderly. With an artist's care, with something of an artist's satisfaction, he painted a neat circle of formaldehyde.

"Now," he said, "this is where you're going to feel a little tiny prick."

"Is that what's going to make my chest better?"

"Yes, yes, I hope so. Now still, please, just keep as still as you can!"

HE was glad to have the first step over.

The attack of sentimentality had been unexpected. He supposed that every scientist was subject to such dangers in the early stages, a moment when the patient's private interest blocked out the view of one's objective. Well, he had stood his ground, and the onslaught would not come again. If the girl suffered pain under his treatment, if in the end he lost her, he would certainly feel a personal regret; for she was not ill-looking now that he had cleaned her up, and there was something attractive in her simplicity. But nothing would make him waver now. The supreme experiment had started.

He began to calculate dates. Nine weeks, he reckoned, was the minimum in which he could expect any reaction.

Tomorrow he would scrub the floor again, using some of the hospital soap; and he would substitute his own mat-

tress for the lousy thing she had at present. Possibly get her a new pillow. He was feeling already a possessive pride in her, the pride a man takes in some piece of machinery he has put together. She was something far more important than his first private patient: the instrument of his inventive genius, the screen on which new knowledge, so laboriously designed, might be projected.

He cleared a space at the end of the bench, moved the electric bulb which he had fixed on a running flex. The record-book, where was it? Not in its proper compartment in the instrument-case. Oh, yes, he remembered; the book had fallen off the bed just as he was measuring out the dose; he had picked it up and crammed it in his pocket. He was annoyed, now, to see that it was badly crumpled and had a brown stain across the cover.

When he opened it, he did not see his carefully ruled margins, his own neat handwriting. It was covered, page after page, with the swaying, stumbling hand of a child.

Unpardonable carelessness! He had come away with Minna's scribbling-book by mistake. He must run up again quickly and get his own book before she started reading it: to let her understand the grim details of her condition, might be disastrous.

But his alarm lasted only a moment. Ridiculous to suppose that she could make head or tail of his record, with its tabulated data, figures and symbols. She would learn as much from an Egyptian papyrus. He smiled, turning over Minna's pages: what a contrast with his own precision, this caricature of handwriting, this battlefield of blots and smudges. What was it all about—the story of Minna's life? With a sudden, pale curiosity he began to read.

Another plate last night. Smithereens. The Witch went on for 20 mins, all about sense of duty etc: I said you can't expect a plate not to smash the floor being brick like that. She said why do you drop it on the floor then. I said there's such a hell of a pile of plates after supper one of them's got to fall off, it was cracked anyway. I said I can't go on washing all those plates three times a day not with this feeling giddy the way I do, why can't you send the Frog to help, what does he do all day long except read the newspapers. So then she slapped me and I laughed and she cried. Then afterward I cried because the Witch hasn't got hardly any money on account of the Leopard not paying and the Social Democrats ruling the country wrong, and she gets pains in the back which are worse than pains in the chest. I shall tell Fräulein Rother and God.

Fräulein Rother came last night when I was waiting to clear away supper. She came and sat in the Witch's chair. Her robe was made of peacock's wings and her hair was like a waterfall of golden sparks. I told her I was rude to the Witch and she said I must get up at 4 next morning and do the front passage the Witch generally does. So I did that this morning.

Sick again, no breakfast. I got the pain, doing Herr Barthol's room, the bit behind Herr Barthol's writing table where you can't get at the dust with the nails sticking up and catching my clout. The pain was like a hot dark sea. It is all right if you don't try to get to the shore again, you must go where the sea takes you, you must be like a fish in the sea. Minna went deep down into the sea, Minna was not frightened, it was hot down there and she swam easily like the fishes do. The grey fish came to swim beside me, his body is like the evening clouds, he is the sign of God's humility. Minna spoke to the fish, she asked why God had sent her into the sea of pain, the fish said that Minna was proud and God must punish her. Minna had been too proud, she thought she was better than all the people in the Witch's house, even better than Herr Rupf. But when you go far down in the sea it is not too hot any more, God does not punish you so much, you can breathe quite easily there.

Minna passed by the cave, the dark cave in the bed of the sea. I thought the sea's current wrapped about Minna. But the Witch's voice came down to call her back, Minna was frightened and her arms beat hard against the water, her body rose again, leaving the quietness of the colored shadows, she struggled up to the high hot sea. The hands of pain caught her by throat and forehead, she could not sink again to the quiet water, she saw the cold light far above and fought to free herself from the angry pain.

The Witch said that only lazy sluts went to sleep at their work, she said I must come back after dinner and do Herr Barthol's room all over again.

I will write more diary to-morrow night. Too tired now.

I woke up early and the pain was bad. I cried a long time. I wasn't crying for the pain hurting me, I was crying because I can't beat it, the pain takes hold of my head to make me angry and proud. That is why I am cruel to the Witch.

Tomorrow I'll do the beds in the Witch's room and Frau Rupf's room, that the Witch generally does.

A lot of coughing today. I was frightened in case the Witch saw my handkerchief that had got all bloody. Must go down and clean it in the sink when the Witch has gone to bed.

The coughing would not make me angry and cruel if it wasn't for pride. It is because I think all the people in this house except Herr Rupf and the young doctor are all stupider than me and I am the only important person. I suppose when you get old you get better about that, you get to see it isn't other people's fault that they're so stupid and unimportant. I want to get old so that I can be humble enough to love other people.

Chapter Seven

HE was sleeping badly, a new experience. Having got to bed shortly before two o'clock, he regularly woke at about half-past three, with head aching and a dead tired body, his brain fully conscious. The darkness became intolerable then; he would turn on the light and go through some notes, try to do some calculations he had jotted down for odd moments. But at that hour his mind worked like a leaky pump; he could always hear faintly the noise of Minna coughing.

To a patient in that condition, he would glibly have advised a change of scene. He had never thought of taking a holiday himself: with the Zeppichmanns, the word *holiday* meant a day when you were obliged to close your shop and lose money: but now, two days after the third injection, Josef had decided to give himself an evening's amusement.

He had almost decided to spend the evening reading the medical papers, when he thought of an invitation that Ahlwarth had given him. Dr. Ahlwarth, the young assistant in the out-patients' department who was always enjoying some obscure joke of his own, had treated him most amiably. He had said, shortly after Josef's arrival: "If you're ever at a loose end, come round to my digs. 24 C Zeugerstrasse. My girl and I are nearly always there; we keep open house." Yes, one ought to have some friends, to get some practice in social behavior. An evening call was not irregular, he supposed: it was seven o'clock now.

As the crowded tram pitched and squealed down the Langebergstrasse, he remembered that he had said nothing to his patient about going out. As a rule he made a last visit shortly before nine o'clock to note her temperature and make her comfortable for the night.

Already he felt that this evening was a mistake, he was spending time and getting nothing for it. This tram moved like a wounded ox. His fellow-passengers, accustomed all their lives to awaiting other people's convenience, sat in a dull complacency, the air grew thicker with their breathing. In a bout of nausea Josef shut his eyes and at once he was back in Minna's room.

The state of the arm, that was his real worry. The general condition was worse; but he had expected such a setback at this stage. He had also expected a local morbid reaction at the place of injection. But the swelling should have abated by now. There was a rash he could not precisely identify spreading right down to the wrist, and a still larger area of cutaneous sensitivity, which interfered with the girl's sleep. He remembered a case that Plünnecke had mentioned where an ordinary calf-lymph inoculation had produced toxic reactions so severe that the arm had to be amputated. Supposing, now, that it came to calling in a surgeon! That would not only mean the end of this experiment: one way or another news would reach the Moltke Hospital almost as soon as the surgeon arrived, and then there would be Wildelau to settle. Perhaps he should have applied a Zeliche poultice before leaving.

It was starting to rain when they got to the terminus.

The house he wanted stood huge in the darkness. He saw no light in any window; the bell-pull only brought a rattle of rusty wire and the patter of plaster falling; but the door stood open and he went inside.

The air was musty, and his footsteps on the tiled floor cracked hollowly against the high bare walls. It was like a theater when the audience has gone. There were voices somewhere, he thought they came from above; and a door continually banging. He struck a match and went up the bare staircase to the first landing; another match and on again. But at the second landing he stopped, a little scared by the weight of emptiness. He thought he could hear, now, the sound of a bed creaking; and suddenly a woman's voice quite close to him said, "Oh, God, my arm, my arm!"

He ran then, back to the stairs, clung to the handrail and let his feet find what steps they could, was down both flights before he could collect himself. The pan of light from the door, with the moist air blowing in, brought him to his senses.

As he stood in the darkness, letting the vibration of his body work itself out, the rectangle of light was broken; a man who smelled of onions came in and began to feel his way down the passage toward the back of the house. He would have walked right into him if Josef had not spoken.

"Excuse me. I wonder—"

The man jumped. "Who's that?"

A pair of hands, skinnily strong, seized Josef's wrists as neatly as if the two men stood in broad daylight.

"Keep still," the man said hoarsely, and called out: "Franz! Come here, quick!"

From a lower floor footsteps came up to the end of the passage; there a door was kicked open, letting out a sprinkle of light. Mercifully, it was Ahlwarth's voice that Josef heard.

"Well, Neuling, what the devil's wrong with you?"

"Bloody spy!" Neuling shouted.

Josef brought his heels together.

"Doctor Zeppichmann!" he said.

As the candle which Ahlwarth carried came nearer, he could see that the man who held him so fiercely had a boy's figure; only his dark head, dripping with rain, showed the size and hardness of a man's: a miner's head, the face spare and white, eyes far recessed and brilliant.

"There is some misunderstanding!" Josef said.

Ahlwarth, coming up to them, broke into laughter.

"Spy indeed—you slug-wit! Let him go, fool. This is my friend Zeppichmann, the most respectable member of the Moltke staff—we're all of us proud of our Doctor Zeppichmann!"

He took an arm of each and led them along the passage.

"Well, how was I to know!" Neuling said gloomily. "The devils are everywhere, they follow me about."

They followed Ahlwarth down to the basement.

The long room, floored with cheap linoleum, had the smell of a beershop, and all its hard-worn furniture might have come from beerhouse auctions.

"I'M sorry the light's not better," Ahlwarth said. "They've cut off the current for some reason, so we have to make do with these lamps. This is Friede Tscherloh, who lives with me."

Unused to the light, Josef saw indistinctly a plump girl who lay across a bed at the end of the room. Nervously he went that way and clicked.

"Doctor Zeppichmann."

Fräulein Tscherloh took out her cigarette but did not move.

The door, violently kicked, swung open again; a girl with gray hair hanging in rat-tails round her yellow face splashed into the room, a trio of men behind her. "God!" the girl said, "how this place smells! Whose is the schnapps?"

"Help yourself!" the Major said. "Here, use Neuling's glass; he's not more consumptive than you are."

The girl drank the glass half-empty and passed it to the man behind her.

"I want some one's face smashed in," she said. "Heard what they've done to Paul?"

The man behind her, gently stroking the red skin on the side of his face where eye and cheek were missing, said: "Fftt! Every one knows about that."

"You shut up!"

"Let her spit it out!" the Major said. "No good strapping up a wench's tongue. Here, Anna, here's a cigarette for you. It's my last, so give me your blessing."

"I'll give you more than that," she said. Like one deliberately focusing attention on herself, she took a long time to light the cigarette, staring at the flame as if it were an animal whose tricks amused her. "Well, they've got Paul where they wanted now." She hardly moved her lips when she spoke; you'd have said she was a marionette for which a conjurer used a tiny, harsh falsetto. "Spraacke, it was, he fixed the whole thing. He wanted Paul's job. Paul's first job in ten years, and Spraacke wanted it. Spraacke fixed it with the foreman."

The Major shrugged. "That's natural. You don't expect to hold a job if you don't fix the foreman."

"Yes, and the foreman, d'you know how *he* fixed it? Told Paul to oil the worm-gears in the Spann husker. Watched him till he had his hand in. Then he kicked on the power."

Ahlwarth whistled. "My God, what happened to Paul's hand?"

"Happened?" Anna laughed. "You should know! I expect they've sent it up to your hospital for you to play with, forearm and all. You can do things with a disused forearm, can't you? Use it to teach the young doctors."

She was weeping now. The stiffness left her face as when the wire is drawn from a crinoline; it was the face of a child weeping.

THE Major had been listening as a lawyer would, nodding and nodding, while his cigarette burned down to his lips. Suddenly he stiffened.

"Who did you say it was? Who was the low-life who fixed it?"

Neuling answered him:

"Spraacke, she said it was. That would be him; I know that fellow. Always round with the Nationalists."

The Major nodded.

"Spraacke, yes, I know him! Herr Spraacke is in for a surprise." The voice was as soft as a cat's-paw.

Ahlwarth had moved round the table; he caught hold of Anna's wrists.

"Quiet!" he said urgently. "Come, Anna, loosen up. What's happening to Paul now? Why didn't you bring him to me?"

She said jerkily: "He's in the Lützowstrasse clinic. They said there wasn't a bed in the Moltke."

"Who's the doctor? Who's looking after him?"

"Doctor Grohne."

Ahlwarth spat. "What the devil does Grohne know about a surgical case! Might as well go to a blasted vet." He turned to Josef, letting his voice dive beneath the hubbub. "Look here, Zeppichmann: I'll want you in on this. We've got to get hold of Wildelau and put the fear of God in him. That hospital was built for the poor, and the poor have got first claim on it. My God, we'll see him now—we'll rout him out in his blasted mansion and drive some sense at him. Where's your hat, or haven't you got one?"

For Josef it was like being casually asked to take a jump from a church tower.

"But—one can't call on a gentleman at this time! I understand that Doctor Grohne is a very able clinician, has been in practice many years. . . . In any case I was about to tell you," he said resolutely, "I must be getting home now. I have some private work to do. I am most obliged—"

"Private work?" Ahlwarth stared at him, no longer angry, only overcome by curiosity. "But surely—with a doctor—there's no such thing as private work. I mean—we're all in it, aren't we? We're all at the same thing, trying to reduce the world's filthy flood of pain—"

"But we go about it in different ways," Josef said.

They were talking in a special privacy which you can find in noisy, crowded rooms. A wave of quietness disturbed them. Then Neuling spoke:

"At the Bierstube Moritz, that's where you'd find him now. The Moritz, that's where Spraacke and his lot go."

The one-cheeked man buttoned his coat.

"The Moritz? Good! We'll start by smashing that."

"Stop!" the Major said. "You listen to me—I understand these things. No good smashing up the Moritz; it's as like as not Spraacke gets away without a dent on him. You never get your man that way."

"I don't mind who I get," Anna said quietly. "I just want to smash up the face of one bloody Nationalist. They've had Paul's arm and they're going to pay for it—I'll get a night's sleep after that. Some one give me a fag!"

"Much better make Spraacke pay the bill himself!" the Major said reasonably. "It's easy enough. There's a back way out of the Moritz—into Verbin's yard. Just chuck in one *fuldner* bomb and Spraacke'll go out that way sure,

having Paul's arm on his mind. The yard's a tidy place to deal with him."

"What's the good?" Ahlwarth said quietly. "If you smash up Spraacke, they'll only get their own back."

He was answered by Friede. "Don't interfere, Franz. They've got to learn, those people. If Spraacke gets off without a mark on him, they'll think they can do what they like."

The Major had crossed over to Neuling.

"The first thing is to secure a *fuldner*," he said.

"And where do we get that?"

"Off Simon Gehrdmann. He's got 'em in a cellar under the shop. Eight marks, and they're dead reliable. Police stuff."

"Yes, and who's got eight marks?"

"I've got one-fifty," Willi said, and threw the coins on the table.

It had become a business meeting; they were sober and thoughtful. Five more coins landed on the table, and Friede counted.

"Seven-sixty," she said, and looked all round. "I suppose, Doctor Zeppichmann, you haven't by any chance—"

Josef hardly hesitated. If a handful of pfennige would get him out of this, he was ready to lose it. He put down a five-mark note.

"If that will help you—" he said awkwardly.

To his horror, Friede leaned over the table, caught him by the shoulders and kissed his lips.

"Franz! Why didn't you tell us? Why didn't you say he was a millionaire?"

"Here, come with me a moment!" Ahlwarth whispered.

Thankfully, Josef followed him out of the room. They stopped at the top of the stairs.

"Listen!" Ahlwarth said quietly. "It's my fault, I suppose; I shouldn't have had you here; my friends are people you don't understand. But why were you such a fool as to chuck your money about? Don't you see what'll happen? Neuling will get that bomb for them. Oh, yes, they'll make him; nothing'll stop 'em now. If he gets caught with it, he'll get twelve months. What happens to his wife then?"

Josef breathed heavily.

"I'm sorry, but it isn't my affair. I don't understand people like that. My parents always kept with respectable people; I don't want to be mixed up with any rowdiness—"

"Yes, but that girl—Anna—don't you want to help her? Don't you see what a state she's in? That husband of hers, the only man on earth who's ever really loved her—"

"Well, I've paid for their bomb, haven't I! I don't see—"

Ahlwarth said with his teeth clenched: "Yes, you've paid for their bomb all right. That was bloody helpful, wasn't it! You think it'll do them all a world of good, going off and raising hell in the Moritz!"

"Well, that was what they wanted. They wanted excitement, I suppose—"

If he had done something wrong, it was Ahlwarth's fault; really he had been placed in a most difficult position!

Reaching the door, he breathed the clean air gratefully. The clouds had risen, and a scudding moon broke the wet street into solid shapes. He seemed to have wakened from a liverish dream.

HE was halfway over the road when he noticed a group of men standing by the wall of a house a little way up the street; a dozen perhaps—the wall gave them its shadow, and he could not see them distinctly. To reach the tramstop by the way he had come meant passing close to them, and he did not care for that; they stood so very still, so quietly. He turned to go the other way, and instinctively increased his pace; but he heard swift footsteps following, and some one called: "One moment, please!"

The voice was cultured, but its tone hard. Josef turned.

It was quite a youngster, seventeen or so, who stood there pointing a torch at Josef's face.

"Excuse me," he said, with the quick pleasantness of a hotel receptionist. "I think you came out of that house over there, 24 C?"

"Yes, yes."

"You have been to see some one there?"

"Yes, I was visiting my friend Doctor Ahlwarth."

"Doctor Ahlwarth—oh, yes! And your name is—"

"My name?" he said. "Why, I'm no one of any importance; I'm just a junior house-surgeon from the Moltke Hospital. Doctor Zeppichmann, that's my name. . . . Good night!"

"One moment!" the boy said again. He cocked the torch under one arm, pulled out a notebook and wrote the name down. "And your address?"

"I happen to be in rather a hurry—"

"And your address?" the boy repeated.

"Handelstrasse 149."

Recording it, the boy asked: "Number 149, you said? That's where Herr Erich Heisel lives, isn't it?"

"Herr Heisel, yes. Yes, quite a friend of mine."

"Indeed! . . . And who else is with Doctor Ahlwarth this evening?"

"If you really want to know, there wasn't anybody—no one but myself. And now if you don't mind, I'll be getting on."

That unexpected firmness had its effect. The boy, aiming his torch, held Josef's face for a moment in a clawing scrutiny. "Oh!" he said, with a trace of confusion. "Well then, that's all right—you can go now." He turned and walked back toward his friends.

Josef went on at a stroll, even pausing to light a cigarette. That was the way, he thought—ignore these swashbucklers, show them he wasn't scared. He would keep on like this till he reached the first corner, then turn and put on pace. But he had not got so far when he heard a noise behind him: the Major's whistling laugh, and then, quite clearly through the night's silence, the hysterical voice of Anna: "—care who it is, as long as I smash up some one."

The sensible course was to run—he knew that. But instead of running, he turned round, and shouted with all his might:

"Look out! Go back!"

IF Ahlwarth's friends had been clear-headed enough to take that warning, they might have got back in time. But they had reached the middle of the road, chattering like school-boys, before they seemed to hear anything. They stopped then, and their halt served as signal to the men who were waiting.

Josef was standing still. Out of an instant's silence the first sounds that reached him were a thud and a scream together. Then the rush of feet over the gritty surface of the road, a cry cut off as if a switch were turned, the hiss of clothes tearing. The moon was behind a cloud, and he saw the scuffle only as in an early cinematograph, a clot of wriggling shapes that bunched and spread. But when the shifting clouds spilt a moment's light, he had a glimpse of a circle neatly formed, the men on its circumference stooping and rising with the regularity of laborers beating a carpet. The screaming had all stopped by then; nothing was going on except this methodical swing of shoulders, and beyond the thumping noise, there was no sound but a chain of throaty cries, as if a stammerer were trying to shout a message to the whole of Hartzinnfeld.

Someone got loose from the shambles and came toward him at the loping hobble of a hen with a weight on its legs: it was Neuling, whimpering like a child; his face, as Josef saw it, a wet dishcloth squeezed into a ball. He was ten yards off when another man broke from the skirmish and came in pursuit.

As if he were a child watching his first circus, Josef stayed where he was and let Neuling stumble blindly past him; his eyes were on the man who followed. He would have stayed like that, a bemused spectator, if Neuling hadn't fallen. The shaking thump of that fall, the pitiful cry, made him turn his head; in one moment he saw Neuling's body like a black pillow pitched in the roadway, heard the pursuer's excited shout and the speeded clatter of his feet; then a spurt of reckless anger tightened all Josef's limbs, and he jumped across to intercept.

The man was coming too fast to dodge; his weight poured over Josef's body like a landslide. Sight and hearing went out together. Josef only knew that his shoulder was in biting pain, that his right hand clutched at something soft, his left struck flesh, and struck it again as the roadway and the patchy sky swept up together round his head. Then he was lying on his stomach with his mouth full of blood and grit, and the man who had charged him lay a yard away, as quietly as a shepherd boy on a summer hillside. Afterward he remembered that Neuling had disappeared, the moon had shown only the two of them on that expanse of road; but at the time it made no difference. His body took complete control, got itself upright, and then against the tether of pain, he was running as he'd never run since boyhood.

Chapter Eight

JOSEF had not switched on the light when a cry came from above, the cry of a child frightened by dreams. It cleared his mind as the single prod of a fork sets a choked conduit flowing; that cry, of course, had come from Minna's room.

His faculties fell into service like a tired battalion paraded at dawn. He put the usual things together: sponges, thermometer, lotion; washed his hands as well as the bandages allowed and went upstairs.

She lay across the bed with her head hanging down toward the floor, the bedclothes in a ragged typhoon about her legs. His quiet "Minna! What are you up to?" did not reach her, and for a few moments he stood still, gazing at her luxurious hair (it struck him as pretty in that disorder), listening to the inhuman, little noise she made. "You know," he said, still quietly, "it's silly to lie like that with all the clothes off you. It makes your cough worse, doing things like that. Why didn't you put the light out and go to sleep?"

Impossible, he found, to work with one arm pinioned: to get her back with her shoulders on the pillow, straighten out the blankets. Well, with this one supremely important case, he'd spare himself nothing. The girl had taken advantage of his absence to work up a fever—knowing what he did about her mental state, he should have expected that; and now he was in for an hour's labor to prevent any further damage. It was tiresome, but as much his fault as hers. . . . He sat on the foot of the bed with his back to her and gradually worked his hand and arm free of the bandages. He wanted a rest after that.

When his faintness passed, and the pain had quieted enough to be overridden, he set to work preparing a capital compress. Her moaning had stopped now.

"Why didn't you put the light out?" he repeated. "You're a silly girl, you know; you'll never get to sleep with the light on."

She didn't answer at once; but presently: "My arm. The stuff you stuck in it's burning all the veins."

Yes, he should have looked at that to begin with; he seemed incredibly dull tonight; but the inflammation could hardly have increased to the point of danger during these few hours.

"Here, let me look!"

He had miscalculated. The inflamed area was considerably larger; it frightened him.

"I'd like—more water." Her voice was quieter.

"Of course, yes!" It meant going down to the tap in the passage, and he felt that every moment was of value; and he was so desperately tired. Still—"I'll get you some straightaway—here, I'll take the glass; I'll have to clean it."

The journey downstairs gave him time to think more steadily. He had lost his head; it was all nonsense to contemplate getting some one in now. If it came to amputation—no, that wasn't to be thought of. There were lots of things to try, starting with Vehne's antiphlogistin—that stuff, they said, would draw the toxins from the base of a cesspit. . . . When he reached the attic again he had still not made up his mind.

"Here you are, it's beautifully cold—I ran the water two or three minutes. I've put something in; it hardly tastes. Make you cooler!"

She had been like a sleepwalker. Now, sitting forward to take the glass, she seemed to come awake, and her eyes gradually brought Josef into focus. She said sharply:

"What is it? What've you done to yourself?"

"What?" He had forgotten that his face was still in such a mess—he hadn't stopped to clean it. "Oh, I had a bit of an accident; I fell down in the road. Come on, there's a good girl, I want you to drink all of that."

"But that bandage, what's the bandage for?"

"Bandage? That's to put my arm in, when I'm not using it."

"But what's wrong with your arm?"

"It's the shoulder. The bone went and snapped. It's a part that often goes—very weak."

"Doesn't it hurt?"

At this moment, when he came to think of it, it was giving him hell.

"Comes and goes," he said. "Now do drink up that stuff and I'll get you comfortable again."

"I could do the bandage again for you," she said suddenly. "I expect I could do it all right."

He laughed. "It takes five years to learn how to bandage a fracture, even as badly as this."

She nodded seriously. It was always a surprise to him that with so frail and fluid a brain she could often appear so intelligent.

"Then you'd better go to bed," she said. "You can't stand about here when you're all bust up like that. There's nothing more I want; my arm won't come off. Go on, go to bed! Yes, please!"

"I'm going to see to that arm before I think about bed," he said tersely.

No, he wouldn't use the Vehne, but he would apply linseed fomentations hourly. It was ten times the work, but far safer, a thoroughly practical solution: that was, if she could stand up to it—the cutaneous sensitivity of the arm was acute. He said:

"Just wait a few moments; I'm going to make up a warm poultice."

"Will that hurt a lot?"

"A bit."

In his room he found the kettle boiling already, but preparing the poultice was a long job. She was asleep when he returned. . . .

Well, that was over; now he must wait an hour, and then if she was awake do the whole thing again. Must get the arm right. Patience—it was going to need a lot of patience. He sat on the edge of the bed, observing her. He got to a better position with his head on his right hand; he might give himself five minutes' rest, he thought. . . . Something cool touched his forehead. He opened his eyes to see sunlight on the little window, and Minna, kneeling beside the bed, was bathing his face.

Chapter Nine

THE window of Röstel's surgery commanded the courtyard and a shed where the staff kept bicycles. There, waiting for Röstel to come and go down to lunch with him, Dittmore saw young Zeppichmann wheeling out his machine, as he did every day.

"Our poor luncheons are not good enough for your distinguished assistant," Dittmore said over his shoulder.

Röstel closed the door and went over to the basin.

"I hope you've gargled," he said abruptly. "If people who have nothing better to do must spend their time blowing on my window-panes I require them first to sterilize their breath with carbolic. . . . Zeppichmann? I don't know why he goes home for midday; I don't know what he does; I can't understand him at all. He looks as if he never goes to bed. They tell me he's a Communist; they say he spends his time scrapping in the streets—I don't know. His work's all right, I can't help what he does out of hours; I can't spend all my time chasing my subordinates all over the place. Please, if you don't mind, I'd rather you didn't fiddle with those instruments."

Josef, free-wheeling down the drive, let his eyes rest on the town for the first time. Up here one felt light and free, with the stale hubbub of the wards behind.

Where the drive turned into the public road, the wind stood against him like a net; he had to pedal to keep going down the hill. He was surprised to feel so great a reserve of strength, to find himself so far detached from the lumbering pain of his forehead.

It was another victory. He had left Minna dozing, with a temperature hardly over 98.6°, respirations back to the average of the previous week; she had taken a little food, even asked for something to read: he was satisfied that one more hazard lay behind. That quickening relief, as when a tired swimmer feels the sand, had come at every stage in the treatment. But this emotion burned more warmly than relief, and with a brighter flame. From such a state of mind he could not pick the separate threads as when he diagnosed an illness; he scarcely knew that his mind had altered, only that a certain happiness had come, like sunshine to the faces of the blind; that something was alight inside himself which resisted all external coldness.

There remained, across this inner light, a streak of darkness: a final problem to be solved. But he would not allow his thoughts to turn that way.

He pedaled slowly, calling: "If you please! Excuse me!" It was difficult to get along with people walking about the roadway as carelessly as in a fairground. He saw what they were making for: the Radio-Haus am Schüster stood at the next corner, with a trio of trumpets sprouting from its entrance like a monstrous flower, and there the crowd across the road was damming the traffic altogether. He had to walk again, maneuvering his front wheel as if he were thrusting a spoon through a bag of apples: "Excuse me, please. . . . Thank you!" And then for a moment or two he was quite shut in. The radio was in clumsy order, spouting a stream of broken sentences and music; he caught only a phrase or two: *"He will release us. . . . All that is done with now."* It seemed to be enough for the crowd; they caught at a group of words and pitched it out to neighbors at the fringe; a knot of boys with arms round each other's necks were laughing and cheering. "Please—excuse me—I am in a hurry." The man he spoke to squeezed to let him pass, giving a friendly smile.

It increased, the sense of separation and of insecurity, as if some cloud pursued him with a private shadow. It derived from fragments belonging to a world outside his own, bits of a conversation he had heard in the staff mess, newspaper headings. He had thought it was no concern of a scientist with his job to do, this uproar from the mart of argument and rumor. And now he felt as if free wine were being poured in the street, and he alone had come without a pitcher. They were shouting to each other between the houses: "Heard the news?" A child with a little flag held right above her head was singing triumphantly as she stamped along the curb. It was the sun, perhaps, which drew good humor to these faces as it draws new color to the earth's dun crust.

Across the river the floating crowd had a new direction; a whiff of music came from somewhere along the Siemenstrasse, and they were hurrying that way. Josef would have turned to avoid the crush by going the long way round, but his time was limited, and he thought he could hustle through.

The sun had gone when the tail of shouting children reached the bridge, but as Josef made his way through the drifting crowd, the new strange light was still on their faces. Old Frau Pfeiffer at the door of her shop with the meat-saw in her hand, a man who had come out of the barber's with the lather still on his face, they laughed and shook each other's hands; a woman seized a grocer's boy and kissed him. "We've got it!" Hans Brose called. "It's come at last!" And with great tears falling on his cheeks and his belly bouncing like a trawler, he danced a jig on the pavement. The tram which the crowd had stopped jerked on a foot at a time, with the driver leaning down to shake hands with his friends; the people inside stood up and banged the windows and waved their handkerchiefs. *"It's come, it's come!"* Carefully guiding his bicycle, murmuring, "Excuse me, please, excuse me!" Josef did not quite understand it all; his own sunshine had disappeared, and he got no warmth from theirs. But he smiled, as he had learned to do at a hundred bedsides; he smiled and gave his good-humored nod to anyone he knew. Only when a girl stepped out with a sudden cry of *"Jude!"* and rammed her umbrella at his front wheel, did he realize fully that the festival was not for him. When he had picked up the umbrella, and gravely returned it, he rode on as fast as he could.

THE news had got through to Handelstrasse, and Herr Spühler had put on his medals. He did not altogether understand: he couldn't see how a swap-round of politicians in Berlin was going to make old Barthol pay his rent, to clear up the troubles which had thickened about them like cobwebs these fourteen years. But young Herr Heisel seemed to know all about it. Herr Heisel with his important friends in Berlin; and Spühler had more sense than to bother himself with schoolbook questions. That burst of sunshine, it had come right in through the kitchen window; and Herr Spühler's heart had told him that once again he was free.

The Spühlers and Herr Barthol were standing at the street door when Josef arrived: a triad of the resurrection.

With this new spring of kindness bursting from her heart, Frau Spühler would have run to welcome Josef, poor Dr. Zeppichmann who worked so hard and was always so tired out. But something stopped her. Perhaps it was the Doctor's face, so very pale today, his eyes so guarded and so dead. Herr Spühler called as he approached, "Herr Doktor, have you heard?" but he too fell silent, and Josef did not answer him.

Josef propped his bicycle against the wall; it fell over, but he didn't go back to pick it up. Closed in himself, hardly feeling the eyes which followed him, he went upstairs, past the door of his own room, straight up to the attic. The old excitement of entering that room had gone; he only wanted to find peace there.

She was awake. She looked at him cautiously, as if he might be coming to scold or to praise her. He didn't say anything; he sat on the side of the bed and held her hand, with his eyes not quite meeting hers. He sat there for a long time, almost happy, nervously pressing her hand.

Chapter Ten

"I MAY say, Doctor Zeppichmann, that I very much regret the Director's decision," Röstel repeated. "In fact, to be perfectly candid, I strongly urged him to reconsider it. I—I went as far as it was possible to go with proper regard to the Director's position. Naturally, in such matters of high policy as the appointment of staff, one must respect the Director's judgment. I can only say that I regret the decision, I—I regret it very much."

"You are really most kind, Herr Doktor!" Josef said.

At half-past six Josef went to get his things from Röstel's surgery; but when he reached the door, he heard voices inside. Maus, the new man, was there. Dr. Maus was living up to his reputation; his manners with everybody were delightful.

The long row of wash-basins with the chipped mirrors, Gustav sprawling over the evening paper, the smell of liquid soap: these had become like the wheel's rumble in a miller's ears; it was difficult for Josef to realize they were done with now. Gustav, glancing up, said: "I understand you won't be wanting that peg any more?"

"Thank you, no!" Josef said, and jerked the swing-door open with his knee, twisting into his coat as he went along.

This was something he had learned to enjoy, as you enjoy the day's first cup of coffee: the moment when the swing-door opened, letting a cool air wash into his face, and closed again to shut away the staring light, the hum and heat of three hundred people at work. But the pleasure had been unreflective—he only realized it now. He stood still for a moment, catching the faint, damp smell of trees, and looked up at the rows of lights across the yard. Ward 11, with the main dispensary just above it; No. 2 theater over that: it was curious that he would never see those again. He got his bicycle, lit the lamps, and pedaled down the drive.

He went through the back streets, partly out of prudence, partly to fence his thoughts with the comparative darkness.

He was riding fast through the Old Market, drawing a physical refreshment from the cold air flowing to his cheeks, the soft hum of his well-oiled wheels. But at the Adrianstrasse crossing he was brought to a stop by a little crowd spreading across the roadway. "The tram," he heard some one say, "it was the tram did it! Caught her back wheel and sent her flying." He propped his bicycle against the curb and started to push toward the center of the crowd, calling, "Is some one hurt? I'm a doctor."

"Let him through!" a policeman shouted. "Let the doctor through!"

They had got her under a street-lamp, with her head on a policeman's surcoat: a girl of Minna's age, and rather like her.

To Josef the shape of it was plain at the first glance: femoral fracture and probably fracture of the tibia on the same side; the facial wound was superficial; it was the blood from the armpit he didn't like. His coat was off already; he said: "Just get out of the light, will you? Somebody give me a penknife—no, don't move her yet!" But a man came up behind and got him by both arms and a thin voice said, "You, we can do without your sort, you clear out!"

And Josef found himself face-down in the road.

As he made his way back through the crowd, he thought: "Well, she can die, if that's how they want it. It's not

my business; she belongs to them." Yet the image of the girl's face kept close to him—so near to Minna's face. . . .

The next, most critical injection was due tonight. The "condition curve" had begun to fall as it had done at every corresponding stage, though this time far less steeply. It was a reasonable assumption that if further tuberculin treatment were withheld, this curve would continue to slope down gently for several days, perhaps for weeks. Then, if the case were under ordinary, sound treatment, the drop would be arrested. Life would continue, perhaps for years, on a lower level; she would remain as one of those who lie on little beds, dozing, occasionally coughing, sometimes reading a page in a book before letting it fall. . . . Another injection might push the curve of crisis up again, possibly above his hypothetical line of fatality. He didn't know; it was all guesswork; he simply didn't know.

He had put the bicycle away, entered the house by the back door, slipped up to his room before anyone had seen him: this was his way now, to hide from the quickfire of curiosity. He started mechanically to make his preparations: drawing off a minute quantity of the P.T. and slightly raising its temperature; sterilizing the needle. He was oddly nervous, dreading the moment which was running toward him, the moment when he would take her arm and press the needle in. "This," he thought beneath his thoughts, "is climax; this is the last stage in the old happenings between her and me. When this is over, and when its effect is over, I can rule a line across what is past. She will have ceased to be an instrument; she will be a woman and my friend, and I shall be released." But he knew that this last stage might never be over, never in that way. He longed for her; he wanted his freedom now; he was terrified to drive her through this new battle before he was free.

Chapter Eleven

SHE was sitting up, just as he had arranged her at midday. Awake, but apathetic, as she always was in what he called the pre-injection period. He said:

"Well, how are we feeling now?"

She was looking at the things he had put down on the chair: the little gray box which held the vial, the blue box with the syringe.

"Is it time for that again?" she asked wearily.

"I think we'd better," he said. The same voice, the same smile fastened on his lips like sticky paper. "It doesn't hurt so very much, does it? Just one little prick!"

"It's what happens afterward."

"Oh, it won't be so bad this time," he said. "Not half so bad!"

The mask he had put on in his early days with her had seemed such a work of art: it fitted so well, looked so convincing, felt so natural. The mask was grafted to his face now. And it was not only his face which went on posturing, separate from his feelings and his will: the carefulness of his feet as he moved about the room, the gentle way his hands had as they raised her shoulders on the pillow, the attitudes of every limb were false. He was trying to express his tenderness with kindly motions; and all his motions were as glib as actors' tears.

He was dumb with awkwardness; his hands were trembling. He would have liked to busy himself with something on the table, but there was nothing to do there; all the tools were ready. When he started the usual examination, he could not altogether avoid her face; and her eyes, which always followed him, were expectant. Expecting what? He knew that she wanted some sign from him, a word or two of reassurance. But the only words he could think of were ones he had used a dozen times before, they had no more blood in them than a printed sermon.

Without intention he was hurrying, jotting a note and jabbing the pencil back to his ear like a shopkeeper in a busy morning: the examination was done in half the usual time. Without speaking, he rolled up the sleeve of her nightgown (the green nightgown with ribbon at the sleeves, his gift to encourage her for the second injection), moved a bolster under her arm and slipped a towel in between. This arm—he didn't much like it; its condition had never entirely recovered since the first injection: but that was a small worry among so many, he couldn't think of it now. Just now he must forget about Minna altogether; he must think only of the gap closing up inside her breast, of the crucial offensive he had to make against a remorseless enemy, the report he would write for *Neue Medizinische Monatsschrift*. . . . . He reached for the formaldehyde, carefully painted the little circle.

Now the syringe. "Steady now; just keep as still as you can!"

The muscles in the arm tightened; he saw obliquely that she shut her eyes, getting ready for the stab. She whispered:

"Be quick, be quick, please!"

It didn't come.

MINNA opened her eyes again and saw him standing by the table, empty-handed. His face was that of a man who watches his house burning.

"Herr Doktor! What's the matter?"

The smile should have come back, but it didn't.

"I'm not doing it," he said to his own hands.

"Not today?"

"Never. I sha'n't do it any more. I can't go on with it."

"You mean—you'll not go on making me better?"

"You'd better have someone else—much better. I'm no good at this. I'm not a proper doctor at all."

She did not seem to be startled by that. When she answered, it was in her tired way:

"You mean you haven't learned it? You don't really work in the hospital? Or do you do the cleaning there or something?"

He said: "Well, you can think that if you like. You'll hear about it, anyway—I'm going to send you up there. It's a man called Doctor Vollmuth; he understands about chests, I'll send you to him. Yes, that's what I'll do."

"So that you won't see me any more?"

"Well, not as a doctor. . . . You'll like it up there. They look after you properly—nurses and people. You get clean sheets every day."

He started to collect his instruments.

What was that? She was saying something in her sleepy voice; he hadn't done with her yet.

"Yes," he said impatiently; "what is it?"

"I say I don't want to go anywhere else."

"Not out of this wretched room?"

"I don't want anyone else mucking about with me. You do it all right. I'm used to that."

"But don't you understand: there are doctors who do nothing else but your sort of illness. They—they know more about it than I do."

She seemed to be in difficulty then. Her words came like a file of sheep, tethered hindleg to foreleg:

"I thought you liked doing me. I didn't think you thought—I was such a filthy nuisance. I figured I was all right. I thought you liked—I thought you liked it."

"You're all right," he said roughly. "It's me that's wrong."

That was like the magic sentence in a fairy-tale, changing his form. He was free at last, stripped of his grinning philanthropy. And when he went on speaking, the words came almost as easily as if he had rehearsed them. He stood against the door with his hands crossed on his stomach: it was the way they made you stand for reciting at the Richterhausen primary school. He spoke at her chin, without wavering.

"Listen, Minna: I didn't take you on because I wanted to make you better. I did want to make you better, but only to please myself. I'm not interested in doctoring, I'm only interested in new ways of attacking disease. I'd worked out some new stuff for attacking tuberculosis—which is what you've got—and I wanted to test it. That's all."

She accepted this as if it were a commonplace announcement; as if he were returning a kettle he'd borrowed, with the remark that he'd burnt a hole in it. She said:

"What were you going to do after that?"

"After that? Well, if it worked, I was going to publish a report. Then all the hospitals would have sent for specimens and everyone would have used the stuff. They'd have cured loads of people with it." He hesitated. "But I wasn't thinking about that. I was just thinking what it would do for me. It would've made me famous."

She said suddenly: "Why do you stand up at the door like that? I don't like you standing up. Why don't you sit on the bed like you always do?" Her voice was staccato, almost imperious. "That's better, yes, that's better. . . . I'd like to know, why doesn't it work, that stuff?

I thought I was getting on all right. Don't you know enough to make it properly?"

He answered slowly, as in an examination: "It's like this. The stuff's a sort of poison. It's meant to poison the bugs inside you. Only, sometimes it poisons the patient as well. That's the difficulty; you've got to mix it so it'll kill the bugs and not kill the patient. It means trying all kinds of different things, making hundreds of experiments. I've been at it six years, all my spare time, up all night very often. I thought I'd got it right. Well, it's no good talking."

"BUT I want to know!" she insisted. "What's gone wrong with it? Doesn't it kill the bugs any more?"

"It kills 'em, all right," he said; and he could not hide a trace of eagerness. "I'd got 'em in hand; I can tell you that. You wear them out, you see. The first dose doesn't make an awful lot of difference; it only gets to the shell of the bacilli; the second gets a bit further—it makes the disease weaken a bit; you begin to see the effect then. At least, you do after the third and fourth. You get a better result every time. Only you have to keep on with it. There's a point where you have the disease beaten; but until you've reached it, you've got to keep plugging away; otherwise the filthy thing gets stronger again, catches you napping. You can't leave it, else you've got to start the whole thing over again."

"But you are leaving it, aren't you? You said you weren't going to treat me any more."

"It's too much risk," he said flatly.

"You mean I might die?"

"Yes. You nearly did last time."

"I know," she said. Then: "Couldn't you make it a smaller dose?"

"No good! It wouldn't get through the shell, the shell I told you about. That's the point about my stuff; it's all worked out more closely than anyone else's; you've got to give the exact dose to get any effect. . . . I'll come back later on and get you comfortable for the night," he said.

"Why?" she asked.

"Why? I always do, don't I?"

"But you said you'd given me up."

"As an experiment," he said. "I'm going to look after you, all the same, till someone else takes on."

"You'll get someone else now? Someone to try the stuff on?"

"I suppose so."

"Another girl?"

"I don't know. Women react better in some ways. No, not a girl. Some one fairly old, if I can."

"And start all over again?"

"Yes."

"And all the time you've spent on me will be wasted?"

"More or less."

"I don't see why it's got to be. I don't mind dying."

"But I mind," he said.

He hadn't noticed her hand creeping toward him; he was surprised to feel her clutching his sleeve.

"Listen, please listen!" She was weeping, but her voice came unbroken and curiously strong. "I don't care what happens as long as you finish it off with me. You've got to do that! You've put all that muck into me; you've made me sweat and burn with it; and now you've got to pay me back."

"Pay you back?"

"You've got to let me have my share. You go off and do it on some one else, and it works all right on her, and you get famous, and then what happens to me? I'm just lying up there in the filthy hospital. I tell you, it's my experiment as well as yours. I'm the one who's been through it, all those pricks, feeling like hell. It's mine, I tell you! If you're going to show someone off to all the other doctors and tell them you've cured her, it's got to be me."

"Minna!" he said. "Minna, don't you realize, don't you believe me—the next dose may kill you! Kill you!"

"Well, you knew that all along, didn't you!"

"Yes, I did. But I didn't—I didn't care about you to begin with. I care about you now. The experiment doesn't matter; it's—I hate the whole bloody business. It's *you* I care about now."

She was silent. Just for a few moments. And her voice dropped to quietness when she spoke again.

"Then why won't you do what I want?"

"I'll do anything, except kill you."

"It needn't. You said it wasn't bound to; you said I might have got enough resistance. I've got more than you think. It wanted me to die last time, that stuff you put in, but I wouldn't. I just wouldn't die." As if to show the force she wielded against death, her grip on his arm tightened. But her voice stayed low. "Josef! Josef, there's only one thing I want, only one thing for myself. I want to be the one you show off, the one you've cured. I've never had anything to be proud of; I've never had anyone being proud of me. You wouldn't have to say anything about me; you could just say it was a kitchen-girl called Minna Wersen. It'll all go to you just the same; I want you to have it all, the writeups, photo in the papers, all that. You ought to have that, after all the sweating you've done; you must have that! Josef, I want it to be a success, I want you to have it all. Only, I want it to be me that you've used, all the way through. That's all I want."

It was a long time before he gave in. When he surrendered it was from spiritual exhaustion. . . .

The job, when he came to it, was ridiculously hard: to hold her arm firmly, when his fingers only shaped to gentleness; to insert the needle with a clean thrust, and deeply enough, when all his feeling was to save her the smallest moment of pain. Yet he did it properly, as a master pianist who cannot fumble a chord; making sure that the full dose went in, whispering inside himself, *"Don't let it kill her, don't let her die!"* While she, instead of lying back as she had done at previous times, pushed herself up on the pillows to watch his work, watched quietly as the needle went in.

It was just then, just at the moment when he held the point beneath her skin, that he felt her lips pressed against his neck; and he answered her, as he withdrew the point, with his own lips. This was the first acknowledged tenderness between them; their first embrace.

Chapter Twelve

THE curve of reactions indicated that the post-injection crisis should occur, on this occasion, from the time of injection plus twenty-seven hours. That meant, approximately, at midnight on the night following. A little after twelve, Josef went down to his own room and took off his shoes and collar for an hour's rest. He put a chair on the bed and arranged the back of it under his legs to give a certain discomfort: he didn't want to sleep soundly. But he was fairly confident that a cry from above would wake him.

He began going back to his earliest acquaintance with Minna and tried to see her as she had appeared then. It was a curious picture, part of memory and part homemade. Standing there, a few feet from where he lay, she had been a wretched object, her face smeared and red with coughing, the sodden rag of an apron lashed to her waist with string, a big toe sprouting naked from her ancient slippers. But he seemed to see, now, the beauty lying behind that soiled façade: the enchanting smallness of her forehead and chin against the weight and darkness of her hair, the depth in her steady, brilliant eyes. And his mind went back and back to the way he had treated her, to the dryness of his former thoughts, the fashioned geniality. He tried to see himself at every stage, to mark the worst in every attitude of his, to purge himself. That day when she had said the darkness frightened her, and he had smiled and told her not to surrender to childish fears; the evening of the third injection, when she had begged him to leave it till tomorrow . . . And now, when he would have talked to her of all those things, and tried to bury them in the depth of her compassion, a weight was fastening across his mouth to hold it silent.

He had not switched off the light. When his eyes opened, painfully, he did not think he had been asleep. But something had disturbed him, and he lay, stiff with overdriven nerves, listening for some sound from the attic. Then the knocking at the front door began again.

"This way, Herr Schutzmann, if you will be so kind. This is the person's room, if you please. Of course we know nothing about him, you understand; he thrust himself into our house, we had no means of turning him away."

Like a kettle boiling, Josef thought dimly, this voice of Herr Spühler's: steam pouring forth, and the lid bobbing up and down.

The man came in as if the room were his own: the face of a bank-manager just out of the barber's, the thin body uniformed. He went straight over to the desk and pulled out the top drawer. Two young men in ordinary clothes were also in the room, standing motionless by the door: the picture seemed to have arrived already formed, as when the curtain rises in a theater.

"Key of this drawer!" the man said.

Josef's thoughts moved like those of a man pitched suddenly into space. Case-book, record of all his work—they mustn't get hold of that. Second drawer as a rule. . . . Not tonight: no, up in Minna's room.

He got up, took the key from his trouser pocket and gave it over. But the officer had already found something.

"This document—what is it?"

"That? I—I don't know. Some notes, I expect. Some notes on some experiment of mine."

"Yes," the officer said, "it looks like that."

MOVING a little nearer, Josef caught sight of the paper. It was amateurishly typewritten, all blobs and genuflections, with a manuscript heading in giant capitals: "ACTION-PLAN FOR HAND GRENADE ATTACK ON NAZIONAL-SOZIALIST PARTY MEETING 26TH FEBRUARY."

"You say these are some notes of yours?" the officer asked. "Some notes for an experiment?"

"No, that paper's nothing to do with me. I've never seen it before."

"But you said just now it was your own notes."

"I—I didn't realize—I didn't see what it was you had."

The officer folded the paper carefully and put it in his pocket. "No, evidently you did not realize. I imagine you generally keep these things in the drawers that are locked."

Josef said: "I wish to state positively that—"

"Exactly!" the man said. The voice was in accord with his appearance, the voice of a bank-manager helping a woman customer through some financial intricacy. "Naturally, yes, you would like to make an explanation. That will be arranged for; you will make an explanation at the central office tomorrow morning."

Josef nodded. "I see. . . . What time shall I come?"

"Now!" the officer said. His eyes smiled faintly.

One of the boys at the door turned and signaled with his chin: there was no ambiguity.

"I'll just put my shoes on," Josef said.

"It is unnecessary," the officer said.

"May I—may I see a patient of mine before I go? She's upstairs; it won't take me two minutes. It's most important—"

The officer looked at his watch.

"You can see her for one minute," he said. "Wait, I'm coming with you. You can stay here, Hauser—and you, Dubiel. This way, is it?"

The officer marched ahead up the attic stairs, swift and competent. He rapped once and jerked open the door.

Minna had not moved. They waited, Josef and the officer together.

"Josef!" she called suddenly. "Josef, someone's making an awful row. Josef darling, can't you make him go to hell?"

The officer stood aside.

"You can have just one minute," he said.

Josef went to the bed and put his fingers on her forehead; kept them there for a moment, drawing refreshment from the softness of her skin.

The officer said: "Well, aren't you going to do something?"

Do something? There was nothing to be done, at present. Bewildered, he tried to steady his thoughts, to recover the doctoring mind. It was curious: the appearance of her eyes would have shown that the usual reaction was well advanced, and yet he judged that her temperature had hardly risen since he had left her an hour before. He said urgently, "Minna! Minna, how are you feeling now?" but he knew she wouldn't answer. He put the thermometer in her arm-pit and started to prepare his usual febrifuge. The officer observed him closely. No, Josef thought, mustn't leave anything like that about. Some fool would come and pour it into her at exactly the wrong time. What! Couldn't he come back and see to it himself? Would he never be in this room again? He tipped a fingernail of the mixture into another glass and filled it up with water; while the officer, intently watching, supposed it was the usual procedure.

The case-book: it was on the shelf at the other side of the bed, hardly four feet away. He would have stretched and taken it, but the machinery of his intelligence was still at work beneath his panic confusion: stupid to do that; you couldn't hide the thing; they'd have their hands on it at once.

"What are you doing?" the officer said. "Why can't you hurry?"

Josef took out the thermometer. Yes, the temperature had hardly risen at all since the previous reading.

"Well, can't you read it?"

"Yes—yes, perfectly. Only, I'm rather puzzled—"

"I can't spare time for your being puzzled. Is there anything you want to do?"

"No, there's nothing—yes, I ought to feel the pulse."

Anything—it didn't matter how absurd—anything for the chance to stay with her a minute longer! The officer came closer, watching the work with critical attention.

"If I may suggest—" Josef said, "not too close! There's a danger of infection."

"What, is she infectious?"

"Very! As a rule no one comes in this room besides myself."

"Then why in hell didn't you say so before?" He was back at the door already. "I'll want you in thirty seconds from now," he said, and went down the stairs.

Josef sat still, holding her wrist. They were alone together, another thirty seconds, and he didn't know what to do with it. Her eyes, half open, were as fixed and meaningless as the eyes of a draper's model; she seemed to be in another country—only her body was close. He put his mouth to her ear and whispered: "Minna! Minna, do you hear me? Minna, my own, my darling, can you hear?" All his strength was in that whisper, as if he were shouting at the top of his voice; and although there was no response he went on desperately: "Minna, Minna darling, you must get Doctor Ahlwarth! Doctor Ahlwarth, do you hear? Don't have anyone else. Make them get you Doctor Ahlwarth! Do you hear, darling, *Doctor Ahlwarth,* make Frau Spühler get him!"

He snatched a piece of paper and wrote across it: *"Very important: Doctor Ahlwarth of the Moltke hospital must be asked to take over this case."* And while he was writing, she stirred a little, and her free hand started to feel along the covers.

"Josef! Darling Josef! Where have you gone?"

Josef couldn't speak any more. He took the creeping hand into his own, he put his arm behind her shoulders and pulled her up to him and kissed her mouth. And while his lips were pressed on hers, the hand he had loosed came weakly round his neck, and the thin fingers pushed into his hair. And when he released her, her voice came to him again, from very far away: "Josef, dear darling Josef, Josef darling!"

From the foot of the stairs the officer shouted: "Here, what are you doing?"

Josef could not kiss her again; his strength had given out. He made a little cup in the pillow, as he always did, and put her head there. He slid the smaller pillow under her shoulders, in the expert way he had; and going to the door he said: "I'll be back soon, Minna. I'll be back again—before long—you understand! You understand, my dear?" At the door he turned, and saw her hand feeling out again, searching. He turned away then, not wanting to see that any more. He said once again, "I'm coming back—won't be long—I'm coming back!" and shut the door after him.

IT was several weeks since a lady's hair had been trimmed at the Victoria Lady's Club, but the compound odor of shampoos lasted, vapid, as a kind of personality. The sun could reach these windows only in the early morning, and it had to penetrate net curtains as well as tinted lozenges of glass. The linoleum had been rolled up and the cubicle curtains tied in a bunch, with a label *"Not for Present Use";* the ointment cabinet was empty except for a sheet of prison rules pasted inside the glass. The room had the permanence of places that recur in dreams.

With the smile of polite surprise which belonged to the casting of his face, Max Dahlmeyer sat in one of the two basins, drawing aërial patterns with his pointed feet. Occasionally he felt in his waistcoat pocket for the watch that was no longer there, but he did not seem impatient; for him, the previous sixty years had really gone too fast.

"If only they had left the tools!" he said. "You know, Herr Doktor, I feel that time is never wasted when one is acquiring some new ability. The last time I was ill, and had to spend six months shut away in the country, I learned how to milk a cow. I've never milked one since, and yet I don't regret the patience I devoted to that study. When I get a bad notice in the papers—when someone writes that I don't get the full power out of my orchestra—I say to myself: 'Well, after all, I'm probably the only musician of my rank in Europe who can get the last drop of milk from the udders of a Holstein.' "

"I beg your pardon, but I just don't see!"

Neuling, who was lying on his stomach in the corner, turned slowly over and let his watery gaze creep up to Herr Dahlmeyer's face.

"I don't see the good of knowing how to milk a cow," he said listlessly. "There aren't any cows to milk; you can't find a cow in a place like this."

Herr Dahlmeyer politely shook his head.

"You misunderstand me, I think! I was considering the advantage we would gain if the *coiffeuse* had left her tools —the long scissors and the clickety-clickety things. We could practice cutting each other's hair, and before we were all bald we might have become quite expert."

He was amiable, this Dahlmeyer; but what Josef wanted now was silence. . . .

At eight minutes past, the key was turned and the three bolts drawn.

"Attention!"

Josef's hands came out of his pockets, and his heels shot together, while Neuling hauled himself to his feet. Gracefully, and like a bather trying the water, Herr Dahlmeyer let his toes down to the floor. Hauser slammed the door behind him and locked it.

"So we have the pleasure of another visit!" Dahlmeyer said.

"Silence!"

"92 F, I have orders for you."

In the interval Neuling had been edging forward. His long, lipless mouth was working, and suddenly, like a knotted cord running over a pulley, the words began to fall.

"If you please, Herr Kerkermeister, it's only a small matter; it wouldn't be against the rules—"

"I haven't time—"

"It's only to send a message, just two words, to Doctor Ahlwarth, Doctor Ahlwarth up at the hospital. I want him to see my wife; she's in a bad way, she—"

Hauser nodded.

"I'll send two words to Ahlwarth, all right. We've got him down in the basement, with four more of your communist friends. . . . You, 92 F, you're to read this paper and let me have it back when I'm round again. There's a place for your signature at the end of each clause."

Josef took the paper and glanced at the first paragraph.

"You mean—I've got to sign this?"

"It's not compulsory," Hauser said curtly. "I simply advise you to. It'll make things easier for you, that's all."

JOSEF read the document through twice, and then passed it over.

"This," he said, like a child faced with a paper on dynamics, "I don't understand it—what do you make of this?"

EVIDENCE preferred in regard to Zeppichmann (J):

1. That by corruption he did, in the premises Handelstrasse 149 maliciously obtain and insultingly occupy the furnished apartment in the legal tenancy of a German.

   Admitted.....

2. That being of inferior race he occupied a salaried post in the Moltke Hospital, Hartzinnfeld, without proper competence for the duties of that post.

   Admitted.....

3. That on the 8th of November in company with twenty-five other persons, to be later named, all members of a revolutionary (communist) society, he maliciously and with weapons and explosives did set upon and brutally injure five Germans in the street known as Zeugerstrasse.

   Admitted.....

4. That he did persistently behave with arrogance unsuited to a person of inferior race.

   Admitted.....

5. That at 7:15 P.M. on the 16th inst., in Adrianstrasse, he did obstinately refuse to give medical aid to a German woman, the victim of a street-accident.

   Admitted.....

6. That he did organize and develop complete plans for an act of revolutionary violence to be carried out on the occasion of an assembly of loyal Germans on the 26th February next.

   Admitted.....

Josef, still staring woodenly at the paper, said: "There'd be trouble over that!"

Dahlmeyer nodded.

Chapter Thirteen

IT was a place of humid draughts, the Victoria Club; somehow the central heating had never worked very well. The smell of rust was there, from the entrance to the attic stores; a floating stuffiness pervaded all the rooms; no one was ever warm. The coldest part of the whole topheavy neo-romanesque affair was the office of administration, formerly the club's debating-room. But Commissioner Fietz didn't mind.

He moved his chair back a little further, getting his stomach clear from the handle of a drawer.

"You see, Heisel, this fellow's giving us a bit of trouble. Lack of memory, perhaps—or shall we say, pig-headedness. I'm inclined myself to think it's pure stupidity, he's got a numbskull, plowboy look to him—inbreeding, probably."

But Erich Heisel felt the cold, and his chair was very hard.

"But I don't quite see—"

"My idea," the commissioner said, "is simply that you should face the boy. I don't see how he can go on denying the facts when he sees you—he must realize that you know all about him. I wouldn't bother about it, myself, only some one's been fussing round my office in Gottwaldstrasse asking for some inquiry. An extraordinary person called Rupf. One has to be a little bit careful. Zeppichmann may possibly know some one influential in Berlin, and if there happened to be a song-and-dance, I'd like to have everything taped beforehand. You'll do that for me, won't you! We've got him in the examination-room now; Rutsatz, here, will show you the way."

"Very good, Herr Bevollmächtigte!"

At the foot of the staircase Rutsatz stopped. "I've something here," he said, "that you might find useful. We find it saves a good deal of time in these examinations."

It was a piece of rubber hose some three feet long. Erich said, "Thank you," and put it in his pocket.

The examination, in the music-room, had begun some twenty minutes before. On these occasions a certain relaxation of discipline was allowed: the officers engaged were mostly young, and the chance of a little comedy was considered good for their morale.

There was fog outside, and this room with its brocaded curtains was always a little short of light; so they had the electric chandelier switched on, and the standard lamp with its rose-silk shade, bringing the pleasantness of evening into the raw day. The heavy carpet was predominantly rose, and the covers of the easy-chairs were in the same warm tone. It was a pretty room, Hauser thought, as he lounged on the sofa; the furnishings old-fashioned, but with the peculiar, mellow charm of all outdated things. The other officers, half a dozen of them, sat and smoked in a row of easy-chairs along the wall, leaving the central limelight to the prisoner.

It was left to Schulze-Behrend, the senior man present, to open the business. Tall and handsome, widely renowned for his wit, he sat on top of the Blüthner, drumming with his heels.

"So you maintain, my good Herr Doktor Zeppichmann, that you are a first-rate physician? You will not be offended, perhaps, if we conduct a brief examination of your attainments. To begin with, can you tell us where there is a muscle known as the Schlagbesen?"

"There is no such thing in the human anatomy," Josef said.

Schulze-Behrend frowned. "Oh, come, Herr Doktor Zeppich-hinterteil! When I ask you where a muscle is, it's hardly polite to say that it doesn't exist. Don't you agree with me, Tarnow?"

The man beside Hauser on the sofa, a swarthy youth whose growth had all been lateral, started to heave and squirm.

"I am bound to agree!" he bubbled.

"I think," said Behrend gravely, "we shall have to give our friend a little demonstration."

That was Sauerborn's cue. With his slow, good-humored smile he came up behind the prisoner's back, grasped the bottom of his jacket, and in one adroit movement jerked it off.

"I would ask you to be careful," Josef said. "I broke a bone in my shoulder—it's still rather weak."

"That must be a matter for a separate inquiry," Behrend remarked. "Yes, I've got it on the list: 'Cause of Damaged Shoulder.' And possibly we could help with a little massage. Proceed, friend Sauerborn!"

Another mighty jerk, and the shirt was off.

"And now, though we are slightly repelled by the color of your skin, we shall endeavor to show you the exact location of the Schlagbesen." He slipped down from the piano. "Pohlse, I think you have a pair of dividers you could lend me? Thanks, comrade! Now, Herr Doktor Zeppich-Mutterring (hold him still, Sauerborn!), the Schlagbesen is to be found in the left side of the small of the back, *here!* One minute; I don't think I made myself quite clear. (Perhaps you would just turn the patient the other way up. Thank you, Sauerborn!) Now, the exact position is—*here!*"

Through his giggles Tarnow managed to splutter: "I'm s-sure you're not quite right, Behrend! It's more over to the left."

"I bow to your superior knowledge!" Behrend answered modestly. "Here is the tutorial index; I beg you to demonstrate your own view of the matter. . . . Thank you, sir! One minute! The Doctor appears a little sleepy. Perhaps you would lend me your cigarette a moment, Grünwitz? . . . Yes, our friend seems definitely less sleepy now. It would be a kindness, perhaps, if we allowed the Doctor to finish your cigarette while he is giving his lecture. Wait! I understand that really learned doctors invariably smoke by placing the cigarette in the left nostril. Perhaps you would steady him again, Sauerborn, while I place it for him?"

Hauser wished the wretch would shout or scream; there was something in his silence that made you sweat.

"And now," said Behrend, "we might see if we can do anything for the shoulder. These shoulders that get damaged in attacks on Party Members are always so troublesome. (Have you got him tight, Sauerborn?) You, Grünwitz, perhaps you'll help me with the massage. And you, Tarnow, might work the arm a little, it's a great thing to get the muscles loose."

Hauser lit another cigarette. His digestion seemed to be giving trouble. Only twenty minutes had gone, and he supposed it would last for half an hour.

SOUNDLESSLY the door from the next room opened a few inches, and in his furtive, rather ladylike way Rutsatz revolved himself in. He stood still for a few moments, his head on one side, watching the progress of the inquiry with a critical eye.

"If the Doctor will forgive a moment's interruption," he said at last, "a friend of his has called to see him." He turned to Schulze-Behrend. "It's Group Development-Secretary Heisel—the Commissioner sent him down."

Erich saluted Behrend. He had one eye on the prisoner—on his body, not on his face at all.

"I understand that this man denies the charges brought against him?"

Behrend said: "That is so. . . . We were rather hoping that he would save himself the ordeal of court-procedure, but—what can one do?"

"You might ask him," Erich said, "whether he still denies them, now that I'm here."

Behrend turned to the prisoner. It was curious, he thought, this shyness of Heisel's. Just at present the fellow appeared to be slightly drunk.

"You—what have you got to say about it?"

"I—still deny them."

"You mean," Erich said, his voice strangely low and hoarse, "you mean that I'm a liar?" His hand went into his pocket. Like the hilt of a sword, he thought, the blade of purity and vengeance, the glorious sword of Parsifal!

Josef faltered. Then:

"Yes—that's what I mean."

It was Behrend who actually whitened with rage.

"My God! —Have you got him tight, Sauerborn?"

Erich waited for just a moment, savoring his ecstasy, before he stepped forward.

"All right, then!"

THIS country, the Weper valley, like a kind of music, could be loved without being understood. He saw it first in the half-light of a March morning, dull and distant shapes floating in a gray sea. When he noticed it again, leaning on his shovel and lifting his head for a moment, the boundaries were closer, loose curtains of green breaking the farther reach. This spring came on slowly, and the early days of June brought the sun to its fullest strength, and beneath that arc-light, which blistered your bare shoulders and shortened your breath, the pattern settled into solid permanence. A single farm down there, a russet roof studded with eyelids which stretched to shield a wooden gallery; below the pond a tail of brilliant grass, where the overflow slipped secretly to the lazy stream; and from the poplar fence a sandy track that having edged toward the brook strode over it by a wooden drawbridge and lost itself in the rising green beyond. That was a miniature, done in a crook of the stream with all a modeler's neatness; and the knoll which guarded it was wrought to scale, a thumb of goat-shaved turf with a sloping collar of furze. Farther and easterly the yellow land pushed up again, by easy curves, as you see a sleeper's form from the foot of the bed; and between the giant breasts of pasture land at its highest reach the sloping edge of forest showed like a Syrian beard. Leftward, the marshy pan of sheep-land ribbed with wheat stayed low for twenty miles, the roofs of Weperbrücke shown like a steaming rag in the river's farthest coil; only when the sky was cleaned with rain, and before the fenland mist had gathered afresh, you saw that the level ground was measured off by the pine-capped bluffs of Sigismund's gorge. In that extent the eye received no violence.

This was a kind of safety, the field of his senses remaining always the same. In the three-mile climb to Cutting 28, where the string of trucks stood hungry beside a débris of blasted rock, he hardly noticed anything but the shoulders of the man in front. (You had to keep your step and distance if you didn't want a rifle-butt jabbed into your back.) There were cabins beside the track with elaborate carving over their doors; there were sometimes children staring at the gang, but he scarcely saw them. It was not until he had taken his position in the loading-line, and the panorama was spread beneath him, that he seemed to come awake.

By rule, no pause was allowed till twelve o'clock, when a whistle was blown for rations: half a pound of potato-bread with a mug of bohea, cold. If the stint of trucks had not gone down, this "hour of gratuity" was reduced from twenty minutes to ten.

But much depended on what the Disciplinary Works Director was doing. As long as he was about, the elderly Sergeant Busch would march up and down the duckboard path as rigidly as he had done for twenty years on the drill-ground at Halberstadt, halting at intervals to urge them on. "You, cabbagehead, God rot you, put some kidney into it!" But from time to time the telephone would ring in the Director's little cabin—there had been some hitch in returning empty trucks; the Director, breathing the fires of hell, would emerge and march off down the hill. As his head disappeared, Sergeant Busch unbuttoned his tunic, released a pumpkin of blue flannel and squashed it in again, expelling a load of boredom and dyspepsia in a mighty creaking yawn. He would look all round, and clear his nostrils, and out of the top of his gaiters came the stump of a cigar: "Satan's teeth, my little cows, it's not so warm today!" And then, with a kind of ferocity, he would seize a prisoner's spade. "Here, Zeppichmann, give me that, and I'll show you how it's done. Can you never learn! Go on, go and sit over there—you, Baruch, spawn of a cockchafer, you sit down as well—watch the way I do it!"

It was best for him to be surrounded by such simplicity: the sergeant's graveled voice, the piebald skull and scrawny neck that belonged to Herr Baruch, truck-rails narrowing down the hill. You did not have to worry here; you made no plans. When darkness came, you took your place in the marching line, and they led you back to the other half of your world. It came to feel like the rhythm of changing seasons, this tight monotony.

An effect like that of morphia came from pouring out his physical reserves, with the air and light washing all day against the bare skin of his torso. He was half asleep by the time they reached the barracks; he went through the routine of soup-queue and blanket-queue like a marionette. Sometimes, when the whistle was blown for bed, he could not concentrate enough to undo his boots, and would even fall asleep on the concrete. Then little Baruch, with the help of Dahlmeyer, who was still in protective custody and who slept nearest the floor, would heave him on to his sleeping-shelf.

He slept, as a rule, like animals in safety: a lump of flesh and bone with only a shallow movement of the chest to show it is still alive. Now that the weather was warmer, the blanket was enough protection; he had grown accustomed to the feel of the slatted shelf. He hardly woke when, at the first promise of daylight, the reveille whistle was blown. Only his body got itself down to the floor, his hands gathered the boots and presently he was marching up the hill.

But sometimes the cough which he had contracted in his earliest days of imprisonment woke him up with its violence. Then he lay awake for an hour or more, in a kind of stupor but with his eyes open, his senses shallow but acute. Below him Dahlmeyer gently snores; above, the restless Baruch is wriggling, making the slats bulge and creak, while he carries on an endless monologue. The shelves go on for thirty yards, in the three layers there are forty-five men between here and the latrine, where the barbed wires cross, and the next section begins; from this stack of bodies out-of-use come tides of sound, snoring and little groans, occasionally a boy's sobs or an eerie, shuttered laughter. Beyond the wooden wall the sentry's boots ring on the concrete; forty paces, the stamping turn, forty paces again.

The wall came two feet short of the iron roof, the intervening space being webbed with wire. He woke one night when the moon, low on that side, revealed the whole barrack in milk-blue light crisscrossed with shadow; and seeing the dark line of bodies, and the sentry's bayonet passing along the gap, he thought he was still in the train. He wondered at its quietness, for in all the fourteen hours from Hartzinnfeld the train had rocked and hammered like a brewer's dray; and then, feeling that the journey had been so long, he believed it had passed beyond the steady world, and ran on silently through Limbo, bearing its load of restless dead.

It was another night, but he thought it was the same, when he was wakened by the light of an electric torch brushing across his eyes. Two of the guards were standing beside his shelf: the man they called the Münster Matador and the little chap with eyes like mushrooms in a bloodless face. It wasn't Josef they had come for; they gave Dahlmeyer a jab in the ribs; and he, as if he had been expecting it, got up and quietly went away with them. Josef remained awake, and in a little while they brought the old man back, carrying him by his arms and legs. They put him on his shelf again, and left him there; and until Josef fell asleep, he heard him whimpering, as a child whimpers when ashamed of some private sorrow. Next morning, as they trudged up the hill, he noticed that Dahlmeyer was marching lame. That was the only difference Josef saw: in the ration-pause the old man chatted to Sergeant Busch in his usual, courtly way.

BEFORE the leaves had begun to turn, the prisoners were moved to Sondersumpf. Barracks here were not so good; the pine walls were rotten, letting in the wind; there was always an inch or two of water along the floor. Yet he found a kind of restfulness in the desolate country where they worked, lonely, staggering trees that rose from the early mist, the mournful green of rush and water-weed, majestic skies. Only at dusk, when the labor brigade marched through the village, he sank to the lowest point of his dejection: for the sharpness of his sensibility was growing again; and smelling the cabbage soup from the cottages, and seeing the ragged boys who played about the street, he remembered that in a former life he had been as well-off as they.

This battle which had seemed to be won must still be fought again. Lying sick and faint on the floor of the cattle-truck, enduring in every bone the train's dogged advance, he had felt that Hartzinnfeld was being shaken away; and with the scene of old experience he thought its content would be gone, as if he had put all his possessions in a grain-sack and dropped it into the sea. The shreds and tags were coming to the surface now, and the tides bore them in. Where the barrack path came out on the main road he noticed, day by day, the yellowing of the lindens, as he seen them last year from the window of his room in Handelstrasse. He did his turn at cleaning out the warders' room, and the scrubbing soap they gave him was the kind Frau Spühler had used. The days growing short, the cottage lamps were lit by the time they passed them in the evening; he would get a glimpse of an old man sitting to supper, of an iron bedstead in a shallow room. On a hundred tatters of experience his brain worked fretfully, as a dog will scrabble at old earth; and now, when the cold woke him early in the mornings, he could not escape from the dark invasion: Her face as she lay asleep; the whispered, "Are you sure it'll make me well?" the thin, bare arm lying against his cheek: their shape grew fainter, but they would not stay away, those moments where the richness of the past was caught.

It was Baruch who crept along to Josef's shelf one night, an hour after the whistle had gone; found Josef's hand and pressed a tablet into his palm. "Something for your cough!" he whispered. "I saw the Matador had them—stole one out of his coat."

And Josef sucked it gratefully, but the cough was worse that night, angry enough to keep even his exhausted body away from sleep. In the morning, putting on his boots, he noticed for the first time a freckle of blood on the slats where his head had been.

Chapter Fourteen

AT Handelstrasse 149, in the room where Josef had lived, Erich Heisel woke up suddenly before it was light. The melancholy which held his mind like a tautened strap seemed to have come from a dream, but he could not remember what the dream was. By degrees he recalled what had happened the day before: the letter from Karl von Schüttenwalde which had killed his hopes of escape from Hartzinnfeld.

He groped for the bedside switch that Josef had fitted, and turned on the light. The letter was in the pocket of his coat, which hung on a chair beside the bed. He read it again.

> *I am afraid the position you applied for in the Frankfurt Headquarters has gone to another Party Member who, though not having your social standing, has rather more experience in the kind of work which the post involves. I am so sorry.*
>
> *I have made some inquiries about the Jew, Zeppichmann, that you mentioned in your letter. I understand—from a report which reached me in rather a roundabout way—that this person did not adapt himself properly to the new state of construction work allotted to him and is believed to be dead now.*

What was the good of that! He wanted to be certain.

It was just after four o'clock. Handelstrasse slept. Only the wind, stronger toward dawn, chivvied the leaves about the roadway, fumbled at curtains through the open window.

He left the light on to protect him against dreams and lay still, waiting for the warm tiredness of his body to overwrap his lurching thoughts. His eyes closed, and he saw the corridor stretched out, a voice that came to him without any sound said, "Take this, Herr Heisel, you may find it useful." He tried to plant his feet hard on the floor but found himself sliding, sliding, toward the door he knew so well: the panel with two cracks, the baroque finger-plate. He shouted, "No! I won't go in there!" and his eyes opened again.

A door banged. He listened intently, and thought he heard footsteps, somebody coming down the attic stairs: a halting step, the feet brought together on each stair: and now it was coming along the passage toward this room.

The handle of the door was in the corner of his vision, it seemed to be moving. He tried to turn his head that way but the muscles of his neck were locked, the whole of his body was stiff. He did not see the door opening, he only knew that someone had got inside.

The visitor moved quietly. There was only a rustle from the papers lying on the desk, a faint click from the handle of a drawer. Then the smell came nearer, a kind of soap and the smell of chemicals.

Erich whispered: "Listen, Zeppichmann, you'd better not come any nearer! Listen, there's something I want to explain. I want—"

A shadow leaned across the side of the bed; a cool breath touched his forehead. His voice broke out through the narrow channel in his throat, a tearing sound: *"Hilfe!"*

As he lay spent and paralyzed, a door opened in the farther passage, he heard the approach of bedroom slippers. Frau Rupf came in.

"Was it you screaming just now, Herr Heisel? What's the matter?"

Her sharp, everyday voice severed the cords which held him; he managed to turn his head. He said:

"The doctor—over there—behind the curtain. Don't let him—*keep him off!*"

He was out of the bed and cowering behind it. Frau Rupf, in her practical way, went and poked the curtain with her fist. She said:

"What do you mean? There's nobody there."

Chapter Fifteen

COMMISSIONER FIETZ was driving into the town office by the upper road which went past the hospital. He took the bend by the Moravian chapel rather faster than usual. As he came round, he saw a woman wandering near the middle of the road; he put all his weight on the footbrake, swerved, and stopped, tires yelling, his near front wheel on the footpath and his rear wing actually touching the woman's skirt. He got out, and for something like four seconds regarded the woman in silence. She was quite a young girl, pale, small-featured, with fine dark hair. The blue coat and skirt gave her the appearance of a child dressed up in its mother's clothes. She was holding a clumsy parcel. The small new hat was of a deafening green. Fietz said:

"You, young woman, are extraordinarily lucky to be alive."

The girl said: "How do you know? Being alive isn't so amusing. Why couldn't you blow your horn?"

She then, suddenly, sat down.

"Here, what's the matter?" Fietz said. "The car didn't touch you, did it?"

She said: "I can sit down if I like, can't I?"

"You'd better get in the car," Fietz said, And as she made no movement, he picked her up and put her there, parcel and all. "Where were you going to?" he asked.

"Into the town."

"What part of the town?"

She said: "You can put me down by the Bülow fountain. Or anywhere round there; you needn't go so far as the fountain if you're not going that way."

"That's very kind of you. You're sure there's nothing else you want me to do?"

"No, that's all. Wait! Yes. I want to know the name of a good lawyer."

"Ah, now that's more difficult! Lawyers are never good; they're a pack of scoundrels, the whole lot of them. What sort of lawyer? I mean, to get you out of some trouble?"

"Yes."

"Then take my advice and go to Doctor Kunig. Doctor Kunig in the Ruhrstrasse—a quarter Jew, I shouldn't wonder, only we can't prove it. I'd have that man under lock and key if I knew how!"

He stopped the car at the corner of Gimpelstrasse.

"Will this be all right for you?"

"Yes, this'll do."

"Wait a moment!" Fietz fumbled for his purse and took a note at random. "You'll want something to pay Doctor Kunig."

She accepted the gift, tucked it away and suddenly smiled. "Oh, that's kind. That's fabulously kind! God bless you!"

He stayed to watch her drifting along the pavement unsteady and apparently aimless, swinging her parcel by the string, colliding with people and taking no notice, till she was out of his sight.

Next to the Konditorei Cöpenick a rusty plate said *"Dr. Kunig: European and New World Trustee-Agent,"* and a narrow staircase went steeply from the pavement to a distempered passage smelling like a swimming-bath. Nearest the door with frosted glass in it an old man sat with his hat between his knees, as if he were waiting to catch his loosely fitted eyes directly the tethers broke. Farther along the deal bench was a trio of women, not old, but appearing to have been warehoused for some time, and a youth with herpes. They wore in common a steady patience, like those who are used to waiting. From time to time a pinkish girl with the top of her stays poking out her art-silk blouse, with one stocking crouching in many dewlaps about her ankle, would march across to the frosted door, open it, slam it again, and say triumphantly:

"Doctor Kunig is still engaged. He is on the telephone."

When she noticed Minna, she put on her smile: it was like the best kind of artificial pearls, Fräulein Meissner's smile, hardly distinguishable from a real one.

"It'll be a long time before he gets as far as you. Is it something important?"

"Yes. Very important."

Fräulein Meissner came nearer and bent toward her ear.

"Are you going to have a baby or something?"

Minna considered the question.

"Yes," she said, "I'm going to have a baby. Or something."

Fräulein Meissner went to the frosted door again, and called inside:

"Another illegitimacy just come!"

An adenoidal voice said: "Hell burn and blast these strumpets! Go away!"

At twelve o'clock Dr. Kunig himself came out, twisting his small body into a shabby overcoat. He said as he passed, "Next client at 2:30," and went off down the stairs.

Minna had the advantage of being nearest to the stairway door. She caught it before it shut behind him. Dr. Kunig, without the appearance of physical exertion, moved quickly. He went down the stairs like a sailor, and he was thirty yards along the street by the time Minna got to the pavement. She saw him reach the corner and turn left toward the Technical Institute.

She thought she had lost him, But the little alley, after two right-angled turns, came to a dead-end in a café-bar. A waiter who was throwing scraps for the pigeons put his hand on her arm as she came to the door, "Excuse me, this isn't a place that ladies usually come to!" But she gasped, "Important!—Doctor Kunig," and went inside. The place was full. Dr. Kunig was already seated at a table near the service-door, sowing the ash of his cigarette on to the *Lokal-Anzeiger*. She took a chair across from the next table and sat down facing him.

DR. Kunig did not look up. Without moving his head he could see the untidy parcel she had laid on the table, the stunted hands; and he said, as he jotted figures on the back of an envelope:

"I do not see clients except at my office during business hours."

Minna was silent. Her chest still seemed to be using wind a little faster than her stomach could pump it up. But when the waiter returned with Kunig's order she said, "I'll have the same, please," and her voice was unexpectedly steady. She leaned across the table and looked straight into Kunig's face.

"Tell me please, what's it going to cost me, what I've ordered?"

He said promptly, still writing: "One and sixty-five. Another twenty-five if you have coffee as well."

She nodded. "Very well. That means I can offer you—let me see—fifteen marks for your fee. Only, I'm not going to wait about in that dirty passage all day. I want you to give me advice straight away. You can take it or leave it."

"I can leave it," he said.

"And I'll pay for your dinner as well. With coffee."

"You're the one that's going to have a baby, aren't you? My secretary told me—"

"Your secretary? Oh, yes. A baby, yes."

"Well, all I can say—"

"Very soon," she added. "I mean—almost at once. I think it must have brought it on, having to run after you. I feel—"

"Good God!" For the first time Kunig looked up from the paper. "Here, you don't think I'm a medical doctor, do you?"

She shook her head. "No, that isn't what I want. I've got plenty of those; the place I come from is crawling with them. It's about Josef. I want your advice about him."

KUNIG'S eyes wouldn't leave her now. God in heaven, the girl was pale! Was it possible—with that fantastic overcoat one couldn't—

"If you really feel bad," he said sharply, "I'll get the waiter to put you in a cab. You'd better—"

"No, no, I don't want a cab. I can wait a bit—half an hour, I think. It's about Josef—"

"You send Josef to me," Kunig said, squeezing the words past the end of his cigarette. "You send that fellow to me, and I'll—"

"I can't. He's in prison."

"In prison—where?"

"That's what I don't know. That's what I've got to find out."

"What's he in prison for?"

"I don't know that, either. It's what they call 'Political Safeguarding'—something like that—"

"Then I'm not interested!" Kunig said baldly. "I regard the police as competent to manage their own business."

"I only thought that as Josef's a Jew, and you being partly a Jew yourself—"

"Be quiet!"

Kunig beckoned the junior waiter.

"This lady doesn't feel very well. I'm going to take her home. Ring up, please, and get a cab for me." He waited till the man had gone and then leaned over the table. He said quickly, almost inaudibly: "The food's no good here. I'll take you to the Reichsadler, get you something you'll like. Go along and wait for me at the end of the alley. I'll settle up here and be with you in five minutes."

She did as she was told. When a taxi drew up, she said, "For Doctor Kunig?" and sat down inside. In less than the time he had given Kunig joined her.

"Where to?" the driver asked.

"My office in Schmolldamm." He wound up the window. "And now," he said quietly, "I want to tell you something. I've got papers in my office proving that my eight great-grandparents were Aryan. You can see those papers if it interests you. And then—listen!—if you say to me or any one else that I have Jewish blood, I shall bring a slander action against you. Do you understand?"

"Oh yes, I understand. And now, about Josef—"

"Who was it who said I was a Jew?" he demanded.

"He didn't; he only said you were partly one."

"Yes, but who?"

"My chauffeur. I mean, the man who drove me in this morning. I don't know who he was. Some kind of policeman, I think."

"Why do you think that?"

"Well, he said he was going to put you in prison as soon as he got a chance."

"So this policeman friend of yours sent you to inquire about me?" he demanded suddenly.

She asked: "Why are you so frightened if there's really nothing wrong with you?"

"Answer my question!" he said.

The car had stopped, held up at the Zeinstrasse crossing. She got up and opened the door.

"It's not my business to answer your questions—"

He grabbed her back, just as the driver let in the clutch.

"Sit down, you little fool!"

"What are you doing with me? You said you'd give me a nice dinner at a hotel. Now you're—"

"Did I? Yes, I did, Well, first I want to know what else your policeman friend said to you."

"I'll tell you," she said "—when you've given me advice about Josef."

Kunig lit a fresh cigarette.

"Right, then! Josef: he's the father, I suppose?"

"The father?"

"The father of this child you're going to have."

She smiled. (It was odd, and not unpleasing, Kunig thought: the way a smile would suddenly flood this deathly face.)

"The baby, you mean? Oh, no, Josef isn't its father. I wish he was. No, no one is. I mean, it's all just myself."

"Oh, my God!" Kunig said.

"I mean—I made that up. That awful blonde you keep—"

"Then tell me," Kunig said furiously, "who is this Josef, what is he, what's he got to do with you, and what in hell's name are you wasting my time for?"

"I'm not wasting your time; you're wasting mine. I told you I'd pay for the consultation—"

"Well, get on with it!"

She said patiently: "Josef was my doctor—I used to have T.B., you see—he was my doctor, and he had a special sort of stuff he put into me to make it better. He made it lots better, he would have made it quite all right, only the damn'-awful *Nazional-sozialisten* got the government, and of course the first thing they did was to put Josef in prison. And now I don't know where he is. I got Herr Rupf to ask the Commissioner, but the Commissioner won't tell him." Her eyes had shut, and her voice grown weaker: she was palpably unused to so much conversation.

The cab turned into Schmolldamm and stopped at 46. Kunig paid the driver and marched into the entrance hall. He said over his shoulder, "You'd better come up to the office!" and she followed him into the lift.

Dr. Kunig, standing by the table with his black homburg pushed back from his forehead, lighting a new cigarette and signing a letter with the other hand, said:

"You'd better tell me who you are and where you live."

"I'm Minna Wersen," she said. "I don't live anywhere at present; I've got to find a job. I'm a skivvy by profession; when I find a job, I'll live there till Josef marries me."

"Where did you spend last night?"

"At the Moltke Hospital. I'm supposed to be still there, but I escaped this morning."

"Escaped?"

"They said I was still ill; they said I wasn't strong enough yet to do anything; only I knew I was—"

Kunig stretched for the telephone. "I can check up on that. . . . Get me the Moltke Hospital."

She ran across the room and seized his arm.

"If you tell them where I am—"

"Shut up! Go and sit down!"

HE went across and opened the door of his secretary's room. "Thora! Get through to Fräulein Meissner, will you, and tell her I won't be over before three-fifteen. Oh, and then go down to the Kurchen Kaiser and get a lunch tray—for two—something expensive." He said at last, standing in the middle of the room, fiddling with a ring of keys, tracing the motif of the carpet with his toe:

"Why don't you sit down? There's no need to stand up there like a weatherbeaten signpost. . . . This Josef, did he ever overcharge you?"

"No, he never charged me at all."

"A pity!" he said. "That's a great pity. One might prosecute him for an overcharge. He didn't ever borrow money, by any chance?"

She said: "I don't understand. I don't want to prosecute him—"

He turned to face her then.

"Listen! You've got to start by realizing this. You can't deal with these fellows in any ordinary way, these hooligans who put human beings in cages for their own amusement. You're not negotiating with civilized people; you're dealing with apes. And you can't deal with apes and not get muck on your hands. Now see here! It's no use asking the Commissioner or anyone else what they've done with your Josef; they won't tell you. I've never traced one man that way—and I'll tell you for your private information I spend a great part of my days and nearly all my nights trying to trace one victim or another. There's only one way to start the ball rolling, positively only one. If you want to find a man who's disappeared, you've got to bring up something against him. Then if he's still alive, they'll produce him—six times out of ten. They like that—you get me? They like to have a definite charge, something they can make a song-and-dance about. If you handle it properly, you can get something like a proper trial and a definite sentence, with at least a chance of the man getting out at the end of it. I say a chance, mind! It doesn't always work. And in any case you've got to take the hell of a risk. Well, there you are: you've got to make up your mind whether the risk's worth taking."

Minna said slowly: "You mean, I've got to accuse him of something?"

"Exactly! Something that sounds serious and can be proved not so serious. For example, you might allege that this—what did you say his name was?—you might allege that this Doctor Zeppichmann gave you careless or inefficient treatment. What do you think about that?"

"I don't know. . . . You're sure there isn't any other way. Any way that I wouldn't be hurting him at all?"

He looked at her obliquely. The color of that face—madness, madness, to have come on a trip like this!

"No," he was saying, "no. I'm sorry, but there isn't another way."

Chapter Sixteen

T did not seem quite right to Herr Oelschläger that there should be a bowl of flowers on his desk. His taste was good; and flowers, in a Police Divisional Legal Office, seemed to him as well placed as caryatides on a factory by Corbussier. Was Fräulein Bruder responsible? He would have said, as she sat there hunched-up over her shorthand book, that she had as much imagination as a pile-driver. He finished dictating:

" 'In all the circumstances comma therefore comma I feel that the proper course is for Zeppichmann to be brought back to Hartzinnfeld for further examination semicolon and if you agree with this view I shall be glad if you will arrange for the necessary instructions to be given full stop.' That's the last of that batch."

Fräulein Bruder fled to the B Section Typists' Room. "Luise!" she called, with her head round the door. "Luise, I'm just going up to Cashiers' to check my stamp-account. Answer the Big Man's bell, will you!" She went on to the end of the corridor and swiftly down two flights of stairs, out onto the pavement; looked round quickly and slipped across to the hairdresser's on the other side of the street. "Can I have an appointment tomorrow, my usual time? Just a trim. Thank you! Oh, might I use the phone one minute? Thank you so much!" She shut the door of the telephone closet carefully. "Inner 185. . . . Gertrud here. I've just seen a letter on the Important One's desk, about J.Z. He's made a confession, apparently. He says he wanted to kill the girl. . . . No, that's all I could get; I only saw the bottom half. The Important One has asked for Z to be brought here. . . . Yes, I'll let you know when there's anything more. *Auf wiedersehen!*"

Dr. Kunig put his elbow on the cut-out and immediately raised it again. "Get me North 100." He leaned back against the wall. Why, he thought, why must the fellow throw his hand in just when his plans had been worked out so neatly! Of all the dirty strokes which had come his way in the last twelve months, this was surely the most exasperating. . . .

"All the same, I'm not happy about it," Oelschläger was saying. "As a legal man I dislike a case of this kind."

Little Herr Siegert, perched on the edge of Oelschläger's desk, shrugged. He said:

"I don't see why. If you've got a confession, the whole thing is simplified, that's all."

Oelschläger took another turn across the carpet, stroking the silky hair above his ears.

"Yes, but why did he confess? And for that matter, why did he want to kill the girl? Of course it might have been out of pity—"

"That isn't the point. The ethical purpose of the law, as I see it, is to preserve the integrity of the State, to defend the State against the actions of people who are hostile to it. That seems to me the supreme conception, raising law from a mere code of inter-individual adjustment to a manifestation of the State's highest virtue. And if—"

"Yes, I know, I agree! But surely the law becomes less able to fulfill its highest functions whenever it's seen to work clumsily. I mean—"

The telephone purred. Oelschläger took the receiver and placed it carefully in the recommended position.

"Reichsanwalt Oelschläger. . . . Oh, is that you, Kunig! . . . *In re* Zeppichmann, yes. Yes, I was going to write to you. Certain information I've received makes me doubtful whether the case is one demanding public examination. . . . Of course, yes, I have the interests of your client in mind, but I must point out that it's exceedingly unlikely that any funds will be found to meet her just claims. It's very unfortunate. I understand there was only a trifling savings-bank account, and that sum was naturally requisitioned to meet the public expenses connected with the man's arrest. I should like to say, I am very much obliged by the help you've given me. Your attestation was of great value. I beg your pardon?"

Kunig was drawing little figures in the air. He said:

"Well, perhaps it's hardly worth mentioning in the circumstances. I was only going to tell you that you might get an adminicle of some interest from Doctor Dittmore at the Moltke Hospital. You probably know that he's the most noted diagnostician they have there, and I understand that he took particular interest in my client's condition when she was admitted. My feeling was that the evidence of a man of that kind might give a little extra rigidity to the construction of the case—I mean, from the standpoint of public reaction."

"Dittmore—I'll make a note of the name," Oelschläger said. "I am most obliged."

It was four days later that Oelschläger found a letter from Herr Meiricke on his desk:

> *". . . appears from the memorandum sent to me that Zeppichmann is a specimen of particular insolence. Realizing not only the State-importance of such cases as these, but also the probationary nature of your own present position, you will I am sure make special efforts to ensure that justice is done to Zeppichmann speedily, determinedly, and exemplarily. There must be no failure through academic narrowness."*

At eleven o'clock Oelschläger rang for Fräulein Bruder. "I am ready for Doctor Dittmore now."

"I must tell you," Dittmore said, "that I've been spitting down the well of your stairs. Tell me, please, who do I pay the fine to?"

Oelschläger hesitated. "Well, I—I think perhaps the porter should be informed in the first instance. . . . Do please sit down! I've sent for you to ask your professional opinion on a matter—"

"You mean the spots on your neck? Well, my advice is to avoid all these doctors; they're quacks, the whole—"

"No, no. It was about a certain Minna Wersen. I understand that you were responsible for her treatment at—"

"I'm sorry, no, I wasn't."

"I mean, I believe that you were called in to give a diagnosis when this patient was first admitted?"

"No, I'm sorry, I wasn't."

"Do you mean that you know nothing about the case?"

"Well, I've seen the girl once or twice."

"Ah, then presumably you made some observation as to her condition?"

"I saw the X-ray plates, if that's what you mean."

"The X-ray plates, ah, yes! And did those tell you anything?"

"They suggested something."

"Yes?"

"To me, personally, they suggested that the girl had been treated with injections."

"Injections, ah, yes! Injections of what?"

"That's what I don't know."

"But you can say, I take it, whether the—the material used was good or bad?"

"No, I can't tell you that till I know what material—as you call it—was used."

Oelschläger touched the bell and waited in silence for Fräulein Bruder. "Fräulein Bruder, go and present my compliments to Herr Fenrich, will you please, and ask if he can spare me a few moments."

"YOU will have to try to take me a little more seriously," Oelschläger said with hard-worn patience. "I am really inviting you to put your professional knowledge at the service—not only of an individual—but of the State. You, as a doctor, are concerned with the State's physical welfare. I am concerned with the State's moral welfare. And just as your task is to make war on poisons in the physical body, so mine is to extirpate poisonous elements from the social body. Now, there's no need for me to go into details. Suffice it to say that a certain Zeppichmann made a pretence of giving treatment to Fräulein Wersen; we have ample evidence that the so-called treatment was ignorant, if not actually malicious; and what we require now is an adequate description of that 'treatment' in

medical terms. Naturally there's no need to give precise details—actual formulæ and things of that kind are usually of small legal value. I simply require you to say—ah, there you are, Fenrich! May I present Doctor Dittmore? I was just explaining to Doctor Dittmore the importance—the social importance—of our having a clear statement about Fräulein Wersen's condition when she was admitted to the Moltke Hospital."

Dittmore said: "Yes, but I'm still not perfectly clear. You say that it doesn't matter about the precise formula which Zeppichmann used?"

"Exactly—"

"All you require me to say is that he used *a* formula?"

FOR a moment Oelschläger hesitated. "Well, to be more precise, we require you to say that the treatment he adopted was harmful."

"You mean, I'm to say that he should not have used tuberculin?"

Oelschläger glanced at Fenrich.

"That should be good enough," Fenrich said.

"Or," said Dittmore, "putting it more broadly, that tuberculin treatment is a bad treatment."

"Or rather," Fenrich said, "that it was a bad treatment in this particular case."

"You mean, having regard to the circumstances of the case at the time when the treatment was begun?"

"Precisely!"

"And I take it you would like me to substantiate my statement by giving a description of the condition as it was at that time?"

Oelschläger said: "That would be helpful, yes."

"In spite of the fact that I never set eyes on the girl till some six months afterward?"

With a voice like broken glass Fenrich began: "I don't know if you think you're amusing, Herr Doktor—"

Oelschläger coughed.

"I've already told Doctor Dittmore that he would be well-advised to treat this business seriously, if he—"

"It seems to me," Dittmore said, "that if any one's not being treated seriously, it's me."

"Be quiet!" Fenrich snapped. "Listen to me! If you think you can talk in that strain to people in our position, you're in for trouble, understand? Listen! We know already that Zeppichmann did his best to poison the girl!"

"Then why bother me?"

"Doctor Dittmore, I warn you—"

"One moment!" Oelschläger said, ringing his bell. "There may be a way of convincing Doctor Dittmore that our conclusions are not so groundless as he seems to suppose. . . . Oh, Fräulein Bruder, is Fräulein Wersen here? Then bring her in, will you?"

The three men waited in frozen quietness, like amateur actors when an entrance cue has been missed. When Minna came in, she went straight to the chair she had sat in for a former interview. She smiled briefly at Dittmore, and sat with her eyes fixed on Oelschläger's face, as the devout gaze at a preacher, while Oelschläger studied his blotting-pad: his chivalry forbade him to look directly at a young woman's face, and his eyes couldn't stomach the hat. It was Dittmore who spoke first.

"You're a naughty girl, you know, running away from Doctor Vollmuth like that. You're not fit to be away from the hospital, you know you're not! If I told Doctor Wildelau—"

Fenrich tapped the floor with his toe.

"I don't think you were asked to say anything!"

"All right, please!" Oelschläger wished now that he had left Fenrich out. "Listen please, Fräulein Wersen. You know that we're all very anxious to help you, we want to punish the man who did so much harm to your health. But lawyers have to be very careful in the way they work to make sure of being perfectly fair, even with people they know to be blackguards. That means that we've got to find out as much as we possibly can about what this Zeppichmann did to you. Now will you tell me again exactly what you remember?"

Minna shut her eyes. She said feebly: "He—he put some stuff into my arm."

"We know that already!" Dittmore said.

"Perhaps you would like to question Fräulein Wersen?" Oelschläger suggested.

"Yes," Dittmore said, "yes, I would," and at once regretted it. There was something here he didn't understand. These people were talking as if the girl had a down on Zeppichmann, and he'd always imagined it was just the other way. He said with hesitation: "You remember, Minna, I was asking you about Doctor Zeppichmann's papers, whether you ever saw any papers he had when he was treating you, notes and things? I expect he kept a notebook—I should think he may have had it in your room sometimes to write down things he wanted to remember."

Her eyes were still shut.

"Yes," she said, "he did."

"Do you know what happened to that notebook?"

"No, I don't."

Fenrich said: "There was no such book among the personal belongings collected by the police. I checked the list over last week."

Dittmore ignored him. His mind was moving now.

"Listen, Minna! I think we've got to be fair to Doctor Zeppichmann, as Herr Oelschläger says. Herr Oelschläger wants me to tell him exactly what Doctor Zeppichmann did to you, so that he can see just how wrong it was."

Minna said: "Yes, I—" and stopped.

"Yes?" He had guessed long ago, and he was certain now that she knew exactly where the notebook was. "Yes?" he repeated.

"We can't wait all night!" Fenrich said.

But they had to wait nearly a quarter of a minute before she spoke again.

"Yes, I—I remember now. He told me—I think, yes—yes, he told me he kept the notebook hidden in his room. In some very secret place."

"Why?" Fenrich asked.

"I don't know. I think he—I think he must have thought it might get him into trouble, his giving me that stuff."

"Well, he was right about that!"

"What part of the room?" Oelschläger asked. "Did he ever tell you that? Did he ever give you any idea?"

"No. No, he didn't."

"The simplest thing," Fenrich said didactically, "is to get it out of the fellow himself. If need be, take him to the room he lived in and make him find it. That would probably save trouble."

Minna said quickly: "That's no good!"

Fenrich, who had already forgotten the girl, turned his head; and was surprised to see that she had come to life again.

"What do you mean, no good?"

SHE said slowly: "I mean—he wouldn't tell you; he wouldn't show you where it is."

Fenrich smiled. "We can be wonderfully persuasive."

"Yes, but he's—he's very obstinate. He wouldn't want anyone to see that book; he wouldn't find it if anyone was there. The only thing—"

"I think perhaps I'll take him along myself," Fenrich said. "If I—"

Oelschläger stopped him. "Wait a minute, Fenrich!" He turned to Minna. "What were you going to say? 'The only thing—'?"

She seemed to be confused again. "I only thought—I thought he might get it if no one was there."

"I don't quite understand," Oelschläger said. "What do you mean, 'if no one was there'?"

"I mean, I thought—if you took him to the house and said, 'You're free now, we don't want you any more,' I thought he'd probably go straight and get his book."

"Yes," said Fenrich, "get it and destroy it!"

Minna shook her head. "No, he wouldn't do that. It was full of things he wanted—medical things. He told me. No, he wouldn't destroy it; he'd take it somewhere else."

"You seem to be very sure about Zeppichmann's ideas!"

"I don't know anything about his ideas. I only know people don't throw away things they've taken all that trouble over."

"Trouble? You mean—"

Dittmore said shortly: "She's right about that. A scientist never destroys his notes."

Fenrich yawned and went to the door. "If you'll excuse me, I've got rather a lot to do. . . . I personally see no reason for any monkey tricks. I think it's just a waste of time. If you want that precious book of his, make him cough it up."

Oelschläger waited till the door had swung to; then, "This house you're talking about, where is it?" he asked.

"Handelstrasse 149."

He made a note. "Very well! I think that's all I want to ask you this morning. Thank you!"

"Thank you, Herr Reichsanwalt!"

Chapter Seventeen

MAY I come in?"

"Yes, come in!"

Frau Rupf was alone. She was sitting on a hard chair by the stove; there was something curious about her, something wrong with her eyes. Minna, standing just inside the door, said:

"I'm sorry—I wanted to see the Herr Professor. I forgot—he'd be at the school now."

"No," Frau Rupf said, "he's not at the school; he doesn't go there any more. He's out looking for another post."

"He doesn't go to the school any more?"

"No. And if you want to know why, you can ask Herr Heisel. *Herr Heisel, you remember him?* Herr Heisel overheard something my husband said about the new education. Well, that was all that was necessary."

Minna nodded. "Herr Heisel, yes!"

Here, in a room she had so often scrubbed, Minna sat on the edge of the easy-chair, woodenly, with knees together and feet apart, hands in her lap. Her eyes followed Frau Rupf about the room. She said abruptly:

"It wasn't Doctor Zeppichmann's fault. He'd have made me all right if they hadn't taken him away."

Frau Rupf looked at her sharply. "That was Herr Heisel too!" she said. "He wanted that room."

"He's still there?"

"Yes."

"Oh! I was hoping—I was hoping he'd gone."

"Why?"

"I don't know. . . . Only, Josef may be coming back sometime. Not for long, I don't mean. I just thought—he wouldn't want to see Herr Heisel again."

Holding the little tray with the cups and coffee-jug, Frau Rupf stood staring down at Minna, as Pharaoh's daughter stared. The cups began to jingle foolishly in the saucer and she put the tray down. She went and looked out into the passage and then locked the door.

"I don't know what you mean!" she said. "Doctor Zeppichmann—I thought he was dead."

"No, he isn't dead."

"How do you know?"

"The Herr Reichsanwalt told me."

"Tell me about that!" Frau Rupf said. "I want to know. Tell me everything about it—it's all right, there's only Herr Barthol next door; he's as deaf as a judge."

All her apathy had gone now. To Minna's surprise, she felt for a cigarette out of the Professor's box; struck a match with quick, masculine impatience, lit it, and sat on the arm of the easy-chair. Rather clumsily, like a boy in his first flirtation, she put her anæmic hand on Minna's shoulder. "You mustn't be frightened; I won't let anything out!" And as she listened to the stumbling recital, she was snatching mouthfuls of smoke with petulant energy, murmuring: "Yes. . . . Yes, go on! . . . So!

"Then you've no idea when they're likely to bring him?" she asked at length. "I mean—what time of day? . . . Well, it would be night, surely. They always do things late at night, those swine—they don't want people to know what they're up to. Yes, it's sure to be night. And I suppose they'll hide some one in the room, that's the sort of thing they do."

"I didn't think of that," Minna said. "I hoped—"

"Never mind! You must leave all this to me, do you understand! Only I may want you to write a letter to the Herr Reichsanwalt—I haven't thought it out yet. I must—"

Minna said: "But wait—please!" With the heat of the stove and Frau Rupf's quick voice the feeling of hopeless weakness had returned. She had thought of Frau Rupf as a mere mosquito, a nuisance that didn't matter; she was frightened by the intensity in these little eyes only a few inches from her own. "Please—I was only going to say—I thought there might be some way of getting Herr Heisel away from the room before he came. I thought we could have just a few minutes alone, Josef and me."

Frau Rupf shut her eyes. "No," she said, "no, there's a better way than that. You shall tell the Herr Reichsanwalt that Herr Heisel's away, but really he'll be there all the time. Yes, I want him to be there—you must let me have my way about that, and then I'll do all the rest for you. I'll pay for a car and everything, I can manage that." She got up and started fumbling in her workbasket. "My measure-tape—what in God's name has happened to it! I want to measure down from the balcony—it can't be more than two meters. . . . You must leave it all to me; I don't mind if they send me to prison for it, so long as I get it done the way I want. But Herr Heisel's got to be in his room, you understand! That's my part of the profits. . . . Are you feeling bad? I'll get you some water. Now listen, I'll tell you what I think we've got to do". . . .

Josef said over and over again, to the man who sat beside him. "I don't want to go back to Sondersumpf. . . . Please, I don't want to go to Sondersumpf!"

The car stopped and they put him out on the footpath, took the handcuff off his wrist. "Right—you can get along now!" Fenrich said.

"Get along?"

"You know the way, don't you? You're free. You can go home now."

He knew nothing, except that he was in a dark street. He started to walk the way they had left him facing, feeling with his hand along the wall from one lamp post to the next. A fit of coughing stopped him, he leaned against the wall doubled-up.

He reached the house, and felt along the ledge for the key. It must be late, he thought, but the door wasn't bolted. The passage light was off, but he knew his way, all right: the edge of the coat-stand, the newel post, the turn in the stairs: only his body was heavy tonight, heavy and very cold, and the work of pulling it upstairs took away his wind. He halted when he reached the landing.

He was tired; it must have been a busy day, though he could not remember. "But I ought to see Minna," he thought. "I ought to have a look at Minna before I go to bed." The house had fallen into its deadness, the kitchen smells were cold. He could not think how Minna had been when he left her at dinner-time.

It came back to him as he started to labor up the attic stairs: he hadn't seen her since last night, and that had been within the crisis-radius of the last injection. She had been sleepy then, the temperature a point or two above the normal; and he remembered promising to be with her soon. It was wrong he thought, it was foolish to have left her so long alone.

Then his desire to see her grew hot and huge, he wanted to touch her skin and smell her hair. He wanted to see her thin arm come out from under the blanket; he wanted to hear the hoarse voice say, "Oh, Josef, you look so tired!" It was the feverish thirst of a long march through an August day, the violence of a tired swimmer's arms when his feet can all but touch the sand. He called, "Minna! I'm coming!" thrusting his voice through the weight of wind on his chest. He stumbled up the last four steps as if they were catching alight behind him, jerked the door ajar with his shoulder and turned the switch.

THE rusty bed was still there, with the pad lolling over the side. There was a shirt of Minna's on the floor, with half a comb and a sheet or two of *"Hartzinnfelder Zeitung"* furred with damp. His own tools, the top of a thermometer-case, inspection-torch, fragments of flasks, were all over the place, lashed with cobweb. The top window was broken; the ghost of the room had leaked away.

He picked up the shirt.

He turned out the light and went down the stairs again, slowly, holding the shirt against his mouth.

"I will have a sleep," he thought, "and in the morning I will ask them to take me back to Sondersumpf."

He felt his way along the passage toward his own room, opened the door and turned the switch. But the light would not go on. Then he became aware that someone was calling him.

It was hardly more than a whisper: "Herr Doktor! Herr Doktor, I want to speak to you!" A woman's voice that he knew, but he could not put a name to it. A fillet of gray light showed where the passage turned; he shut the door again and went that way. He was tired and cold; he didn't mind where he went to. "The light," he said, "there's something wrong with the light in my room."

Frau Rupf took hold of his arm, whispering: "It's all right, it's quite all right. Just come into my room, I'll see to your light later on."

SOME loud noise must have awakened him, Erich Heisel thought, for he had taken his usual sleeping-pill before going to bed, and now he had been jerked from heavy sleep to full wakefulness. He fancied that the street door had slammed, but he could not be sure. He reached for the bedhead switch to see what time it was, but the light would not go on.

What was that? Someone was coming up the stairs, he thought, and instantly he felt the creeping coldness in his stomach. The footsteps went on up the attic stairs.

The light, he must have the light; he must get to the switch; in thought he was over there in a moment, but his body was dead as a ship aground; even his arms would no longer move. A stretch of silence quickened his powers; it was his body which seemed to act of itself now while his will would have held it back. His feet were on the floor, his hand on the chair where his clothes lay, when his straining ears caught the footsteps once again; and now they were coming down.

The flat, uncertain steps: he counts them, eight—nine—ten, then they stop. He hears a little cry, and he knows that cry. Then the handle turns, and the door is opening; he sees a man's shape standing there, dark against darkness, and the door is closed again. A new noise—only the murmur of a man's yawn, but within the room. He turns; the curtain moves an inch; the side of a man's head shows on the paleness of the window. The thing has got inside.

It was not altogether instinct; it was partly an act of courage that made his hand go slowly back to the chair. His coat was there, spread over the back of it, and his automatic was in the outside pocket. In a few long seconds he had got the pistol over to his right hand; in a single motion he aimed at the curtain and fired.

Fenrich, waiting impatiently in the porch, heard the shot and the animal scream which followed it. He shouted, *"Pohlse, here!"* and the man on guard at the side of the house came running toward him. There were three more shots. Before the third, he had reached the top of the stairs, with Pohlse at his heels. The lights all over the house were coming on like a theater sunrise; there were people gathering in the passage; a frightened old woman said: "In there! In there!" He kicked open Erich's door. "Hauser!" he said. "What's ha—"

Young Hauser, of the Police Department, had fallen against the curtain in such a way that his knees held it down, and his head had come right through the worn fabric. The man sitting in pajamas on the edge of the bed, whom Fenrich recognized as Herr Heisel of the Secretariat, was grinning at this spectacle with frozen merriment: the automatic lay in tidy alignment with his bedroom slippers on the floor. Sauerborn went up and shook him by the shoulder, but there was no reaction. It might have been a wax mannequin that he was shaking.

Chapter Eighteen

T is Josef sitting beside me, dumb, with his head lolling on the back of the seat. It is Josef's hand, this cold hand that I'm holding, though it's thin and knotted like an old woman's hand. It is Josef's hand, though it seems to flinch away when I try to stroke his fingers. I can only see his face when the street lamps brush across it—his eyes are open but he doesn't seem to look at anything.

"It's stuffy in here. I want to go to sleep, and I want to be sick. I can't breathe fast enough to keep my head up; it tires me to breathe so fast. I don't want to do anything any more. I want to lie back here with my cheek against Josef's arm, to let my breathing stop and my body grow small and light. I mustn't go to sleep, I mustn't go to sleep; my head has got to be clear and sharp to look after Josef!

"Josef! Josef!"

But he didn't answer.

The car tilted as it turned to run along behind the barracks. Headlamps swinging from the park showed the face of Herr Rupf old and white as he sat stiffly in the other corner, gripping the bamboo crook of his old umbrella, drumming on his knee. The knife of frosty air through the crack of the dividing window smelled for an instant of wooded hills, the car screwed left and grumbled up the cobbled carriageway of Wulfgasse. In Bruddestrasse it stopped.

Strength, oh, God, strength now!

They stood forlornly on the narrow footpath like country passengers waiting for a train; the car jerked off backward to turn in the brewery entrance and the friendly smell of it floated away. The opening to the river-steps was only a few yards on; the river wind poured round the corner like a lynch-mob. From the lamp at the brewery gate the light was spun as far as the road's turn, showing the roadway empty, torn posters beating like pigeons' wings along the brewery wall. A voice said: "Wersen? Fräulein Wersen?" A shadow moved and became a dingy overcoat with a chubby face clutched in its collar. "From Doctor Kunig! Follow me, if you please!"

HE took the fiber attaché case Minna carried—she wouldn't give him the parcel; he went ahead of them down the steps, a schoolboy hustling his parents through the fairground, squashed hat planted between his spreading ears, fat small feet churning like a camshaft. The light from the road gave out, the steps dived into nothingness. "Come, Josef, come!" But he lingered on the topmost step, insensible to the wind soaking his cotton boiler-suit, hands held together as if they were tied. She took his arm and urged him on, half-dragging, half-supporting him, green hat and sprawling parcel clutched together in her other hand. "We must hurry, please!" the guide called back; and Herr Rupf, holding Josef's other arm, head down against the wind and feet pawing for the steps, repeated: "Come, Herr Doktor, we must hurry!" He let them have their way with him; he pitched and stumbled down the steps like a man asleep. The steps drew clear of workshop walls; the river showed as a gray sleeve stained at the golden buttons, wharfhouse roofs a cardboard pattern cut sharp on frosty sky. They bundled all together round the second angle of the zigzag and lunged along the halfway terrace, clawed and crumpled by the wind.

They had reached the final flight when Josef started coughing. The first convulsion tore him out of their grasp; he knelt on the steps curved over like a bridge and shook as if a wild creature were struggling to get out of him. When Minna stooped to put her hand in his armpit, a trick she had learned from him, he shrank away and rolled on his back, bringing up his knees to ward her off. The guide, who had reached the foot of the steps, came stumping up again. "Really—ladies and gentlemen—I beg you—I beseech you to hurry—they won't wait for you after the hour!"

"We must carry him!" Rupf said. "The only thing is to carry him."

But when they tried to get hold of him again, he wriggled away; breathless and whimpering, he began to crawl down the steps on his knees, and overbalanced, and rolled the whole way to the bottom. They saw him there a dark heap like the contents of an overturned market stall, motionless; Minna ran crying down the steps, and Rupf plunged after her, clutching the parcel she'd dropped, and both their hats and a spoke of his own umbrella. But Josef was up again before they reached him, and staggering toward the river's edge, letting out a chesty noise that sounded like laughter. It was the guide who caught him just in time, and the others closed round him. He was passive again now; he hobbled along between them murmuring: "I want you—to finish me off—for God's sake—finish me."

Minna's eyes had shut; this was like a dream.

The sounds which linger in a town at night had fallen behind, the concrete underfoot had given place to gravel. A husky, melancholy voice said: "You're very late. I thought you weren't coming!" She opened her eyes and saw close to hers a shrunk face, bristle-piled, with a drooping cigarette burnt all along the side. "Your clocks are fast," the guide said shortly. "You ought to keep your clocks right!" He was pressing something into Minna's hand. "The papers," he said. "Those are the papers Doctor Kunig's got out for you; you'll have to look after those."

"Right, come on then, if you're coming!" the hairy man said.

"Where's the parcel?" Minna asked. "I must have the parcel!" Rupf gave her the parcel, and held her hand for a moment, murmuring without a trace of hopefulness: "God with you, Minna—it's all right now. I know it's going to be all right!" The black shape of the boat seemed to be quite close; she stepped there as you would walk from

one room to another, missed it, soaked a stocking up to the knee, landed in the bows of the boat on hands and knees. But the parcel was all right; she had it grasped against her stomach with her hat and Dr. Kunig's papers; it hadn't got wet at all. They were helping Josef into the boat; he lay down in the bottom and started coughing again; the boatman took his place to scull from the stern. "You'll understand I'm taking no responsibility!" the boatman repeated. "I'll do what I'm paid to do, but you'll understand that I'm taking no responsibility."

The fat little guide stooped down to shove out the bows. He said: "You'll remember—be careful about those papers. Doctor Kunig was very strong on that; it's taken him a lot of work."

"You understand, I'm not taking any responsibility!" the boatman said.

"You got them?" A woman's voice.

"I got them. But I'm not taking any responsibility, I told the gentleman that. . . . Will you get aboard, Miss!"

She stood up in the bow, weak and hazy, felt for the side of the barge with numbed hands. The distance now seemed huge, an ocean of water in between, and she doubted her strength to get across; but a pair of hands came down to catch her by the arms; with careless power the woman pulled her up and over. They couldn't make Josef move. He knelt there in the lethargy which terrified animals show; he didn't stir when the rocking of the boat brought his forehead hard against the barge's side. Only his lips were moving all the time, "—finish me off—she can't do anything worse to me—why can't she finish me off?" Until the woman leaned far over and linked her fingers behind his back, the boatman put a casual shoulder under him and they tumbled him on to the deck.

Chapter Nineteen

"YOU say it was a girl brought you the book? A German girl?"

"Well, she seemed to understand my German—more or less."

"And where did she come from?"

"Well, Germany, I suppose."

"Doctor Inning, you're talking like a fool this morning!"

"I'm sorry, Mac. No, she didn't say who she was or where she came from. She merely said she'd come back later on to see if I thought the book was 'satisfactory.' A fortnight ago, that must have been. Well, what do you think of it, anyway?"

McDonner milked the lobe of his right ear.

"I wouldn't say it hasn't some interest. It's done by a methodical man. And the formula has some interesting features. But of course, there's nothing to go on. I'd say it was a dangerous thing to play with."

"But the X-ray plates, what do you think of them?"

"Well, they might be very remarkable. You can't tell. There's nothing to say exactly what kind of conditions he had the patient under. I'm not pretending to be a scholar of German, but there's something about special ventilation—"

"Well, no, all he says in his notes—as I understand it—is that he made some sort of top window. I don't see how the room itself can possibly have provided anything like first-class sanatorium conditions. Here—where is it? Yes, it seems to have been a sort of attic."

"It is very well established," McDonner said didactically, "by all the leading authorities, that tuberculin treatment is no use, no use whatever, except under sanatorium conditions. And if—"

"Exactly, that's what I mean! Here's this fellow with the music-hall name—what is it, Zep-something?—here's this fellow carrying out his experiment under the most crazy conditions and apparently getting away with it! Unless the X-ray plates are faked, or the dates are faked or something. Wait—this one's got a hospital date-stamp in the corner, so that's all right. No, the other one hasn't. But it's the same subject, all right—at least, Grover says so, and he's not likely to be wrong. Well then, we've got the whole thing, haven't we? The basis of the theory, summary of previous experiments, actual formula, scheme of dosage, details of all reactions—and the portraits before and after using. On top of that, I've got an idea that the girl who brought the book was the patient herself."

THEY were steep, these stairs, but this was a place you could understand; here at last was a smell she knew. "Josef, it's like the Moltke, don't you think?" But he didn't answer; he was several steps in front, and he went on doggedly in the porter's wake, shoulders crouched and hands behind his back.

At the top of the third flight she sat down, and Josef noticed and came back to her. "Is something wrong?"

"It's only the stairs; they've squeezed the air out of my stomach." He knelt and did up one of her laces while she took fresh air and arranged her hat; he didn't seem to be out of breath. He was stronger, her beloved; the sea must have done him good; but his mouth ought not to bleed so much. The porter, swinging his weight from foot to foot, sulkily watched them.

Dr. Inning. The porter gave a cuff to the door; and at once, to show that laboratory doctors were neither here nor there, jerked it open. "Mr. and Mrs. Freyburn!"

A fire of the English kind, although it was summer; a pleasant untidiness, the English doctor smiling through his horn-rimmed spectacles: nothing was quite in focus, for the climb upstairs had fogged her eyes a little, but you could manage things in a small room like this, and she felt so well today. "So glad!" the English doctor was saying in his curious, halting way. "I thought you had forgotten to come back. This is Doctor McDonner; his German is even worse than mine. He is a Scot, you see—a Scotchman." And that seemed to be a joke, for the young doctor laughed and the other Englishman with the gray mustache screwed up his mouth and sniffed, so Minna laughed as much as she could. "And this is your husband?" the young doctor asked.

Josef, clicking, said: "Zeppichmann."

"Oh—then you are—you are the Doctor Josef Zeppichmann who conducted the experiments? I—I do not quite understand. Will you not take a chair, Frau Freyburn—and you—please!"

The chairs were anyhow in the middle of the room; they sat in them where they were; a little apart, she with her hands folded and staring at the young doctor's face, Josef perched like a hook on a picture-rail, his eyes to the window. She said:

"It was Doctor Kunig, you see; he said that our name would be Freyburn. Zeppichmann is the name he used to have, the name in the book, I mean; he was called that when he did the experiment. Only, the police wanted to have him in prison again, you see—"

"Just one minute!" The young doctor went to the door and called: "Miss Brewer! See if you can find Doctor Schneider, will you please—ask if he can spare me a few minutes."

"You see, I was Minna Wersen when he put the stuff in my arm; I belonged to Frau Spühler then; I was Frau Spühler's kitchen girl, you understand, and I'd got T.B. So you see—"

"Oh," the young doctor said, "I was right then, you are the—the subject of—of your husband's experiments? I mean—the case described in this book, it was yourself?"

"But the photos," she said; "I gave you the photos of my chest—"

"Yes, yes, exactly—only I didn't know—"

"But I told you, I told you it was my chest." She began unbuttoning her blouse. "Look, I'll show you—"

"No, no, some other time—"

DR. SCHNEIDER came; the room seemed crammed with doctors. "Here is a countryman of yours," the Englishman said. "He speaks your language quite well—don't you, Paul!" Dr. Schneider bowed. He was young and handsome, and his hair was nicely done; his white coat was clean; he was altogether different from the Englishmen. "And you are the mysterious lady?" he said. "My friend Doctor Inning, here, talks of nothing but the book you brought him! And is this Doctor Zeppichmann?"

But Josef had turned his chair; he wouldn't look round.

"Josef! Josef, please! This doctor here wants to talk to you."

He said in English: "Not understand. Not German. Hollandisch."

Dr. Schneider's smile went out; he stood rubbing his chin. "My friend," he said slowly, "I left Göttingen more than a year ago. I couldn't do my work there. You understand?" And as Josef didn't answer, he said: "They

had a talk with me before I left—you know the people I mean!" He pulled up a cuff and put his wrist in front of Josef's face. "Look! You know how one gets that little trademark?"

Then Josef was weeping, and he talked at the same time. "They can have the book, you see. These doctors here, I want these doctors to keep the book, but they mustn't let *them* have it—those people over there. Those people would spoil it; they'd make my stuff all wrong and say it was because of me. They're not to say that, you understand; they're not to say I was trying to kill people —I was trying to make people better, whatever else I did. Please, Herr Doktor, please, I don't want you to tell them about my stuff, not those people over there. I'll pay you —Minna, we've got some money left—I'll pay you—please—" The cough took him, and he had to stand against the wall for a minute or so, bent double, while the inkpots on the table rattled in their stand. Then he was calmer, as if some weight had rolled away; he stood and faced the doctors with something like a smile, and said: "I'm sorry—it was at Sondersumpf; that's where I got like that."

The gray Englishman had come to Minna's side. He asked her quietly: "How long—that cough, your husband? Some blood, yes? He—he sweats—he sweats in the night? No?"

Josef was on his chair again, and the young Englishman was asking him questions which Dr. Schneider put into better words. Then the doctors were talking together in English, and then Dr. Schneider was asking some more questions, which Josef seemed to answer without any trouble, though Minna could not understand them at all.

Dr. Schneider was translating. He had his hands in his pockets, and he sat on the edge of the table; he knew the way to behave in an English hospital. His voice was quick and smooth, miraculously turning Josef's words to English as they passed from ears to mouth; the voices came and went like shuttles; the small room was a loom of strangely colored words. "And you yourself, you've been through a bad time?" "At Sondersumpf, yes, the food wasn't good; it wasn't enough for the work you have to do."

At last Josef turned to her.

"He wants to examine me—the English doctor—he thinks he could do something for my chest."

THEY took her to another room to wait while Josef was examined. There was a chair by the fire here; and a girl who was rather pretty in an English way but could only talk English; the girl gave her some cake and a glass of milk, and a magazine with pictures of people shooting at birds.

In the pleasant warmth she went to sleep; when she woke it was after three o'clock. She was suddenly afraid Josef had left the hospital without her; Josef was often forgetful in his dreamy moods. At last Dr. Schneider came.

He led her into a room with a big writing-desk; it was full of doctors but Josef wasn't there. He told her that a bald little doctor with tired eyes was Dr. Mayneshott, and they made her sit in a chair; the English always wanted to prowl about in their rooms, but they wanted everyone else to sit in a chair. It was the bald doctor who started the talking, while Dr. Schneider explained what he said.

"Doctor Mayneshott doesn't want to alarm you unduly, but he has found that your husband's lungs are in a very bad condition—"

"I know that!" she said. "He's got T.B. I had it myself once."

For a time the doctors were all talking together, in the English way, hardly using their tongues at all, but pursing their lips and making fierce little nods. Then:

"Doctor Mayneshott thinks you ought to realize that your husband's case is serious. When the disease has got to this stage, it's—it's seldom anything can be done."

She said: "Oh, but he's better now, he's very much better. He's getting quite strong again."

The old man in the corner suddenly came awake. He said, finding the words one by one:

"You must understand, a man cannot go on living without any lungs. He must have his lungs—to breathe. When his lungs are all destroyed by disease, then he—he must die. I am very sorry. I am very, very sorry. It was necessary to tell you that."

The doctors were all looking at the carpet as if they wanted to take it to bits and remake it themselves. One or two of them were making little English coughs. It seemed curious to Minna that everything in the room was the same; stains on the gray doctor's coat and the clock ticking. "So Josef is going to die," she thought. "So Josef is going to die."

She said slowly: "I want my husband to have the very best treatment. You must understand, he is a doctor himself; he is not just anybody; it's right for him to have the best treatment. I shall pay for it by degrees; I am going to find household work; I have a great deal of household experience. It must be understood, please, that my husband is not to be put in the pauper wards—the treatment will not be too expensive for me, if he's only to live for a short time."

DR. SCHNEIDER said, when the doctors had all talked again, pursing their lips and making their little nods: "There's no question of expense; the doctors here regard themselves as colleagues of your husband; they are all very glad to give their services. It's only a question of the kind of treatment. Now you know, I think, what tuberculin treatment is?"

"You mean, putting stuff in your arm? Yes, that's the best. I'll have that for Josef, please. I'd like—"

"But wait! There are many different kinds of tuberculin. In a case like this, Doctor Mayneshott's normal practice would be—"

She said: "I want you to use Josef's own stuff, the stuff that he thought of. That is the best kind."

It was clear now, it was very clear indeed. She asked: "Have they got to do it straight away, whatever they do to him?"

"They'd like to," he said. "It would be much best to start straight away. You see, the disease is getting stronger all the time; in a very short time he'll have less what we call 'resistance.' "

She nodded.

"I want to see Josef," she said; "I want to hear what he says."

All the doctors nodded and pursed their lips, the old man went to open the door and bowed her into the passage. Then they knocked at a door and let her go in alone.

It was a bedroom. Josef was not in bed, but he was wearing a dressing-gown. He sat in an armchair by the fire. A nurse was in the room; she was fiddling over a glass table and rattling things as nurses do. Minna said: "I don't want her in here; can't you tell her to go!"

Josef said that the nurse could only speak English. "And you can't make nurses go," he said.

She stood in front of him, looking at his face. He was tired, she thought; he didn't look so well now.

"Do you feel all right?" she asked.

"Yes, I feel all right."

"All those doctors say that you're ill. I mean, they say you're very ill. The old man specially. But I think he's a bit mad; he opened the door for me. How ill do you think you are?"

He was looking at the fire. He said: "Listen, Minna, listen! I think I can make them use my polyvalent tuberculin. On me, I mean. You know, the stuff I wrote all about in that book."

"Will it hurt a lot?"

"I don't mind that."

"I don't want you to be hurt any more."

"I got used to that."

"Is it bound to act all right?"

He hesitated. "I think so. . . . And you see, if it does, it proves what I thought. Two cases are very much better than one; they always think one case may be just an accident."

"And then if it acts all right, they'll use it on a lot of people? People won't have T.B. any more?"

"Well, a lot of them won't."

"And will they call it the Zeppichmann medicine?"

"They might. But I don't mind about that. Not now."

She wished that he still minded about that.

"You want them to do it?" she asked. "You want it very much?"

He said: "I thought you'd better decide." And then he said, stumbling: "We were in it together; you said that. When I did the last injection, You said it belonged to us both. . . . So I thought you ought to decide."

So he remembered that! And she thought: "I've got him back now, I've got all of him back."

She wished she were in the old room again, with her in bed, her feeling the burning hot stuff as it crept up the arm. You couldn't see things clearly with Josef in this new dressing-gown, and the nurse rattling things and the high, naked walls.

"I suppose it would be a good thing," she said.

Josef smiled then. He looked happy and surprised, as if she had given him a present, and she was glad that it made him happy. He said: "Yes—yes, I think it'll be a good thing. . . . Perhaps you ought to find the doctors and tell them."

The doctors were talking to each other, a little way down the passage. Dr. Schneider came to her, smiling, and she said:

"My husband and I have made up our minds. We wish you to begin the treatment at once, with the Zeppichmann medicine."

Dr. Schneider looked at her curiously. "You do understand—"

"Yes, yes, I understand all about it. My husband has made it quite clear to me."

He said: "Look here, would you like to come to my house? My wife would make you comfortable."

"Oh, that's kind, that's fabulously kind!" But it wasn't safe, she thought; he might write to the German police and tell them where she was. "But I'd rather go to my hotel," she said. "Thank you very much, but I'd rather go to my hotel."

"Are you feeling all right?"

For a moment she thought of telling him that she was ill: she could say how giddy she was sometimes, and how her legs sometimes refused to work; then they might let her stay in the hospital. But another plan was uppermost: she would go to some place where they taught you to be a nurse; then they would let her come back and look after Josef.

"I'm perfectly all right," she said. "I can come back tomorrow?"

He nodded. "About ten o'clock. Ask for me, and I'll make things all right."

"Can I see Josef again before I go?"

"But of course."

The nurse was still there, but Minna was bolder now. She went to her and said, "Go away, please! Please go away!" The nurse went off to complain to Dr. Mayneshott. Minna said to Josef: "You're quite sure you want it done?" He answered: "Yes, quite sure."

"You won't let them hurt you an awful lot?"

"Oh, no, I don't feel things much. Not after Sondersumpf."

She wanted to warn him about the way you felt when the stuff started to work; but she couldn't put that into words; she had lost the habit of putting things into words. "I expect it will be all right," she said; and he said, "Yes, I expect it will be all right," and then, indistinctly: "I'm glad it's me this time."

She put one of the cushions underneath his elbow. That way it kept his shoulder up, and then he didn't get the ache in his shoulder. (The nurse wouldn't know that.) After that she kissed him on the eyes, letting her tongue touch his eyelids, she said: *"Jesus mit Dir, Liebe—Allerliebster."* The trousers he was wearing had a tear at the knee, but the nurse would have to see to it. She heard him say: "You've done too much—too much!" Someone with creaky boots was coming into the room (It wasn't their own room; anyone could come). She kissed one of his hands, and went away, straightening her hat.

Chapter Twenty

AT least he is in a warm room, and Dr. Schneider is kind. He is by the fire; he has no more walking to do, and the police won't find him there. The book was all crumpled and the pages were torn, but the doctors could read what Josef put; the young doctor with the spectacles has seen how clever Josef's medicine is.

"At least, that is over. I talked to them all, and I walked along their passages; none of them thought I was ill, and it shows that Josef's stuff can work all right."

But her powers had been at stretch too long. As far as Canon's Plough her legs were docile and her head kept up, she halted there and leaned against a sandbox; immediately her hold was broken. She waited patiently: it was nothing new, this slackening of all her joints, this dry, stale air in throat and forehead: only the pain beneath her breast was of a new kind, a curious squeezing as of fierce hands wringing out a cloth. And that would pass.

She felt her way up the damp stairs to the room that she and Josef had, groped for matches and lit the gas. It had seemed to be good enough, this section fenced by matchboard from a larger room; the single chair, the enamel basin on the window-sill: it was lifeless now.

The fiber case lay open on the floor, as it had been since they came; their sponge was on the mantelpiece with half a slab of chocolate; most of their things about the bed. She wrapped the sponge in a piece of paper torn from the wall and pitched it into the case; the other things went in on top. The case was shut; and she had snapped the only fastener that worked when she saw her diary beneath the bed. What use? But she dragged it out, slapped off the furry dust and stuck it in her coat; pressed her face in the pillow where Josef's head had been, and went downstairs again with the case under her arm.

A SWAN'S-HEAD reading-lamp was the only light turned on in the reference-room. Inning took off his soaking coat and put it over a chair; carefully, so as not to disturb Mayneshott, who was lying on the couch.

But Mayneshott was not asleep. He said:

"That Inning? Devil are you doing—this time of night?"

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to wake you. I'm just—interested, you know."

"The German boy?"

"Uh-huh. I thought there might possibly be an early reaction."

"That all? Well, if you want to know, there's been a hell of a reaction."

"Oh—"

"Father and mother of a temperature. Here, this thing's gone out; give me another match. Thanks. You know, Inning, I can't quite understand the Satrap allowing it. He's not the world's congenital gambler, most days. I thought it was damned risky myself, and so did McDonner—"

"McDonner thinks everything's risky—"

"It needed twelve months' try-out in the labs. Not less. That would apply—"

"But the fellow had done all that. We've got it all in black and white. Anyway, he wanted it himself—"

"What the patient wants is neither here nor there. No, I'm not blaming you. You only gave your opinion; that's all anyone can do. . . . What makes me rather sick is that I saw a chance of getting away with it, using a modification of Telly's P.T. It was a Telly case, all right. My God, if I could have got him through, with a body all shaken to bits like that!"

"But then we'd have learned nothing."

The door was tapped, and opened.

"What is it, nurse?"

"He's awake again."

"Restless?"

"No, only talking. He keeps talking about somebody called Darlmire. I think he wants something; I don't know what it is."

"I'll come," Mayneshott said. He worked his thick body off the couch and shook out his legs. "I say, Inning, you might go and get Schneider. He's in his room."

The bed in the observation-room was huge, the gift of a benevolent ignoramus forty years ago. The young German looked quite small there. He lay very still. In the nightsuit they had found for him, rather too big, he resembled his walking self as much as a cheap photograph. The eyes were brighter than they had been when he came; bright and far-pitched, steady in direction, like the eyes of someone looking up the street for his bus.

The nurse was sponging the forehead with pieces of cotton wool exactly squeezed-out. You had to do something. Mayneshott warmed his hand at the gas and slipped it under the bedclothes to feel the heart. . . . He asked uselessly: "The arm, is it painful? *Schmerz hier?"* The boy's lips opened, showing his teeth; the eyes did not alter, but Mayneshott knew from familiarity that that was a smile. The boy's hand was walking like a spider along

the oversheet; it found the nurse's hand and held it. Mayneshott heard him whispering *"Es ist nun alles zu mir gekommen. . . . Ich habe es von Dir abgenommen."*

Schneider's footsteps hardly sounded on the linoleum; he could move with a peculiar quietness. He stood where the shadow was deepest, not venturing to approach another man's case. But Mayneshott knew he was there; Mayneshott knew everything. He went across. "We ought to get the wife," he said below his voice. "You took the address, I think?"

Schneider said abruptly: "Excuse, please!"

Mayneshott was over to the bed almost in one stride. "Steady, old chap, steady!" The figure had come to life; the boy was trying to sit up, fighting against the weight of the bedclothes. "It's all right, old fellow, take it easy! Schneider, talk to him, tell him to lie still—"

Schneider was at the other side; he slipped his arm behind the boy's shoulders. "Quietly, old friend, quietly—nothing to worry about!"

Unexpectedly strong, the boy had got his torso up straight; he was holding Mayneshott's arm as if it were his only safety. But with that he seemed satisfied; he sat quite still; his eyes began to move, left and right, left and right, like a clockwork figure's in a shop window. "The doctor," he said suddenly, the voice small but perfectly free, "I want to see the doctor."

"He's here," Schneider said. "No, the other side. Look, there he is; that's his arm."

Josef's eyes went that way. He said impatiently: "No, that's Doctor Röstel; he wouldn't understand. I want the young doctor."

Schneider said: "Wait, wait a moment; I'll see." He found Inning in the next room; he said: "I think it is you he wants; I'm not sure. . . . No, I'm sure Doctor Mayneshott will not mind." They went back to the observation-room together. "Look, I've brought Doctor Inning!"

"Inning? . . . Yes, Inning, yes, that's right! Where?"

"I'm here," Inning said.

The eyes came round, hunting.

"Nearer. . . . Yes, the young doctor, yes. You had my book; you read it?"

"Yes, of course."

"Nearer. . . . I was thinking, I was thinking all night—your thoughts go quickly down there. Nearer! . . . You hear all right? It's about the P.T. The Psi Plus—you know? That's all right; I know it's all right. Where's the German doctor? . . . Tell him, please, tell him the Psi Plus is all right. It's the Minus, that won't do. Sepsis, you see. It all comes from the Minus. I know that now; it's all clear; it's perfectly clear. I'll write it—book, where's the book?"

"Can't you quiet him?" Mayneshott said.

Schneider said: "Listen, old friend—"

"They can give me another injection," Josef said. "Not yet, not just yet. Five days the first interval, not longer. Don't let them wait any longer—"

"You leave it to me, old friend. I'll see to it—"

"It's got to go on, you understand!"

"Yes, old friend. Don't worry, don't worry any more; we'll see it goes on."

"Oh. . . . Where's Minna? Tell Minna it's going on. I want Minna to know. Minna! . . . *Allerliebste—*"

His eyelids had come down; he dropped asleep as babies do, the pulsing of a factory cut by a single switch. And as if it were a child, Mayneshott lifted him one-armed, patted the pillows and put him down.

"Schneider, be a good chap and get that other kettle going—I've got an idea—I'm damned if I'll lose that boy—Yes, nurse, what is it?"

She said: "Will you come, please—"

"Wait a minute—I'm getting something—"

She shook her head.

THIS street is narrow, with a little shop abutting on the roadway. The red lamp of a crossing showed ahead. The shop was for old clothes and furniture, and the smell of it left soft by rain came down the street a little way.

The moment when she recognized the street was very small, like a bird's shadow across a sunny window.

With darkness weakening, the small and busy noises had begun; the clack of fire-irons in a house she passed, quick footsteps and a boy's whistle launched fearlessly against the drowsing town. Night's frightening sounds, small flutterings and clopping steps in empty streets, were overwashed in the rising tide: somewhere the machines had started; the first tram showed its lights at the crest and coasted down the hill. Across the clangor of its passage her ears caught Josef's voice, *"Come quickly, Minna, quick!"* So still he needed her.

The pain grew rancorous as she tried to force her legs. But that was an old companion, which had first brought Josef to her side; she could hold it till she reached the top of the hill, and there perhaps it would let her go. The wall had given out, and a monstrous church grew up; the street lamp showed a pale Christ struggling on its Calvary. Her steps got shorter, but the paving stones still moved; the staring workmen fell behind; she passed the first of the solemn porticos. He had cried and she would get to him. He might have traveled deeply into pain, but that was a country which she knew.

And this was like release: to have her purpose narrowed again. No longer to search the horizon, but to go at a single mark; no longer to ask if she cared for his work as well as for himself, to match his need against a larger scope, to put the smallness of her strife beside the hugeness of the battlefield. Only to watch one face, only to beat away one enemy, to let her power of loving be lost in a single pity. Let that be enough—ah Merciful, ah Crucified, let that be enough!

NOW the hill pitched sharper, and the trees began. The coldness gathered from wet clothes was winding up inside of her; the fingers of the squeezing hand grew cold. On this steep length of road each pace took up a double breath; and with the drag of pain she could not make it fast enough. But the store would last, she thought; she would make it last to the top. Another tree had crept behind, leaves gray in the expanding light; the shape of red became a letter-box; then that was past. She called: "I'm coming, Josef—now!"

She felt no courage, only the fierceness that comes in war, brilliant like noise of trumpets, flame against fire. The curb was broken, and she fell; some strength unreckoned picked her up; she was running now, and the stubborn pavement flowed like a swollen stream. Another tug of pain, an answering thrust, eyes shut, feet clutching at the path, legs driving them like broken canes: and the hill's resistance gave, her eyes opening saw mistily the street pitched down, and there, beyond the timber-yards, the ranks of windows in a smoky wall.

It was then her power gave out. One pause, a moment's rest: she sat down on the path; and pain, as if in timed assault, took hold and held her there.

A sense of pitching motion, as at sea: and when she looked again, she caught a glimpse of steps she recognized, a long board shouting *"Must raise £40,000."* But in the drumming noise the hospital had changed; the corridor was dim and wider now, reaching beyond her sight. The solemn doctors stood in line, their faces showing faintly through the darkness: they stood and bowed to her. Dr. Schneider whispered as she passed: "Success, a great success!" and the word went down the line of doctors like a breeze through corn, "Success, complete success!" So the medicine Josef had found was right, she thought; but she could not see him there. The train slowed down; an old man with a wooden leg came up to take her ticket; and across the shaded square the boys were racing on their bicycles. Beyond the old stone bridge the road began to climb, leaving the wide roofs far behind, and the scent of pines became so rich that she seemed to float upon its waves. She knew where she had got to now. She caught another scent, of a man's skin and tiredness. Then the sun came out, and all the pain had gone. She called, "Beloved!" and ran toward him up the hill.

THE END

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