THE American

MAGAZINE

January
25¢

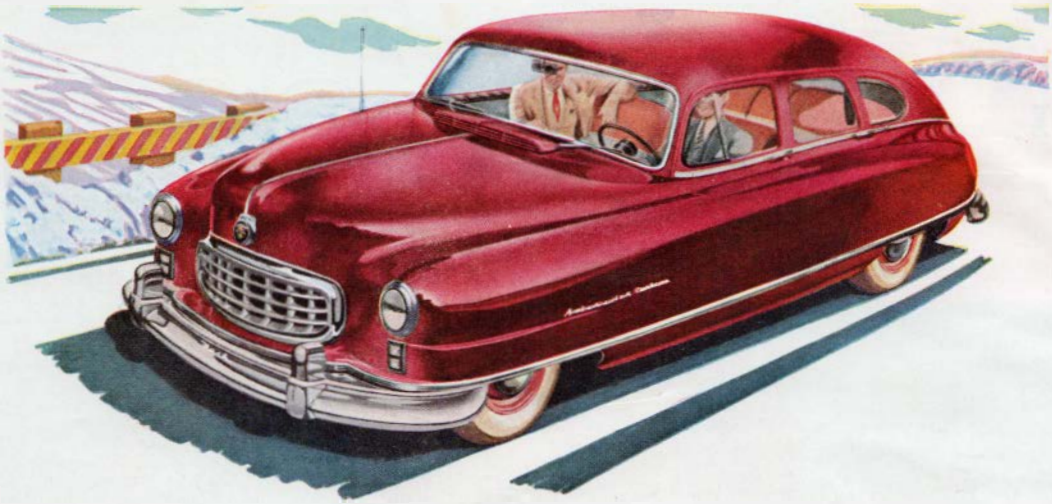
Complete in this issue

A novel of romantic adventure

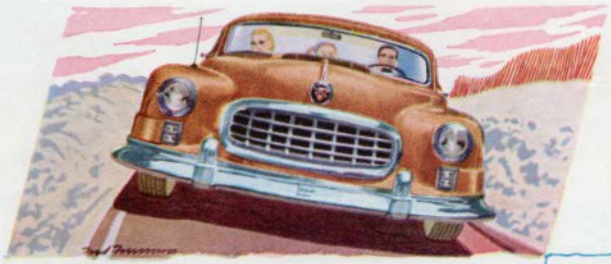
by SARAH-ELIZABETH RODGER

also a short mystery novel

THE TRIAL OF STEVEN KENT



THIS IS OUR CHALLENGE FOR 1950!



This is our challenge—*five minutes in a 1950 Nash Airflyte will completely change any idea you ever had about how an automobile rides—drives—performs.*

Airflyte Construction is the reason—the rigid strength of streamline train construction now applied to a car.

Up goes safety—performance—and up goes gasoline economy, up to 30% more!

New Super-Compression Engines whisk you along. You romp over bumps without sway, or wobble. Airflyte's double-rigidity does it.

You move with 20.7% less air-drag than does the average current car. You get over 25 miles on a gallon in the Statesman at average highway speed!

Take an Airflyte ride—try the new Ambassador Airflyte with Hydra-Matic Drive and Selecto-Lift starting.

And remember, new lower prices, too!

ONLY NASH HAS

AIRFLYTE CONSTRUCTION!

Alone in Nash, the entire frame and body, floor, roof, rear fenders are built as a single rigid welded unit. It has 1½ to 2½ times the torsional strength of ordinary construction. Makes possible new safety, new economy—stays new years longer, adds to re-sale value.

NEW! The beautiful new Sky-Lounge Interior. See the new Airliner 5-way Reclining Seat . . . Twin Beds . . . Roll-a-Lock panel for dash controls . . . Glove Locker that *pulls* out . . . Uniscope safety . . . the Weather Eye System.

Nash Motors, Division Nash-Kelvinator Corp., Detroit, Mich.

Nash AIRFLYTE

The Statesman ★ The Ambassador

Great Cars Since 1902

★ THERE'S MUCH OF TOMORROW IN ALL NASH DOES TODAY ★

★

OVERHEATED?

OVERTIRED?

WET FEET?

Look out for a Cold!

GARGLE LISTERINE ANTISEPTIC—*Quick!*

This prompt and delightful precaution can often head off a cold or simple sore throat. Here's why:

When you're tired or overheated, when your feet are wet or cold, threatening germs, called the "secondary invaders," find it easier to stage a mass invasion of the throat tissue. They are the ones that are responsible for much of a cold's misery, authorities say.

Kills "Secondary Invaders"

Listerine Antiseptic can often check such an invasion because, as it reaches way back on throat surfaces, it kills literally millions of these troublesome germs.

In other words, Listerine Antiseptic gives Nature a helping hand in warding off the infection you know as a cold.

For your protection during the cold-and-sore-throat months, make a habit of using Listerine Antiseptic regularly night and morning, and between times at the first symptom of trouble.

Fewer Colds in Tests

Bear in mind that tests made over twelve years showed that those who gargled Listerine Antiseptic twice a day had fewer colds and usually milder colds than those who did not gargle . . . fewer sore throats, too.

LAMBERT PHARMACAL CO.
St. Louis, Mo.

Note How Listerine Antiseptic Gargle Reduced Germs!

Actual tests showed reductions of bacteria on mouth and throat surfaces ranging up to 96.7% fifteen minutes after the Listerine Antiseptic gargle, and up to 80% one hour after the gargle.

P.S. **HOW'S YOUR BREATH TODAY?** Don't guess about it. Don't offend others with bad breath due to food fermentation in the mouth. Listerine Antiseptic sweetens and freshens your breath instantly. It helps keep it that way, too . . . not for minutes . . . but for hours, usually.

Picture of the Month

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer presents

BARBARA STANWYCK · JAMES MASON

VAN HEFLIN · AVA GARDNER

in

"EAST SIDE, WEST SIDE"

CYD CHARISSE

NANCY DAVIS · GALE SONDERGAARD

A MERVYN LEROY Production

Screen Play by ISOBEL LENNART
Based on the Novel by MARCIA DAVENPORT

Directed by.....MERVYN LEROY
Produced by VOLDEMAR VETLUGUIN

East Side, West Side—that's the title of M-G-M's new picture, and it's about the dreamy as well as the seamy side of anybody's town . . .

The high hat side and the low brow side rarely meet (in public places, that is). But when they do, and they do in M-G-M's new piece of taut dramatics — you get a story to sit straight up with.

Barbara Stanwyck plays the woman in it, a woman who knows the heartbreak of dream street. One of the dazzle girls of the social columns, she always looks as though she's having such a delicious time. But *uh-uh*—she's married—to a guy who gets the ringside tables — and the phone numbers. Watch James Mason play *this* part! It's the kind that set hearts clicking when he first flashed across the American screen.

Of course there's the other woman—there usually is—but not like *this* other woman. Ava Gardner plays it with claws extended. Watch her go for James Mason.

Yes, this is the story of life under the lights, and the kind of playing around that leads to newspaper headlines—and once in a while to murder!

There's another character, too, that puts punch in this picture. It's played by none other than Van Heflin, who knows how. He's an ex-cop whose eye for people and nose for news make the world his beat.

Written by a lady whose novels are always on the bestseller lists, Marcia Davenport has provided some characters that really breathe hard. And she gives you the biting low-down on the glitter spots you read about in the papers.

Mervyn LeRoy was *the* man to direct East Side, West Side because there is no one in the make-believe business who can get a story clicking faster. And he's also the man who knows how to make actors act.

We've used up our space now, except for one word—GO!

THE American MAGAZINE

JANUARY 1950 Vol. CXLIX Number 1

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The characters in all short stories and novels in this magazine are purely imaginary. No reference or allusion to any living person is intended.

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EVERYTHING COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE

1949 Was Another Good Year for Telephone Users

MORE SERVICE FOR MORE PEOPLE — Nearly 2,000,000 telephones were added to the Bell System in 1949. This meant service not only for many people who did not have a telephone before but it also increased the value and usefulness of your own particular telephone. You can call many more people — and many more can call you. There are now more than 50% more Bell telephones than at the end of the war.

BETTER LOCAL SERVICE — The over-all quality of telephone service continued to improve in 1949 and it keeps right on getting better. There's faster, clearer, more accurate service on millions of local calls.

IMPROVEMENTS IN LONG DISTANCE Long Distance grew steadily better in 1949. The average time to complete out-of-town calls is now down to little more than a minute and a half. Nine out of ten calls go through while you hold the line. Over many routes, the Long Distance operator dials the distant telephone directly. It's faster, friendly, courteous service all the way.

275,000 NEW RURAL TELEPHONES were added by the Bell System in 1949. 1,300,000 have been added since the war — a truly remarkable record of rural development by the Bell System. Great gains were made also in the quality of service. Fewer parties on the line. Many thousands of new-type telephones put in. A higher proportion of our farmers have telephones than in any other country in the world.

CONTRIBUTION TO PROSPERITY — All of this expansion and improvement in telephone service provided work and wages for many people outside the telephone business.

More than $1,000,000,000 was put into new facilities. Western Electric — the manufacturing unit of the Bell System — bought from 23,000 different concerns in 2500 cities and towns throughout the country.

BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM — The best and the most telephone service at the lowest possible price.

SPEAKING OF DOGS

By ELIAS VAIL

Just what *is* a dog's world, anyhow? . . . The eyes haven't it, but his nose knows . . . Silent sounds . . . The test of taste.

EVER TRY GETTING YOUR DOG'S SLANT ON THINGS? By that I don't mean dropping down on all fours and joining him in chasing rabbits or baying at the moon. But if you can put a little time into imagining how the world seems to him you'll find living with him easier and more fun. After all, he can't imagine your outlook, so mutual understanding has to start with you.

SEEING MAY BE BELIEVING to you and me, but your dog more likely feels that "smelling is believing." He learns relatively little through his eyes, especially from objects close at hand. His eyesight is at its best at a distance and at catching motion —a stirring leaf or the flash of a squirrel's tail . . . His nose, on the other hand, can single out thousands of faint odors . . . and I suspect he gets the same pleasure from sniffing around as we get from looking through a picture book.

HE TAKES THE HIGH NOTES, you take the low notes when it comes to hearing. Your dog can hear tones pitched so high as to be unheard by human ears, but perhaps the other extreme of our world of sound—at the level of the lowest notes on a piano—is silent to him. Living with a dog, you'll find a lot that this difference might explain—such as the way some dogs spot the family car when out of sight and human earshot.

ONLY A CRYSTAL GAZER would try to predict the tastes of any one dog, especially in food. At times it can include anything from light cord plugs to things like chile con carne and sauerkraut. But you can't let these whims or even your own taste dictate the regular diet of your dog. Looking at the experience of hundreds of dogs, Gaines Meal would seem a good bet to please any one dog . . . because figures for the nation show that dogs eat more Gaines than any other make of dog food. Now, of course, owners have a lot of reasons for feeding Gaines, but if the dogs didn't like it, I don't think Gaines would have stayed as popular as it has for the last twenty years.

BY THE WAY

Ever move from an old house to a new home? Did someone turn her head to hide a tear as she uncovered an old memory in the attic? Did you forget, and have to rush back and leave a change of address for the postman? And, in spite of all the tagging and labeling, did you wonder where to find the box marked "cooking utensils"?

If you've had any of those experiences you'll have some idea of the mixed emotions that accompanied THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE's move to its new home at 640 Fifth Avenue after 25 full and eventful years of "living" at 250 Park Avenue.

We didn't exactly have an attic to rummage in, but there *was* a warehouse full of rare and wonderful memories. In fact, 8 tons of them, in the shape of truckloads of archives, had to be sadly consigned to the incinerator. And among the papers were names so illustrious they made us wonder how many of the familiar figures that stalk in and out of our new offices now will seem as glamorous in the future.

There were Richard Harding Davis, Lincoln Steffens, and Finley Peter Dunne, the "Mr. Dooley" who brought laughs to millions. Booth Tarkington, Albert Payson Terhune, Ida Tarbell, and Irvin S. Cobb were well represented, as were Rudyard Kipling, Ellis Parker Butler, Peter B. Kyne, and many other greats. There were the names of illustrators such as Frederic Remington, who did the great paintings of the West; Maxfield Parrish, remembered for his sunsets; and Charles Dana Gibson, whose girls were the pin-ups of yesteryear.

It is impossible now to know which of the many present contributors to THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE will wind up in the literary halls of fame of the future, or which ones will lapse into obscurity. But we *do* know three AMERICAN MAGAZINE writers whose names will be brought to public attention 100 years from now! They are Louis R. Bruce, Jr., an American Indian; Sou Chan, an immigrant Chinese; and Dr. Willford I. King, an economist. Their articles in THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE recently won awards presented by General "Ike" Eisenhower for Freedoms Foundation, Inc., in recognition of their contribution to Americanism. And the three articles were sealed in a crypt at the base of the American flag that flies at the Foundation's headquarters in Valley Forge, Pa., from which they are to be recovered and examined in the year 2049!

Our New Home

Ike and Louis R. Bruce, Jr.

Sou Chan and Ike

Now that we're comfortably installed in our gleaming new Fifth Avenue building there are many new delights in store for us. Fifth Avenue is the street down which the world's most fascinating and important parades are conducted. And we'll have ringside and box-office seats for all of them, free of charge. Across the avenue are the tall spires of the famous St. Patrick's Cathedral, and to one side of us are the wonders of Radio City, to which our building contributes its modernity. And on both sides of the street, as one walks in either direction, is the finest window-shopping territory on earth! It's pretty keen. —R.B.H.

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if you join the DOLLAR BOOK CLUB now!

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THE MOST sensational offer in Dollar Book Club history! By joining now, you may have your choice of any TWO books described here—for just a 3-cent stamp! And—as a new member—you may choose as many more as you wish for your current selections at only $1.00 each. These best-selling books are typical of the selections received by Dollar Book Club members. Club membership regularly offers you the most popular current novels for only $1.00 each—a saving of 60% to 75% from the established retail prices of the same books in the publishers' editions. Name the TWO books you want for just a 3-cent stamp, and your first $1.00 selection, on the membership form below and mail it today.

LORD JOHNNIE

by Leslie T. White

THE ravishing Lady Leanna wed Lord Johnnie the Rogue on his way to the gallows, and planned to forget him; but slippery Johnnie eluded the hangman and came back . . . to claim his wedding night! A tale of strange love and swashbuckling adventure!

PRIDE'S CASTLE

by Frank Yerby

HERE'S reckless love and bold adventure in sinful old New York that tops even the thrills of *The Golden Hawk* and *The Foxes of Harrow*. The story of a handsome, ruthless fighter and the woman who bartered her beauty, her decency and her father's fortune for his kisses.

THE CASE OF THE CAUTIOUS COQUETTE

Erle Stanley Gardner's Best!

BEWARE this luscious blonde—she's a booby trap! The inimitable Perry Mason is faced with a beautiful but dangerous woman, a dead husband, and a man with "a million dollar" alibi which almost sends the wrong party to the deathhouse.

THE PASSIONATE JOURNEY

by Irving Stone

THE true story of John Noble, Kansas painter, the "male hurricane" who hurled himself at a new painting or a new love with equal energy. What the best-seller *Lust for Life* did for Van Gogh, this fascinating book does for a great and exciting American artist.

BRIEF GAUDY HOUR

Margaret Campbell Barnes

ANNE BOLEYN was one of the most fascinating women who ever lived. Here is the story of the lovely and passionate girl who became Henry VIII's wife and discovered the extremes of ecstasy and sorrow. Rich with the color of Tudor England.

HIGH TOWERS

by Thomas B. Costain

HERE'S a great new tale by the author of "The Black Rose." Here's reckless daring and reckless love; action which takes you to lusty old Montreal, with its fur traders, priests and schemers; and again to rough and raw New Orleans during its hectic beginnings.

The Only Club That Brings You Best-Sellers for only $1

JUST imagine—with most current best-selling fiction costing $2.75 and $3.00 in the publishers' editions at retail, the Dollar Book Club continues to bring its members the cream of the current books for the one low price of $1.00 each! And in handsome, full-size editions, bound in an exclusive Club format!

There is no fee for joining the Dollar Book Club, and there are no dues of any kind. You are not even obligated to take a book every month; the purchase of as few as six books a year fulfills your membership requirement.

Start Enjoying Membership Now!

Upon receipt of coupon at right, with a 3-cent stamp, you will be sent your choice of any TWO of the six best-sellers shown above. As an extra privilege, extended to you as a new member, you may choose as your first regular selection for $1.00 *another* one of these best-sellers. (Or choose as many more as you like at $1.00 each.)

As a member, you will receive regularly the Club's descriptive folder called The Bulletin. The Bulletin describes the forthcoming book selections. It also reviews other book bargains offered to members for only $1.00 each. You buy only the books you want.

Mail Coupon Today— Get 2 Books for 3 Cents!

When you see the TWO books which you receive for just a 3-cent stamp—and *your* first $1.00 selection; when you consider these are typical of values you will continue to receive for $1.00, you will be delighted to have become a member!

DOUBLEDAY ONE DOLLAR BOOK CLUB, GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK

MAIL THIS COUPON

DOUBLEDAY ONE DOLLAR BOOK CLUB, Dept. 1A, Garden City, New York

Please enroll me as a Dollar Book Club member and send me at once the following TWO books for the enclosed 3-cent stamp:

.....

Also send me the following book (or books) as my first selection and bill me $1.00 each:

.....

With these books will come my first issue of the free descriptive folder called "The Bulletin" telling about the two new forthcoming one-dollar bargain book selections and several additional bargains which are offered at $1.00* each to members only. I am to have the privilege of notifying you in advance if I do not wish either of the following month's selections and whether or not I wish to purchase any of the other bargains at the Special Club price of $1.00 each. The choice of books is entirely voluntary on my part. I do not have to accept a book every month—only six during each year that I remain a member. I pay nothing except $1.00 for each selection received plus a few cents shipping cost.

Please Print

Mr. / Mrs. / Miss .....

Address .....

City ..... Zone No. ..... State

If under 21, age, please .....

Occupation .....

*Same Price in Canada: 105 Bond Street, Toronto 2

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

HOW THE MONEY ROLLS IN

Dear Mr. Sughrue: Jerome Beatty's article, *Why You Give Money Away* (December), was of interest to our hospital group.

We required $400,000 (plus $200,000 Federal Aid) to build a new hospital. The local consensus was that $250,000 to $275,000 was the limit we could raise in a group of towns with a population of less than 9,000.

The fund-raising experts said we could raise $400,000 if we furnished the solicitation power. We employed them, and the net cost was not high. We raised $430,000 in pledges, and our new, modern building is 35 per cent toward completion.

Mr. Beatty's story should give courage to hospital officials. Money is harder to get, but it can be gotten with expert assistance.

J. F. BRESNAHAN, President
New Milford Hospital

New Milford, Conn.

SPECS ACCEPTED

Dear Sirs: David Chandler's novel, *The Diamond* (October), reverts to silent movie plots when the boss doesn't realize the beauty of his secretary until she throws her glasses away.

Young people today take their specs in stride with no feeling of inferiority, having forgotten the stigma of "four eyes" and the old notion that "men seldom make passes at girls who wear glasses."

M. VANDERHOFF

Big Timber, Mont.

POTATO PICTURE

Dear Mr. Blossom: I am writing regarding the article, *Potatoes and Gravy* (November), on the potato price-support program as it affects Aroostook County, Maine.

Basically, Aroostook County is no different from any other agricultural area in the United States. We have our rich bankers and our titans of industry, but also a very large number of hard-working, economy-minded farmers. . . .

Only 4.2 per cent of our 5,074 potato farmers produce over 100 acres, with approximately 3,000 noncommercial farmers in the state producing 3 acres of potatoes or less. . . .

We are not proud of the support program for potatoes and the regimented economy on which we have had to exist since the conclusion of World War II. The Maine potato industry was the first to appreciate the imperfections of the support program, and petitioned Congress for a reduction of the level of payments in the spring of 1948.

Growers of Aroostook County are wondering if they are being used as the "horrible example" of a political system over which they have little, if any, control. They are wondering if the press is making any attempts to give them a fair deal.

LLOYD R. WILLIAMS

Presque Isle, Maine.

STEAK FROM GRAPEFRUIT

Dear Mr. Blossom: I have just read *Cowhands on the Grapefruit Range* (December). Don Eddy's article is a factual account of the history of cattle raising in Florida. It sets forth the very important development—the discovery that the waste from citrus canning makes good cattle feed. . . .

Grapefruit ranchers

The fact that the cattle industry in Florida—beef and dairy—has increased faster during the last 15 years than in any other state is no accident, and Mr. Eddy's article fully explains it.

NATHAN MAYO
Commissioner of Agriculture

Tallahassee, Fla.

For a view of a prosperous Florida ranch family, meet the Whaleys (above): Cecil Whaley (second from left), his wife Nancy (right), son Goozy and daughter Bennie Lee. They raise cattle on 10,000 acres near St. Cloud, Fla.—THE EDITORS.

IN LOVE WITH SHOES

Dear Editors: I enjoyed Shoe Designer Herman Delman's article, *What I Know about Women from Shoes* (December). And I admit that the five types of women he names—the feminine, sophisticated, conservative, dramatic, and outdoor—might be inclined to wear different kinds of shoes. Personally, however, I like 'em all, from sexy "scandal sandals" to flat-

heeled moccasins. In fact, I think most women would just love to have a chance to wear every color and style shown in your photographs between the time they get up in the morning and bedtime. I know I would!

MRS. S— J—

Chicago, Ill.

COMPLETELY SATISFIED

Dear Sir: "Everything complete in this issue"! What a lot of satisfaction to pick up THE AMERICAN and not be confronted by a line reading, "The first of umpteen chapters."

With winter closing in on this mountain world, we won't have to go to bed wondering whodunit.

ROBERT L. FISK

Lincoln, Mont.

WHAT AMERICA MEANS

Dear Editor: I want to tell you how much the whole family enjoys THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE, and especially those articles on *What America Means to Me*. The one in November by Robert Nishiyama was really inspiring.

MRS. CLAYTON SHURLOW

Hastings, Mich.

Dear Mr. Sughrue: Bob Nishiyama was chosen for a scholarship at Lafayette College by American Army and Navy officers in Japan, who believed him to be the most deserving of the Japanese boys whom they knew there. . . . We are proud of what he is accomplishing, and we see in him a finer hope of future friendship between peoples who have misunderstood each other in the past.

RALPH COOPER HUTCHISON
President, Lafayette College

Easton, Pa.

STILL ENCOURAGED

Dear Sir: Have been a reader of your magazine for a good many years. It was an article written by E. M. Statler, the hotel man, in 1919, that gave us the courage and inspiration to buy the farm we now live on.

It took us 25 years to pay off the mortgage, but we also put up new buildings, land improvements, and stock. When we would get discouraged we would say, "If Statler can do it, so can we." I still find your articles very encouraging.

MRS. SEYMOUR DARTT

Van Etten, N. Y.

MOTHER KNOWS

Dear Editors: I've always been one of Bette Davis's fans. After reading *Things My Mother Taught Me* (November), I am more than ever inclined to think she is an extraordinary person. I am sure, by following her mother's policy, that daughter Barbara's childhood and adolescence will be both happy and successful.

BOBBY COWSER

Commerce, Texas.

●

ADDRESS YOUR LETTER TO:

The Editors, The American Magazine,
640 Fifth Ave., New York 19, N.Y.

NEW YEAR'S Resolutions

THAT'LL BE FUN TO KEEP!

To Read →

MAN BY HER SIDE

Complete Romantic Novelette by Richard Llewellyn, author of "HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY"

How two mature adults mismanage their love affair like inexperienced teen-agers makes exciting reading, especially when told by this popular author. You'll wonder how any husband in love with his wife can order separate suites on a honeymoon! And never enter his bride's room except by invitation!

You'll see this "cold war" of uncertainty melt away when this industrial designer and his career wife both realize their passionate feelings for the other. And you're sure to be delighted by the feminine way the heroine finally gets her "man by her side!"

To Read →

The 5 fast-moving short stories that come with this novelette in the January Woman's Home Companion. And you'll top off a real treat with Part II of Nelia Gardner White's new novel, "The Pink House."

→ *COMPANION'S FAMOUS, OUTSPOKEN ARTICLES:* HOW TO HANDLE QUARRELS . . . Married couples should quarrel, says Dr. David R. Mace in the Marriage Clinic, explaining that it is the quickest way to clear the air of fear, hate, and resentment.

To Read →

WHAT IS SCHOOL DOING TO YOUR CHILD'S EYESIGHT? . . . Tests show that an alarming number of young grade school pupils have faulty vision. And that their eyesight deteriorates rapidly under the strain of school-work! Are the schools to blame? What can you do to safeguard your own child's precious eyesight? Read this challenging article!

→ ARE PAROLED CONVICTS A DANGER TO YOU? . . . Every year 30,000 offenders, including murderers, burglars, and prostitutes, are released under parole. Are you afraid of what they might do to you, your family, or your friends?

BEFORE YOUR OPERATION . . . A vivid, reassuring report of the precautions taken to safeguard you in case of an operation. One sure to say the emotional dragons of fear that terrify many patients!

SMART FEATURES: All the helpful, smart feature pages that 4,000,000 alert American women turn to every month for inspiration and entertainment, including:

Preview of Spring Suits
Patience, A Camera— And Your Child!
Let's Have A Kitchen Party!
Food Calendar
Companion Poll
We've Come A Long Way Since 1900
. . . and cartoon chuckles!

IT'S EASY TO KEEP THESE 4 RESOLUTIONS . . . for all this fascinating reading is in just one copy of the Woman's Home Companion.

So start the holiday season right—treat yourself to the liveliest, most entertaining, and helpful magazine on your newsstand,

WOMAN'S HOME COMPANION

ALL IN THE BIG JANUARY ISSUE

NOW ON SALE

FOOD FRONT

Griddle-Ready: Buttered steaks bow in. Quick-frozen and thin-sliced for two-minute cooking, they're buttered like sandwiches, 8 to a box. All you have to do is salt and fry. The ingredients: chuck, ground fine, frozen, then sliced and buttered, griddle-ready.

Twosome Roast: This little pork butt, tasting like ham, appears in a fresh guise. Boneless, rolled, smoked, and cured, it's now pre-cooked and glazed. Warm in the oven for a roast twosome-sized. Or slice for pan-fried ham, sandwiches, or cold cuts. Headed nation-wide.

Make-to-Order: Even a tyro can mix professional-style dressings with a new make-to-order kit. Name your choice—paprika French, garlic, herb, or old-fashioned French, tear open the matching envelope (it's filled with seasonings, spices, and herbs) and pour into the pint-size mix jar, which is marked with red lines for sure-fire proportions. Add oil to one marker, vinegar to the next, then shake till smooth.

Angel Mix: Your family likes angel-food cake, but too many eggs for your purse? Here's a mix for it, everything ready. Just add water and bake.

Jiffy Rice: Converted rice, rich as the brown in nutrients yet tasty as white, comes pre-cooked for jiffy serving now. Open the can, empty in a sieve, and dip in boiling water; it's table-ready in 30 seconds.

Minute Popcorn: No waiting on this popcorn; it puffs in 60 seconds to giant size. Reason: a special popping oil plus hybrid corn, bred to explode 3 to 5 times normal size.

Stuffed: They're stuffing pickles in the Midwest now—with cheese. Bite one kind, sharp cheddar nips your tongue; another, Roquefort. Slice for *canapés* or sandwich garnish.

Yankee Sinkers: Because Yankees turn up their noses at "boughten" doughnuts, machine-made sinkers look like homemade now. A special machine cuts them big, thick-crusted, and irregular-shaped, no two alike. Already the jumbos reach down-Easters; no date set, though, for national launching.

Pearl-Small: Tapioca now is whittled down to Junior's size. Pearl-small (chemists worked a year on this) and strained for infants, it's mixed with Italian plums for a tart yet sweet dessert. Everywhere by February.

Quickie: Sliced beef teams up with white sauce makings for a hurry-up meal. The ingredients: a powder that needs only fat, milk, and a little cooking to yield white sauce for 4 people, plus extra-thin slices of smoked beef.

Snack Puffs: A new type of cocktail puffs, curled and crunchy. Come in 5 flavors to meet everyone's taste (shrimp, cheese, tomato, onion, and bacon) and vacuum-packed for long life.

Foiled: Deep-dish pies, apple and cherry, come frozen in foil. Just heat and serve. Extra asset: crust flakier than usual. Available now from Maine to South Carolina; wider distribution ahead.

Bog-Fresh: Cranberry juice concentrate, quick-frozen like citrus, arrives for fruit juice change-off. Tart and tangy, it's cold-processed to save all its bog-fresh flavor, its sun-ripened nutrients. Add twice as much water, it's ready to drink. In frozen-food bins country-wide.

Victoria's Choice: England drops the price, boosts the export, first since the war, of Queen Victoria's favorite tea. It's mild and delicate, a blend of Ceylon, India, and Formosa oolongs. No change in 60 years from Victoria's choice.

PRISCILLA JAQUITH

• **Names and addresses of manufacturers and distributors of the products mentioned in FOOD FRONT will be mailed to any reader who requests them. Send your inquiries, with self-addressed, stamped envelope, to Food Front, The American Magazine, 640 Fifth Ave., New York 19, N.Y.**

WHY DON'T ? THEY...

PRINT snapshots on adhesive-backed paper covered with a thin protecting film? Remove the film, and the photograph would be ready for permanent placement in an album.—*Marjorie Spease, Forest City, Mo.*

MARKET an electric pad for a baby's play pen to keep him warm in winter?—*Mrs. G. W. Stroube, Denbigh, Va.*

MANUFACTURE an inner-spring saddle?—*David Bishop, Spartanburg, S.C.*

INVENT "by-the-slice" bread machines for use in grocery stores? Set a dial to the number and kind of slices you want, press a button, and out pops your packaged selection.—*Mrs. Donald Quinlan, Fresno, Calif.*

INSTALL handle-bar brakes on wheelbarrows to prevent them from running away downhill?—*Clarence R. Nelson, West Hartford, Conn.*

INSTALL a strip of concrete sidewalk in shoe stores so new shoes may be tested under normal walking conditions?—*Helen Katzen, Cambridge, Mass.*

MARK breadboards with colored circles of varied diameter to indicate proper size of pastry for different pies?—*Mrs. Don McCafferty, Kent, Ohio.*

PRODUCE blankets with box pleats for fat people and curled-up sleepers, and so eliminate "blanket snatching"?—*Mrs. Walter Luce, North Lancaster, Mass.*

UPHOLSTER auto seats with muslin, and avoid the waste of fitting seat covers over expensive fabrics?—*Mrs. John F. Hughes, Springfield, Mass.*

EQUIP washing-machine wringers with rear-view mirrors to eliminate feeling or peering around the other side to determine if the clothes are going through all right?—*Miss A.L. Hayes, Rochester, N.Y.*

DESIGN a glove with a replaceable strip of sandpaper in the palm? After sawing a board, a quick rub with the glove would smooth it.—*Mrs. William Ellis, Colorado Springs, Colo.*

MANUFACTURE tea bags with two drawstrings to compress water out of the bags after withdrawal from cups?—*H. M. Obrecht, Detroit, Mich.*

PRODUCE stocking tops similar to slip hems, so the tops could be cut off to the desired length?—*Anne Phillips, Harrisburg, Pa.*

DEVELOP rolls of some soft material which could be fitted into vacuum cleaners in place of brushes for polishing floors?—*Dottie Spares, Waterville, Maine.*

PROVIDE labels for name and address of customers on all take-out purchases in department stores to facilitate return of lost parcels?—*Robert E. Graham, Muskegon, Mich.*

PERFECT a telephone with dual mouthpiece and receiver, so mother and child can talk to father at the same time?—*Mrs. Lawrence G. Roth, Rochester, N.Y.*

★

Have you any ideas no one else seems to have thought of? Send them to the "Why Don't They?" editor, The American Magazine, 640 Fifth Ave., New York 19, N.Y. We'll pay $5 for each suggestion accepted. None can be returned.

GEORGE HARRINGTON

And why not wallpaper for children's rooms with a blank picture-frame pattern, so kids can paste in the pictures they like? (Suggested by Nat Rutherford, Cincinnati, Ohio.)

This lady's accessory (or weapon) cooled more by suggestion than by moving air.

The "washboard blues" meant more than a song to women who bent over them!

Poor substitute for a baseball bat, but ball games waited while Junior beat rugs with this!

What one thing made these old-fashioned?

You're right if your answer is "*cheap* electricity." Part of the miracle of electric service today is its low cost.

You've helped make electricity cheap, by using it for more and more jobs. So have the people of the *business*-managed electric companies, who long ago foresaw the need for low-cost electric service. Their skills, and experience, and sound business methods have made it today's best buy. What else can you buy that costs so little—and does so much?

• • •

It is to your benefit to know the facts about your electric service, and to ours to have you know them. That's why this advertisement is published by America's *business*-managed, tax-paying ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER COMPANIES.*

*Company names on request from this magazine.

• "MEET CORLISS ARCHER" *for delightful comedy. CBS — Sundays — 9 P. M., Eastern Time.*

"Sad-iron," they called it . . . and women who lifted it on and off the stove agreed.

Clean and fill—trim the wick—turn it up . . . a lot of work for the light the oil lamp gave!

In the parlor, blushing beaux and patient visitors "saw the world" with the stereoscope.

NOW THEY'VE DONE IT

INTRODUCED, for better service in restaurants and night clubs, a miniature lighthouse for each table designed to summon the waiter. The patron lights the device when requiring service; the waiter extinguishes it after taking the order. The waiter knows at all times which tables need service, and the manager has a check on the whole floor.

INTRODUCED an elevator crib in which, by turning a crank, springs and mattress can be hoisted to the top of the protective sides. This permits mother to tend to baby's needs without bending or stooping.

PRODUCED plastic lamp shades that can be wiped clean with a damp cloth. The shades look like conventional fabric, filter light in the same way, come in a variety of sizes, shapes, and colors for table and floor lamps.

DEVELOPED a new aid for the farmer: a flexible glass-cloth hose designed to carry water to crops from well or pond, eliminating labor and expense of digging irrigation ditches and keeping them open. A 100-foot-long section weighs only 45 pounds, making it easy to move any number of sections to a desired location. No drying after use or special care in storing is needed.

ANNOUNCED a device to take the "lug" out of luggage. Weighing less than 2 pounds, it consists of 4 swivel wheels on a unit that quickly attaches, by adjustable screw lock, to any suitcase, packing case, or trunk weighing up to 300 pounds and varying in size from 3″ to 15″ in any dimension. The unit travels in any direction, can be converted into a dolly for home, office, or shop by substituting an easily made wooden platform.

PRODUCED a lock that fits over the trigger guard of rifles and shotguns and prevents accidental discharge or unauthorized use. Light and compact, easily carried in the pocket when not in use, it slips on quickly, can be locked with a key or simply latched in place.

CONTRIVED a "no-nail" hanger to eliminate nail holes and plaster cracks in walls. The hanger has a metal hook sealed into adhesive-backed material which, when pressed firmly on, sticks to papered, painted, wood, glass, metal, or tile walls. Each hanger holds up to 10 pounds, is suitable for pictures, small mirrors, plaques, knickknacks, even small shelves.

CONCOCTED an "in-a-pinch" umbrella—made of waterproofed paper. Available in colors and selling well under $1, the development is designed to permit the average home to have a supply of umbrellas on hand just as it has guest towels, eliminating the problem of lost and borrowed expensive umbrellas.

MADE foam-rubber cushions that zip together for convenience and greater utility. Individual cushions may be used by two people or zipped together to make a seating unit with back rest for use at outdoor sports, on outings, or in the home, office, or sickroom.

MARKETED a special candle with which you can start a fire in your fireplace without kindling. It looks like a frosted cupcake and is designed to blaze quickly and intensely, igniting logs in a few moments.

DEVELOPED a paint that frosts glass. Easily sprayed or brushed on, it gives the same effect as commercially ground glass, blotting out unsightly views, reducing glare, ensuring privacy.

BROUGHT OUT a plug-in attachment that automatically turns closet or other lights on and off when the door is opened or closed, like the light in a refrigerator. It comes completely assembled.

MANUFACTURED a multi-purpose Venetian blind bracket that simultaneously holds drapes, curtains, or cornices, eliminating unsightly traces of curtain hangers when the blinds are down.

DEVISED a key chain that also carries on it 5 gold-finished handbag items: ballpoint pen, perfume flacon, metal-covered memo pad, pill or powder box, signal whistle for hailing taxis.

LAWRENCE N. GALTON

Names and addresses of inventors and manufacturers of items mentioned in NOW THEY'VE DONE IT will be sent to any reader who requests them. Mail your inquiries, with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, to Now They've Done It, The American Magazine, 640 Fifth Ave., New York 19, N.Y.


A GREAT BOOK BECOMES A GREATER PICTURE!
DICK POWELL and EVELYN KEYES
in
"MRS. MIKE"
A man!
A woman!
A wilderness!
The strange triangle of a woman who fought a million miles of northland for the man she loved!...
with J. M. KERRIGAN • ANGELA CLARKE • John Miljan • Nan Boardman • Executive Producer SAMUEL BISCHOFF • Producer EDWARD GROSS • Directed by LOUIS KING • Screenplay by Alfred Lewis Levitt and DeWitt Bodeen • Based on the novel by Benedict and Nancy Freedman • Presented by NASSOUR STUDIO in association with HUNTINGTON HARTFORD • Released thru UNITED ARTISTS

Studebaker Commander 4-door sedan

This Studebaker's "next look" is a years-ahead look!

GIVE your new-car money an opportunity to buy you the utmost in value this time.

Stop in and drive this low, long, alluring 1950 Studebaker. It's the "next look" as well as the "next ride" in cars—originated by Studebaker.

This aerodynamic 1950 Studebaker's styling compliments your liking for distinction—but you pay no premium for the never-ending pride of driving this thrill car.

The truth is, the trim, sleek Studebaker design and sound, solid Studebaker craftsmanship substantially keep down your outgo for gas and repairs.

This is the brand-new, thrifty, pleasant kind of motoring that everyone is entitled to from now on.

Step into a showroom and see the low-price Champion and value-packed Commander sedans, coupes, convertibles—the special, extra-long-wheelbase, ultra-luxurious Studebaker Land Cruiser.

NEW 1950 STUDEBAKER

America's most distinctive car

White sidewall tires and wheel discs optional at extra cost

Rich nylon seat upholstery gives a distinctive charm to the interiors of the Studebaker regal de luxe Commanders and the special long-wheelbase Land Cruiser. Appointments of exclusive "next look" smartness.

Rough going? Not for a Studebaker! Every ride in a 1950 Studebaker is a relaxing, restful, cushioned ride. Balanced design and a new kind of coil spring front suspension serve to suppress jouncing and jolting.

Youngsters love those big windows! And grownups do, too. Huge areas of glass give everyone a panoramic outlook on the passing scene. Studebaker extra vision all around is extra assurance of extra safe driving.

Studebaker craftsmanship begins early! Many fathers at Studebaker school their sons to work with or succeed them. No wonder Studebaker cars stay sound for years!

Studebaker Corp'n, South Bend 27, Indiana, U. S. A.

The
AMERICAN MAGAZINE
January 1950

Be glad you're Free to Laugh

by Victor Borge

GEORGE KARGER

The author, Danish-born pianist whose playing and story-telling first made him famous on Bing Crosby's radio show

What America means to a noted musician-comedian who had to flee from Europe for making jokes

ONE of the most valuable freedoms in the world is one we don't often think about in this country because we take it for granted: the freedom of laughter. Americans probably have the most highly developed sense of humor in the world, but I wonder whether many Americans realize how lucky they are to live in a country where people are allowed to make jokes about whatever strikes them as funny, and to laugh at anything they choose.

As a practicing humorist in my native Denmark, I used to marvel at the things I heard about the way the American funny bone worked. Situations which in other countries might have caused riots or revolutions appeared to be solved here with a joke. I remember the occasion, for example, just before World War II, when the German Ambassador to the United States paid a visit to New York and was picketed by an anti-Nazi group. The Ambassador asked the city for protection. In reply, the Mayor of New York, Fiorello La Guardia, sent a single policeman to stand in front of the Ambassador's hotel room. The policeman was a Jew.

This incident, when we read of it in the newspapers, was highly appreciated in Denmark, where we were having our own troubles with the Nazis. In fact, because I, myself, had made jokes about them on the stage and over the radio, I had to leave the country when the Germans invaded it in 1940. Since my wife is an American, I decided to come to the United States and become a citizen.

I already knew that Americans are the greatest humorists in the world. American comic strips, for example, are read in every language from Japanese to Flemish, with the exception only of those countries where the Communists consider such a fellow as Mickey Mouse an enemy of their dictatorship—and of course he is. No dictator can allow his slaves to enjoy the freedom of laughter.

Americans know how to laugh, I discovered, even in the middle of a terrible war. Observe, for example, that of all the books written about the last war, including those by Cabinet members, generals, and admirals, the one which sold the most copies was a humorous book by an ordinary GI: *See Here, Private Hargrove.* I believe that of all the slogans that came out of the war, the most widely quoted was a humorous command given by an army chaplain in the midst of battle: "Praise the Lord, and pass the ammunition."

IN OTHER words, the more serious the situation in which we find ourselves, the more important it is to remember how to laugh. This lesson I learned as the result of the first great tragedy of my life: the death of my father. I was 23 at the time and we were very close, since my father, too, was a musician and had a great sense of humor. His death left me completely despondent.

I attended the funeral feeling as if the world had come to an end for me. The pallbearers were fellow musicians and friends of my father from the Royal Opera in Copenhagen, and as they placed the casket beside the grave I watched them with tears in my eyes. They were all (*Continued on page* 118)

She felt she had a right to be a prima donna now, she'd been a supernumerary for so long

Mirror, Mirror

"Do you think I'm pretty?" Letty asked the man she loved—and his answer changed her life

BY CECILIA BARTHOLOMEW

IF YOU'D been the only plain member of a perfectly beautiful family, if your friends had to resort to such adjectives as "generous," "kind," "good sport" when they wanted to compliment you, if even your husband had to admit that he didn't think you were a magazine-cover girl, what would you do if you found yourself suddenly beautiful? Wouldn't you get a little vain? A little spoiled? Wouldn't you twit that husband of yours just a little when your picture did appear on a magazine cover? Well, Letty Brown was only human.

It was before they were actually husband and wife that Letty, transported and vulnerable, had asked Bart if he thought she was pretty.

Bart had taken her dancing. He had whispered again and again against her ear, into her hair, close to her mouth, that he loved her. She believed him. Not only his lips said the words, but his whole body said them to her. And she loved him. She loved him so much that he seemed to her as handsome as a Greek god. She thought his love must make her beautiful, too, and she wanted to hear him say it, she wanted to hear the words for the first time. And so she asked trustingly, her eyes shy but expectant, "Bart, do you think I'm pretty?"

Maybe if the music hadn't stopped just then . . . But it did. And of course Bart had to drop his arms. Maybe if his arms had still been around her . . . She was glad, of course, that he was truthful. It would have been hideous if he had been embarrassed, if he had tried to say the words she wanted and had stumbled over them.

As it was, all that happened was that she was set back on her heels, where she had been setting ever since she was five and had heard the lady at church say, "Isn't it odd? They look so much alike, but one is so pretty and the other is so homely," meaning Letty and Evelyn, her sister. Ever since six, when she went to school, and David, her brother, had fought a playmate who had made a crack about her nose, and then had been angry with her because he had to fight for her. Those times had really been bad. By comparison, this was easy.

Bart had looked at her earnestly and honestly and had said, "Well, I don't exactly think you're a magazine-cover girl. But what's beauty, anyway?"

"I know," Letty said flatly; "it's only skin-deep. Have you ever seen beneath anybody's skin?"

"Yes," Bart said.

And after that Letty was all right and let him link his fingers with hers as they walked back to their table.

"You've got pretty eyes," Bart said.

Letty smiled, reassuring him.

"You've got a pretty skin, and pretty hair, and a pretty smile."

"I know," Letty said; "it's just my nose."

"That's right," Bart said.

"You might just as well say, it's just the face."

"Oh, come on," Bart said. "Besides, there really isn't anything wrong with your nose."

"No, but there isn't anything right with it." She laughed, and he laughed, too.

"That's one of the things I love you for, Letty," he said. "You're grown up. Some girls would let a—a—"

"A nose like mine," Letty supplied quietly.

"A nose like yours spoil their disposition. But you're mature. You're . . ."

"Such a good sport," Letty said.

"That nobody ever notices your nose."

Letty sighed.

"If you wanted me to, I could say it was a pretty nose," Bart said.

"I wouldn't want you to."

"Attagirl. Now, let's forget about noses."

"If you can, I will," Letty said.

But she never really did, of course. There was in their love-making an added urgency, a striving, as if she hoped through their love to achieve a pretty nose; there was a little sadness, because she never did. . . .

LETTY and Bart were married, and that was one time when Letty heard herself called beautiful. But it wasn't really Letty they were calling beautiful, it was the bride. All brides are beautiful, and so Letty the Bride was beautiful. And there were times after they were married, in their love-making, when Bart whispered, "My beautiful," but Letty knew he just meant he loved. And that was good. That was important. Letty, after all, was grown up, mature.

With Letty's marriage, the family and friends had acquired a whole new set of adjectives for her, none of them beautiful, but all wonderful: wonderful hostess, wonderful housekeeper, wonderful cook, wonderful gardener. And, besides all that, Letty could sing. Of course, she could sing before she was married, but after she was married she sang even more sweetly.

Bart had a friend in the radio studio business, and when he heard Letty sing he put her on (*Continued on page* 133)

BY JOHN D. MacDONALD

ILLUSTRATION BY WALTER BAUMHOFER

Moonlit Sport

It took more than a beautiful girl to sweep George off his feet. It took a pair of skis

ZISSMAN'S voice on the long-distance wire was deceptively mild. "Yes, Georgie," he said, "it is warm here, and as a defensive conversational gambit, weather-talk is maybe a little feeble. Instead, we will discuss Christina Wiel, please."

"Lovely girl. Lovely," George Barker said.

"Should I be sending you out there all expenses paid to sign up something that rides on a broomstick? May I remind you of the budget? May I remind you that I am growing more anxious every minute to get our skiing epic into production? With Miss Wiel the picture will be what, Georgie?"

"A thrilling yet tender film of the snow-clad mountains, featuring that—"

"Georgie, she will do for skis what you-know-who did for ice skates. Be factual, Georgie."

George Barker scratched the sole of one stocking-clad foot with the toes of the other. He swallowed hard. "Mr. Zissman, maybe it looks easy when you're in the palm-tree belt, but this Christina Wiel came over here from Switzerland to compete in the national skiing events as an amateur. She thinks the movies are silly. She thinks everybody that doesn't spend their time going a hundred and eleven miles an hour down the side of a mountain is silly. She thinks I'm silly."

Zissman sighed heavily and audibly. "Georgie, that amateur movie we got shows me a new queen of the films. She photographs like a dream a sailor has after maybe twenty days in an open boat. There is nothing outstandingly silly about a thousand a week with options. You disappoint me, Mr. Barker. I am sending out Joey Bellish to help you. And when Joey gets out there to New Hampshire, Georgie, I want him to find you going up and down those mountains at a hundred and eleven miles an hour hand in hand with Imposing Pictures' new star, Christina Wiel."

"But I can't ski!"

"We are paying you four hundred a week and expenses, Georgie. From now on you can ski."

"Argus Studios has a guy out here trying to sign her. He can ski and he is getting no place—at least, as far as signing her up, Mr. Zissman."

"You can ski, Georgie," Mr. Zissman said sadly.

George heard the gentle sound as Mr. Zissman hung up the phone.

GEORGE sat on his bed in the warm, paneled room at the Crestrun Inn. Snow was piled on the outside window sill. He glared at the snow and shivered. He was one of those rare creatures, a native Californian. He had teethed on an abalone shell and walked his first steps on the sand within spitting distance of the Pacific. That rain, better known as a heavy dew, should turn into white stuff and coat the landscape seemed a phenomenon both unnatural and fearful. He padded to the window and stared up at the white, sun-glittering slope. Little dots made S curves down the incredible slope, throwing up arcs of powdered white. They converged at the foot of the slope, fastened onto a cable, and went trundling back up again.

"I won't do it," he muttered. "Damn if I'll do it." Then he gave a defeated sigh as he remembered Mary Alice. She was, he hoped, waiting patiently for his return to California. And she was a project requiring the major portion of that four hundred a week. . . .

The bronzed salesman in the Pro Shop yanked the strap tightly across his instep and said, "Those boots are what I'd call a good fit, Mr. Barker."

George grunted and managed to lift his foot. "And I can always use them for deep-sea diving."

"Heh, heh!" the salesman said. "Let me see, now. We've fixed you up with everything except goggles and skis. Goggles are necessary. That cold wind makes your eyes water and spoils your vision. You could slam into a boulder that way. Here's a good tinted number for seven and a half."

"Unbreakable glass?" George asked in a husky whisper.

"Heh, heh!" said the salesman. "Of course. Now for the skis. Come on over here. Like these? Seven and a half foot, steel-edged. The skis, harnesses with heel springs, and an all-purpose wax kit will come to—let me see—thirty-five eighty. Oh, I *did* forget the ski poles. Here they are. They have a nylon web and a manganese steel point. Eleven dollars the pair."

Five minutes later George trudged toward the door. He stopped suddenly and turned back. The ends of the skis brushed a pile of wax kits from the counter. The salesman, wearing a pained smile, picked them up and stacked them again.

"I just wanted (*Continued on page* 89)

As he tried to get up, he glanced back and saw Christina coming straight at him

America's Biggest Umpire

When strikes throw a monkey wrench into the nation's industrial machinery, the thankless job of patching things up falls to a pipe-smoking, storytelling giant of a man by the name of Ching. At the age of 73, he is our top Federal Mediator

by

James Y. Newton

HARRIS & EWING

Cyrus Ching's *young partner-wife, "Vergie," sends him off to a conference in good spirits. Jokingly she says she's the "older" of the two*

THE country's economic life line was tied in knots last fall by the strike of 1,000,000 men in the steel and coal industries. Business was going from bad to worse. People wondered when President Truman would do something to release them from this economic strangulation. Suddenly, as so often happens when things seem darkest, the sun burst through the storm clouds. Word leaked out that the CIO Steelworkers' Union had reached a settlement of their pensions dispute with the Bethlehem Steel Co., and the month-old steel strike was broken.

News accounts stated merely that CIO President Philip Murray and Bethlehem officials had sort of miraculously released their grips on each other's throats and suddenly had seen eye-to-eye on how this battle over free pensions for workers should be settled. What the chroniclers did not say was how the warring factions got together. That was because they did not know at the time that the peace was arranged by the quiet, behind-the-scenes work of a giant government servant bearing the unusual name of Cyrus S. Ching. He is Uncle Sam's chief peacemaker in the industrial world, the go-between in the unending struggle among unions and managements, the workers and the bosses.

The steel strike settlement was typical of the operations of Ching, for whom life in Washington began at an age—71—when most men, especially those of means, have long since found the pleasures of retirement. At that age he answered the call of President Truman and accepted the rough-and-tumble task of directing the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, the agency assigned the thankless job of keeping labor peace.

Now, 2½ years after accepting public service, Ching has become a Washington landmark, a sort of animate Washington Monument. There is the resemblance, since Ching stretches upward 6 feet, 7½ inches, or "5 feet, 19½ inches," as he prefers to put it. He stands out in the bureaucratic capital in other ways, too, as will presently be seen.

Ching was widely known in the business world before coming to the Government as one of the country's ablest and most forward-thinking executives. He was a pioneer in good labor relations, and the success of any business depends, in large measure, on how well its management and employees get along together.

Ching for years, until he came to Washington in August, 1947, was director of industrial and public relations for the United States Rubber Co., one of the industry's "big four." He is winning new laurels now as he tangles with tough John L. Lewis and the other hard-bitten chieftains of labor and industry. Unusual in this day, Ching, despite his management background, commands the respect and confidence of labor leaders as well as of corporation executives, and he has used it to save the country countless millions in strike costs.

OFFICIAL Washington was in for surprises from the moment Ching hit town. Expecting a gouty, perhaps crotchety, septuagenarian, they soon found that Cy was one of the most refreshing things that had happened to Washington in a long time. They found he could more than hold his own before a congressional hearing or at a cocktail party, and that he was an outstanding storyteller in a town long noted for its raconteurs. Washington soon found the lumbering 230-pounder to be, despite his age and height, one of the "youngest" bureaucrats about, and the most agile of brain and limb.

Washington also soon discovered the charm and wit of Cy Ching's young wife, "Vergie." She was his secretary at U.S. Rubber, his second wife whom he married in 1943 some years after the death of the first Mrs. Ching. The Chings are a team, both about the same "age" in spirit, although she says sometimes she is the "older" of the two. "Vergie" still does secretarial work for Cy at their tastefully decorated Massachusetts Avenue apartment, advises him on important official problems, and accompanies him on most of his many trips.

Cy nicknamed his young wife "Vergie" because she was Miss Vergosen, of New York, and he likes it better than her first name, Mildred. She is pretty, brown-haired, and 39. The Chings point out there is the same age difference between them as there is between Vice-President Barkley and his bride. In fact, having a fellow feeling for the Veep, Cy sat down and wrote him a long letter in longhand the day before the Barkleys were married.

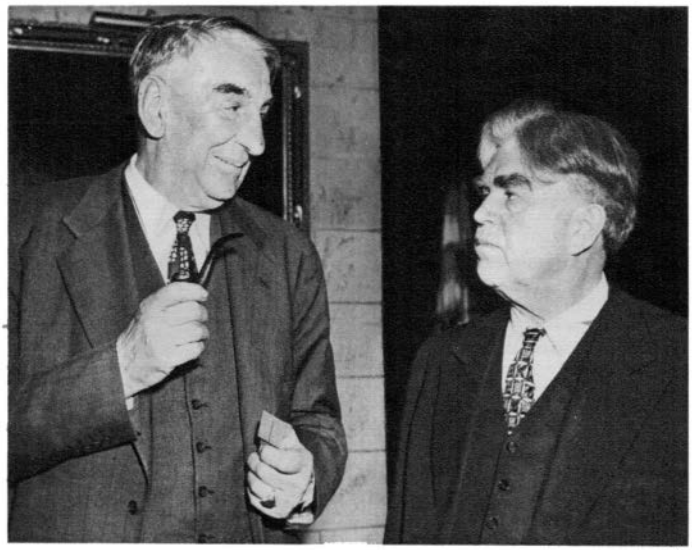
Ching enjoys life to the fullest. A well-developed sense of humor and a philosophic approach to problems keep him young. Helping out in that respect, too, is a real love and understanding of people, especially young people. The average age of those with whom he associates would probably be little over half of his 73 years. Life has been good to Ching and he knows it. He came up the hard way, from potato digger in Canada to trolley operator in Boston to corporation executive in New York. He has retained an understanding of the problems of men who work with their hands, and yet, from experience, also has an appreciation of the problems of the industrial manager. That is what makes him effective in a job where he must sympathize with both ends of the capitalistic axis.

In a controversial job where he is eternally open to attack from the professional critics and second-guessers, Cy, nevertheless, has enjoyed about the best "press" of anyone to occupy a Washington hot spot in recent years. That is not because he has not made mistakes. He would be the last to make such a claim. But he is utterly frank in dealing with newsmen, a rare quality in Washington, and he takes them into his confidence as far as he can in his delicate negotiations with warring union chieftains and industrial leaders. He trusts reporters and they trust him. They have pretty much a free run of his agency's offices in Washington's Labor Department building. He does not barricade his own big private office against those who are on the scent of a story, as do so many top government officials. Most any day reporters can be seen talking with Cy and filling their cigarette lighters from a fuel can on his desk which is known as "the Ching filling station."

As most everyone knows, it is always "open season" on the bureaucrats, a term which is used here not in the derogatory sense. And, as often as not, the criticism is unfair and based on misunderstanding. Many are the officials who have been driven from Washington by that very thing. Ching has had some of that. When it comes, he does not take it too seriously or brood over it. When a bitter attack is made on him, about the only noticeable change in the philosophical Ching is that he puffs more rapidly on the ever-present pipe. He had 92 pipes in use at the last count.

CHING'S toughest assignments have been in the handling of the belligerent Lewis, for whom any federal official is fair game, whether it be President Truman or a lesser light. Cy has been on the receiving end of Lewis's verbal blasts of both the public and the private variety. He brushes them off with a shrug of his huge shoulders and a remark like "Oh, John has to be like that," meaning that it is part of his act for the miners.

In the mine strike in the spring of 1948 over the miners' pensions, Cy, after fruitless efforts to settle Lewis's dispute with the mine operators amicably, suggested that the President appoint a fact-finding board to air the argument, a step toward getting a (*Continued on page* 130)



ACME

Ching's toughest assignments *have been in handling John L. Lewis, head of the United Mine Workers. When blasted by Lewis, Ching quips, "John has to be like that"*

The fateful dance began. Arturo's whole future depended on this girl of ice and flame

BY ALEC RACKOWE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ERNEST CHIRIAKA

Dance with me

Arturo had two sure prizes in his hand: the rumba cup and a beautiful señorita... yet in a rash moment he gambled both on a peppery redhead's grace

THE factory Perfecto Rubirez occupied a small, dilapidated one-story building, bleached and stained by forty-odd years of Florida sun and Tampa rain. It was located several blocks off Broadway in Ybor City, which, so far as maps, civic ordinances, and services are concerned, is an integral part of Tampa. In every other respect, however, it is a foreign country, with its own customs, foods, and language—a unique combination of Spanish, Cuban-Spanish, and Italian known as Ybor City talk.

A perfect August day, which is to say a mixture of hot sun, fitful breeze, and threatening thunderheads, hung over the factory Perfecto Rubirez, as Arturo Rubirez, its sole owner, showed Señor Spoto, vice-president of Ybor City's chief bank, about the premises.

Arturo was twenty-six, dark, and enthusiastic. His shoulders were broad in the jacket of the immaculate white suit, his hips almost nonexistent. His eyes were black, his skin a deep olive, his teeth gleamingly white. He wore a hand-painted tie with his white basket-weave shirt. His black hair had the faintest wave as it clung to his well-shaped head. When he spoke, his gestures were as courteous and elaborate as the flow of Ybor City talk that fell from his lips.

Arturo was the perfection of Ybor City bachelorhood. He could have belonged nowhere else, nor would he have wanted to, though he would have roused to quick anger had any outsider questioned his nationality. Arturo was American, Florida-born and -educated, with thirty-six months of service with the Tanks, eighteen of them overseas with the Fourth Army. Purple Heart, Bronze Star. American all the way through, but Ybor City style—generous, warmhearted, food-loving, rumba-loving.

Señor Spoto was short, stout, and gray where he was not bald. Arturo led him through every department. First, to the almost airtight cubicle where the bales of tobacco were opened, and the leaf shaken free and then carried to the blending piles that lay on the wooden floor like Indian burial mounds in Philippe Park.

Having remained in the choking dust a bare minute, Señor Spoto seemed happy to go on to the corner where the girls sat stripping the leaves that would make the wrappers for the cigars.

On the other side were the cigar makers at their battered, littered tables. There were less than a score of them, for the most part men of advanced age, dark-skinned, gray-mustached. The making of a cigar seemed easy as these past masters performed it. The taking of just the exact amount of long leaf filler. Shaping it between the fingers, selecting half of a workably damp leaf of palest wrapper; rolling it to the right point, then cutting it so as to leave the flange exactly proper to finish off the end. A touch of a finger into the paste pot, and there it was.

Señor Spoto watched. Arturo lifted his hands in admiration. "*Mira!* A baby could do that, no?"

Señor Spoto snorted his appreciation of the jest. They went across the room to where the girls sat, banding the cigars and slipping them into their cellophane wrappers; boxing them.

There were four girls, their heads bent over the empty boxes against which they held the cigar while banding it. Three of them were pleasingly plump. The fourth was skinny in comparison. Only the top of her red hair showed as she worked. Her slim white fingers glued the band, took up the wrapper, and deftly worked it over the cigar, past the band. A twist of the end, and the cigar went to lie exactly beside its fellows in the wide white-and-gold box.

She did not look up as Arturo discoursed volubly to the banker. Arturo said, "*Vamos*, Señor Spoto," and led the way to the tiny corner that was his office.

He waited for the banker to seat himself, held out a box of Elegantas and offered a light. He said, "*Por favor*," and sat down, himself.

Señor Spoto savored the cigar. He nodded, sighing, and then he frowned as if at his own weakness. "Why?" he asked.

Arturo jumped up. He gestured. "*Dios*, is it not obvious, Señor? I have shown you my orders. They mount like lovers' sighs to the very sky. All over the country connoisseurs clamor for Perfecto Rubirez Elegantas. Our cigar, handmade. Of the four pale leaves only. With the color the rarest and most sought after. I cannot fill such orders. I must expand."

"Can you?"

"*Pero si*. You think of the masters like Pedro Perez and Vega outside. That I know. They are dying out, and who shall take their places when these ancients are

gone? But I have thought of that, long since. Two years ago I started an apprentice system. Young men I pay to learn, and these old ones to teach. Some of the young are already more than capable. Able to take a handful of filler leaves, crush them, shape them, wrap them, and finish, and have a cigar of good feel, good weight, good shape. A cigar that will smoke perfectly to the last inch. A miracle. An art. But they can do it."

The ash on Señor Spoto's cigar was a clear gray in the exact shape of the tobacco consumed. He said, "So . . ."

"So I must expand. I own the lot behind this building. I wish to construct a concrete block factory, two-storied. Air-conditioned. Space for double the workers I have. A small cafeteria for good lunches. Good conditions, good work. I pay a premium for the perfect leaf, a premium for the best workers. True, machines will make good cigars, more cigars and more money—but I make only one shape, handmade, the one super cigar for connoisseurs from Florida to Canada and from Alaska to Mexico."

Señor Spoto stirred, obviously shaken by Arturo's enthusiasm. He said, "A lot of money."

"A lot," Arturo agreed courteously.

Señor Spoto considered the poster card tacked to the wall above Arturo's desk. It announced in red- and black-lettered Spanish: *Baile! Third September, at the Circulo Cubano. Annual Invitation Rumba Contest. Music by Carlos Morales and his Habana Malecondos. Tables only. Five dollars the person.*

Señor Spoto, his eyes still on the poster, said, "You will dance in the rumba contest, doubtless, next month?"

"If the good Lord but spares me," Arturo agreed, smiling.

"With Miss Ramona Haya?"

Arturo gestured. "She has always been gracious enough to choose me as her partner. I shall dance with her tonight at the Circulo as well."

"The Hayas," Señor Spoto murmured. "Very wealthy."

Arturo's eyes flashed. He said softly, "*Si*, Señor. The family Haya, as you remark, are very wealthy. Perhaps some day Miss Ramona Haya's family will take pity and smile upon one of her languishing suitors, and I may be that favored one. But this—" Arturo waved. "This, Señor, is something I have made myself, without aid. I have cousins. In Ybor City, as you know, everyone is cousin to almost everyone else. I could get money if I wanted partners. I do not. I come to you because the business of a bank is to lend money. There is no family in it. It is entirely impersonal. I represent myself to you as a good risk, a good prospect. You have but to say yes or no."

Two-thirds of Señor Spoto's cigar was ash. Regretfully he broke the ash off into the tray on the desk. "I understand. I will lay the facts and figures before the board when next we meet. You shall hear from us."

"*Gracias*," Arturo said, and flashed his smile.

He conducted his guest to the door, watched him go down the steps to the chauffeured car. Arturo bowed, waved, and turned back. A gleam of sun touched the bright head bent over the banding box. Arturo frowned. He wondered why his foreman, his cousin Alfredo Mirez, had hired such a skinny one.

At six o'clock, the bookkeeper left the deserted factory. At seven, Arturo said good night to Medrano, the night watchman, and went down to his convertible. He drove to Innocentio's, took his usual table, listened with one ear to the Havana station and the other to Angel, the waiter, while he ate his bean soup and *arroz con pollo*.

See page 138 for this month's complete mystery novel by JOSEPHINE BENTHAM

At eight, he was in his small but adequate apartment on 14th Street. He read the paper, but after a time he let the paper fall to his lap. He sat thinking of many things: about the new factory he would build, gleaming-white outside and cool inside; about the dance at the Circulo; and about Ramona Haya.

He sighed, far from unhappily. He was twenty-six. It was time he was married. Marriage was something of gravest importance. A considered, well-contemplated act. It was something that set the seal upon a man's accomplishments and prospects, upon his social standing.

The Hayas, as Señor Spoto had said, were very wealthy. Even more, they were important. An alliance with the Hayas would be a crowning achievement for a young man.

Arturo nodded, while the radio went on unheeded. When his new factory was built and the business going as he knew it would go, he would be in a position to wait upon Señor Haya and ask for Ramona's hand.

It was a pleasing prospect, all the more so because Ramona, herself, was a jewel of the finest water. Dark-eyed, red-lipped. Arturo had never for a moment been with her alone. He had never more than brushed her fingers with his lips. He knew little of her, save what his eyes and his Latin temperament made of her, but that was only right and proper. A girl of good family and fortune gave no liberties to her suitors, nor would they dream of taking any. To Arturo, Ramona was more than a girl, she was a symbol of attainment.

At nine o'clock, he bathed and got into a fresh suit. At ten, he parked his car and went down the street, calling greetings to others who were also making their way to the sprawl of the Circulo Cubano. It was beginning to sprinkle; there was ominous thunder and the flicker of lightning to the east. Harry Lopez said from the dark, "Looks like inside tonight," and Arturo said, "For a while. It will pass."

The Circulo was big, two-storied, the center of Ybor City activities and the heart of Ybor City dancing. There was the big room downstairs and two above. Outside, in the patio, was a dance floor of marble with a covered stage for the orchestra. Sometimes, for extra big dances, there were several orchestras, and all rooms and the patio were filled, but tonight it was a comparatively small *baile* for a local charity, with but one Ybor City orchestra to give out the rumba.

The big room was crowded, the tables well filled, as Arturo came down the steps. Each table was practically a family gathering. To Ybor City, dancing is as necessary as eating or talking. Papas and *mamacitas*, aunts, grandmothers, daughters and daughters-in-law, sons and sons-in-law sat at the long tables while waiting for the music to begin. Waiters brought big bowls of ice and paper cups. They brought trays with bottles of Cuban rum. Jars of olives were emptied onto the crushed ice. Everyone talked, ate olives, and drank toasts to one another.

It was very merry. It was heartening, cordial, and polite. A mixed gathering, for the most part of cigar workers and their families. Not so expensive or exclusive as the big *baile* of the rumba contest would be, but happy and expectant.

Arturo made his way between the tables, giving and receiving gracious salutations. Ahead he saw the table where Ramona Haya held court, guarded on either side by two of her aunts, *Tia* Francesca and *Tia* Pilar.

There were also present three of Arturo's rivals, but he gave them not a glance as he bowed before Ramona Haya. He murmured, "If I wondered where the beauty of the night had fled, now am I answered."

Ramona's long lashes fluttered. Her smile acknowledged the compliment, her eyes taunted the giver. She was a vivid brunette of eighteen, full-bosomed, full-hipped. The white dress set off her blue-black hair, her liquid black eyes and red lips.

Arturo respectfully saluted the aunts.

He was aware that the music had started up. As he gave his polite but mocking smile to Alberto Rodriquez, Carlos Veda, and Pedro Garcia, the floor began to fill.

Pedro said, "You may as well sit down or look elsewhere, Arturo. This villainous Alberto has acquired the first dance."

Arturo sighed, his eyes upon Ramona. "The evening is yet young and one may hope."

Ramona rose, rounded and seductive. "There is always hope," she said coolly, but as she turned on the dance floor to face Alberto, her eyes met Arturo's and her long lashes fluttered again.

Arturo sat down. He accepted a drink. He raised it to the aunts. He drank and looked around. At several tables close by demure yet bright-eyed señoritas smiled invitingly, the backs of their heads to their *mamacitas* and *tias*. Behind the bars of the open windows at the street level, the people outside watched the dancers, called greetings to those inside; accepted the proffer of a paper cup through the bars.

The maracas and bones emphasized the beat; trumpet and bass and piano filled in the melody. On the floor the dancers gave themselves up to rumba. Gray heads and young black and blond heads swayed and bobbed; arms and legs moved in harmony. A partner might be a dozen feet from his lady, but they were in rhythm. Each danced as he or she felt the music, but the whole room was as one, united in the best of the orchestra.

Arturo watched, his lips faintly curled.

Pedro, slimmer than Arturo, but just as dark, said, "You do not dance."

Arturo shrugged. "I await my chance to dance with Ramona. That alone will be rumba. This"—he gestured—"it is a dance of a kind but it is not rumba."

Pedro considered the olive he had taken from the bowl. "The contest then will be rumba of a purity, you think?"

Arturo drained his cup. "*Dios*, need you ask? Consider the judges. Miraflores, Sanchez, and Greco. To them as to me the rumba is not an abandon to intoxication; it is a rite. A dance, not a mad jig."

Pedro nodded. "Ah, *si*. There will be but half a dozen couples to compete. With Ramona as partner you will again undoubtedly receive the accolade as last year."

"Undoubtedly."

Pedro consumed the olive. He said slyly, "Definitely an unfair competition, since it is the lovely Ramona who bestows upon you a favorable handicap. Were it I dancing with Ramona and you with anyone else, the prize would be mine."

Arturo stiffened. He considered Pedro with utmost scorn. "You make a noise like an empty paper bag, *amigo*."

"So you say," (*Continued on page* 78)

"Thank you, amigos," Arturo told the girl's captors. "Now leave us"

The race against *Pain*

by Clarence Woodbury

HANS KNOPF AT MERCK & CO.

Technical assistant *checks sample of cortisone, the rare hormone which promises relief from arthritis*

Almost every week you read of some amazing new remedy for a dread disease. Are these really "wonder" drugs? Here for the first time is a comprehensive report on the latest medical discoveries and their promise of hope to sufferers

AS THIS is written, one of the most exciting and important treasure hunts in history is under way. The treasure which is being sought is a remedy for arthritis, and the hunt for it is worldwide. In hundreds of laboratories throughout the civilized nations, and even in the jungles of Africa, scientists are feverishly seeking a plentiful source of supply for rare hormones which hold promise of alleviating arthritis and several other grim diseases.

But this search for hormones is only one phase of a much larger quest which is being pushed forward relentlessly in every field of medical research. During the past few years the quest has been enormously successful. Millions of people are now alive, for example, who would not be if it had not been for the discovery of penicillin alone.

But medical science's treasure hunters are just getting warmed up. They have not yet found remedies for all the ills which afflict mankind, but almost from day to day they are making spectacular progress against a host of fatal or crippling diseases.

I discovered this when I set out recently to find out about newly found remedies and what hope they promise for sufferers. Like many other people who do not read medical journals, I wanted the answers to a few simple questions:

Were any marvelous new drugs coming out? Were any others in the offing? What about the so-called "cold cures"? Were any improved weapons in sight for fighting such killers as tuberculosis, heart disease, polio, and cancer?

These questions, and others, I put to experts in many different places. I talked with research scientists in laboratories of several of America's largest pharmaceutical companies; with doctors at Johns Hopkins Hospital and other great centers of clinical study; with biochemists of the United States Public Health Service and the Pure Food and Drug Administration; with specialists in the vast plant of the National Institutes of Health at Bethesda, Md.

The answers which I received were in all cases couched in conservative language. Medical researchers lean over backward to avoid saying anything which might arouse false hopes in the ill. They take pains to point out that some of the newest drugs have serious shortcomings. Others, they warn, may not live up to their early promise. But, for all their conservatism, I found that literally dozens of new remedies are coming out of the laboratories—drugs of tested efficacy in treating a wide assortment of ailments. And other new substances, not yet so well understood, give every indication of becoming healing agents of priceless value.

THE most talked-about of these are the rare hormones—cortisone and ACTH, an abbreviation for adrenocorticotrophic hormone. Cortisone is made from the bile of butchered cattle and ACTH is derived from the brains of hogs. Both stimulate certain secretions of the adrenal glands in human beings—the two small organs which are situated right above the kidneys—and both have been applied with surprising effectiveness during the past few months.

News of cortisone's great possibilities was first flashed to the world last April from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., where the hormone was isolated by Dr. Edward Kendall, a Mayo chemist, and administered intramuscularly to

15 arthritis patients by Dr. Philip S. Hench of the Clinic's medical staff.

One of the patients was a married woman of 29 who had been bedridden for 4½ years. After four days of the cortisone treatment she got up and walked. At the end of a week she went on a shopping expedition. The response of the other 14 patients to cortisone treatment was equally astonishing. The hormone did not cure their arthritis, Dr. Hench and his associates explained, but it had a remarkably palliative effect upon their disease, similar to that which insulin has upon diabetes.

SINCE arthritis has always been one of the most mysterious as well as the most common of maladies, the announcement from Mayo's created a tremendous stir in medical circles. In some quarters the news was regarded as too good to be true, but during recent months further experiments with cortisone have supported the claim that it is highly effective against arthritis. It also has given relief in cases of rheumatic fever, and both it and ACTH are now being tested in the treatment of a number of other diseases.

At Johns Hopkins Hospital, five patients suffering from acute asthma were recently given injections of ACTH after other drugs failed to relieve them. Within from one to eight days their asthmatic symptoms disappeared. Three other patients who entered the hospital for sinus operations didn't need surgery after receiving ACTH. Five others who were suffering from lupus erythematosus (a serious disease which causes skin lesions, arthritis of the joints, and heart involvements) also received dramatic relief from the hormone.

Elsewhere, cortisone and ACTH are being used experimentally against hay fever, arteriosclerosis, mental illness, and cancer. Scientists of the Sloan-Kettering Institute and the Memorial Hospital in New York have announced that, in certain cases, the hormones appear to be of value in temporarily arresting certain types of cancers, although neither drug has yet permanently stopped the growth of a cancer or saved the life of a single cancer victim.

Cortisone and ACTH have become the most discussed and the most sought-after medicines on earth at the present time, but both have certain serious drawbacks. It has been found that grave nervous disorders sometimes result from heavy doses of the hormones and also a condition known as Cushing's Syndrome, which is characterized by water retention in the body's tissues, a moonlike face, increased blood pressure, and the growth of beards on the faces of women.

THESE side effects may be overcome in time, scientists told me, but a graver problem is that of a source of supply. Since only a minute amount of the materials from which cortisone and ACTH are made is obtainable from one steer or hog, and since the chemical process of making them is enormously complex, there is barely enough of the stuff now available for limited experimental purposes and none at all for general therapy. The hormones cost $20 and upward for a single dose. If all the cattle and hogs in America were slaughtered tomorrow they would not provide enough of the drugs to alleviate the illness of our 7,000,000 arthritics.

As a result of this situation, the world-wide treasure hunt I mentioned is going on to find new sources of the hormones or new ways of making them. The manufacturers of the drugs alone are investing millions of dollars in this research. And there is hardly a drug company, medical school, or biochemical laboratory anywhere in this country or abroad which is not working on some phase of the problem.

ALFALFA seed, Mexican yams, and the skins of Japanese toads are just a few of the substances which are being investigated in the search for cortisone, and five different expeditions of scientists—three of them American, one English, and one Swiss—are now collecting specimens of a poisonous vine called the strophanthus plant in West Africa, in the hope that its seeds may provide a more abundant source of the precious hormone than cattle bile.

Most of the scientists with whom I talked, however, predicted that a practical short cut to the supply problem would come through a more complete understanding of cortisone itself—knowledge which will make it possible for them to produce the hormone synthetically from raw chemicals, or perhaps from some plentiful starting material such as soybean oil or by-products of the paper industry. Penicillin, they recall, was just as scarce and expensive a few years ago as cortisone is today. The enormous demand for the drug made it plentiful and cheap, and the same thing, they told me, is sure to happen again in the case of the hormones.

Almost as important as cortisone and ACTH are several new members of the germ-killing family of drugs which are called antibiotics.

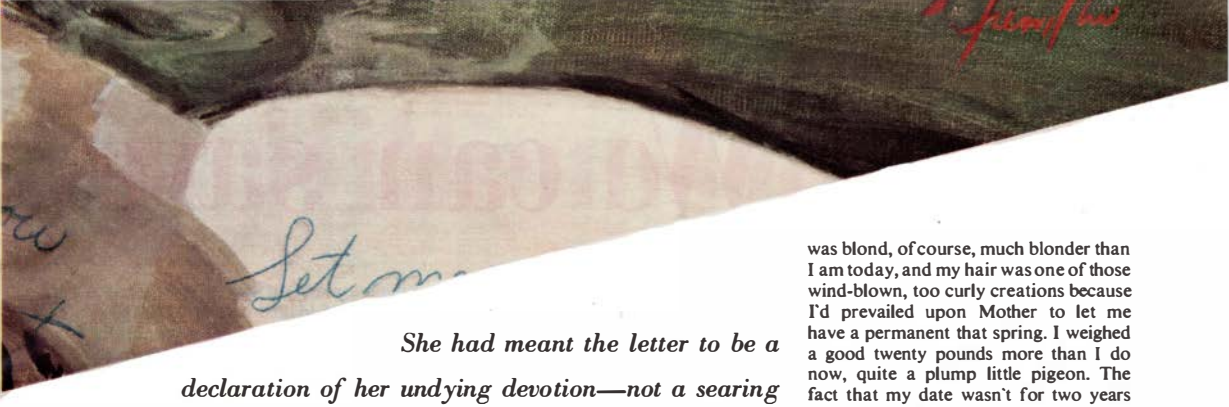
The most dramatic performer of these is probably aureomycin, which has been available to doctors for less than a year. Derived from a gold-colored mold in the laboratory, this drug may become the most practical weapon yet discovered against infectious diseases. Laboratory scientists told me that it not only knocks out most of the bacteria against which penicillin and streptomycin have hitherto been used, but also kills several smaller disease organisms called rickettsiae. These include the germs of so-called virus pneumonia, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, undulant fever, and typhus.

This versatility does not mean that Aureomycin is an all-purpose remedy for infections, but I was told that it comes closer to being one than any other yet discovered, and has the added advantage of having no toxic effect upon human beings. This makes it of tremendous potential value to doctors. When a patient comes down with (*Continued on page* 127)

COURTESY OF E. R. SQUIBB & SONS

Extreme precautions *are taken in manufacturing the new drugs. Here workers wear white clothes, masks, and goggles to prevent them from being severely burned by the ultraviolet lights, which keep the laboratory air completely sterilized*


I am forever
my beloved
heart
to-ni
saffron
Love
letter



She had meant the letter to be a declaration of her undying devotion—not a searing humiliation that she could never forget

BY PHYLLIS DUGANNE

ILLUSTRATION BY GWEN FREMLIN

IF YOU had not given me that hope chest, the summer I was fourteen, dearest Granny, I probably would have been married years ago, and to the wrong man. Or men. As it is, Miss Lydia Wheeler takes great pleasure in announcing her engagement to— No! I waited so long to find out his name that I think I'll make you wait, now. Because it was primarily the fault of the hope chest, Granny—make no mistake about that! —and it was you who gave it to me.

I truly was beginning to think that I'd die an old maid. Not because twenty-two is so old to be still unmarried, but because I had gotten this Thing—Complex, to you, Granny dear. Now that everything is all right, I want to tell you what I have never told a living soul, and even though everything is all, completely, ecstatically right, I'd still just as soon you didn't tell anyone.

The hope chest, you may remember, was sent to our Hendonport house in the summer of 1941. Chuck Peters brought it from the express-depot in his old yellow truck and dumped it on the front veranda. Mac was home from college, with no more idea than a rabbit that he'd be in the Navy by December, and he was playing tennis with Neal Barry when it arrived.

Remember Neal? He lived, summers, in the big white house across from the Unitarian church, and I think he was the handsomest boy I ever saw. Blond, with laughing blue eyes and a tan like liquid shoe polish. He was Mac's age, and all us little girls used to moon over him. The big girls did, too. He was the most popular boy in town—and he played the field.

Mother called them to uncrate the chest, and I sat on the top step and admired the muscles in Neal's arms as he pried up the slats and he and Mac lifted it out.

Mac said, "What is it, anyway?" and Mother said, "It's for Cricket." (I was twenty before I finally got rid of that nickname.) "It's a hope chest, from Granny," said Mother.

Neal looked down at me with those exciting blue eyes and grinned and asked, "Do you hope to get married, Cricket?"

Granny, it was like being struck by lightning. I don't remember what I said. I'm sure I didn't say what I was thinking, which was: "I hope to get married to *you!*"

He kept on looking at me for a moment, and then it was lightning striking twice in the same place, because he turned to Mother and said, "Mrs. Wheeler, may I take Cricket to the yacht-club dance, next Saturday?"

Mother laughed and said, "Come back and ask again, in a couple of years, Neal."

"I'll do that," said Neal. He made a little waving salute in my direction. "It's a date, Cricket. August, 1943."

Granny, I can describe to a freckle how I looked, at fourteen, because I reeled upstairs and examined myself minutely in Mother's long mirror. You see, I wasn't looking at myself. I was looking at the girl Neal Barry had just asked to a dance. She was a stranger to me, and obviously pretty attractive. I was blond, of course, much blonder than I am today, and my hair was one of those wind-blown, too curly creations because I'd prevailed upon Mother to let me have a permanent that spring. I weighed a good twenty pounds more than I do now, quite a plump little pigeon. The fact that my date wasn't for two years didn't depress me a bit. Two years seemed nothing to wait for a date with Neal Barry.

That winter I hemmed two dish towels and placed them tenderly in my hope chest. When I looked at them, lying there, I could see myself in a ruffled apron cooking Neal's dinner and Neal coming home from the office and kissing me. I got my penknife and carved his initials, very small, in an inconspicuous corner of the chest. N.B. My love, my future husband. I was considerably better at carving than hemming, by the way. . . .

I DIDN'T have to wait two years. The next July, when we were back in Hendonport, Mac and Neal, both ensigns, came home on their last leave. And Neal asked Mother again.

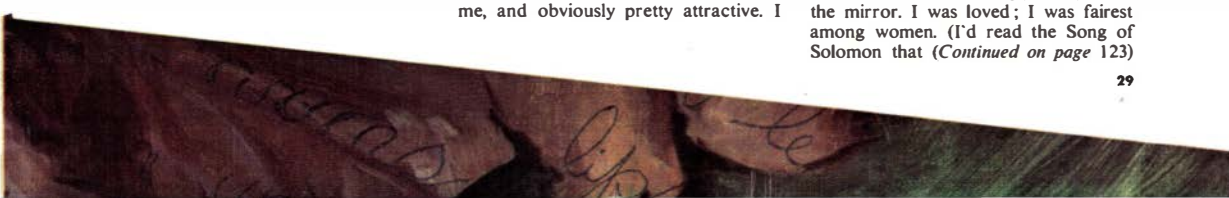
"I wouldn't want to stand Cricket up on our date for '43," he told her. "How's about letting her step out once, this summer?"

Even Mother could not say *No* to Neal Barry in uniform.

There's a lot of nonsense about a girl's first date and a girl's first kiss, but this wasn't nonsense. Mother couldn't have been more understanding. She let me pick out a new dress without a murmur, though I must have looked like a kid dressed up for Halloween in it. She even let me wear earrings. I was fifteen and Neal was twenty, and, from where I sit now, I'd say we were both very young for our respective ages. The whole evening was wonderful, the music, the uniforms, the almost unbearable awareness of the girls that their partners were off for the war.

Neal brought me home when he'd promised Mother, but he hadn't promised not to kiss me good night.

Oh, Granny! I floated up to my room. If I'd had to speak to Mother, have anything remind me, then, that my life was ever going to return to its usual channels, I think I'd have died. I sat for a long time and looked unseeingly at myself in the mirror. I was loved; I was fairest among women. (I'd read the Song of Solomon that (*Continued on page* 123)



We can save

Secretary of State Acheson recently made it clear that we must start trading with other nations along a two-way street. At present we are sending abroad six billion more dollars' worth of goods each year than we are importing. Under the Marshall Plan we are giving away billions of dollars' worth of goods. American taxpayers and consumers will continue to pay through the nose unless foreign nations are enabled to help themselves. As this article shows, our antiquated tariff laws restricting imports discourage efforts to repay. If this sort of traffic on a one-way street is allowed to go on indefinitely somebody is bound to get pinched. And it probably will be you

by

Jerome Beatty

SUPPOSE you have a friend who lives on the other side of town, who has had hard times. Although you are deep in debt yourself, you are helping to support him because he is the kind of friend you may need some time. He raises chickens and offers to deliver eggs that you can use, and sell for him. With the money he gets for the eggs he can reduce his debt to you.

Suppose you say, kindly, "That's fine, George. I want to do everything possible to encourage you to pay me back and to become self-supporting, but when you deliver the eggs to me you must bring them in a wheelbarrow and deliver them at 4 A.M. on a moonlight night. Instead of pushing the wheelbarrow down the main highway you must—while singing lustily *You Made Me Love You, I Didn't Wanna Do It*—go on that old, almost impassable dirt road, an extra eight miles up and down hill, fording a couple of streams on your merry way. It will be nice to see you, George. Come often."

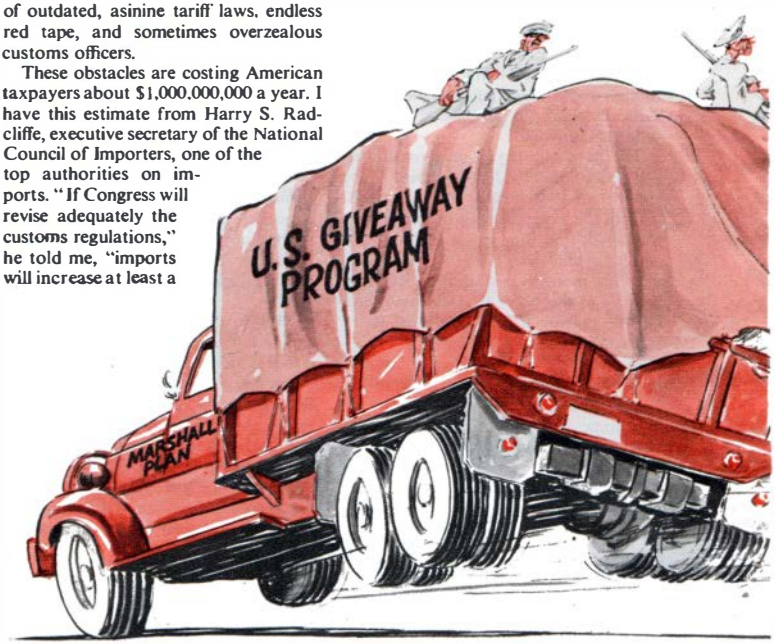
Anybody who, for no good reason whatsoever, would so discourage a friend who wants to pay on a debt, would be a fathead, of course.

Yet that, roughly, is what the U.S. Government is doing to foreign nations. In trying to help them get on their feet, we are giving them free nearly $5,000,000,000 worth of farm and manufactured goods. Yet when they try to sell us their goods for dollars with which they can pay us back and get off the dole, what do we do? We put every conceivable obstacle in their way in the form of outdated, asinine tariff laws, endless red tape, and sometimes overzealous customs officers.

These obstacles are costing American taxpayers about $1,000,000,000 a year. I have this estimate from Harry S. Radcliffe, executive secretary of the National Council of Importers, one of the top authorities on imports. "If Congress will revise adequately the customs regulations," he told me, "imports will increase at least a billion a year." In other words, foreign nations could sell us $1,000,000,000 more of their goods, and consequently would have $1,000,000,000 more with which to pay us for the goods we now give them free under the Marshall Plan.

ALTHOUGH our government, mostly through the reduction of tariffs under the reciprocal trade agreements, has moved to encourage imports, the complicated and out-of-date customs laws, passed in 1930, remain on the books. In 1930, the depression was upon us and the backers of the Hawley-Smoot tariff law convinced Congress that the best way to bring back prosperity was to keep foreign goods out of the United States; to apply such high duties and to lay down such complicated regulations that foreigners couldn't compete very successfully in American markets.

Today economic conditions are completely reversed. We have high employment, enormous production—and want to keep things that way. Our manufacturers no longer need a high protective tariff wall—they need markets abroad. Farmers, overproducing, must sell in foreign lands. But the antiquated tariff



a Billion Dollars

laws and regulations still remain in force, serving to shut off these foreign markets. For we can't sell, unless we buy.

Dean Acheson, Secretary of State, recently said, "We must become really import-minded. We must devote our time and energy to bringing in imports. It's common sense for us to want them and to go after them." He pointed out that the United States exports goods that might otherwise be available to consumers in this country, and that American taxpayers give and lend money to foreign countries to pay for these excess exports. More imports will tend to balance the trade and relieve the American taxpayer.

But, through ridiculous horse-and-buggy laws, we block imports from debtor countries which need our dollars.

One of the most costly absurdities lies in the basic regulations, which order customs appraisers to assess the highest possible value on imported goods. These assessments involve complicated and often absurd classifications of value which determine the amount of duty to be paid.

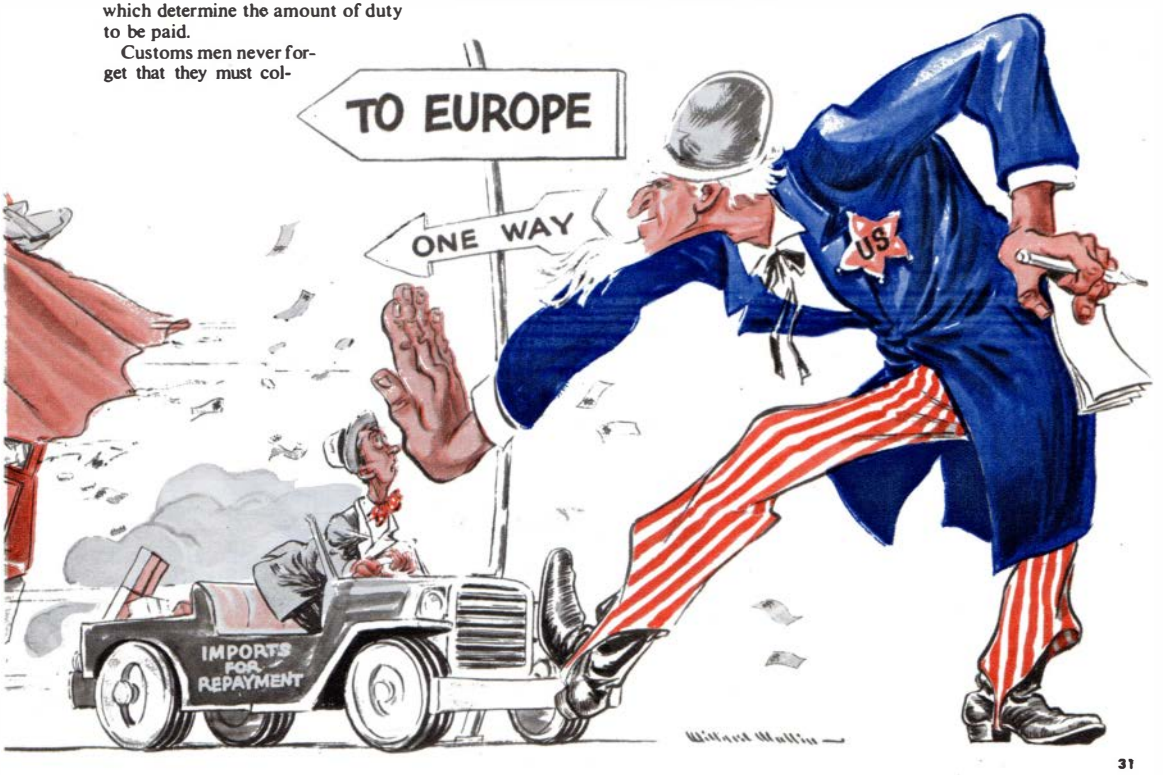
Customs men never forget that they must collect the highest possible duty. Afraid of criticism from their superiors if they are lenient, hopeful for promotion if they help to increase the customs receipts, most of them work very hard, indeed, to obey the law. If they assess a duty that seems to be too high, the importer usually must hire a customs lawyer and go to court, to get a reduction. Months after an importer has sold his goods, he may learn that the eager beavers in the Customs Department have found a way to classify his merchandise, or to assess its value, that will double the duty. If he takes his case to court, then months and maybe years of delay are added. After a few of these cases, many an importer suffers so much grief that he goes into some happier line of work.

ZEALOUS customs men collected $420,000,000 in duties in 1948—6.7 per cent of the value of total imports—and you may think, offhand, that it's nice that we get that dough from abroad. But we don't get it from abroad. It is paid by the American importer, added to the retail price, and you, the American consumer —not the foreigner—pays it. Just one more hidden tax.

You can reach in blindfolded and pick out strange samples of valuation. The law says an imported object must be classified according to its "material of chief value." A radio network that imported a recording of famous foreign church bells thought, reasonably enough, that it was bringing in a phonograph record. They didn't know the Customs Department. What's the chief value of a church bell? Its sound, of course. What was the material of chief value in the record? The sound, certainly. So the radio folks paid a duty under the classification of "church bells and gongs."

"I suppose," observed the importer who told me of the incident, "that if anybody tried to import a Bing Crosby record, they'd pay duty on the million-dollar Crosby voice."

A linoleum (*Continued on page* 120)



DON'T DARKEN MY DOOR

Gumbo Parmalee firmly believed a woman's place was in the home—her own home, not his

by
Merle Constiner

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE GARLAND

WHEN the doctor had left the house on his morning rounds, Gumbo Parmalee straightened the kitchen. He gave the ancient linoleum a few vague slaps with a broom and laid the breakfast dishes on the pantry floor, covering them with an old gunny sack. This promotion from handyman to housekeeper—and the wonderful vacuum left by Miss Bates, his predecessor—was almost too good to be true. After a bit, he took up his willow basket and started down the lane to the village.

All about him the wooded Tennessee hills boiled into the sky, brazen and hot, and the cupped air was sultry with dust. Across the lane from the doctor's henhouse was Miss Bates's white picket fence.

Miss Bates was leaning on her gate, waiting for him. Always, now, she seemed to be waiting for him. A big woman, sly and ruthless, hard as nails, with eyes like little pine knots.

"'Morning, Mr. Parmalee," she said. "Have you took care of your breakfast dishes?"

Mr. Parmalee came to a dignified halt. "They've been took care of, Miss Bates, and put away."

"Today is cherry-pie day. Has the doctor been getting his Wednesday cherry pie?"

"He has, Miss Bates."

She looked startled. "And his Saturday hog jowl and beans?"

"He has, Miss Bates."

It stunned her. "He used to be at me all the time, hammer and tongs, about his food. Nothing but the best would satisfy him."

"That's what I give him, Miss Bates. Nothing but the best."

She shook her head in mock sympathy. She knew he was a hillman born and bred, knew his traditional background and ingrained principles. The subtlety she attempted to convey was that he was degrading himself with woman's work.

He said heartily, "I never knowed

housekeeping could be so pleasurable!"

She leaned over intimately and grabbed the bib of Mr. Parmalee's overalls. The sickening sweet smell of her stiff-starched apron enveloped him. "Fired jest because of some little ole misunderstandings!"

Fired, Mr. Parmalee reflected, because she was such a busybody. Because she was impossible to live with, because she scolded the doctor himself and insulted his patients.

"Throwed out on my ear," she said.

Mr. Parmalee disengaged himself and picked up his basket.

Halfway down the lane he heard her yelling at him, yelling at his back. "I should be over there right now. In that big house, a-waitin' on him body and soul, hand and foot. I love him like he was my first-born!"

First-born, Mr. Parmalee thought angrily. Dr. Tom was at least her age. In the middle fifties.

A footpath branched from the lane to the village, and, as Mr. Parmalee took it, fragments of the old days, ended a brief six weeks ago, popped into his mind. Miss Bates bellowing at him, shrieking at him, screaming at the doctor. Miss Bates taking home, furtively, the duck livers out of the gravy, the loin from pork roasts, even the spare change from the doctor's vests. Sucking up anything that wouldn't be missed, and all the time shouting and howling complaints.

Before Gumbo knew it Miss Gilpen had taken over. She had a home remedy for each patient

The very memory of those days gave Mr. Parmalee the horrors.

The big house was paradise now. Just a couple of bachelors, Dr. Tom Imlay and Gumbo Parmalee.

There were only two flies in the ointment: Prince, the doctor's rooster, and the embarrassing fact that Mr. Parmalee couldn't cook.

Main Street had two false-fronted general stores, a cement-block garage, a yellow frame bank, and a dusty thumbnail high school. Dogs lay in the hot shade of the doorways. Mr. Parmalee entered the cool dimness of Rush Haverstick's general store and laid his basket on the counter.

Rush said, "Howdy, Gumbo."

And Mr. Parmalee answered, "Howdy, Rush."

They then lapsed into silence and stared at each other. They were old and close friends and this silent locking-of-eyes mind reading gave them a great deal of pleasure.

After a bit, Mr. Haverstick cleared his throat. "See you got a bandaged thumb. Old Prince been working on you again?"

Mr. Parmalee nodded, and smiled sourly.

They went back to silence and the pleasure of staring each other in the eye.

"Well, I got to be getting on," Mr. Parmalee declared at length. He took a list from his pocket and read it aloud: "A hatchet and roofing nails. A sixteen size pink rayon ladies' slip. Enough red oilcloth to cover a baby's cradle. And four pocketknives."

The storekeeper placed the articles in the basket.

"Same way," Mr. Parmalee said. "Charge 'em to the doctor. Clump 'em together and enter 'em as sundries."

With a jerk of the chin they bid each other farewell, and Mr. Parmalee stepped out into the dusty street.

THERE was no sign of life along the hot sidewalk. Mr. Parmalee went west to the schoolhouse, circled to the rear, passed through an old cemetery, crossed a footbridge, and came out into a small grassy clearing flanked with osage and wild grape. In the center was the wreckage of an abandoned sawmill, and a few feet away was an incredibly ancient car. An incredibly ancient man, bearded and in homemade overalls, sat on the crumpled running board sifting the sun-warmed sawdust with his bare feet as a child plays with sand.

As Mr. Parmalee came forward the old man put his jaws into action; finally words emerged through his snuff-stained lips. He said, "Howdy, grandboy."

Mr. Parmalee laid his basket on the running board, "'Morning, Grandpappy," he said. His voice was solicitous and deferential. "How's all my kin at Panther Ridge?"

"If you want to know, come out and

see," the old man said curtly. "I ain't here to chitchat."

He got laboriously to his feet, unpacked Mr. Parmalee's basket into the back of his car, checking its contents aloud as he did so. This done to his satisfaction, he refilled Mr. Parmalee's basket from a basket of his own. One by one, he stowed away eight quart glass jars filled with home-canned food.

"Here's your cherries fer yore cherry pie," he said. "That-there's yore home-canned hog jowl, and them's yore beans. That fixes up Wednesday and Saturday. This is ours, an' it's mighty fine. Now, here's some tomato preserves. Cousin Sarah put *them* up, and I won't say yes nor no about 'em. But that's a chance yo're taking, son. The canned beef is from Aunt Johnny Lee and is as stringy as a hank o' fishin' line, but that jar o' sausage, also from Aunt Johnny Lee, winned fust ribbon at the Panther Ridge food show."

The old man leered. "Some of it's passable, some of it's wonnerful, and some of it would strangle a barn rat. But we're a-givin' you what yo're asking fer. All of it's home-cooking."

The oldster produced a penciled list. "That's for next week. Cousin Sarah wants two pair o' fancy stockings, size ten. Uncle Reedy is fixin' to drain the spring out'n his south field and wants some drain tile—"

"I don't think I can get drain tile—" Mr. Parmalee looked worried.

"Shore, you kin. You live in town, don't you? See you next week." He hopped into the front seat, the car roared, he backed, swiveled, backed once more, and was off through the weeds and osage to the highway beyond. . . .

During the long reaches of the afternoon, when there was nothing else to do, Gumbo Parmalee washed the breakfast and lunch dishes. Just before supper he got out his box of pie mix and made the pie. Dr. Imlay preferred his cherry pie cold, but Mr. Parmalee always made it at the last moment and served it hot—as an indirect guarantee that it was home-cooked.

Twilight was darkening into night when Mr. Parmalee fed the chickens.

It was a late hour but Mr. Parmalee invariably selected it with the vain hope that Prince, the doctor's giant Black Minorca rooster, might have deserted his flock and retired early.

Occasionally there appears among the great brotherhood of roosters what Mr. Parmalee and his friends called simply "a mean one." This, as Mr. Parmalee realized, was an understatement. No bull was more treacherous nor a starving wolf more vicious. Like a maniac, a mean rooster would attack at the slightest whim, and would attack anything. Anything that moved: a dog, a man, a child, even a piece of wrapping paper rolling in the wind. Prince was a mean one and Mr. Parmalee lived in mortal fear of him. Dr. Imlay, who saw Prince scarcely once a week—and always through the mesh of chicken wire—was very proud of him. Mr. Parmalee saw Prince daily, and battled with him daily.

Gumbo took a path hidden from the house

In the old days, Miss Bates had fed Prince, and battled him, and Mr. Parmalee secretly believed that it was her incessant tirades against the fowl, and her muttered threats against it, that had added to her general unpleasantness and eventually touched off the spark that caused Dr. Imlay to dismiss her.

Tonight, as he opened the chicken-run gate and stepped inside, Prince catapulted at him from the shadows. A great, violent bundle, composed of stiff feathers, hard beak, and powerful, threshing spurs. High in the air Prince came tonight, beating and striking at Mr. Parmalee's chest and throat. Wildly Mr. Parmalee scattered his feed and withdrew.

As he locked the gate he discovered his face was bleeding. The mirror in the kitchen told him that his cheek was cut to the bone. Foggy with anger and throwing caution to the wind, he decided, himself, to take the matter up with the doctor. He walked down the hall to the doctor's study, knocked on the door and entered.

Dr. Imlay sat in his undershirt before a fine old buhl table, relaxing with his arrowhead collection. The walls of the study were covered with glassed-in cases of broken Indian relics, smashed pottery, jawbones, unclassified flints, junk, which he had assiduously accumulated from his farmer friends since boyhood. The very sight of it would have given an archaeologist nausea, but Dr. Imlay, with collector's zeal, was under the impression it was priceless. Everywhere were neat, small signs which said: *Hands Off! Irreplaceable! Do Not Touch! Rare Specimen!*

Tonight, as usual, the doctor was dog-tired. He was a bulbous little man with roiled blue eyes and uncut white hair which blossomed in ringlets behind his rosy ears. His general absent-mindedness and conversational contradictions caused the straight-thinking Mr. Parmalee a great deal of confusion.

As Mr. Parmalee entered, Dr. Imlay said breezily, "I've been thinking about you, Gumbo. Come in and sit down. You're fired."

Prince was forgotten. The cut on his cheek was forgotten. Mr. Parmalee staggered into a chair. "Did you say fired?"

"Here's the situation," Dr. Imlay explained. "You won't do. You're not the right sex. You're not a female." Dr. Imlay chuckled. "I've got you there, haven't I?"

Mr. Parmalee, who had a hillman's love for debate, thought

for a moment and saw that he was whipped. He nodded dumbly.

"I'll let you in on a little professional secret," the doctor said gravely. "A physician, especially a rural doctor, simply has to have a reputable woman around the premises. It's an old custom and a sound one. In the first place, a doctor never knows when he's going to get a crackpot female patient, and then it's nice to have a female witness of his own. But, most importantly, especially in hill country like this, women patients are timid about coming into a purely bachelor establishment. I don't know whatever got into me, I don't know why I ever let Miss Bates go!"

"You let her go because you couldn't abide her. 'Member the time she opened a can of hominy with some of your surgical instruments?"

"We can get her back," Dr. Imlay said eagerly. "We'll apologize and offer her an increase in pay." A look of happy reverie spread over his pink face. "You back in the garden again pulling weeds, or cutting firewood. Miss Bates bustling about, singing folk songs. Folk songs are educational, Gumbo. Most people don't realize that."

"I can sing folk songs," Mr. Parmalee said. "I never knowed you cared for 'em."

Dr. Imlay ignored him. "How can we get her back," he asked vaguely.

"We can't," Mr. Parmalee said somberly. "I was discussin' the subjeck with her this morning. She says love nor money couldn't bring her back into this house. She says a doctor's home is coated inch-deep with disease an' germs. You cain't see 'em, she says, but they're there. A-crawlin' in your hair, a-crawlin' in your food, a-crawlin' in your clothes—"

Dr. Imlay listened, fascinated. At last he said, "But that's absurd. Absurd." Unconsciously he ran his hand beneath his undershirt and scratched his chest.

Mr. Parmalee looked uncertain. "Leastaways, that's what everybody says—"

"*Everybody?*"

"Lot of folks thinks I'm brave to work here." Mr. Parmalee gave a little martyred smile. "I ain't brave, Dr. Imlay. I'm just loyal, I guess."

AFTER a moment he changed the subject: "How do you like my cherry pie?"

"Very good, Gumbo."

"And my hog jowl and beans?"

"Very good."

"Sausage tomorrer for breakfast. Wow!"

"Sausage?"

"Old-timey sage sausage," Mr. Parmalee disclosed benevolently. He arose. "Dr. Imlay, what we really need is a female office girl. I believe I know just the party. Maybe I can swing it." He hummed softly to himself and broke out suddenly into a muted, ragged baritone: "He swum the river and clumb the hill, and hid in 'Simmon Cave. But Shurf J. W. Inglebrook dogged him out, and laid him in his grave. In a rocky, lonesome grave."

"Is that a folk song?" Dr. Imlay asked.

Mr. Parmalee seemed surprised. "Why, yes, it was. I never knowed I was doing it. I can sing hundreds. I sing 'em without thinking. That's a very beautiful song called *The Fenton County Jailbreak*."

It was just as Mr. Parmalee was about to leave that Dr. Imlay noticed the cut on his cheek and asked Mr. Parmalee how he had come by it. Mr. Parmalee said carelessly that Prince had given it to him, and the doctor chuckled and said that Prince certainly was a spunky bird. Mr. Parmalee chuckled, too, and agreed. This was no time to air a grievance. . . .

THE little house, scarcely more than a hut, sat on a wedge of eroded clay at the confluence of two gullies just outside the village. The family was named Gilpen. They were newcomers to town, yet Mr. Parmalee was already fairly well acquainted with them and felt they could use a little ready cash. If they could be properly prevailed upon. Three months in town, and already they were famous for their resistance to even the mildest forms of labor. The Gilpen house, Mr. Parmalee decided, held his answer. The Gilpen house was jam-packed with females.

A coal-oil lamp burned in the kitchen window. Mr. Parmalee made his way through the litter which constituted the village dump and the Gilpen side yard, and rapped on the kitchen door. A rasping voice ordered him inside; he faltered, and entered.

Half of the room was floored with an old barn door and the remainder was simply beaten earth. The rough-wood walls were decorated with colored illustrations from old magazines —love scenes, babies, and more love scenes. An oil drum served as a stove and near it stood a bed composed of three old mattresses covered with a cotton blanket.

Mr. Gilpen, fully dressed, to brogans and black felt hat, reposed on his back on the blanket. From his position of ease he was aiming and clicking an empty but efficient-looking pistol at an imaginary tribal enemy on the ceiling. Sometimes, apparently, he missed, for occasionally he flinched and frowned; (*Continued on page* 82)

An American Vignette

ECHO

★

PEGGY felt her color rising under the older woman's hostile appraisal.

"I could interrupt the meeting, Mrs. Craig," Peggy said, "and have your son—"

"That is not necessary." Mrs. Craig pushed her mink stole back off her shoulders and regarded the girl with unflinching candor. "I came to see you, Miss Wilson. Not Richard."

Peggy smiled. "I've looked forward to meeting you," she said.

The smile was not returned. Mrs. Craig leaned forward.

"Let us be completely honest, Miss Wilson. It saves time, and misunderstanding. I've come to look you over. Since you became Richard's secretary, he has shown an alarming interest in you. I am prepared to nip that interest in the bud."

Peggy's eyes widened in disbelief. "But why, Mrs. Craig? I love Dick."

"Do you? Or do you love the idea of marrying the Craig money?"

Peggy gasped. "I'd love Dick if he didn't have a cent."

"A familiar assertion, Miss Wilson. One which you may have the opportunity to prove. When Richard's father took over the Craig Lines from his family he worked twenty hours a day to build this business. Now that he is gone, I will not allow the results of his labor to be squandered. I shall cut Richard off. You will have no security whatever. I still control the company."

"Do you?" Peggy said, and her voice now matched the older woman's in sharpness. "I'm sure that gives you a tremendous sense of power. But you don't control me, Mrs. Craig. And I don't think you control Dick. I'm going to marry Dick. I'll have love, and security, too. The security of being first with someone, first in his heart and mind. Maybe that is a security you've never known."

Peggy's voice softened: "I'm sorry for you, Mrs. Craig. Sorry that your heart is so empty that you can't see what an opportunity you are offering me—the opportunity to prove my love."

PEGGY was standing, her hands gripping the desk, when Dick opened the office door.

"Hi, Mother!" he called. Then he saw Peggy's stricken face. He went to her and put his arm around her. "What's up, honey?" He turned to his mother: "What is this? Have you been frightening her?"

"No," his mother said. "She doesn't frighten easily, I'm happy to say." She smiled, and suddenly all the severity was gone. "I like your Peggy, Richard. I like her very much."

Mrs. Craig got up and pressed her cheek against Peggy's. "Forgive me, my dear," she said. "I had to be sure. I was trying the acid test that Richard's grandmother once pulled on me. Forty years ago I had your job. I'm happy to see that you are handling it *exactly* as I did."

JAMES ROBERT

How we Scalp the Indians

PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

Big chiefs of The People: *Vice-Chairman Zhealy Tso and Chairman Sam Akeah of the supreme Navajo Tribal Council. They represent 65,000 Indians*

We call them "original Americans." But are we cheating them and denying them their rights as full-fledged American citizens? . . . Our reporter traveled thousands of miles to meet the redskins face to face, and to bring you this startling answer

by Don Eddy

BABY, it was cold outside! The Winds Which Hold Up The World howled out of the Place Of The Great Snakes and screeched through the ice-fingered pinnacles of the Six Sacred Mountains, pelting sleet against this one-room cabin in the settlement of Shiprock, northwestern New Mexico. This was Navajo country, the fabulous mile-high Land Of The Sky, and this tiny building hugging the frozen earth of a bare plateau was headquarters of the supreme Navajo Tribal Council.

Inside, I sat across a scarred pine table from a bulky, brown, square-jawed man in store clothes and a silver-banded sombrero worn ballooned on top in the Indian way. Thick horn-rimmed spectacles crusted with gold magnified his moody eyes, and a heavy silver-and-turquoise bracelet on one wrist complemented a handsome strap watch on the other.

He was Sam Akeah, chairman of the tribal council, and thus great chief of the 65,000 Navajos who proudly call themselves The People. He was the spokesman for human beings who were reportedly dying of hunger and pestilence. I had come a far piece to find him.

On just such a wintry day almost a year earlier there had been twin headlines in the nation's newspapers. One reported another multimillion-dollar appropriation to feed and clothe the peoples of Europe. The other reported American citizens, American Indians, starving and freezing on our own western plains.

We all knew about conditions in Europe; every bleeding heart with two fingers and a typewriter had chronicled the plight of people, some of whom, only four years earlier, had been trying their

best to annihilate us. But what did we Americans know about our own countrymen, the Indians, with whom we had lived at peace for two generations and whom we had promised to protect in payment for the expropriation of their continent? Nothing. Almost literally, nothing.

That morning, the Editor of THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE assigned me to go out and get the facts about the Indians. It was a long, confusing trail—from the cloistered aloofness of the Washington bureaucracies to the steaming jungles of the Florida Seminoles to the big-timbered valleys of the Oregon Klamaths, through more than half the states and fully a third of the remaining 96 tribes.

I talked with rich Indians and poor Indians, educated Indians and illiterate Indians, and with scores of the white men who supervise them. I learned astonishing truths and obtained an entirely new conception of "the Indian problem," which really isn't one problem, but hundreds of problems.

Now the trail had doubled back to this sleet-battered cabin on the rock-ribbed backbone of the continent and the most publicized and controversial of all the tribes, the Navajos.

I said to Sam Akeah, "Chief, we are told that Navajos are starving to death. Is this true?"

He said, in his heavy voice, staring at my forehead because it is impolite to look into the eyes of one to whom you speak, "It is not true. My people share what they have. When one has no food, he is welcome to eat in the hogan of his neighbor. Many are hungry, but no one dies of starvation."

I asked, "Is there plenty for all The People?"

He replied enigmatically, "What is plenty? Is it plenty that a working man tastes meat twice a month, or that a child makes a meal of piñon nuts and sucks the hide of a dead sheep?"

I said, "How did your people become so poor? You say you had 1,500,000 sheep a few years ago. Now you say you have only 500,000. What happened to a million sheep?"

SAM AKEAH took off his gaudy spectacles and rubbed his eyes with huge hands. He said without emotion, "The Government ordered us to get rid of them. They said the grass would not support them in time of drought. It was something they called the range conservation program. This seemed strange to us, for my people have pastures no white man has seen. But we had no voice, no choice. We had to comply or be arrested. So today we do not have enough sheep to keep us from hunger. That is how it is."

I said, "Give me a case history, Chief. You were one of those who had sheep. Tell me what happened to you."

He deliberated a long time, and it was very quiet except for the moaning of the wind in the eaves and the rattle of the sleet, like elfin drumfire, on the frosted windows. Then he said:

"To understand about the sheep, you must begin with the horses. My people had many horses. In 1931, without warning, the Government ordered us to sell all our old horses. In District 12 of the reservation, where I live, we were ordered to get rid of 1,084 horses by a certain day or be arrested. It was the same in all 18 land-management districts of the reservation. We were not told why we must do this thing. We were only told that this was the order.

"So we sold these old horses—the wise old horses which knew how to work—for whatever we could get for them. In many cases we received only the value of their hides. Some of these old horses were taken into a canyon and shot, and their bones are still there. Then the winter came, and the young horses, the ones we were permitted to keep, could not stand up to the work. So they died. That is how it was."

He cleared his throat and wiped his lips with a handkerchief.

Then he (*Continued on page* 86)

American citizens *who can't speak English, these Navajo children lack adequate schooling and most of them will grow up to tend sheep. In 1868 Uncle Sam promised to provide the Navajos with one teacher for every 30 children. He never kept the promise*

Will atomic energy *make the Indians rich? Eloise Lovine, of Navajo Indian Agency, holds sample of uranium found on reservation*

"Like it?" Carla asked. "No," Ken said. "No, I don't"

the idol

She would sacrifice anything to his memory—even her husband

BY BELVA PLAIN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MILTON WOLSKY

THEY were eight days married. Dinner was alfresco; the inn was pink-shuttered; every lavish vine in Florida laced the courtyard wall, and gaudy birds quacked in white cages.

Carla was saying, "Oh, it's beautiful, it's perfect, Ken," when the waiter came with the telegram.

Ken took it wonderingly. "Telegrams on a honeymoon?" he said. And then something happened to his face.

He was very gentle, very quick: "Carla—your father—Carla, come upstairs, darling."

So she heard that Vin was dead.

"He had no pain," Ken said, again and again. "His heart just—stopped. He was reading the morning mail, quite peacefully, when it happened. You must make yourself remember that." . . .

It was bright fall in the North. When they came home from the services, from the crowds and the organ-wail, the afternoon was living gold. But Vin, who had loved such days—who had loved all days—was dead.

The cook brought sandwiches and coffee to the downstairs study. They grouped there, silently, with the puzzled air of bereavement, not knowing what was expected of them—Uncle Douglas, Ken, Carla, and the widow.

"Mother looks dreadful in black," Carla thought irrelevantly. The plump, pink little face, the small, dainty bones of her generation were accustomed to the dowdy-pretty pastels she always wore. "I wonder what she will do now?" Carla thought. Doris Mallow had been Vin's satellite, had been nothing without Vin. She would have no friends of her own to fill the great house, only a few women from the garden club and the local charity leagues. What would she do?

"I think I'll lie down a while," Mother said now in her soft little voice, almost as if she was asking permission.

She went out, and the silence continued. The coffee burned bitterly in Carla's dry mouth. Through the open door she could see across the hall into the drawing-room that fronted on the bay. Everywhere were the flowers Vin demanded, clustered and fat in bowls, or tall and feathered against nested green. In the middle distance photographs confronted her, framed on tables in silver, in leather, in glass: the faces of musicians, governors, generals. *For Vin*, they said, in delicate or crabbed inscriptions: *For my good friend, Senator Vincent Mallow. For Vin, in Memory of Paris*—or London, or Rio de Janeiro.

Then Vin himself: in tweeds with two English setters; on the steps of the Senate Office Building; in a frog-fastened opera cape worn casually as another man might wear a raincoat. And at last the wing chair where she could imagine him again, vivid, lean, and dark, as she was, with his charming smile and the cigarette flourished in its holder. She twisted her head in an agony of loss.

THE telephone rang. "Reporters again?" Douglas said, taking the receiver. "Oh, yes," he said. "I see. . . . No, I'm the Senator's stepbrother. . . . I'll do what I can for you. Some time next week."

He hung up. "That magazine fellow. He's halfway through the article on Vin. Wanted to know whether I could help him finish."

"Vin had a full life, anyway," Ken said. "Politics, the arts, travel, and the metal works. Incredible."

"He knew everybody," Carla said. "He could do everything. All the flair and charm of this house are his. We didn't even need the decorators."

"I wish I'd known him longer."

The silence fell again. So much to remember. . . . Then, when Carla spoke, it all came pouring:

"I remember Nino Curci reading his lyrics at the fireplace. Nobody knew him then. He was so thin—I think he was hungry. And I remember the night Kerdichev played his *Prelude in C Sharp*. We were the first to hear it. There was such *life* here! Why did it have to end?"

"After a while," Ken said, "you will be able to think how lucky you were to have had it at all."

"They say you take for granted what you've always known, but I never have. I came down to breakfast one morning and there was a man at the table. He was the new governor—Vin had brought him home late the night before. The house was always full. Vin never gave notice beforehand, either. The servants were always threatening to leave. Then Mother'd have to soothe them. I can see her in her bathrobe tearing down the backstairs to the pantry—"

DOUGLAS rose abruptly. "I was going to spade my gladiolus bed this week, and today's as good a day as any for it."

"Today?" Carla said.

"Why not? Vin wouldn't mind. He believed in gardens."

"A sound belief, too," Ken said. "Incidentally, Douglas, we're both awfully glad you're down the road. I know Carla's worrying about her mother being alone."

"I'll do my best for Doris," Douglas said seriously.

You could depend on him, Carla admitted. That was in his face, the good, middle-aged face, the level, thoughtful eyes. Vin must have known what he was doing when he'd put Douglas in the head office. And he certainly would be good for Mother; they'd putter in their respective flower patches, she'd tell him about her varied preserves, and they'd have nice, dull evenings together. A curious pair to have been in Vin Mallow's family, his wife, his brother—

"Carla," Ken said when Douglas had gone, "go up and rest. You haven't slept properly since Tuesday."

"I'm too tired to rest. I want to move around."

They stepped out through the French doors. The water breeze lifted the hair from Carla's neck with the first sharpening sting of fall. The grass was unbelievably green. And in the crescent of the bay, the water sparkled.

Ken said softly, "There couldn't be anything on earth more beautiful."

"No," she answered, her voice breaking on the sound.

"I remember the first time I came up that driveway. I was completely intimidated. I wasn't used to calling on girls who lived like this." He laughed.

Carla turned to him, raising her hand to his face. "But *I* didn't scare you, did I?"

"No. Only the way I felt about you, and sometimes that still scares me. You can't know."

"But I can. Because it's the same for me."

They walked half a mile past lawns into wild fields along the beach, and still they were on Mallow property. Then, at the boundary, stood Vin's "cottage," gray-weathered, with its turquoise door locked, guarding the piano, the favorite pictures and books.

Ken stood regarding it. "If I weren't a lawyer," he said, "I'd like to build. The fellow who did this knew what he was doing. It's got that feel—the pitch of the roof, the overhang, mathematically just right."

"Gregory & Burroughs designed it," Carla said.

"Ah, no wonder, then."

"Vin always used to say it would be a perfect bride's house," Carla ventured. "It's all equipped, you know. Stainless-steel kitchen and all."

"Shall we sit a little?" Ken said.

He took a cigarette and lighted Carla's. A flock of land birds made a long, lazy turning and beat southward to the infinite sky.

Carla thought, "The world so wide, and so little to hold to." And picking the moss from between two rocks, she crumbled a dry, warm pinch of earth. This earth. This piece of sky. All her memories here; her own place on the rootless planet— Hadn't some poet or other called it that?

Suddenly she spoke into the quiet: "Ken, I want to stay in the cottage. We could be so happy here, we would have everything."

He looked at her, not comprehending. "For good? Live here?"

"Yes," she said. "Yes, it would be wonderful; it would mean so much."

Now he was astonished. "But, Carla! There's the little matter of my law practice in Maryland. You've not forgotten?"

"Uncle Douglas knows so many people. Or any of Vin's friends would be glad to do something for you, get you into some New York firm, or even find contacts for an office of your own here in town. There are so many possibilities."

"Oh, no, Carla," Ken said quickly, strangely. "Oh, no. I wouldn't want that."

"Why not? You could make a lot more money."

"That isn't precisely my idea."

"Ken," she said then, "Ken, please understand. This isn't just a *place;* it's part of *me*."

She thought, "I could do so much for him here. The security and warmth. The richness of my parents' life. All re-created for Ken. This house a talisman, a good augury."

"Oh," she cried, "if you stayed here even a little while you'd be part of it, too! I know you, and I know you would."

"If you knew me," he said stolidly, "you'd know you're asking the impossible."

But it was impossible for her to leave. To go away to a strange place, among strangers, *now*.

As though Carla's thoughts were visible, Ken said, "You knew when you married me you'd have to leave here."

"But I didn't know what was going to happen a few days afterward."

He said quietly, "Of course, it's terrible; of course, this is the worst day you've ever had, and especially cruel that it had to come when we were just beginning our new life. I want things to be easy for you. Only, it wouldn't make sense for me to lie simply to spare you. We're going back to Maryland, Carla."

"*I can't, I can't,*" she thought, in pain.

"And if I won't go?" she said. It was a wild thing to say, but it said itself.

"If you *what?*"

She did not answer, and Ken said, "Quite a remark for a bride. Quite. I think I'll pretend I didn't hear it."

They had begun to walk back. "The first thing I ever asked of you," Carla said bitterly.

"Why didn't you ask for my right eye?"

"I hate cheap, melodramatic talk."

"All right, it was melodramatic. But it wasn't cheap; it was true. Asking me to throw away everything I've worked for to gratify your whim."

"My *whim?* What deep understanding you have! I'm really moved by it."

So it went. Sharper and more dangerously sharp, all the way to the house and to their room, to the lacquered beds which had been Carla's since childhood. At last, in the darkness, exhausted silence. And, very late, sleep.

Their first quarrel. And not two weeks before it they had stood together in the radiant church. . . .

They made up, of course, although not easily, for it was not in either of them to be humbled. When, in the morning, Ken came to Carla with all the wonder and marvel of their beginning together, so that the hurt was covered, it was still not entirely covered.

"Darling," he said. "I'm so ashamed. Yesterday, of all days, to have talked like that—"

For a jubilant moment Carla thought, "He is going to stay—we're going to stay at Mallow Hill."

But he only said, "Won't you be happy, Carla? You'll make a home in Pawling. After a while you'll forget all this—"

She thought, "I am yours; I love you, and I will do my best for you, but I shall never forget."

"If it's your mother you're concerned over," Ken said, "we could have her live with us."

Carla thought gratefully, "He is so good. No man wanted a mother-in-law in his house, yet Ken had made the offer, and he had meant it."

"No," she said, "no, darling. Mother's got Mallow Hill. It's a part of all of us who've lived here. And, anyway, Mother and I have never been very close. Just two awfully different people. That wouldn't be a solution."

"Your mother is a remarkable woman," Ken said then.

She would have thought he was being ironic, if irony had been in him, but it was not, and she replied, "Remarkable? Sweet, yes. And kind, of course. But hardly remarkable."

She had spoken the small disparagement with fondness, yet Ken looked curiously disapproving. "The sweetness and kindness are just what I find remarkable."

"Well, I'm glad," Carla said vaguely, not understanding his persistence. And she thought how odd it was that Ken should like her mother, when she had been the one—although Ken did not

She thought, "I am yours; I love you, but I shall never forget"

know it—who had been reluctant about the marriage, heaven only knew why. Doris Mallow was a reticent person, and Carla hadn't been able to get at any reason other than a vague, "Why hurry it so, why not wait a little?"—which was no reason at all. . . .

By midmorning they were packed and ready. Doris was downstairs to see them off, her face quiet above the gray woolen collar.

Apparently, then, she didn't intend to continue in mourning. Of course, Carla thought, raving and ranting were no proof of anything, yet somehow she felt that Doris was not as much affected by Vin's death as she was, herself. Some people's nerve ends were more immune to stimuli, that was all.

"I'd put the top down if I were you," Doris said cheerfully. "There won't be much more sun like this till spring."

They kissed, quite calmly, and Ken admonished, "Now, get some rest, and when you feel like it, come visit us."

He started the car; they rolled down the drive, past the startle-white of asters against green, past the dark, fern-rimmed pool and the rabbit hutch. "There were fat, gray rabbits here when I was a little girl. I fed them spinach," Carla said.

She sat back quietly; the car went through the great gates and onto the highway. Mallow Hill was gone. They passed Douglas's stone cottage, the club, where she'd had her first party, her first angelic French dress. Patsy's Clam Bar, where she went after the movies. All her young life . . .

"Sleepy?" Ken asked.

"A little."

"Put your head on my shoulder, then."

Carla obeyed. But she was not sleepy; her memory was wide awake. So many things to remember, now when she was saying good-by to everything. All the good days at Mallow Hill, birthdays, the sailboat, week ends home from boarding school. And bad days, too.

THE time she had come close to dying. She thought of that. Of Mother and Douglas speeding her to New York in the middle of the night. It had been a holiday and the surgeon they wanted had been away. So they had called Vin by long distance and, although he had been on a very important political week end, unable to get to her, he'd moved heaven and earth by telephone. He'd routed the surgeon from his fishing camp, got special nurses, two to a shift, the best suite in the hospital. Vin knew everyone, could do anything.

Then Mother and Uncle Douglas had sat there for three whole days, Mother not leaving to sleep until the doctor commanded her. But no one had been able to rouse Carla even to a smile. Until Vin had come.

That was the fourth day, and life had come rushing back with him. He'd carried orchids, an incredible basket of them, so that the nurses on the floor had come to marvel, and real-lace bed jackets, perfume. All with that lavishness, that joy.

Old, forgotten things. The first heartbreak, so childish now, so tragic then. She had been fifteen and a boy she had been crazy about had taken her to a dance. But he had left her there for another girl, and Carla had gone home alone in a taxi at one in the morning.

All the rest of the night her mother, who had heard her come in, had sat in the room while Carla wept, uncomforted. Doris never knew what to say. She'd brought cocoa and a sandwich, had hung the pathetic party dress away, and sat again quietly until Carla had fallen asleep.

But when Vin heard about it in the morning he had only laughed, and Carla, feeling somewhat better after her rest, had laughed with him.

"Tell me, do any of your friends have fur coats?" he had asked, and when she had answered that they were too young, he'd said, (*Continued on page* 115)

1875-1900: Cold | 1900-1925: Warm | 1925-1950: Hot | 1950-1975: Cool

How the author sees feminine fashions changing through the weather cycle of a century. . . the styles of the gay nineties, he says

Forecast—Cool and

MANY of us have been frightened by the trend of the world in recent decades. Civilization has seemed to be sick. All around the globe people have been so obsessed with "security" and so listless about their independence that they have allowed themselves to fall into the grip of dictators.

Our music has become shrill, our art crazy, and our morals decadent. It has been a neurotic age high-lighted by depressions, dictators, and droughts.

Many people are asking, "What is the world coming to?" Science now has some answers to that question. In the past 20 years we have discovered and perfected a method for peering into the future. This is based, not on crystal gazing, but rather on the forecasts made by astronomers and meteorologists of basic shifts that are scheduled to take place in the world's climate. We now believe we know what patterns of human behavior tend to go with any given climatic condition.

What we see in the future—on the basis of projected weather trends—is a world utterly different from that you have known during the past quarter-century. We are entering a period in history where the Rugged Individual will again come into his glory. There will soon be a great democratic revival. People everywhere in the coming decades will be cherishing their freedom above security. Dictators—including those in the Kremlin—are in for a very rough time.

We are coming into a period of old-fashioned prosperity, old-fashioned ways of living, strict, old-fashioned virtues. Also, we're coming into a lot of old-fashioned winters. The long-range weather forecast now is "cool and wet" followed by "cold and dry." These are just a few of the exciting things in store for us because of the great shift that is now starting to take place in the world's weather conditions.

The world's weather shapes our destiny, and our day-to-day behavior, in ways we never suspect.

Cool weather makes us more energetic, while prolonged hot weather drains our energy, makes us lethargic and irritable. Scientists have found that people in cool climates tend to be more vigorous, more persistent, more democratic, more alert, more resistant to oppression, and more ruggedly individualistic than people in uncomfortably warm climates. On the other hand, people living in hot climates

WHETHER OR NOT

Since the war, rapid strides have been made in the science of long-range weather forecasting. The Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., has had surprising results in predicting weather conditions as far ahead as a year, and commercial weather services have been supplying advance seasonal information to farmers and businessmen.

For 20 years Dr. Wheeler has studied the weather and its influence on human behavior, and is widely consulted by commercial weather services. Only time can tell how many of his prophecies will come true. But whether or not you believe them, you'll be fascinated by his picture of your future.

The Editor

A weather prophet tells your fortune for the next 50 years. He foresees Grandpa and Grandma coming into their own—with plenty of old-fashioned winters, straight-laced bodices and virtues, ornate homes, fancy needlework, and sporty beards

by Raymond H. Wheeler, Ph.D.

DIRECTOR OF CLIMATE RESEARCH, WEATHER SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Frilly

tend to be more quarrelsome, more susceptible to despots, more inclined to sensual pleasures, more cruel, more given to acts of impulse.

People living at the extremes of climate —either hot or cold—are bound to be primitive and backward—at least, until air conditioning reaches the tropics and subarctic.

Coolness is not the only requirement for high human vitality. It's also important that the weather be fairly wet, stormy, and changeable throughout the year. Most of the U.S. qualifies on all these counts, which is one reason why Americans are known throughout the world as "go-getters."

Most of us don't realize it, but in America and elsewhere our climate undergoes profound changes. Sixty years ago, when it was much colder in America, Lake Mendota in Wisconsin regularly froze solid with ice five months of the year. In recent decades the ice has sometimes remained only two months.

The amount of rainfall in many areas also fluctuates tremendously. Twenty-four centuries ago the inland Caspian Sea was believed to be 265 *feet higher* than it is today. That was about the time of the Golden Age in Greece. Then, during the terrible droughts that came to a climax in the fifth century A.D., the level dropped to 45 feet less than it is today. These droughts caused hordes of Asiatic peoples to sweep toward Europe. To ward off such migrating hordes a fort was built at the edge of the Caspian. Today that fort is 18 miles from the shore!

Our climate not only undergoes changes, especially in the temperate zone, but does so at fairly regular rhythms. These rhythms are due in part to the known cycle in sunspot activity. When tides in the sun's gaseous surface bring electrical disturbances to a peak on an average of every 11.2 years, we have cool, cloudy weather.

Astronomers may have found an even more basic long-range cause of climatic cycles in the changes in the earth's orbit around the sun. When the earth follows a fairly circular orbit, it is close to the sun all year round and enjoys a very warm climate. When, however, the earth gradually moves into an oval orbit, it is far away from the sun much of the year. Winters become longer. At the extremes, we go into ice ages.

Weather doesn't just happen. As the earth spins through space, air tides ripple across the earth's surface. We believe that these north and south air tides are produced by variation in the gravitational pull of the moon in much the same way that tides and currents are produced in our oceans. And just as the U.S. Navy works out tables charting the ocean's tides and currents for a year in advance, our astronomers are now calculating the world's weather a year in advance.

The tides coming from the north carry cold, dry air, and those from the south carry warm, moist air. By charting where the two air masses will collide each day, meteorologists can forecast where windstorms will occur. And as these warm, moist air fronts from the south are chilled by mixing with the cold air from the north, their moisture condenses. We get rain.

Twenty years ago, while I was directing the Psychology Department at the University of Kansas, I became puzzled by evidence of recurring waves in human behavior. People all through recorded history seemed to behave startlingly different during the first part of a 100-year period than they did during the latter part. During the first part of this 100-year cycle there was a great burst of energy, and people tended to think in terms of *wholes*. They worked out universal laws and tried to build universal empires under strong, firm-handed leaders. During the latter half of the cycle empires tended to crumble, and tyrants were overthrown as people stopped putting the state above the individual.

In this latter phase the emphasis in thought was on the *individual parts* of the whole. Here the great blows for human freedom and individual rights were invariably struck. Any wars were usually rebellions or civil (nation-crumbling) wars.

I could draw curves charting my strange cycle in human behavior. But for the life of me I could not explain *why* this rhythm in human affairs existed.

My big clue came accidentally. At a scientific meeting one night I related my problem. A zoologist on the Kansas faculty asked me if I had heard a guest lecture given at the university a few weeks before by Dr. Andrew E. Douglass of the University of Arizona. I confessed I had not. Douglass, I was told, had been charting the ups and downs of climate for the past 3,000 years by measuring the ring growth of giant old California sequoia trees over 30 centuries old.

I was told that Douglass had discovered a long-range climate cycle which seemed to have much in common with my cycle in human behavior. I hastened to investigate Dr. Douglass's tree-ring curves. Point for point in history, the similarity of great spurts of growth in tree rings and great spurts of growth in nation building was astonishing.

We seemed to be on the brink of a fundamental (*Continued on page* 74)

AN AMERICAN SHORT SHORT STORY COMPLETE ON THESE PAGES

BY JEROME BRONDFIELD

the top

SHE sat on the bandstand, waiting to sing her next number, smiling graciously as the dancers came by or as they swayed rhythmically in front of her without moving from the spot. Mostly it was the younger crowd who did that, the college kids who lost each other momentarily to stand in fascination watching the leader and his glamorous entourage —Tony Davis, his orchestra, his trio, and lovely Julie Drew.

A little more than an hour, she reflected, and it would be all over. The end of a dream. She glanced at a table on the terrace. The Crystal Room of the Merrick House was jammed as usual, but she was able to pick him out immediately. He looked up at almost the same instant and waved gaily.

If it was telepathy, she thought, it certainly made sense. Herb was going to take her home in the morning. He had driven 300 miles to New York to take her back to Clairville, and that would be the end of it. And the beginning.

The band went into a novelty tune and Julie stepped to the mike. She gave it a lot of bounce, and they loved it. Looking around, she tried to catalogue the sights and sounds in a way that would leave them filed securely in some special recess of her mind. Not to be heard and seen again, but not to be forgotten, either. . . .

The two years flooded back rapidly. A vacation trip to New York and a contact through a friend of her uncle's had gotten her an audition with Tony Davis.

She'd admitted to him, laughingly, that she'd sung only at high-school dances or beach parties for the gang, and he'd probably chase her back to Clairville on the first train. But he was a pretty good sport and told her to go ahead, sing a couple of numbers.

Next thing she knew, Julie Drew was Tony Davis's new vocalist, and the purple dreams began rising out of nowhere. Julie Drew was on her own special dreamboat to excitement and glamour and famous places—New York, Miami, Chicago, Hollywood. Julie Drew on radio and Julie Drew on records. Maybe even the movies.

She remembered Herb's bewildered expression when she'd broken the news to him. Herb was a successful young lawyer with a future. "It's my big chance, darling," she'd pleaded. "I just *can't* turn it down. I think it would sort of haunt us if I did, as though we'd both been responsible for my having missed something. Know what I mean, darling?"

He'd known. He was too sweet and honest not to have known. He'd put up an argument, of course, but finally he nodded and said, "Okay. Take a whack at it, a good whack at it." And then, simply and with no dramatics, he'd told her how it ought to be.

"Let's understand this thing thoroughly, however. I love you. You know how much. And I'm willing to sit here in little old Clairville while you try it out." Then he'd held up two fingers soberly. "But we'll set a limit. Two years. Two years, and you'll be the judge. If you think you've hit the top by then, or if the top is only one rung away—" He'd paused, then said quietly, "Well, that'll be that, Julie, because I don't think we ought to get involved in one of those conflicting career things."

Then there'd been his warning: "No false illusions, though, Julie. I know Tony Davis is pretty good. He's got a fair enough name and reputation, but he's no Dorsey, no Lombardo or Cugat. Maybe he'll be your rainbow trail, and maybe he won't. It isn't always the talent, Julie. It's the breaks and the way things can be set up for you."

She'd given it everything she had, but Herb had been right. Tony Davis was good but not sensational. And there'd been no rainbow trail. Just some pretty good hotel and night-club engagements, a few hit recordings, and their share of the theater dates, college proms, and one-night stands. It had still left her a few rungs short of the top. . . .

She adjusted the mike and sang an old favorite, *Begin the Beguine*. Over the dancers' heads she saw Barney Raymond, the hotel's general manager, having a drink with a friend. They were seated a few tables closer than Herb. A good egg, Barney. Always treated a band swell. She'd miss him and a lot of other nice people in the business.

Always before, it had been something remote and detached, something that *could* happen, of course, and yet couldn't. Not really. But now that it was over, the final minutes at hand, she began for the first time to experience the faint fluttering of mixed feelings. She fought it quickly. There must be no such mixture. Herb had given her the chance she wanted. He'd been more than fair.

She searched him out again, found the dark features, the nice line of nose and chin. She heard of the things people had said when she'd left: that she was luckier than any girl had a right to be; Herb Baker was a fool to wait two years; she didn't deserve him.

There'd been other things which, fortunately, she'd been able to shrug off. Things which Herb deliberately kept his ears closed to. Things that had to do with girls who went off to sing with dance bands. Talk. Clairville kind of talk. . . .

SHE stood up with the trio and carried the melody on a number from a new Broadway musical. Herb grinned and held up a thumb and forefinger, circled.

And then for a second she had an odd thought which had never occurred to her before. What if he regarded her, actually, as a failure? Would it make a difference? For an instant she felt a small twinge of alarm, but it came and went in a flash, dissolved by the single familiar gesture with his thumb and forefinger.

She needed no further proof. She'd had her two years, but she'd never have to consider herself a failure in his eyes. He loved her, and that was enough.

The whole thing was clear now, stripped of any shadowy doubts. Going back with Herb was not just a substitute, a second-choice letdown. It was what she wanted. It was the thing that counted most in her whole life. This was the top rung and she'd almost failed to grasp it.

The happiness suddenly drenched her completely, clingingly, like the dew on the lilacs back home and just as fragrant. She *was* lucky. Maybe she *didn't* deserve Herb Baker. Not because of any comparisons made in Clairville, but, the way she felt about him right then, few girls could deserve him.

rung

ILLUSTRATED BY CLYDE ROSS

For Julie, there was no one else in the room when she sang. Just Herb Baker

"I'm the luckiest girl alive," she told herself happily. . . .

After that, every number had a special lilt to it. Every phrase of every ballad seemed fresher, more meaningful. The young people smiled up at her, and if they thought her starry eyes were smiling back at them they were wrong. The line of focus was beyond them.

Once she noticed Barney Raymond and his friend. Barney raised his glass to her and blew a kiss.

Julie didn't think that final hour would pass soon enough. "It won't be hard going back to Clairville," she thought. "Not with Herb. And I'll deserve him. . . . I'll show them I deserve him."

Tony Davis had told her she could select her own final number. She made it *The Man I Love.* For her, there was no one else in the room when she sang. Just Herb Baker. When she finished she stepped off the bandstand and began to weave her way across the crowded floor.

Barney Raymond reached out a hand and made her sit down. "Julie, you were terrific out there. Meet Al Miller. I told him you were signing off for good tonight but he wanted to talk to you anyway. He's Denny Tyler's manager."

Denny Tyler . . .

Al Miller was smiling. "Denny needs a new vocalist," he began, "and if you're willing to listen, our search is probably over. I think you've got what we need and we'll give you two-fifty a week for it and a build-up that'll knock 'em dead. When can Denny hear you?"

Denny Tyler . . . Top rung . . .

Julie Drew stared at him. *Two-fifty a week and a build-up that'll knock . . .*

"Someone as young and lovely and talented as you," Miller was saying, "would be crazy to retire." He smiled. "Why, you're just *beginning* to sing."

SHE felt almost incapable of reply. Over Barney's shoulder she saw Herb. He was looking at her, his face glowing with delight and a bubbly sort of impatience, as though he could hardly wait until she broke away and came over to him.

She released her pent-up breath. Slowly she shook her head. "You're very sweet, but I don't think so. I honestly don't think I've got the voice for Denny Tyler—"

"Ridiculous," Miller snorted. "I caught your act last night and you were fine. Tonight you were terrific."

Her eyes lifted briefly over Barney's shoulder. She smiled. "Last night," she said, "I was weighing a decision. Tonight I was sure of it. Tonight I was singing to the man I love."

She got up then and left. Herb was standing, waiting. She held out her hands for him to take, and the music in her heart was a perfect obbligato to what she had sung.

Week Ends with God

PHOTOS BY BOB ISEAR

The author *(second from left) answers questions of retreatants at an Episcopal retreat for men on Long Island, N.Y. Father Arnold Ross (left) assists Father Hampshire at the retreat*

"The world has never seen anything like the present spontaneous desire on the part of so many men and women to seek spiritual renewal in religious retreats". . . A firsthand account of an amazing new way to faith and peace of mind in these harried times

by The Rev. W. Robert Hampshire

CHAIRMAN OF THE RETREAT COMMITTEE, AMERICAN CHURCH UNION

ON a Friday afternoon not long ago, a group of 20 prominent business executives boarded a train in New York for an unusual destination. They were not bound for a golf tournament, a fishing trip, or even a business conference. As one of them put it, they were off to spend "a quiet week end with God."

Their journey took the businessmen to a sequestered farmhouse in hill country 50 miles from New York. There, from Friday night until Monday morning, they sought spiritual re-creation through silent meditation, prayer, and other religious exercises. They read no newspapers, listened to no radios, played no golf or bridge, drank no cocktails. But not one of them was bored. When they returned to the city on Monday, each man felt he had undergone a highly refreshing and revitalizing experience.

These business executives comprised only one of hundreds of groups of men, and women, who are seeking new strength for facing life's problems by making religious retreats. Until only a few years ago the term was not even understood by many laymen, but today group religious retreats are being held in every state of the Union under the auspices of many different denominations.

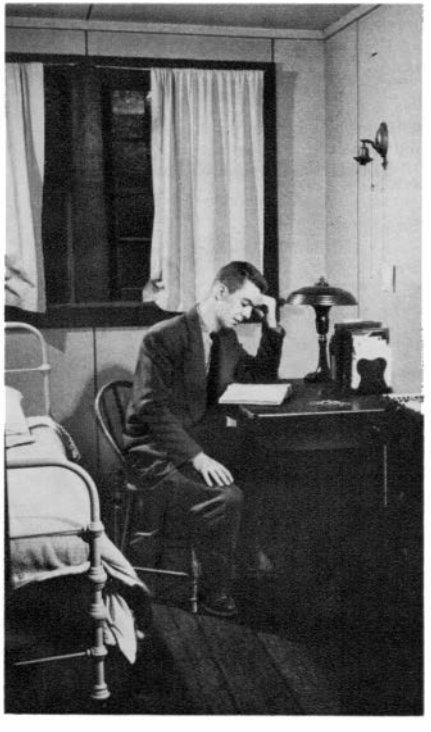
Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Quakers, Presbyterians, and Lutherans are most active in the movement, but clergymen and laymen of many other religious groups are taking up the idea, and retreats are increasing by leaps and bounds. Nobody knows just how many retreatants there are in the United States, but in all probability not fewer than 200,000 Americans now retire into monastic silence, prayer, and meditation for at least two days a year.

This is astonishing to many people, because the movement has developed almost spontaneously. There has been very little publicity about retreats and no

widely organized endeavor to get lay folk to attend them. The harried, feverish, insecure world in which we live has simply caused more and more people to observe Christ's council, "Come ye apart and rest a while with me." They have spread the story of their experiences by word of mouth and, like most of the great religious movements of the past, the retreat movement has come in "on dove's feet."

A businessman whom I will call John Davis is one of these voluntary missionaries of retreatism. The spiritual experiences he had during one week end with God changed his whole attitude toward life, and he never tires of telling other people about it. No two persons are ever affected in exactly the same way by making a retreat, but John Davis's experience may be regarded as more or less typical. So, to see what happens to people at retreats, let us look at this one man's case for a moment.

A man in his middle thirties, Mr. Davis had lost much of the fresh and zestful feeling he had once had for life. He worked hard, but having achieved a comfortable income, he felt that his work held little real interest for him and he was bored with the smart social crowd in which he moved. He felt he was drinking a bit more than was good for him for no sound reason, and sometimes life struck him as a tiresome merry-go-round—a meaningless repetition of work and worry and pleasure-seeking, money-making, and money-spending.



A week-end retreatant *studies a religious book in his assigned austere bedroom, furnished only with a bed, prayer desk, and dresser*

While he had been devout as a boy, he had not attended church regularly for years, and he was a bit amused when a friend first suggested a retreat for him. "I'm no Holy Joe," he said. After a psychiatrist failed to improve his outlook on life, however, he decided to try a retreat. He doubted that it would do anything for him, but he had a free week end and felt he had nothing to lose.

John Davis arrived on Friday evening at an attractive Episcopal retreat house tucked away in a wooded countryside. The establishment consisted of a dormitory, a refectory, and a small chapel surrounded by beautiful grounds. He was welcomed by the priest who was to serve as retreat conductor, introduced to 15 other men who also were making the retreat, and assigned to an austere little bedroom furnished with a bed, prayer desk, and dresser.

Silence started at supper that first night. The retreatants ate together, without speaking, at one large table, while the conductor read aloud from a religious book and explained the procedure of the retreat to them. They should all try to get a good night's rest, he said, because they would have to work during the next two days, and work very hard, if they were to get the most out of their week-end spiritual exercises.

After the meal, evening prayers were said and the retreatants moved into the chapel, lighted only by the candles at the altar, where Compline—the monastic service for those seeking slumber—was held. John Davis had not attended Compline since boyhood and the old Compline hymn awakened memories in him:

To Thee, before the close of day,
Creator of the world we pray
That with thy wonted favor, Thou
Wouldst be our guard and keeper now.

When he retired to his cell-like bedroom John felt different than he had felt in a long time. Perhaps it was that nostalgic hymn, or the candle-lighted chapel, or the silence, but the high-tempo world in which he lived seemed very far away. He knelt at the prayer desk and tried to pray, but he hadn't prayed for so many years that he felt self-conscious, and gave it up as a bad job. For a long time he lay awake wondering if it was possible for anyone as worldly and self-sufficient as himself to regain the simple religious faith he had once had.

After Holy Communion and breakfast the next morning, the real work of the retreat began—that of silent meditations. The conductor provided the fodder for these meditations. First of all, he told the retreatants, they must concentrate on purging themselves of sin and worldliness. In other words, they must kill their old selfish selves. They might find it helpful if they would reflect deeply on a single affirmative idea: "The old man must die."

John followed this suggestion. "The old man must die," he said over and over again to himself. "The old man must die."

It was hard work which required intense concentration. Time and again his thoughts would wander and he would have to force his mind back to contemplation of that one idea. Before an hour had passed, perspiration was rolling down his face but his earnest efforts brought results. After a while he found he was able to pray.

"Let the old man die," he asked God with deep sincerity. "Please, God, let the old man die."

By midafternoon a change started taking place in John. Kneeling in the chapel, he felt that God was listening to his prayers and was willing to let the old man inside of him die if he would confess his sins and make atonement for them. He sought out the priest-conductor, made confession, and received absolution. During this sacrament he did not feel that the priest was speaking at all, but that God was speaking through him, and when it was over he knew that a great burden had been lifted from his soul.

After that, John was hardly aware of his physical surroundings. He did not see the other retreatants. He was unaware of the food he ate. Although he was an inveterate smoker, he did not even want tobacco. He only knew that the old man within him was dead and now it was possible for him to take the next two steps which the retreat conductor prescribed for him: First, he must let God's healing light flow into his purged soul. Secondly, he must strive to make himself one with God.

During all the next day, John concentrated on meditations which have been used for centuries to achieve these results. Repetitive reflection upon the words of St. Paul, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," helped him wonderfully during this stage of his retreat, and eventually he was able to attain the extremely high form of contemplation practiced by St. Francis of Assisi.

Kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament, he said slowly over and over again to himself, "My Lord and my God." In those five words he found a degree of peace and (*Continued on page* 93)

Mike had one dream; Carol had another.

Unfortunately, they both collided with

the Galloping

BY ROSALIE F. WILSON

ILLUSTRATION BY F. SCOTT WOOD

CAROL MARCH opened the door to his office, closed it behind her, crossed the rug, and stopped in front of his desk, and suddenly Mike McKay had a crazy illusion that he wasn't in his office at all. He was in a nice Georgian house somewhere in Jersey or Long Island or maybe Westchester. On his feet were a pair of comfortable slippers and his teeth were clamped lovingly on his favorite pipe. At that particular point he didn't even own a pipe, but there it was in the daydream, life-size; from another room at the back of the house came the high-pitched but manly voices of his sons.

She had that effect on him.

He had noticed the phenomenon first when she came to be interviewed six months ago in response to a call for a secretary. It had, in turn, puzzled, intrigued, and finally fascinated him. He figured at last that it was responsible for his hiring her without discovering the extent of her typing ability, if any. For a few days he wondered uneasily whether he might be losing his mind, and then, with the discovery that she was capably efficient, he began to relax and enjoy the strange effect she had on him.

"There's a man outside to see you," she said. "Harry Smith sent him over."

Mike McKay was still in the Georgian house. "How do you like steak?"

Carol March blinked. "Just fine, thanks."

"You don't understand. If you had your choice of steak cooked any way at all, how would you choose it?"

"Oh!" She pondered that for a minute. "Cut three inches thick. Broiled over charcoal. Black outside. Raw in."

Mike beamed at her. This was an incredible girl. For six months every answer had been one he'd have made himself, if anybody had asked him those particular questions. He found himself pondering heavily on Fate. Clearly, it was something profound which had brought her into his life. In the whole six months she had given the wrong answer only once, but she apparently suffered a small stubborn streak, because Mike hadn't been able to change the answer, even with all the most irrefutable logic marshaled on his side.

For the twentieth time he reworded the question craftily: "Every girl wants to get married some day, doesn't she?"

"Are you conducting a poll?"

"Answer my question," he barked.

"I don't know every girl," she said, grinning at him. "I know Carol March, though, and March isn't going to marry anybody until she's proved that she can lick a career."

Mike dusted himself off and tried another tack: "You're the best secretary I've ever had. You've proved your point admirably. When do I pick up the license?"

Her eyes flashed scorn. "I'm talking about a real career. Some day I'm going to be one of the best-known publicity experts in the business."

"You make it sound hard," Mike told her. "It doesn't take brains."

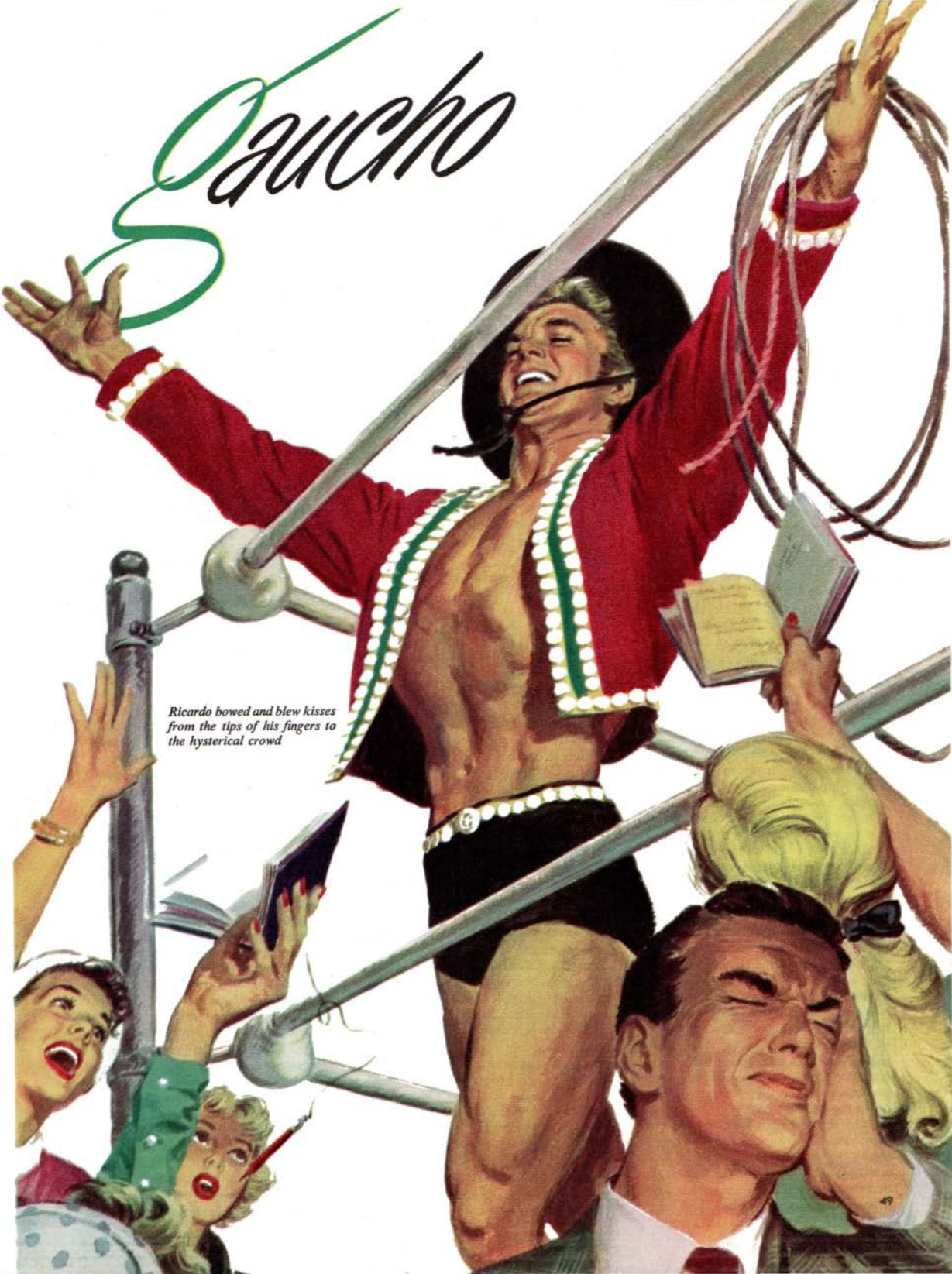
The dark eyes softened. "You've got brains, Mike. You've got everything."

"I've got all the stuff the ads warn you against."

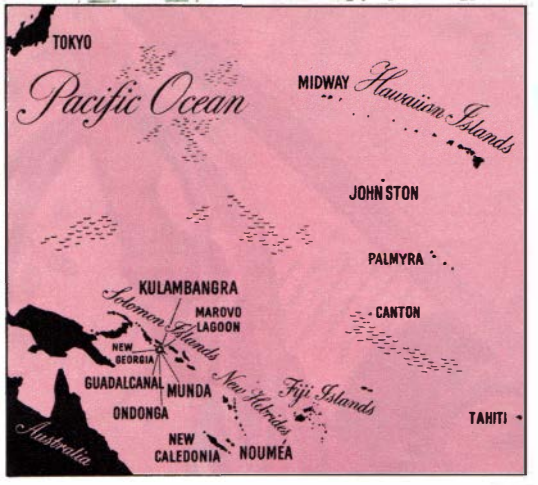
"You're my choice," she said, "but I've got to see what I can do before I settle down to the slow death of dustpans and diapers."

"You call this (*Continued on page 95*)

Gaucho



Ricardo bowed and blew kisses from the tips of his fingers to the hysterical crowd



The South Pacific area, where the author encountered grotesque beasts in the sea

I fish for monsters

Fishing dangerous? Nonsense, said this scientist and lifelong fisherman, as he set out to explore new food sources in the undersea jungles of the Pacific . . . Here's what he caught—adventures as exciting and hazardous as any on earth

by Wilbert McLeod Chapman

U.S. FISHERIES EXPERT AND SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

I AM a prospector in the world's biggest unexplored wilderness—the Pacific Ocean. The riches under this vast sea have barely been touched.

Today, with the world population mounting by millions, the pressing need is for protein food. There is no better source of this food than fish. Yet we have only begun to harvest the ocean crops. In the endless stretches of the tropical Pacific there is more protein food in tuna alone than all the grasslands of the United States can provide in the form of beef. Here in the ocean depths is a cash crop of tremendous size just awaiting the harvest.

Here, too, are some of the strangest creatures ever imagined. And here, among grotesque beasts of the undersea jungles, an explorer may encounter adventures as exciting and as dangerous as any on earth.

Since early in the war my job has been to explore this wilderness for the United States Government in search of new sources of food. Here I shall tell you about some of the queer things I have seen, and of the adventures I have had.

All my life I have been a fisherman, and so was my father before me. I not only love to fish for the fun of it, but I have made a living out of fishing.

I liked it so well that when it was time to go to college I enrolled in the School of Fisheries at the University of Washington and became a trained ichthyologist. For ten years after that I worked professionally in the fisheries up and down the Pacific Coast.

Early in the Pacific war, the Government decided to send a fisheries expert out to the wars to set up small fisheries at the forward bases in the Pacific, so that the boys could have something fresh to eat, along with their canned and dehydrated rations. I was chosen for the job.

As a result I spent more than a year roaming from base to base setting up fisheries—Midway, Palmyra, Canton, Johnston, the Fijis, New Caledonia, New Hebrides, the Solomons, and so on. The things that happened to the Fishery Mission would not, in a righteous world, be permitted to happen to a dog—but we did find fish and discover how to catch them. We stumbled upon a veritable El Dorado in the South Seas.

ALONG the way we found other things. As a scientist I started out thoroughly skeptical of the thrilling stories about sharks, eels, man-eating clams, poisonous snakes and fish that were supposed to live in the South Seas. I returned with some of my best theories turned topsy-turvy.

In the Solomons, for example, we worked from a 75-foot fishing vessel that was home for us ten—five whites from stateside and five Solomon Islanders fresh out of the bush. One evening we came to a cove on the south shore of Kulambangra. After the ship was anchored and secured there was still a little daylight left. I rowed over to the reef, went into the water with goggles over my eyes to collect fish, and thoroughly enjoyed the respite from the hot day's work. My black native guardian stood by nervously in the skiff, complaining bitterly to me that I should come out of the water, because crocodiles came there in the dusk to feed.

"Nuts!" I told him. "Crocodiles stay up creeks in fresh water. You never find them in the pure salt water near the coral."

I was thoroughly disgusted by his nervous chattering, and it was not until the last light was gone that I finally came out of the water and went back to the ship with him. While we were eating evening chow the natives called us up on deck. There in the dark along the reef where I had been swimming a few minutes before were the twin red eyes of a croc. We shot it and brought it aboard. It was eight feet long.

The still twitching beast stood on deck and would not die. He roared and he grunted. He snapped his great jaws together and his teeth snicked like castanets. Every time he did this my knees quivered at the thought of how easily he could have torn the legs off me in the water. To this day the sight of a big crocodile sends chills down my spine.

From this time on I began to pay some heed to my natives.

The wide, bare, outer reef that forms Marovo Lagoon near Segi on New Georgia Island was our fishing ground for a time. One day my partner, Harlan Cheyne, and I were swimming along its outer face scouting underwater for fish. We had on our goggles, and in the transparent water that bathed the kaleidoscopic coral we could see nearly as well as in the air above.

We would swim along until our air gave out, surface for quick breaths, then go under again for another search along the bottom. When we spotted a school of fish we would call to the natives, and they would come with the nets to surround them. To a man from northern seas it sounds like a peculiar way to catch fish in commercial quantities, but it worked, and that is all that a fisherman asks of a way of fishing.

As I crawled along the bottom, going from handhold to handhold so that I didn't have to fight my buoyancy to keep down, my shoulder bumped against a coral head. It snapped shut with a thud that was clearly heard under the water. It startled me. This was the first time that a coral head had ever tried to bite back! I surfaced at once, called to Cheyne, and, when my nerves had settled down, we went under again to see what this was.

It was not a coral head at all, but a clam!

It didn't make sense. Anybody from northern seas instinctively knows that it is not possible for a clam to do any damage to a man. A clam is something you dig with a shovel and throw into the chowder pot by the dozen.

NEVERTHELESS, this *was* a clam. A clam 3 feet long and 2 feet high, and it must have weighed more than 200 pounds. It was firmly cemented to the coral, and although both of us pushed against it as hard as we could to roll it over, it was as immovable as the rock under it.

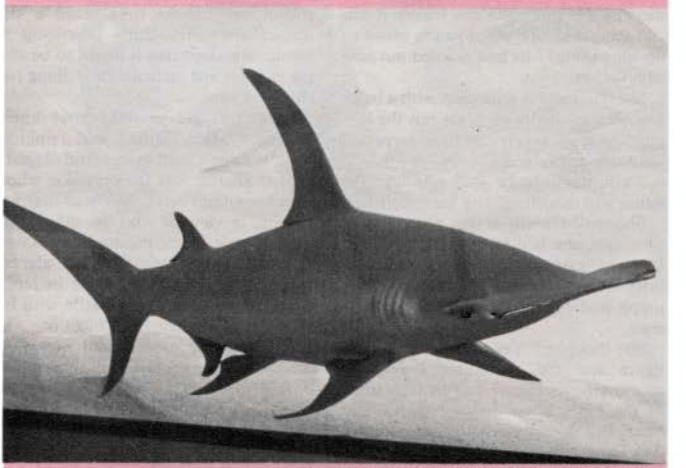
When we left it alone for a few minutes it opened again. The opening was a full 8 inches wide. The edges of the shell along the opening were corrugated, like the jaws of a Stillson wrench. When the beast was open and relaxed you could look down the open siphon, which was a hole larger than your fist could fill, and see the internal workings of the thing.

Cautiously we pushed a big stick of coral, half as thick as your wrist, down the siphon. At the first touch the animal smashed shut its shells and crushed the heavy stick of coral to bits as easily as if it were a straw.

In the immediate area where we were swimming we counted 11 of these giant clams, some larger than the first one, some a little smaller. When you knew what you were looking for, the bright blue and purple mantles were plain as could be; but (*Continued on page* 113)

Moray eel: *"Lurking in coral reefs, moray eels are completely harmless." So thought the author until a moray nearly tore off the arm of a friend*

Giant clam: *It could easily snap off the arm of this little boy or the leg of a grownup. These clams average 3 feet long, weigh hundreds of pounds*



PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Hammerhead shark: *The author had one of these man-eating undersea beasts, measuring 25 feet long, bite a 60-pound tunafish right off his line*

Spring Showing

To Sharon the glamorous wedding dress was a reproach and a reminder. Here is a dramatic story of a model bride whose greatest failure had been as a wife

BY SARAH-ELIZABETH RODGER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM LOVELL

SHARON printed her name neatly as she wished it to appear on the program—*Sharon Evelyn Mackie*. Then she accepted the cigarette one of the girls offered her and tried to hide her inner panic behind its drifting smoke.

"I don't belong here," she thought miserably. "I should never have told Jim I'd been asked." She was paying a heavy penalty for that moment of pride. She should have known from the beginning that Jim would insist on her accepting the committee's invitation.

"How can you possibly expect to meet people and make new friends if you run away and hide when you're asked to do something?" he had pointed out sensibly to her.

She had met his argument with a helpless silence, unable to blurt out the disquieting fears which cast their perpetual shadows on her heart.

"You ought to be glad you have the figure for modeling," he reminded her.

She smiled faintly at that. Once, a long time ago, she had felt the usual purely feminine exultation in the slim, clean lines of her body, but now the small triumph had changed to a numb indifference.

She thought, "Yes, it's a nice enough figure and the committee knows by measurements that it will fit into some of the Paris originals no one else can wear. But does that matter, essentially? Am I any more good to Jim than I was before?"

"Very well, if you like," she had agreed quietly.

She remembered his half-puzzled, half-gratified look. She was glad he would still be away the afternoon of the showing. If she were congealed by fear, if she stumbled on the runway, at least Jim wouldn't see her.

"You'd better all try on the bride's dress," said Miss Edwina Tiernan briskly, "so we can see who looks best in it. There's not much time left, you know."

Sharon knew very well. The sands were slipping inexorably away.

She glanced at the others and envied their composure. Not one of them had shown nervousness or faltered a step during the afternoon's practicing to music. She conceded it ought to be simple enough, the mere act of walking to a rhythmic tune.

"Don't forget to relax your knees, Sharon," Miss Tiernan had reminded her. "We don't want to seem stiff-legged."

We! Sharon was the only one whose knees wouldn't relax. Nor was that surprising, in view of who the other three models were. Terry Preston's looks were familiar to anyone who had glanced through American magazines in recent years. She was having a battle with her weight, but her face hadn't lost one whit of its smooth, professional prettiness. And Terry knew when to flash her lively dark eyes, when to part or moisten her beautifully molded lips, when to smile.

But there was something beyond the poise of the professional model. "She looks as though she were loved very much," thought Sharon, with an ache of longing.

Sharon walked toward the thin young man as far as the runway would let her

Cynthia Moffat was still practicing her walk up and down the runway, humming under her breath.

"That's very good, Cynthia," approved Edwina Tiernan. "I must say no one would ever believe you have a baby four months old."

"Scales, tape measure, and massage," said Cynthia lightly. "That's all it takes."

The other girls smiled. Everyone knew Cynthia's will power, Cynthia's perseverance, Cynthia's incredible standards. When Fergus Moffat took the next step up the diplomatic ladder, and rumor had it that it would be soon, he could thank Cynthia, the perfect wife.

"She has that deadly sureness," Sharon decided impartially. "She'd never miss a step even if the orchestra skipped a bar of music."

The fourth model had neither Terry Preston's luscious prettiness nor Cynthia Moffat's calm certainty, but she didn't need any props. She was Dorcas Llewellyn Forbes, and that was enough assurance for anyone.

Sharon supposed the knowledge of possessing that many millions must act as a buffer between Dorcas and the rough edges of life.

"She's here because she wants to be," thought Sharon, "and only as long as it amuses her. She hasn't a beautiful figure, actually, but she wears clothes well." Why not? Dorcas was used to the best, and thirty years of dressing superbly left its mark on a woman.

"Remember that you girls are the mainstay of the showing," said Edwina Tiernan. "The others will fill in as we need them, but the committee is depending on you as our four principal models. For heaven's sake, don't go skiing and break a leg; don't get colds; and don't arrive that afternoon weighing one ounce more than you do now!"

"How cynical you sound today, Edwy dear," said Dorcas Forbes in her deep, amused voice. "As if you didn't trust us."

"As if we'd dare take an extra bite between now and Thursday," murmured Cynthia, shuddering delicately. "We have to hold our breath already to close those zippers."

Terry Preston laughed and said she was glad the designer who had created her number had had charitable impulses toward bosoms and hips.

"That doesn't mean you can allow yourself any more leeway, darling," said Edwina crisply.

Terry made a pretty, disrespectful little face at her.

"All right, kiddies, into the dressing-room again and we'll decide who is going to play the sweet young bride," said Edwina.

"This is where I bow out," murmured Dorcas Forbes. "To say nothing of my checkered past, I'm just not the type. I never was, even two husbands ago."

Edwina agreed with her. "I guess it's a case of Terry, Cynthia, or Sharon, but I don't think Terry can fit into the dress."

"Nothing's wrong," she said. "Except that you are another woman's husband"

"I certainly can't," Terry admitted. "Why don't we let Cynthia and Sharon toss a coin?"

Sharon made a polite negative little sound in her throat. She felt another surging of panic at the thought of walking to the wedding march.

"I can't," she said in a smothered voice as Edwina slipped the dress over her head.

"You must," remarked Cynthia Moffat coldly. "It fits you best, and anyway I don't want to be the bride. It's silly, when I have two children and everyone in Geneva knows it."

Her attitude made it quite clear, however, that Sharon was winning by default.

"Then that's settled," said Edwina. "You look sweet, Sharon. There's no reason to feel shy. Besides, the bride winds up the fashion show and people will be getting up to leave. It won't matter a bit if your veil is twisted or little Virginia Ayers drops your train. Just relax, and don't worry."

"Please," began Sharon desperately, "I —"

"Nonsense; you'll be simply lovely. Don't be silly." Edwina made a note for the printer: "Bride—Sharon Evelyn Mackie," then closed her brief case.

"Tea is now in order," she said, "but go easy on the pastry."

"Yes, Teacher," mocked Terry gently. "Aren't you going to stay and enforce your regulations?"

Edwina flushed. "Sorry; I can't today. I have to go back to the office for a while."

"B.J. is such a slave driver," commented Dorcas Forbes comfortably. They all knew he couldn't drive *her;* she wasn't that sort of wife. "Well, remember me to him, Edwy. Tell him to get home early one of these nights, or he'll find I've fled to Cannes or Monte Carlo."

EDWINA nodded and hurried off, a trim, angular figure in her good tweed suit.

"She always reminds me of an Englishwoman," remarked Cynthia. "Do any of you know how old she is?"

"What a horrible topic," murmured Terry.

"Of course I know. I asked B.J. once," said Dorcas lazily. "She's just past thirty, if that tells you anything. The trouble with Edwy is that she's too conscientious."

Sharon seldom added her bit to the comments of the others, but now she came loyally to Edwina's defense: "She was the oldest of a big family, you know. She had a lot of responsibility when she was very young."

"Oh, Edwy's a good skate," Dorcas said carelessly. "We'd all be lost without her."

The four took their usual table in the almost empty dining-room of the hotel, and Dorcas beckoned the waiter.

"Tea's on me today," she told the others, "and you can forget what Edwy said about the pastry."

Cynthia, with her iron control, looked away when the alluring platter was passed. Terry moaned, but took one of the pastries. Sharon, whose weight always stayed the same, let Dorcas persuade her to take two.

It was the last rehearsal, and except for their final fittings at the dress house which was sponsoring the fashion show, the four models would meet again only on the afternoon the committee had selected for the American colony's benefit performance. The charity was a worthy one—educational equipment for the children of D.P.'s—but, aside from that, most of the American women living in Geneva relished the excuse for a spring social event.

SHARON refused a second cup of tea, thanked Dorcas Forbes, and said she must catch the 6:15 train to Versoix.

"I'll give you a lift if you like," offered Cynthia Moffat. "I can't think how you stand it out there, not driving."

Sharon explained rather lamely that she had one or two errands to do on the way to the station, that she didn't mind the slow, local tramway, and that after all Versoix was only a matter of five miles or so from Geneva.

Cynthia shrugged. The others said good-by indifferently, and Sharon made her escape.

On the busy street outside the hotel she drew a deep breath of relief and hurried toward the station. She was always eager to leave the rehearsals and the three girls in whose presence she never felt thoroughly at ease, and reach the sanctuary of her quiet, empty chalet. She smiled faintly at herself. She had nothing to go home to but the half-grown cat which Monsieur Delacour, the baker, had given her. Pierrot, the cat, did not even understand English, but his presence was unobtrusively pleasant. He would purr around her ankles while she picked up his dinner and her own, and afterward lie on the hearthrug before the fire Sharon built to ward off the chill of the spring evenings.

The train made its leisurely way along the curve of the Lake of Geneva, stopping at every small, covered shelter en route. After Genthod-Bellevue, there was Creux de Genthod, and, in a matter of minutes, Versoix.

Many people left the train at Versoix, mostly men with newspapers under their arms, a few with brief cases. Sharon heard American voices as she started her long climb up the hilly road above the station:

"For a moment I thought the engine was going to conk out on me. Golly, was I glad to set her down on the strip!"

That would be one of the pilots on the Geneva-to-New-York run. Sharon smiled as he nodded and said "Hi"; but she hurried on before he could stop her.

His voice carried to her in the crisp evening air long after she had passed: "She's one of our little bunch of parked wives. Switzerland is their hangout."

Her breath caught an instant in her throat. He had put it well—*parked wives.* She wasn't the only one. Jim traveled all over Europe on his special job as an economist on one of the committees of the United Nations. But so did many of the other husbands. B. J. Forbes was an important official of a refugee organization; he made frequent runs over the circuit of D.P. camps, and was occasionally called back to the States for conferences. Cynthia Moffat's Fergus, the up-and-coming lad in the American Consulate, had been sent to Paris, Rome, and even to Washington. Terry Preston's husband was a foreign correspondent for a New York newspaper, and though Geneva was his headquarters, he flitted over Europe like a dragonfly.

There were dozens of others, wives of American businessmen on European assignments, army wives who sometimes crossed over from Germany for a change of air or emotional climate, wives of young Protestant clergymen dedicated to social-service missions. Sharon knew dozens of the sisterhood by sight if not by name. Of the many, there were a few she had enough of an acquaintance with to phone and invite to share her lonely dinner.

"As one parked wife to another," she murmured to herself with gentle irony, "why don't we do something? Go to an English-speaking movie, hear some good music, turn on the radio to the Voice of America, or even settle ourselves for an evening of slanderous gossip?" There was no reason for standing apart in her special vacuum of detachment, no reason to section herself off from the others as lonely as she; yet even while she conceded that Sharon Evelyn Mackie belonged to the sorority, she burrowed farther into her cool cave of solitude.

PIERROT came slowly to meet her as she unlocked the door of the chalet.

"*Bon soir,*" she greeted him cordially. "Hello, my good little Swiss pussycat who reminds me of all the cats I ever knew in Iowa. How are you?"

Pierrot followed her to the small, dark kitchen, where she turned on the electric stove and took her veal chop out of the cold-cupboard which served as an excuse for a refrigerator. She moved gracefully, a small, slim girl with deft hands for working.

"One thing, Pierrot," she said dryly, "I was brought up to be useful."

She cut up his piece of liver into bite-sized morsels and served it to him on a cracked kitchen plate. He purred violently, then settled down to serious eating.

When she had finished cooking her own dinner, she put it on a tray and car-

ried it to the coffee table before the fireplace. There had been no letter from Jim in the empty box, but then she hadn't really expected one. She poked up a fire and sat beside it, eating slowly and with little enjoyment.

When she had cleared away, she took her French grammar and notebook and began a grimly determined study hour. Why was it that the French most Americans were taught in high school was of so little use abroad? She smiled at the memory of her teacher's accent, flat and Middle Western. Probably her own was equally bad.

She and Pierrot went upstairs to bed at ten o'clock, and she stood a long time on the wooden balcony outside her bedroom windows, staring at the full moon.

"*Au clair de la lune, mon ami Pierrot*," she sang softly under her breath, feeling the coldness of the moonlight, the terrible emptiness of the night.

THE words she had said to Jim as he went away: "We can't go on this way; both of us know it," echoed in her mind again. She thought despairingly that the place didn't matter; their marriage was as wrong in Geneva as it would be in the United States.

Her reason told her that what couldn't be mended was best ended, and quickly. That grave sadness in Jim's face whenever he looked at her gnawed at her conscience.

"Jim, we'll talk when you come back," she had told him hurriedly, wanting to forestall even for a little while the bitter admission of failure.

He had nodded, and in that moment there had been the tacit understanding between them that a milestone lay ahead in the path of his return.

She knew, and Jim knew, that she had married him only because Peter Ledyard had not wanted her. She stood convicted in her own heart, of the one intolerable failure no woman ever forgives herself: She had reached for her love and found the branch where it grew too high.

Peter Ledyard, voted the Man Most Likely to Succeed of his class at the university, had smiled on Sharon like the sun. For a year she had basked in the delicious warmth of being loved and approved. Then, with a terrifying abruptness, everything ended. Sharon's sun left the heavens. Peter Ledyard said good-by as decisively as he handled all the other departments of his life. His distant cousin, Irene Wales, returned from a women's college in the East, and within six weeks their engagement was announced.

"You know very well how I feel about you," Peter had told Sharon calmly on their last date. "But it isn't enough. Marriages based on strong physical attraction aren't safe or lasting, Sharon. I don't want that kind, do you?"

A silent cry had gathered painfully in

An American Storiette

All by myself

BY LAWRENCE WILLIAMS

ILLUSTRATION BY MARSHALL BOULDIN

SMITH DICKSON liked to tell his friends, "I want my son to have everything I didn't have. And that's what he's getting."

Smith's boyhood had been spent in a cold-water flat on the lower East Side; his son, Bruce, lived in a small palace in the country. The sound and touch of want were as remote from nine-year-old Bruce as from a medieval princeling.

On a Friday afternoon in September Bruce returned home from a two-month stay at a Wyoming ranch, his alert young face tanned by the Western sun.

"You look fine, son," his father told him proudly.

"Thanks, Pop," Bruce said. Then he grasped his father's hand. "Come on inside, Pop," he said. "I want to show you something—petrified wood, a whole bunch of it. I found it. I'll give you some. It's keen."

Smith smiled. "Keen?"

"That's what the kids out West say. Come on, Pop, please. I want to give you some."

It was not until after dinner that the cowboy outfit was mentioned. Bruce showed his father a well-fingered copy of an old magazine. On a page near the back, heavily marked in pencil, was a crudely drawn advertisement showing a boy, in full cowboy regalia, riding a bucking horse. Beneath the illustration was the legend: *Be a rootin' tootin' shootin' cowboy! Send for your original Rangebuster outfit today! Only $3.98 Complete!*

"That's going to be me," Bruce said solemnly, "after I get the outfit."

It always pleased Smith to have some specifically expressed wish of Bruce's to satisfy. "Well," he said, "perhaps we can do something about it. We might even find one you'll like better."

"No," Bruce said. "I like this one."

"But, Bruce," his father objected, "it wouldn't be any good. It would be shoddy. We'll see if we can't do better."

The next morning Smith drove to the best sporting-goods store in the

city and ordered a cowboy outfit. "As much like the real thing as you can find," he told the clerk. And in his mind ran the phrase, "Everything I didn't have—"

Delivery was promised in two weeks. . . .

About a week later, driving home from the station, Smith came upon Bruce dropping a letter into the mailbox at the bottom of the hill.

"Hello, son. Writing to some of your cowboy friends?"

"No," Bruce said. "I wrote for my cowboy outfit. I sent them the money."

"I see," Smith said quietly. "And where did you get the money, Bruce?"

The boy looked at his father, sensing his disappointment. "I earned it, Pop. I mowed lawns on Monday, and went to the store for Mrs. Keller Tuesday. And I helped Mr. Hansen clean out his cellar. Things like that . . ." he finished lamely.

Smith let the subject drop. He decided to wait until the boy had inspected the mail-order clothes before presenting him with the expensive outfit he had ordered. When, at the end of the stipulated two weeks, the outfit arrived from the sporting-goods store, Smith put it on a shelf in his bedroom closet to await the proper moment.

Two days later Bruce ran into the breakfast-room and in his hands he carried an oblong box, "It came, Pop!" he shouted.

Smith watched Bruce's eager fingers untie the string around his precious bundle, and he felt he had to say something more to protect his son from the bitter disappointment that was in store. "Remember, Bruce," he said, "you may not like it as much as you expect. It may—" But the package was open now. And Smith's heart sank.

The cowboy suit was everything Smith knew it would be, everything cheap and shoddy. It was everything Smith wanted to keep from his son. He turned quickly toward the stairs to get his gift from the closet, but Bruce's voice stopped him. The voice held a quality Smith had never heard before. "Boy," Bruce said, "this is keen!"

Bruce was staring at the third-rate cowboy suit with an expression of complete fulfillment. "And I got it all by myself," he said proudly. "I worked and got the money, and they sent it to me when I wrote. Boy!"

Smith hesitated for a moment; then he crossed to the boy and knelt down beside him. "It's just as wonderful as you thought it would be, isn't it?" He fingered the leather-type chaps and smiled at his son. "I think it's keen," he said.

her breast: "It was different for me because I loved you, Peter. I still love you. I wouldn't believe the evidence. I turned away when friends trying to be kind told me you were seeing her. I didn't listen to Jim; I fought him instead."

She looked mutely at Peter and said not a word.

"Be sensible, Sharon, and see this as I do. You and I simply don't match; we aren't right for each other."

She knew in one blinding moment what he meant—that the little girl from a red-brick orphanage hadn't enough to offer the eldest son of the Ledyard house. She couldn't contribute a penny's worth of prestige to the Ledyard Publishing Company or the Francis Ledyard Hotel or even the Ledyard & Sons Hardware Store.

What Peter was trying to tell her was that she had a beautiful body and he conceded it. Because of that ardent young flesh, to which he had responded in spite of himself, he had loved her carelessly and for a little while. But it wasn't enough. He had weighed it in the balance and found it wanting.

"Jim Mackie's a solid sort," Peter had said at last, the faintest note of uneasiness in his voice. "He's crazy about you. You could do a lot worse, Sharon. I know it's none of my business, but you two—"

Fair enough, she perceived bitterly, that Peter should want to arrange something for her. He wouldn't want to carry her on his mind. With one of his impulses of patronizing generosity, he had seen fit to underscore Jim's worth-whileness, his poor-boy stability.

"Thank you," were her last quiet words to Peter Ledyard. "There's nothing you could tell me about Jim that I don't know. He's my friend."

The break with Peter was final. Sharon sealed off the year of her life when he had loved her into a blank space far at the back of her memory. Eventually, inevitably, she married Jim Mackie.

"I want to teach, Sharon," he had explained honestly to her, "but this European assignment is too good to pass up. It would be a valuable experience to us both. What do you think? I won't accept unless you agree. Marry me and come along, darling. You won't regret it."

What was there to regret? She was leaving nothing behind but her stool at the desk of a city library, her small, uncluttered room at the girls' residence club, a few women friends who were careful never to mention the young Peter Ledyards to Sharon Grey.

She was proud of Jim's present career, as she had been proud of his hard-won record in economics. For a farm boy who had worked his way through the university, he had traveled a long, high road. There was no sense in either of them going it alone when a new horizon flashed before them. Of course, Sharon would marry him and fly to Geneva. What girl with her sealed-off past and her drab, predictable future wouldn't?

They were married quietly by a justice of the peace just before they took the train to New York. Sharon wore a new fall suit of emerald-green gabardine. She remembered irrelevantly in the middle of the ceremony that Peter Ledyard had always said she should wear green, with her honey-colored hair. She looked up guiltily at Jim as though he could sense her thought, but he stood there with his grave eyes fixed on the justice's florid face, a tall young man with wide, thin shoulders and no middle at all, a man who in the space of moments would be her husband.

Sharon remembered all these things as she lingered on her balcony in the chill March moonlight.

Her soft "*Au clair de la lune*" caught in her throat. She might as well have run a knife between Jim's shoulder blades as to have stood at his side that day and married him.

For the girl who had taken the train to New York and the plane to Geneva, the girl named Sharon Evelyn Mackie who was to wear the bride's dress in the fashion show, had given him a white-faced ghost for a bride. In some strange, frightening way, she had left her body behind. Peter had said, "It isn't enough. Marriages based on physical attraction aren't safe or lasting." From that moment, the pride a young woman feels in her strength and beauty seemed to dry within her.

All the while her body lay in its cold prison of detachment, her mind turned toward Jim in admiration, for she had kept her pride in him; she liked talking to him; she waited with eagerness to hear how his assigned missions had gone.

Quickly as she could release him from all legal responsibility for this wraith of a wife, she knew she could never blot out the hurt of the memory. When he came back and they said what they must say to each other, she could give him only an empty freedom, not surcease from pain.

"At least, you won't have to look at me as the bride," she thought bitterly. "That would be rubbing it in. Be glad you're in Paris, James, my dear. For a brilliant young economist, you have made a sorry bargain." . . .

On the other side of the lake, in Geneva, Terry Preston flicked through the pages of the newest American women's magazine which had come to her in the afternoon mail, and said in a voice which she tried to keep even and casual, "I guess I'm already a back number, Speed. These girls are kids, scarcely out of bobby socks! This sudsy-shampoo queen was posing for children's clothes when I started modeling, and now look at her."

He seemed not to hear her. Just as

well, she thought, for there were times when nostalgia for the pace and color of a model's life almost overshadowed her present contentment.

But Speed could type and absorb Terry's remarks at the same time. He pushed back his green eyeshade and grinned at her. "So what? You're still gorgeous and unforgettable. What's more, you're still modeling. Or doesn't the American gals' fashion show count?"

"Oh, that! It won't be bad, actually, and the tickets are selling like mad. But I'm having a tight squeeze zipping myself into model dresses these days. I'm about to be outshone by a bunch of scared ex-debutantes who never walked down a runway in their lives."

"Do tell," muttered Speed comfortably. "How do you know they're strictly amateur?"

"WELL, for one thing, Dorcas Llewellyn Forbes is of our little band," retorted Terry. "But of course you already knew that, news hound."

"I didn't. I depend on my wife to keep me up on the high-society doings of the American colony. What's she like? Upstage or regular?"

"Regular in a kind of careless buy-you-and-sell-you way. Sure of herself. She makes a good model because, though she isn't pretty, she wears clothes as though they were designed for her. Of course," added Terry dryly, "they usually are. She has a horse-faced distinction. I like her, sort of."

"I wonder if B.J. does. . . . No, you can skip that; it's just my nasty newspaper mind. Boyish gossip behind the printing presses."

"Of course he likes her. She's rich, powerful, and the perfect wife for him. Incidentally, if you're referring to Edwina Tiernan's crush on him, that's no news. Everybody knows it, including Dorcas. I'm sure she isn't losing any sleep over a typical secretary-loves-boss situation. Why should she?"

"I wouldn't know," murmured Speed, his fingers flashing over the keys of his typewriter.

Suddenly he stopped and said, "Hey, I almost forgot something. Get a couple of extra tickets for your fashion shindig, will you? Peter and Irene Ledyard are flying down from Paris tomorrow."

Terry looked surprised. "That means a big night out and some frantic shopping, of course. I wonder what Irene's collecting now; the last I heard it was after-dinner coffee spoons. Why do they want to come to Geneva, anyway, Speed? Cannes would be more her dish."

"Peter's a big-shot newspaper publisher now," said Speed with a grin. "Maybe he wants to absorb our international atmosphere. This is just the place to get caught up on world affairs in ten easy cocktail parties! We better have one for them."

"Oh, phooie," said Terry. But she reached for a pad and pencil.

"We'll ask Cynthia and Fergus Moffat, of course," she murmured. "They're always perfect with tourists. He has that cute, knowledgeable air and she backs him up like an expert. Then the B. J. Forbeses, if we can get them. There are plenty of bachelors around but we need extra girls, of course."

Speed went on with his article, while Terry pondered.

"*Sharon Mackie*," she announced triumphantly. "She's pretty and her husband's away and— Oh, Speed, this is perfect. She even comes from Iowa!" . . .

EDWINA had never been a fashion commentator before, but then she was one of those capable people who could turn their hands to anything. The committee had chosen her for her clear, low-pitched voice and for her fluent French. Each model was to be announced in French and English. That would please the members of the diplomatic set who spoke only one language, and, besides, it would give a pleasant cosmopolitan flavor to the occasion.

"You'll save our reputation, Edwina," one of the ladies remarked. "Most Americans have such a bad accent."

So Edwina, with her disciplined speaking voice and her Sorbonne French, had accepted the job and explained to B.J. why she had felt she must. "It's one of the few social events where the whole American colony puts up a united front," she said earnestly, "and it's in a good cause."

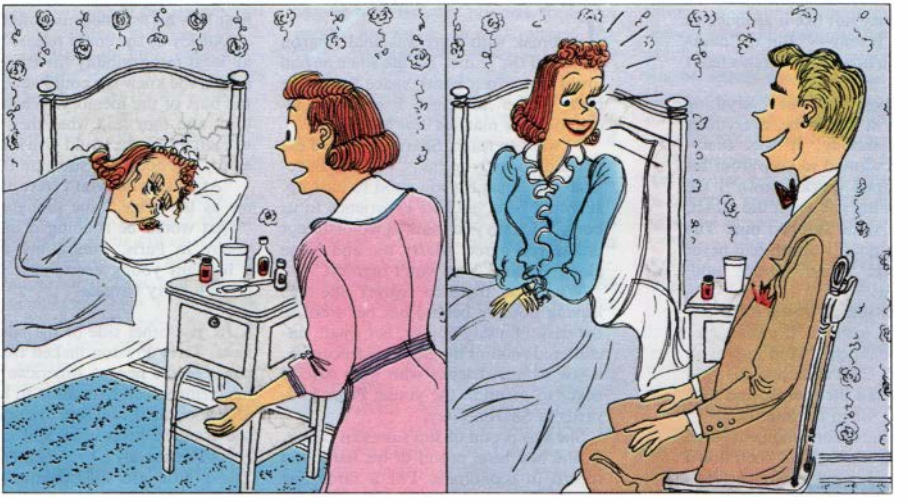
Ben Forbes said of course she'd been right to take it on.

"I'll make up the time lost from my work," Edwina promised.

"Rot, you work too hard as it is."

She had looked at him then, at his fine-drawn face with the deep-set gray eyes, and thought how tired he looked

LIFE'S LITTLE MIRACLES **By Stanley Stamaty and Clara Gee Kastner**



"Your boy-friend's downstairs, but I don't think you're well enough to see him"

Ten minutes later

and how much she wished she could assuage that tiredness.

A slow flush crept over B. J. Forbes's cheekbones as he interpreted her long, silent appraisal. "Don't carry the world on your shoulders, Edwy. It's too heavy and you're too young," he said gently.

"I'm thirty-one," she answered, surprised that it was so, that the years had passed so swiftly by.

"I'm five years older. You learn in five years how little there is one man can do."

"But you don't stop trying," she countered. "Look at you, B.J. You took reports home again last night."

"And shall tonight," he said dryly, "but I'm afraid it doesn't prove much. What the world needs now is action, not reports; *fast action*, Edwy. But we plod along so slowly."

She nodded gravely, feeling the aching sweetness of the understanding which flowed between them. And she thought for the hundredth time, and for the hundredth time did not ask it: "Why did you marry Dorcas Llewellyn? How could two such alien beings step on any common ground?"

Dorcas had remarked once, with her careless humor, that she and B.J. had met during the war. "I was the financial pillar of a very swish officers' club, and who should walk in one day when I was pouring tea but a perfectly beautiful colonel—that was B.J. He wanted a cup of tea, not a restless divorcee, but he could scarcely help himself, poor lamb. He was tired out from D-Day and ready for a little glamour in his life. That was my war work, you know, laying on the glamour with a trowel; and sometimes—this was one of the times—it was fun!"

Edwina, who had been a nurses' aid in a crowded city hospital, conceded that it must have been.

"But the fun's over," she thought sadly as she looked at B.J.'s worn face. "And you two are like strangers, stuck at a party where you don't know anybody and the music goes on and on."

As for herself, why, after years of being too busy to think about love, had she fallen for a married man?

She thought, with an attempt at flippancy, that it was one of the occupational hazards of Geneva. So many conferences, so many delegates, a town of lonely men whose wives were far away. Only Dorcas Forbes was no farther distant than a château overlooking the Lake of Geneva.

"Dorcas asked me to be sure to remind you of the Prestons' cocktail party," she told him quietly that March evening. "And she thought you'd want a ticket for the fashion show tomorrow. Lots of men will be coming."

B.J. thanked her absently and said he'd try to make it.

When he had finally started for the Prestons', the address pressed firmly into his hand by Edwina, she sat alone in the still office and went over her notes for the show tomorrow.

"Here comes Dorcas Llewellyn Forbes," she read in her low, distinct voice, "wearing the perfect two-piece *tailleur* for a morning's shopping in town. The little checked jacket . . ." Her voice snapped suddenly, and she laid her neat, fair head down on her arms, crumpling the pages of typewritten fashion commentary.

B.J. would be there tomorrow. He'd see Dorcas Forbes at her best, nonchalant, assured, amused.

"And I shall be only the voice in the distance," thought Edwina as she wept her tears of helpless envy. "A medley of sounds announcing Dorcas, his wife, in French and English."

She didn't hear the gentle opening of the door behind her, nor the footsteps of the man who crossed the floor.

"I forgot to offer you a lift to the Prestons'," he said. His hand hesitated in the air over Edwina's bowed head.

She lifted her face with the wet blue eyes and the firm, decisive contours gone all soft and vulnerable, like a child's.

With a sound which was half a groan and half a sigh, he drew her from her chair and up against his heart. "Edwina," he whispered. "My darling, my darling, no man alive is worth your tears." . . .

The cocktail party was a success, as the Prestons' always were. It buzzed with noise in four languages, overflowed the large, modern living-room onto the sun deck outside.

Everyone who had been invited came, and everyone spoke his own piece without any prompting beyond Terry Preston's first tactful hint:

"Irene, darling, you simply must meet Boris Poltek. He was a Partisan, you know; his experiences will make your hair stand on end. . . . Boris, don't stand there grinning like an ape and pretending you can't speak English. Here's a lush example of bourgeois young womanhood. Since we're in Switzerland and you can't carry her off and have her shot, why don't you just talk to her?"

A little later she relieved the guest of honor of the explosive Balkan and substituted a mild-eyed German-Swiss. Then an Englishman who could say atrociously rude things to women in such a charming way that they pleaded for more.

Irene Ledyard was obviously having a good time. She laughed her frequent bell-like laughter. She was medium-blond with a high-bred nose and rather cold blue eyes exactly the color of her husband's. She dressed fastidiously. Her topaz-colored alligator bag sat on a table near where she was standing. No one in the room had one as smart and expensive, except, possibly, Dorcas Forbes. She and Dorcas had given each other the long, appraising look which passes between excessively fashionable women at the beginning of a party. Now, by tacit mutual agreement, each held court in an opposite corner of the room.

The Month's AMERICAN Short Novel *begins on page 52*

Peter Ledyard wandered from group to group listening for significant remarks. He didn't want to miss any of the nuances of conversation or facial expression taking place about him. He was glad he had persuaded Irene to leave Paris and her dress fittings for a while and visit Geneva, where Speed Preston could show them around. More Americans such as Peter and Irene Ledyard—representative, influential Americans, that is—ought to come to Europe and find out what was actually being said and thought.

As he roamed the room, the eyes of several of the women followed him. He was a well-set-up man, Peter Ledyard, with a broad, athletic build only just beginning to blur into bulkiness. He had very white teeth and smiled frequently, whether or not he felt any amusement.

He was smiling now, making the apt, pleasant remark in each group he joined and left, until suddenly he looked toward the entrance archway of the Prestons' living-room, and his smile faded.

Terry Preston went immediately to the newcomer with hands outstretched. She was good with shy people.

"Angel, we need you terribly!" she said in her urgent voice. "I thought you were never coming, and there are gobs of men floating aimlessly about. Besides, we're trying to get together a little groupie to stick it out here and go on to dinner and then dance somewhere. You'll come, won't you?"

Sharon Mackie, glancing with her usual inner fearfulness across her hostess's shoulder at the milling, churning party beyond, met Peter Ledyard's eyes in a direct frontal encounter. Her breath seemed to catch in her throat. Her heart beat painfully, in the rhythm of fear.

Terry noticed only that the girl was ill at ease. She was a timid little mouse of a thing, really, but so pretty.

"No wonder you're tagged for the bride tomorrow," she said laughingly, guiding Sharon into the fray with a firm arm about her shoulders. "You have the virginal look, darling, you really do. What's your husband like? Is he a wicked old brute who beats you? Come along now; I forgot to tell you that our guests of honor come from your old stamping ground, Iowa. Here's Peter; I'll introduce you to him first."

Sharon had said nothing. It was easier

Welding words

by BEN L. O'DELL

ANOTHER entertaining game designed to test your vocabulary. Fill in the spaces with words suggested by the definitions below. But, your selection must be such that all 3 words on each horizontal line can be joined together, as they stand, to form just one word. There is only one possible answer in every instance, so it may require a little experimenting with various synonyms to discover the magic combination which makes a big one out of little ones. To help you get started, Line 1 is already worked out. Notice how the trio of words supplied by the definitions blends into the single word, ORCHESTRATE. Six lines correct give you a passing score; 7 or over denote a superior vocabulary. Answers are on page 72.

	A	B	C
1	OR	CHEST	RATE
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

LINE 1
A. Correlative of either
B. The thorax
C. A fixed charge for services

LINE 2
A. Like
B. To cut in two
C. Consumed

LINE 3
A. A preposition
B. A short religious treatise
C. Havingthepowertodo

LINE 4
A. The rough, prickly case around chestnuts
B. A lair
C. An indefinite amount

LINE 5
A. An enclosure for animals
B. A personal pronoun
C. A canvas shelter

LINE 6
A. A flat circular plate
B. A primary color
C. A neuter pronoun

LINE 7
A. A preposition
B. A number
C. To move the body rhythmically

LINE 8
A. A supporting stick or pole
B. An indefinite article
C. A portal

LINE 9
A. The ego
B. The tooth or prong of a pitchfork
C. To shout violently

LINE 10
A. Hurried on foot
B. A cyst
C. A monarch

to let Terry maneuver one than to argue. She felt herself drawn gently, inexorably, toward the man whose eyes held hers.

"This," she thought with the sudden calm of utter defeat, "is what all my smaller fears have been building toward. This is the ultimate misery I should have known was to be faced some day."

"Do you two know each other?" called out Terry gaily over the babel around them. "Sharon, this is Peter Ledyard. Peter, look what I've got for you—a home-grown product right from your own town. Isn't she a little white lamb?"

Peter took Sharon's hand in his strong fingers and gripped it hard. "You," he said when Terry had left them. "You!"

"I live here," said Sharon with a dry throat, "Jim and I—but he's away. He's with the U.N., you know." Her laughter surprised her with its careful coolness; she could hide in it, bury her thumping heart in little laughing words. "We have a chalet at Versoix and a cat named Pierrot, and I've almost forgotten about being a corn-fed girl from the Middle West. Isn't that ridiculous, Peter?"

"Very," he said, smiling at her at last.

She knew he didn't believe she had forgotten one moment of the past. Her voice was a little breathless as she charged on: "Jim will be sorry to miss seeing you. If you're here again, you must come out and have dinner with us."

"It doesn't matter to you that we'd be sitting there with my wife and your husband, pretending to be strangers, pretending we'd forgotten?" said Peter softly.

"Why should it?" she countered. "That was a long time ago. We have forgotten, Peter."

THAT was when she should have smiled and murmured a few more meaningless words and left him. That was when she should have escaped to another part of the room, spoken to someone, anyone, taken refuge in the noise and confusion of the party. She should never, never have let Peter Ledyard rediscover her with his bold, possessive eyes or touch her bare arm with his sure fingers.

"Liar," he said. "No one has a better right to punish me, Sharon, but don't lie. Not to me. Whatever we were or were not to each other, we were always honest."

"Yes," she answered him, "to the point of madness. Do you think any woman but a fool listens to a man saying the words you said to me? 'Sorry, my dear, we've loved each other, but we'd be better off not to marry.' That's using the truth like a blunt instrument, Peter."

"Like a boomerang," he corrected her in a low voice. "It came back and struck me in the heart, a few months too late. Suppose I were to tell you," he went on in the undertone only she could hear, "that I was wrong and that I've paid a heavy price for the sort of mistake only a foolish boy ever makes."

But he had finished at the university after the interruption of war; he was twenty-seven when he graduated. He'd be almost thirty now.

"You were a man," she answered him quietly. "You had the right of choice, and you chose. I accepted your decision. I've lived by it for more than two years."

"Have you lived—or have you marked time?"

She turned from him, then, her color high. "I must speak to Terry," she murmured. "We're in a fashion show tomorrow."

She despised herself for wanting to tell him that, for making sure he would know where to find her.

The thin, plaintive voice of her pride reminded her that if he came—and she thought he would come—he would see, not the little shabby Sharon, the scholarship student who couldn't afford good clothes, but the poised, idealized version of herself. A Sharon whose looks had

attracted enough attention in a whole colony of smart American women to win her a place in the leading spring social event.

For the first time she was glad to have been chosen, glad even to be the bride. Let Peter Ledyard look at her as she might have been. Let him look slowly, searchingly, and remember his own words: "It isn't enough. Marriages based on physical attraction aren't the safe, lasting ones."

"And how is your nice, rich, important marriage, Mr. Ledyard?" she thought implacably. "Based on mutual interests, mutual possessions. Isn't there any warmth or comfort for you in the publishing business or the Ledyard Hotel or the ever-expanding hardware store?"

She had her second chance to leave the party and go back to her chalet and her cat. But when Terry Preston whispered in her ear, "Of course you're coming on to dinner with us, darling; otherwise, we won't have enough girls," she smiled faintly and accepted. She told herself that she was curious to know Irene Ledyard.

It was another hour before the party had thinned down to the group of special friends of the Prestons who were going on to make an evening of it. Cynthia and Fergus Moffat, Dorcas and B. J. Forbes, one or two unattached newspapermen, Boris the Balkan, and a couple whose names Sharon never absorbed beyond "Bill and Madge," all joined forces with the Prestons and Ledyards. They piled into their cavalcade of cars and drove to the ancient restaurant in the old city where Speed had made dinner reservations.

Sharon had wondered how Peter was going to introduce her to his wife. She was a trifle amused at his words: "Irene, this is Jim Mackie's wife. He was a classmate of mine; you've probably heard me speak of him. . . . Sharon, Irene."

Irene acknowledged the introduction pleasantly, but her eyes were blank. Evidently she had never heard of either Peter's old love or his friend Jim. Or if she had, she preferred to give no sign of it.

"Isn't this the most heavenly place?" she remarked, glancing about the justly famed little restaurant. "Geneva has such charm. I envy you girls who live here."

"Yes," said Sharon, "we're lucky, of course. But unless you're always on guard, you can get so accustomed to beauty you stop seeing it. I keep warning myself not to take the mountains and the lake for granted, but to *see* them each time my train passes along the shore."

"Oh, then you live out of town?"

"A few miles. You must drive on the lake road while you're here. It's quite breath-taking."

They were at different ends of the table at dinner, but Sharon caught Irene Ledyard's curious glance directed at her at least twice before it was time to leave.

Speed led them all to the next stop, a casino where there was dancing in a large, old-fashioned ballroom over the lake.

"Is this place on the road to your house?" Irene asked Sharon as they re-did their faces in the powder-room.

"Yes, it's quite near, but the surroundings have to be seen in sunlight to be appreciated. Why don't you come out one day and have lunch or tea with me?"

"Thanks," said Irene. "I'd love to."

"I'll phone you at your hotel," promised Sharon, "after the fashion show is over. We've been working on it for weeks, scarcely calling our souls our own."

"That must be the thing Terry has given us tickets to for tomorrow. Are you in it?"

"Yes," said Sharon. "I'll be the one who stumbles over my feet."

They joined the others then, and Sharon had no more time to wonder what it was about Irene which affected her so strangely. They had nothing—and everything—in common. They moved in completely separate orbits; yet suddenly their lives seemed to touch as though drawn together by an inexplicable force.

Sharon danced with all the men in the party successively, but Peter Ledyard was last.

"I'm taking you home," he whispered close to her temple.

"You can't," she countered sharply. "You haven't a car."

"I'm borrowing Speed's. You have a headache. Someone has to run you out to Versoix and I'm elected. After all, I'm an old friend of Jim's."

"No," she whispered angrily. "No."

"Your head is about to start aching," he said gently. "And Speed is right over there. I'll ask him as we dance by if I can take his car."

"Do you think he'll believe such a trumped-up story? Speed is one of the cleverest men in Geneva. You're mad, Peter. I won't even listen to you!"

"You've been listening, and Speed doesn't have to believe me; he only has to pretend to."

"That's a horrid, cynical remark, Peter!"

"Merely realistic."

To her horror he danced her in Speed's direction, and her feet followed his easily and acquiescently. She said no demurring word when Peter mentioned her headache and her wish to be taken home.

Her chalet was peopled by memories of Peter Ledyard, wasn't it? And the moon shone with the same icy brilliance as the moons in Iowa long ago.

"Yes," said Speed, "better get to bed and sleep off that headache before the show tomorrow. Terry says you're to be the leading lady. Have you any aspirin?"

"Yes, thanks," she said numbly, feeling almost as though her head were really aching. "I'll be all right. Say good night to Terry for me, will you, Speed? It's been a wonderful party. I don't want to break it up."

"You won't. This is going on for hours, or so it looks to my experienced eye."

She sat tense and fearful in Speed's convertible. Peter pushed the button that controlled the automatic top and it went down, releasing a whoosh of lake wind into their faces. She took her scarf from her coat pocket and tied it over her hair.

"Moonlight—wind—a fast car at night. That was us, always; remember, Sharon?" he said softly.

"If the wind gets any stronger, we'll have a *Bise*. That's what it's called here when it blows in from the lake," she babbled in a nervous voice. "It's practically impossible to keep the houses warm in a *Bise*, and it lasts for days."

"Shall we compare it to the weather in Iowa City?" he countered dryly. "Tell me where you live, Sharon, and stop acting like a high-school girl on her first date."

She gave him the turnings in a low voice.

The car drew smoothly to a stop in the graveled courtyard of the chalet.

"I like this," said Peter, looking up at the dark wood balconies and gables. He held out a hand for her key and unlocked the heavy front door.

The cat ran toward Sharon's ankles. She picked him up with a soft sound and took comfort from the warmth of his fur.

"You're supposed to put cats outside at night, didn't you know?"

"Not Pierrot," she said.

She thought she could hear the sound of her heart's beating. "Peter," she said, "I wish you'd leave. Now. Before any words are spoken."

"Or before I've laid one finger on the snow maiden," he mocked her softly, and took her in his arms.

She could hear the ancient grandfather clock ticking in the quiet house. Then Peter's indrawn breath before he kissed her. She waited for the dissolution of her safe little world into flame. There were the arms she remembered, the familiar seeking mouth which crushed her own.

"Sharon," he whispered, "my lovely one, my own darling. I've missed you so!"

After a second kiss she drew herself away from him and stared into his face as into a baffling stranger's.

A slow flush rose on his cheekbones. "Why do you look at me that way? What's wrong, Sharon?"

"Nothing's wrong," she said in a quiet voice. "Except that you are another woman's husband, Irene's husband, and I'm Jim Mackie's wife. I thought I'd forget that, but I didn't—not for an instant."

He pulled her back into his arms with a rough strength. "You and I came be-

fore Irene or Jim. This has nothing to do with them. This is a shared memory of something I should never have pushed aside. I was a fool, darling; you have a right to hate me. But don't stand like a statue carved in ice. It's not *you*, Sharon." His lips touched her temple, her ear, her throat.

She waited like a spectator for him to kiss her mouth again.

"I don't care whether he kisses me or not," she reflected curiously, remembering other nights long past when she had cared so terribly that she had felt she would die if he didn't.

"You're thinking of Irene," he accused her. "I assure you, she doesn't worry about where I am or what I do. We live and let live. It's a perfectly friendly arrangement. We're simply not in love with each other."

But now Sharon knew the nature of the thread which had drawn her to Irene. It was the thin, strong bond of loneliness. Irene understood what it was to be lonely and to love in solitude and without hope.

"So she buys clothes and collects jewelry and has her hair done every few days," thought Sharon compassionately.

She looked at Peter Ledyard as from a great distance. "You don't know how to make your wife happy, do you?" she said suddenly. "She has the most unhappy eyes of any woman I've met."

"That's absurd. Of course she's happy. She has everything. We travel. We entertain. We—"

"You have a friendly arrangement," countered Sharon quietly. "And you imagine that's enough. Poor Peter."

He towered above her, yet he seemed to have shrunk to the dimensions of a little man.

"So you do hate me," he said curiously. "You're enjoying your woman's revenge for your hurt pride. Funny, I I thought you were above that, Sharon, that you were different."

"You thought I'd lock my hands behind your neck as I used to," she said, "so your kisses wouldn't end. You thought I'd weep in your arms and beg you not to leave me—or even plead with you to divorce your wife so we could marry. The strange thing is that I thought so, too, Peter. I was afraid to be alone with you, even here in my husband's house, with his pipe on the table and his reading glasses, which he always forgets, on top of the bookshelves."

She picked up the worn leather case containing Jim's glasses and opened it absent-mindedly. Touching the horn rims with a gentle finger, she remembered Jim's head bent over a book, the lamp shining on his dark, rumpled hair.

"I suggested that you marry Jim Mackie," said Peter angrily. "You weren't in love with him then or ever."

"No, I wasn't. But you knew Jim cared for me and you wanted me tied up neatly with no loose strings dangling, so I'd be out of the way, not hanging on the edges of your life with Irene."

"I was thinking of your good," he said sulkily. "I wanted you to be happy and well cared for. I've already admitted I was a fool, Sharon. How many times must I say it?"

"Not again," she murmured. "It's no good repeating it. You did what you did in your own best judgment. I abided by it." She looked about her as though examining another woman's house. "See how wisely you chose for me, Peter. I have a pleasant home and a successful husband. Why should you want to change the *status quo?*"

For the first time his face looked tired, uncertain. She caught now, in his florid youth, a faint, foreshadowing of his empty middle age.

"I had no intention of trying to change things between us, Sharon," he admitted. "Beyond the moment. I wanted to hold you in my arms and ease an old longing. You were still in my blood, as I should have known you'd be. Our good-by was too soon, you see, too soon for any man."

He moved toward her again, his old smile flashing at her over white, even teeth, his eyes narrowed and assured.

"You're still very handsome, Peter," she said, smiling back at him. "And many women will put up with ruthlessness when it comes so well packaged. But I'm expecting a phone call from Paris—from Jim. I think I'd rather you left now."

He didn't change expression. His blue eyes merely took on a frostier glint and his smile looked more set. "Nicely played, my dear. Game and set. But the next will be mine."

She led the way to the door and opened it. "The next woman, Peter," she corrected softly. "This is the final handshake over the net for you and me."

"Good night, Snow Maiden. I'll see you tomorrow at the fashion show," he said without rancor.

She watched him as he turned in the courtyard and drove away. Then, calling Pierrot, she locked the doors and climbed upstairs to bed.

The telephone on her night table jangled loudly before she had finished brushing her hair. She had lied about expecting a call from Jim, and yet it seemed a fitting answer to her thoughts when the operator said Paris was phoning.

A moment later she heard Jim's husky voice. "I got to wondering about you, whether you're nervous about the show tomorrow," he said quietly.

She smiled because the Sharon of a week ago would have trembled at the thought of the ordeal before her; and

"I don't care. I get cold!"

For The American Magazine by Don Tobin

Jim, knowing her as he did, must have visualized her terrors.

Before she had a chance to answer him, he went on, "You see, I know I pushed you into accepting and it's been on my mind."

"Thank you, Jim," she murmured, her throat thick. "I'm all right, really. It's good of you to phone."

"I want you to know that whatever happens between you and me when I get back, whatever you decide, your happiness is a lot more important to me than anything else, even keeping you for myself—" She heard the sound of his indrawn breath; then he continued doggedly, "As for the show tomorrow, you'll be the most beautiful girl there. You don't have to feel scared or shy. I was going to surprise you, but I might as well tell you so you'll keep an eye out for me. I'm flying back on the noon plane in time to see you march down that runway."

She said in a strange, muffled voice, "I'm glad you told me. I'll be watching."

"I don't like your staying alone in that house so much of the time—that could give you the jitters. But we'll talk about it when I come back. Sleep well, darling, and remember I love you. Please remember that."

"I'll remember."

Then the wire was dead and silent, and she put the phone down.

She thought, "He's believed in me. He's given me help, encouragement, tenderness—everything good. I've given him nothing at all, ever."

LYING straight and quiet on her bed in the dark, she could picture Jim in each room of the house: reading downstairs in the lamplight, his gaunt face absorbed in his book; helping her with the dishes in the kitchen, a tea towel tied absurdly around his lean middle; sitting opposite her at the table in the small dining-room, lifting his glass for emphasis as he talked; even here, beside her, gentle, reticent, waiting for his bride to come to him willingly from her prison of solitude.

"Tomorrow, *tomorrow*," she thought before she slept. "It will be late, but not too late, then. I'll see Jim. I'll talk to him; we'll tear up the old plans and make a new blueprint for our marriage. We failed before, Jim knows it as well as I, but we mustn't fail again. We shan't live in a 'friendly arrangement' like in a house of straw. It's time to build a marriage to last our lifetimes."

The moon clouded over and it began to snow as she turned her face to the pillow and slept deeply and dreamlessly and, for once, without waking till morning. . . .

Dorcas Forbes could drink a good deal without showing it. The effect was mainly subjective. She could view the party then as a spectator, feeling a cynical amusement at the follies and absurdities of the others. She had noticed when Peter Ledyard disappeared with little Sharon Mackie, and now she watched Irene's expressionless face for some clue as to any human jealousy.

Irene was dancing with B. J. Forbes.

Dorcas looked at him, too, her weary-faced husband, with an objective detachment. There were, she reflected, two opposite types of people in the world. There was the kind who worried about civilization's going to pot and tried desperately to ward off a malevolent destiny, and the other kind—Dorcas counted herself among them—who were perfectly willing to let everything and everybody go merrily downhill in his or her own way.

"My poor B.J.," she thought ironically, "the worry-wart of his department, with Edwina Tiernan as chief assistant worry-wart! Those two will grow old without ever having had a youth."

She could, she knew, give them a youth of sorts, together, if she chose. But it was a nuisance changing husbands, and Dorcas, at thirty, found herself wondering if one man was essentially any better than another.

"Still," she thought, "I could go to Cannes or Monte Carlo and have a rest from watching B.J. and Edwy in the throes of their conscientious agonies."

When the fashion show was over tomorrow she supposed she ought to do something, she didn't know what. She glanced down at her slim brown hands and realized that she couldn't possibly keep her tan in the chilly Swiss springtime unless she went somewhere and lay in the sun.

One of the earthy-looking Balkans cut in on Irene, and B.J. came to look for her.

"Order me another drink, Colonel Blimp darling, will you?" she smiled up at him.

"How many have you had, Dorcas?" he questioned her, looking worried. "Aren't you modeling in a show tomorrow?"

"I can strut around in clothes in my sleep. Really, darling, do I count up on you?"

"You don't have to," he said dryly.

"Is it my fault you don't like to drink? I don't giggle or flirt with other people's husbands, so what's the difference how many I take?"

SILENTLY B.J. went to the bar and brought her another highball. "Will you settle for this and then go home?" he asked her quietly. "I'm pretty bushed and we have a heavy schedule in the office tomorrow."

"Okay," replied Dorcas. "But of course you're coming to the show to see your gorgeous wife display all her nonchalant charms before the elite of Geneva?"

"I'll stop by," he promised, his eyes blank.

"And to hear Edwy's cultivated diction," she added wickedly. "In two languages, too! What a woman!"

He made no reply, but she saw a bleakness rising in his face like a shadow, and for the first time in months she felt a twinge of tenderness for him. "B.J., you child," she thought, "don't you know it would be the same thing if you were married to her, your hard-working, erudite Edwina? In a little while you'd feel just as tired and worried about the world. She'd be the badgering wife who would urge you to take vacations and come home to dinner, and one more dream would have faded with the rest."

Well, perhaps not exactly the same thing; Dorcas, with an inner pang, admitted a difference. Edwina might give him a child. She couldn't.

TO COVER that thought she watched the couples dancing by on the polished circle of floor.

There were the Moffats, Cynthia and Fergus, swirling with practiced ease, their heads close together. They looked, to Dorcas's informed eyes, as though they were already counting on Fergus Moffat's next step up the diplomatic ladder.

Cynthia seemed a slim, fragile thing to have such a powerful push. Everyone said that with an impeccable wife like her behind him, Moffat simply couldn't fumble the ball. His house was beautifully ordered, his babies were fat, smiling creatures whose noses never ran, the Moffats gave excellent, if rather formal, parties with only one maid, and neither of them had ever been known to make even a small social break.

"What a shame," thought Dorcas rather sadly, "that they aren't getting Buenos Aires, after all." There were times when she regretted knowing the higher-ups in the State Department as well as she did, and hearing these tidbits of information in advance of the people they affected.

She supposed the young Moffats would hear the news within the next few days—that, with their hearts set on South America, they were being sent to one of the smaller, less important posts in Italy.

Things had been too lush and plush for Cynthia lately, that was it. When a woman began to carry about with her an atmosphere of deadly certainty and other women watched her with a lurking, not too friendly envy in their eyes, then it was time to watch out.

"After you've stubbed your toe, my dear," thought Dorcas, "you'll actually be a nicer person." Yet she was sorry it must happen.

B.J., at her side, was careful not to hurry her over her drink.

Dorcas drained the final drop and set

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LIFE'S LITTLE Problems

In Philadelphia, a meeting of the Direct Mail Advertising Association mulled over the report of a young man who decided to use the mail to court his girl, sent her a proposal every day for 65 days, lost her on the 66th when she married the mailman.

The Council of State Street Stores in Chicago surveyed 1,000 of its working girls, found that they were yearning for, in one, two, three order: a husband, a typewriter, a pressure cooker.

A citizen in Columbus, Ga., who civic-mindedly cropped a 2-year growth of grass which hid a fireplug was promptly fined $6 for parking near it.

A man in Warren, Ohio, who went on a rampage, overturning desks and scattering files in the Veterans' Administration office, explained to police it was all a horrible mistake; he'd thought he was in the income-tax office.

An indignant lady in Phoenix, Ariz., complained that thieves not only had stolen her "Dog for Sale" sign one night; they'd returned to steal the dog the next.

Acceding to the demand, the North Little Rock (Ark.) High School showed its girls' physical education classes a football movie on "Blocking and Tackling Positions."

After a two-day trial, a restaurant in Philadelphia removed its suggestion box for customers, explaining wearily that 34 of the 35 notes deposited on the first day and 38 of 40 on the second day suggested prettier waitresses; not one suggestion mentioned food.

Charging that a slot machine fell off a counter and struck her on the head while she was bending over to pick up a scattered jack pot, a lady in Cleveland won $5,000 more for her injuries.

After parishioners began to laugh in the wrong places during sermons at the First United Presbyterian Church in Long Beach, Calif., an investigation disclosed that headsets installed for the hard of hearing were picking up police calls and ham radio broadcasts.

Discovering that it had no law against it, the City Council in Denver, Colo., hastily adopted an ordinance making it illegal to break out of jail.

Somewhat mollified, a union secretary in Edmonton, Alberta, reported that burglars who had visited the Labor Temple there had broken open a safe he'd been trying to get open for years since losing the combination.

The "falsie" epidemic seemed to be spreading even to horses when a 5-year-old gelding was disqualified in the Pennsylvania national horse show after its tail fell off.

A man in Rock Island, Ill., was picked up for being drunk while riding on the town water wagon.

After much pondering, the Canadian Army in Ottawa decided that a married soldier can keep his mother-in-law in government-owned "married quarters" but can't charge her rent.

A sign on Highway 66 in Oklahoma issued to motorists a frank "Welcome to Vinita, home of 7,539 good people and a few soreheads."

A former carnival entertainer in Passaic, N.J., who bet a friend 25 cents that he could break an empty wine bottle over his own head, won twice, ended up, after the third try, in a local hospital with possible concussion and 10 stitches.

Admitting that he robbed three churches, a man in Moline, Ill., explained that they were the only places where he could find "peace of mind."

A new twist on how to get Junior to eat his spinach was offered at the American Dietetic Association convention in Denver: Parents should take Junior to market, have him personally pick out the spinach, pay for it, carry it home.

ARTHUR LANSING

the glass down on a table. "I'll go peaceably," she said, grinning at him, "though I would really like to see if that Peter Ledyard comes back or not."

She and B.J. met him in the parking lot as they were driving off.

"Good night," she called, waving, as Peter left the borrowed convertible and crossed the courtyard.

"Where was he?" asked B.J., looking puzzled, "and just why were you so interested in whether he rejoined the party?"

"My innocent darling," said Dorcas, "you miss all the nuances of these gay little gatherings, don't you? I suppose you think Peter Ledyard and the wide-eyed little Mrs. Mackie met for the first time tonight."

"I never gave it any thought."

"Well, if you're not above listening to gossip, they didn't. Besides which, she had a sudden headache and he took her home. Add it up for yourself."

He said curiously as he drove the car down the lake boulevard toward their villa, "I don't believe I've ever heard you ascribe a noncynical motivation to any human being, Dorcas, in all the time I've known you. Yet I still wonder if you have any secret illusions about life, chinks in your armor, so to speak. It doesn't seem logical that you, a woman, young and attractive, could be the complete cynic you sound."

"They say the disenchanted are born that way, not made," retorted Dorcas lightly. "But I do have my moments. For instance, I'm a sucker for a romantic love story. The noble soul-shattering, once-in-a-lifetime kind. Fortunately, they don't happen often enough to strain my credulity."

She lit a cigarette for him and put it between his lips, as though to forestall the words she had herself given him the opening to speak. She thought, "Some day he'll tell me that story whether or not I am willing to listen, but I'm too tired tonight."

THE great chandelier in the hall was burning for them. Just behind her, she heard the click as B.J. turned off the switch.

"I'm dead, aren't you?" She yawned, discouraging midnight chitchat.

"I've brought some papers home," he said abstractedly.

She smiled faintly at herself. She should have remembered it was months since B.J. had really wished to talk to her. She shrugged one slim shoulder, turning her cheek as he bent to kiss her good night.

"I may go to Cannes after the fashion show tomorrow," she said coolly. "I'm tired of waiting for spring to arrive here."

"You've just come back from St. Moritz," he said with mild surprise. "But go, of course, if you're feeling rest-

less. Do you need any help with reservations?"

"I'll manage. Edwina is overworked, as it is. Incidentally, I came home from St. Moritz a month ago. Time flies in your office, it would seem."

"Yes," he said, his tired eyes meeting hers. "We're busy."

"And I am an idle bird of passage, chasing the sun." She laughed briefly. "Good enough. I like it that way."

She heard her maid's footsteps in the dressing-room outside the large, ornate master bedroom, and wondered suddenly if Therese talked in the servants' hall about the many nights Monsieur spent in his study, poring over sheaves of papers.

But of course. Therese, like any European servant, took an intense personal interest in her employer's affairs and undoubtedly made them her leading topic of conversation.

A dull flush rose to Dorcas's cheeks.

"Remind me to put my name down in your notebook for a date some time," she murmured as he left her at her bedroom door.

"Dorcas . . ." He turned back, his face troubled.

"I know. Who better? When it's over, it's over, B.J., and we can't whistle it back."

"You don't understand. I don't know if I can explain, but there's something beyond physical attraction, Dorcas, something you and I haven't reached together. It's neither your fault nor mine, my dear—but—"

"Don't tell me now," she said sharply. "Tomorrow is time enough."

She closed her door behind her and leaned against it for a long moment, remembering his tired eyes.

"Funny, B.J," she thought. "A good joke on me, but with you I came close to that 'something beyond,' so close I saw the glint of its wings in flight."

She dismissed Therese and looked at herself in her dressing-table mirror as she slathered cold cream on her face.

"There you go again, sucker," she remarked under her breath. "Believing in love stories. Some day you'll kid yourself into thinking B.J. was the Second Real Love that Passed You By."

She glanced out her window and saw that the moon had clouded over and, with one of the abrupt weather changes of a capricious March, it was snowing.

"Fine," she thought ironically. "Let them come on skis to the Spring Fashion Show tomorrow. Refreshing contrast."

That did it. She would make her reservation for Cannes the first thing in the morning. . . .

Terry Preston slept the exhausted sleep of the hostess who has given a long-drawn-out but outstandingly successful party.

She woke to a sparkling white world at eight o'clock on the day of the show. She stretched comfortably, aware of the good smell of coffee in the breakfast-room. All newspapermen could make wonderful coffee, and Speed's was tops.

"Darling," she called, "how about orange juice in bed? Do I rate it?"

"Juice coming up, Mrs. Preston." Suddenly he was standing there, a ruffled plastic apron over his striped pajamas, looking tender and foolish and quizzical all at the same time.

"You went right to sleep last night," he accused her. "Giving me no chance to hash over the party."

She drank her orange juice in sips. "It was terrific, wasn't it?" she said complacently. "The news of it may even reach Russia, who knows!"

"We did a job of entertaining the Ledyards," said Speed, "but there were moments when I thought we provided a touch too much entertainment. I suppose you didn't know Sharon Mackie and Peter were old flames?"

"Certainly not," she retorted. "Though I'm not sure I wouldn't have asked her anyway. It can be healthy to run into an old love at times, you know, Speed—settling to the morale."

"Whose? Irene took it well, but I doubt if she enjoyed Peter's exit."

"He's exited often enough before, so that she's used to it. But I wasn't thinking of Irene. I noticed Sharon especially. She was afraid of him, Speed. When a woman is that afraid of a man, there's something wrong with her marriage. It needs major repair work."

"Sure," said Speed. "Only, suppose it busts? She might have gone overboard for Ledyard, started two divorces, and gotten pretty badly hurt along the way."

"No," said Terry thoughtfully. "Peter would never leave Irene. They may not be well mated, but they're certainly amalgamated; linked permanently together by tightly knotted bank statements into a joint holding company."

"We're mated, aren't we?" said Speed with a look of idiotic complacence. "Even though you get moods when you wish you were back being the toast of the profession. Don't deny it, Mrs. Preston, because I know you through and through."

She gave him a rueful glance. "I ought to have more secrets from you. A little mystery is said to be a good thing."

"Nuts."

She paused, her face suddenly strange. It was an earth-shattering feeling and she'd had it before but never this violently.

"Terry, for heaven's sake, what is it? What's the matter?"

She jumped out of bed and across the room, answering tersely over one pretty shoulder, "Orange juice—won't stay put . . ."

When she came back, white but smiling, he took her in his arms without a word.

"Oh, Speed, I've wondered, but it must be true, and isn't it wonderful?"

"I've wondered, too," he said unsteadily. "You and your mystery! But I didn't know how you'd feel about it, so I didn't ask questions."

They held each other for a long, shared moment.

"No regrets?" he whispered.

"None," she whispered back. "Now that I know the zippers won't zip much longer, I couldn't care less! I don't want to be a model, darling. I want a bunch of kids to tear your typewriter apart."

"Check," he said against her lips. "Check and double-check." . . .

Though the Committee spent a bad morning worrying about the effect of the snowfall on the success of the Spring Showing, everyone later agreed that it would have taken more than a change in the weather to keep the American colony, and their Swiss and diplomatic guests, home from an event talked about as long in advance.

Most of the women were curious to see Dorcas Llewellyn Forbes, last year's leader of the Ten Best-Dressed list, strutting about in the role of model. Terry Preston's face was still familiar to magazine readers, too. Some of them even remembered her by name, Terry O'Shane, most in demand of all the models of her decade, and startlingly pretty yet, if you didn't mind a hint of plumpness.

By noon the official clique of the American colony were all buzzing with the news about the Moffats. Incredible that they shouldn't have gotten the appointment to Buenos Aires, with Cynthia's heart set on it! What Cynthia wanted, and this applied to the gender of her latest baby or a certain style of new dress or a little extra recognition for Fergus, she had always heretofore been able to attain. Other girls had spoken of "Cynthia's luck" with awe only faintly tinged with annoyance. Actually, they didn't quite mean luck, because Cynthia never trusted to anything so intangible. She placed her faith in hard work, perseverance, tact, and knowing the right people.

How would she take this major disappointment? That was what everyone was curious to see. It had been rumored in official circles that she had been so sure of going to Buenos Aires that she had already started taking Spanish lessons.

The only one of the principal models who wasn't well known and whose name had no drawing power was Sharon Mackie. Still, everyone who had ever caught a glimpse of her conceded that she was a pretty little thing and had the right look, shy and expectant, for the spring bride. . . .

Edwina Tiernan telephoned each girl

in the morning to make sure that she knew the exact time to report for a complimentary make-up, by courtesy of the town's leading beauty salon, and that she was feeling on her toes.

She managed the phone calls in between taking B. J. Forbes's dictation and protecting him from interviews with people who had no appointments.

"Sharon, are you dewy-eyed today? We're depending on our bride, you know. From what I hear, it was rather a late party last night."

"I didn't stay till the end," said Sharon in her young, slightly breathless voice. "And I do look amazingly wholesome, if not dewy-eyed. I'll be there as early as you like, Edwy. Say when."

"Good girl. Two o'clock will be fine. Is there a train from Versoix in time?"

"The 1:29. I'll plow through the snow to the station in my ski pants. Are you worried about the snow keeping people away?"

"Nothing will keep them away," laughed Edwina. "We have too many fabulous characters on display here."

"I'm not a bit fabulous, but you can count on me, Edwy, come hail or sleet."

Edwina called Cynthia Moffat next:

"No sore throat or cold, I hope, darling, and the babies aren't quarantined with measles or mumps?"

"Everybody's fine," said Cynthia in her smooth, level contralto. "Don't bother pretending you haven't heard about Fergus's new appointment. I wouldn't believe you, anyway. My friends have been phoning all morning, carefully not mentioning it. What time do you want me, Edwina?"

"Two, if you can make it. Of course, I've heard about Fergus and I'm sorry if it's a disappointment to you, but you don't have disappointments often, Cynthia, and I imagine you'll bear up under this one."

"Thanks for not speaking to me as though I were ill or my husband had run off with another woman. You're a good scout, Edwy. Of course I'll bear up. As a matter of fact"—Cynthia sounded only slightly off key—"I fully expect to like the new post."

"You probably will," Edwina assured her, and they said good-by.

For a proud girl, the ordeal of walking on parade this afternoon, with the eyes of her friends and enemies searching her face for a hint of despair, would be a grueling performance. Edwina knew that Cynthia dreaded it now as much as she had looked forward to her moment of triumph before. The timing of the Moffats' news couldn't have been worse.

"It's just as well we didn't make her the bride," thought Edwina. "It would have been an awful effort for her to look radiant today."

She didn't expect much from little Sharon Mackie, timid mouse that she was, but still . . . Edwina hurried into B.J.'s office to take another letter, and hurried back to type it. It was another half-hour before she could speak to Terry Preston.

"Terry dear," she said hopefully, "you didn't eat too much last night, did you?"

"Like a truck driver," answered Terry, with her cheerful honesty. "But don't scold me, Edwy. I only put on one pound and I don't think it'll show this afternoon. Besides, my face is fine, no dark circles or haggard lines."

"I never worry about your looking haggard," said Edwina dryly. "Well, we won't cry over the pound, but don't put on another at lunch, darling, and remember I'm expecting you at two."

She had left Dorcas Forbes till last. She kept telling herself, "I have to phone her; I said I would." Besides, to a woman like Dorcas, even if she knew, it wouldn't have had any special significance, that one kiss, stolen so briefly in a moment of unpremeditated need. A kiss was so casual a thing in Dorcas Llewellyn's world that she might even have smiled with amusement at Edwina's taking this one with such serious intensity.

Edwina had dreaded meeting B.J.'s eyes when he came into the office at a few minutes past nine. If he had looked at her rememberingly, she thought she must die of their shared hopelessness, yet if his eyes had passed her by without the mutual memory, it would have been a knife wound in her heart.

The moment, when it came, was quiet and typical of B.J.: "I wasn't free to kiss you last night, Edwina."

"No."

"There'd be no point in asking you to forget it, especially when I don't want you to. Or to forgive me, Edwina."

"No, B.J."

"Put it down on the debit side of our ledger, my darling," he said in a low voice, "but don't quite forget." A few minutes later he asked her to take a letter, and the routine of the office commenced.

"We were wrong," thought Edwina. "But only wrong for us, not for Dorcas, who wouldn't especially care."

Presently she forced herself to dial the number of the château on the lake.

"It's Edwina, to remind you of your duty," she said when Dorcas's husky voice came over the wire. "Don't forget you're our drawing card to get people out in the snow. Is two o'clock all right?"

"How about lunch together first at the Amphitryon?"

Edwina hesitated only for a moment.

"Don't be silly; you have to eat somewhere," prodded Dorcas. "Even if B.J. does settle for coffee and rolls at his desk."

"All right. Thanks. The Amphitryon. I'll try to make it at one."

She put down the phone with hands which were suddenly very cold and unsteady.

Dorcas Forbes had asked her for lunch at rare intervals before; there was no reason to suppose today's gesture was

"Stop enjoying yourself when I'm mad at you!"

For The American Magazine by Jack Markow

anything more than her usual casual one. Edwina had often done little jobs for her, sending out invitations, arguing with her dressmaker, making travel reservations. The lunches and teas were simply a form of social recognition, Dorcas's way of saying thanks.

"Does she know?" thought Edwina desperately. "But how could she possibly guess? I don't show it. I scarcely ever mention his name."

At a quarter to one she looked briefly in B.J.'s office to say that she was going to lunch, but not where or with whom.

"I can't come back to the office, I'm afraid," she said, with troubled eyes, "because of the show this afternoon. I'll gladly work this evening, though. Just leave me a memo of the most urgent things."

"Everything is urgent," he said, smiling at her. "But you aren't to work tonight, Edwina. I mean it. If I see a light shining from this window, I'll give you the sack."

"You won't, because you can't replace me," she answered. For the first time she thought of what it would be like not to work for B.J. any more. A sensible woman would have left months ago, the instant she felt herself crumpling inside when she looked at him.

All her life Edwina had been sensible and sane. She had held a large family of tempestuous young Tiernans together, seen to it that they all worked for their educations as she had worked for hers, given them help when they needed it, been guide, counselor, mentor. She thought ruefully that if any of those younger brothers and sisters could see her now, they could taunt her with her own words, fling her good moral precepts back at her like boomerangs: *Wasn't it you, Edwina, who said never to let yourself slide into a messy situation you'd only live to regret?*

"I won't come back tonight, then, B.J.," she promised him gravely.

"Thank you, Edwina."

He knew, they both knew, that if she insisted on working in the silent office at night he would follow her.

"We can't work alone together any more," she thought miserably. "We mustn't try. We're human beings, not two insensate filing cabinets. We've kissed each other once; that has to be the end."

She slipped quietly away to meet Dorcas.

Funny, she thought, as she greeted Dorcas at the restaurant, that she had forgotten even to powder her nose or put on more lipstick for the encounter. Looking at Dorcas always made her feel dowdy; today she felt more so than usual.

The headwaiter led them to the best table. Headwaiters had been giving Dorcas the best tables for years. She accepted it with a faint smile and a murmured, "This will do nicely." Throwing her mink jacket back from her shoulders, she offered Edwina a cigarette from a platinum case which had her initials marked on it in small rubies.

Edwina, who had never cared for possessions, realized with self-reproach that she could never quite take her eyes from Dorcas's. She thought, "How can B.J. notice me when she glitters so?"

As though in answer to her unspoken perplexity, Dorcas smiled and said, "You get used to these trappings in time, Edwy. When I was very young I enjoyed clothes and furs and jewelry and fast cars. Now I order them out of habit. Occasionally, very occasionally, it's fun showing them off to other people."

"It must be," remarked Edwina without bitterness.

"For a short while only; then you see their power lost. It's quite a bleak, panicky feeling, the first time you realize you've misplaced your faith in mammon."

Edwina looked at her with startled eyes.

"Oh, yes, it's happened," Dorcas continued dryly. "Once I gave the first man I ever loved a shiny new convertible for his birthday. I thought he'd be pleased and grateful, until I saw his eyes. Tell me, my pure and incorruptible Edwina, how would you feel if a man stared at you till you shriveled, and then said, 'I wanted a child, and you refused to have one. I won't accept this in exchange'?"

Edwina said thickly, "That's horrible, Dorcas. Why are you saying it to *me?*"

"It leads up to a question: As far as you know, you're able to bear children?"

Edwina felt sick with pity for the naked hunger in the other woman's eyes. "Of course," she whispered, her hands twisting at the gloves in her lap.

"And you come from a very large family. You're fond of children?" Dorcas persisted.

"Very fond," Edwina answered with a catching of her breath in her throat.

"That's what I wanted to know. It's why I asked you to lunch." Her smile was a bright gash across her pale face. "It's occurred to me, Edwy, that my husband is tired of living in a château with a barren woman and would prefer love in cramped quarters littered with baby bottles and diapers, with you looking up at him from the kitchen stove. I suppose there's no doubt of your being in love with him?"

"No," said Edwina trembling. "I love him terribly. He doesn't, he couldn't know. I don't see how *you* could have known."

Dorcas pulled her mink jacket back around her shoulders as though she were suddenly cold. "Too perceptive for my own good." Her laughter ended on a short, hard note. "Darling, do look across the room and tell me if you see what I see. Isn't that our child bride, all dressed up and out with a man?" . . .

Sharon had intended taking the train, until Peter Ledyard phoned and announced that he had a hired car and was calling for her.

"I'd rather you didn't."

"I must talk to you, Sharon. Our session last night left a bad taste in my mouth. I can't bear to have us say such an unfriendly good-by, after all we've been to each other. You're not still afraid of me, darling?"

"Of course not, Peter," she assured him. "But I think it would be better not to meet again, for many reasons. Irene, among them."

"She's at the hairdresser's. I told her I was having lunch with you, so that's all right."

"As all right as anything all wrong can possibly be," she murmured.

"I'm driving out to pick you up in an hour."

Sharon smiled very faintly to herself and went to the wardrobe for her best suit and the hat Jim had brought her from Paris.

When Peter asked her where she'd like to have lunch, she chose the smartest restaurant she could think of. Nothing quiet and out of the way today.

"I was afraid I was going to have trouble with you," said Peter over their cocktails. "You weren't very nice to me last night."

"I was all alone, and I do have a conscience, Peter."

"Sharon, you haven't forgotten either. Not one moment, not one kiss." His voice was husky and desirous.

"Careful, Peter. People are watching us. There's Dorcas Forbes over near the window."

"Hang Dorcas Forbes."

"We'd better order. I have to report for a thorough make-up and hair-combing an hour before the show."

"What are you modeling, darling?" asked Peter knowledgeably. He knew women liked to describe clothes.

"Several things, but the last especially—" Sharon dropped her lashes at his indulgent gaze. "Peter, I should like you to see me in the last."

"I'm impatient already. I hope it shows off your beautiful figure."

"It's quite—revealing."

She kept him entertained during lunch with tidbits of local gossip about international personages.

He said once, thoughtfully, "Sharon, you've changed, matured. You're no longer a schoolgirl but an intelligent as well as an alluring woman."

Sharon gave him another provocative smile.

He groped for her fingers under the damask tablecloth.

"No," she whispered, "not till after

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the fashion show. There's something you don't know about me, Peter, and won't know till then."

"That you're marvelous in the right clothes? I've always felt—"

"I had possibilities. Only, in my cheap little skirts and sweaters, and my one winter coat which was too short for me, they didn't show, did they, Peter?" she challenged him softly.

"Well, I wanted to buy you a prom dress—remember, darling? But you wouldn't let me."

"I remember."

"But let's not think of the old misunderstandings, or the proud, stiff-necked little girl you were," he said in a low voice. "I'd rather concentrate on the gorgeous woman you are."

She answered, with a sigh, that that gorgeous woman must depart to be worked over by experts.

"They couldn't improve you," said Peter, rising to see her to the door. "Remember, I'll be there watching. I'll never take my eyes off you."

"I don't want you to," she murmured. "Thank you for lunch, Peter." She turned to him once more as she left, "The last dress I model. *That's the important one, Peter.* Don't forget." . . .

THE others were gathered in the dressing room behind the scenes when she arrived, her color heightened, her eyes bright with excitement.

"My!" said Dorcas Forbes. "You look as though this really were your wedding day. Lunch with an old beau certainly sets a woman up!"

"Doesn't it!" Sharon was untroubled by a crack which would have stricken her with embarrassment before.

She looked at Dorcas, noting the shadows of tiredness under her eyes. "What's wrong with you?" she thought curiously. "You're different today. Even your wisecracks have no bite."

They all made a pretense of not looking when Cynthia Moffat arrived.

"Hi," said Cynthia, her grooming perfect as usual and her voice level. "Who is modeling what, to start the show?"

"I'm elected," moaned Terry Preston, "in the pin-checked two-piece, dragging along that dreadful little wire-haired terrier of the Maitlands'. He may look frightfully chic but I bet he bites my ankle."

"Nonsense, he's perfectly friendly if you don't get him excited," said Edwina. "The committee thinks it would be nice to use him."

"And Mrs. Maitland is on the committee, wouldn't you know it?" But Terry went obediently to put on the tailored spring suit, and the others listened to Edwina's last-minute instructions.

"Remember," she said, "I want a little pause near the end of the show before our bride comes into view. One of the students will wear the bridesmaid's dress, and I'm going to signal the orchestra when they're to play the wedding march. . . . Sharon, walk very slowly, dear. It doesn't matter how long it takes to reach the end of the runway."

Sharon nodded gravely. She had every intention of taking a long time.

"That's the main point for all of you to remember," continued Edwina. "You must walk slowly enough to give me a chance to speak my piece about you in French after I've finished the English version. So try to listen while you're parading."

THEY had the finishing touches put on their make-up by the girl from the beauty salon, and Edwina went into the empty ballroom to try out her loud-speaker.

She was still trembling inside and her fingers were so cold she could barely adjust the instrument. Yet she had spoken to the others in her everyday voice and she knew they had seen, not the shaken, incoherent woman she felt within herself, but merely the "good old Edwy" their eyes were accustomed to.

A few people had already arrived and were choosing their tables. Edwina noticed a tall, thin young man hovering uncertainly in the doorway. She finished tinkering with the loud-speaker and went over to ask if he was looking for anybody.

"No—that is, not now. I'm Jim Mackie. I don't want to disturb Sharon, but I'd like a ticket for this show. Is it too late to get one?"

"It most certainly isn't. I'll sell you one here and now. Seven francs, please, Mr. Mackie, and that includes tea. Does Sharon know you're here?"

He hesitated. "She knows I'm trying to make it. I'd rather see her afterward, I think."

Edwina made no comment, but saw to it that he took a seat as close as possible to the runway.

"There'll be a lot of men," she assured him briskly. Then she thought, uneasy at the memory of Sharon and Peter Ledyard at lunch, "Suppose Ledyard comes to the show, too, and they sit and glower at each other. Or didn't this nice gaunt-faced Jim Mackie know that his wife had an admirer?"

"You'll see Sharon quite well from here," she said tactfully. "You must notice her last ensemble especially, Mr. Mackie. She's beautiful in it."

"Thanks." He gave her a questioning look. "Are you Miss Tiernan, by any chance?"

When she nodded encouragingly, he blurted out, "Tell me, Miss Tiernan, is Sharon nervous or scared today? I mean, she's a shy person, really, and—"

"She's fine," Edwina reassured him smoothly. "Her nervousness seems to have slipped away. You mustn't worry about her. She'll be wonderful."

The young man's serious face relaxed a little. Edwina thought he looked like her youngest brother just before an exam. He had a good, clean jaw line and she liked the intentness of his dark eyes. She felt suddenly that she'd enjoy shaking Sharon.

She went for a last look at the models, and since they all seemed composed and ready for their first appearance, she took her place at the microphone again, her script in her hand.

The committee were all present by now. One or two of the ladies gave her little signals of encouragement, and she smiled and made a V with her fingers.

The room was filling quickly in spite of the morning's snow. There was a warm, heavy scent of perfume in the air, and a high confusion of sounds: eager feminine voices, the tuning of the orchestra instruments, the clatter of cups as the waiters moved about serving tea or coffee at the tables.

Edwina saw, with a sinking of her heart, that the Ledyards were present with their friend, Speed Preston. But at least their table was on the opposite side of the runway from where she had placed Jim Mackie.

The show was about to begin.

Edwina looked at her watch. Another five minutes, perhaps, to give late-comers a chance to get seated. She scanned her notes to make sure each announcement was numbered in order. Terry, to start.

"May I sit near you, Edwina?" said a quiet voice at her shoulder.

She looked into B.J.'s eyes. They were gray and lonely as a glacier.

She wanted to say, "Stay near me always and forever. Dorcas is willing to let you go. Oh, my darling, never leave me!" But all she said was, "Of course, B.J. I'm glad you made it in time." She smoothed back a lock of fair hair on her forehead and wished, humbly, that she were half as beautiful as any one of the models who were about to appear. She would have liked so much to be beautiful for B.J.

SHE took a deep breath to steady herself. Then, giving the signal to the orchestra to begin playing a muted rendition of the afternoon's theme song, she said in her clear, well-enunciated voice, "Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, our Spring Showing is in a worthy cause but we hope you'll find it as entertaining as it is worthy. The charming girls who are acting as models have volunteered their services and are all, without exception, home-grown American beauties. I would like to acknowledge, on behalf

of the committee, the tremendous help given us by—"

She went on smoothly, without a break, to give credit where credit was due. Then she repeated the announcement in French. A little murmur of surprised approbation went around the room. A faint flush rose to Edwina's cheeks.

"And now for our first glamorous model: Terry Preston, in the perfect pin-checked wool suit for a morning's shopping. Her bright-eyed canine companion is Whisker Maitland. He is wearing the newest thing in rolled leather collars, with a matching leash."

Whisker gave a short, excited bark, and there was an outburst of laughter.

Terry walked beautifully, even with the terrier pulling at the leash. "I could do this in my sleep," she thought dreamily. "It's funny how it all comes back."

She remembered, with the strange feeling of having seen it in a movie or read it in a book, how she had resisted leaving the orbit of the professional model. Marry Speed Preston and trek all over Europe while her name was being rapidly forgotten? Not on her life! A model's span of fame was short, at best.

"Sorry, Speed," she had told him two years ago at their favorite place on 52nd Street. "It might work for some women, not for me. If you were asking me to marry you and stay here in New York, well, the story might have a different ending." Her smile then had been rueful, because Speed stood out among all the men she knew as the someone special, the quite possible Might-Have-Been.

"You know," she had added lightly to cover her sudden frightening sense of loss, "I could even picture myself teaching some little Prestons how to look at a camera and smile like Mamma!"

"You're going to teach several little Prestons how to smile prettily," Speed told her, "but not in full-page spreads. In fact, my darling, no photographers will be admitted to our private life."

"We aren't having a private life. I'm turning you down, Speed. With regrets, because I do kind of like you."

"You kind of love me," he had said very softly then, and she had had another bad moment of panic, wondering if this cocky little man could be right.

Speed Preston wasn't good-looking, with his sandy head and freckly skin. He wasn't even tall, and Terry was a generous five-foot-niner, without heels.

"I suppose I'll be quite sentimental about you for a week or so after your ship has sailed," she admitted, eyes averted from his. "We've had fun, Speed."

"We'll always have fun. It's too bad you can't have your cake and eat it too. Too bad I'm not a male model or some guy in the advertising business who'd be so proud of your career he'd want you to keep on with it. I'll go farther, sweetie, and come out with the honest fact that the money you pull in every week ain't hay. But we can do without it, and after a while you'll get used to the simple life of the Press."

Terry shivered remembering the awful week that had followed, a week in which she had known Speed's departure date and had felt the days slipping away like sand under her feet.

The last night came, the last hour, before Speed must board the ship for the midnight sailing. . . . They were in a diner on Tenth Avenue, because she knew that once they joined the noisy party in Speed's cabin, he'd be lost to her.

"Have another hamburger, Toots; you look pale tonight," he offered hospitably.

"Can't. I'm modeling something tight first thing in the morning. Extra hamburgers put weight on me."

She couldn't understand his gaiety, his bounce. Surely if he loved her as he insisted he did, he'd be bound to feel some part of this aching emptiness she tried to press back.

"You aren't wearing anything tight tomorrow—or ever," he said suddenly in a low, urgent voice, his grin fading. "Not for hire, at least. I've canceled that appointment, baby. I'm taking you to Europe and making a real woman out of you."

She stared at him, not believing him at first, not daring to believe. "Speed, I—it's not true, Speed."

"Go and look at the single, C-87, and see if you recognize your plaid luggage, and if you still don't tumble, there's your passport on the dressing table. Remember that passport you got a couple of months ago when you thought you were going to model on an exchange basis with a French dress house?"

"It was a stunt," she said faintly. "It never came off. How did you know?"

"News hounds always know. You're lucky you're going to get such a smart husband, Toots. In Paris, all legal-like, before we go to Geneva."

"Speed," she whispered desperately, struggling for the last time against the invisible steel of the trap. Then she put her shining dark head on her arms and sobbed, sitting where she was at the counter, with a couple of truck drivers and the short-order cook staring at her.

"Cry it out, baby," Speed advised her tenderly. "It's relief from conflict. You've wanted to marry me all the time, you know, just as you've wanted to quit wearing those compression girdles and have a few square meals. You're a big girl, Terry; you're going to be a magnificent woman. I'm glad I'm the one who'll be sticking around watching you grow." . . .

"I grew, all right," thought Terry Preston, walking gracefully down the runway in the pin-checked *tailleur*, the skirt of which nipped her in the waist, "and I'll grow more, till finally I'll have a hard pull climbing up the hill from the grocery store to our apartment, but it's wonderful. I'm the luckiest woman in this room, and thank my stars I know it."

The applause mounted as she turned with a precision movement and made her exit, pulling Whisker along beside her.

Whisker had not liked being in the show, but now that he was growing accustomed to the limelight, he resented being made to leave it. "Gr-r-r," he said unpleasantly, and nipped Terry's ankle.

She stumbled a little, recovered, and went backstage smiling. "Gr-r-r your-

"Chuck, that's my mother!"

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self," she whispered. "We'll find a nicer pup than you for Baby Preston."

No one saw the Maitland terrier bite, but practically everyone noticed Terry Preston's brief stumble. Afterward, it was a topic of casual comment that out of all the models, only the professional had missed a step. Several of the ladies thought the famous Terry O'Shane was running to fat, though, of course, she was a beauty still, they couldn't deny it. . . .

EDWINA announced the American students next. They came out wearing pedal-pushers and cashmere sweaters, looking very burnished and young.

"Jean, Peggy, Barbara, and Susan, all at the university, will now show you the latest in rainwear for those April showers which sometimes come, even in Switzerland," said Edwina.

The girls slipped quickly into bright, shower-proof coats with matching sou'-westers, and marched to the tune of *Singing in the Rain.*

When they had been applauded and made their exit, Edwina, with a special sprightliness in her voice, said that Cynthia Moffat would now model a dress especially designed for diplomatic teas.

Cynthia's beauty, always cool and controlled, had a masklike quality. The arch of her brows was so clearly defined, her lips so well penciled in carmine, the curve of her chin such a pure oval. To women who disliked her, the mere fact that she could look like that, and in addition cook superbly, was a personal affront.

The eyes trained on Cynthia at this moment, as she walked down the runway in the gray satin afternoon dress, were avid with curiosity.

"They can't stone me," thought Cynthia. "They can only look at me. I can bear it for this short while. I must bear it for Fergus' sake."

She heard Edwina's clear voice pointing out the intricate drapery of the dress and the subtlety of the little feather cloche to be worn with it. "Many of us have the pleasant problem of what to wear to diplomatic receptions. We nominate this model as the perfect between-season frock."

"For a between-season woman," Cynthia added to herself, recognizing with a flash of intuition that she stood now between the season of her pride and the season of the humility she was yet to learn.

What had she done wrong? Why, when Fergus was certainly in the running for Buenos Aires, hadn't they gotten it?

Somewhere in the audience, among all the staring faces, Fergus was watching her, too. She had assured him only as long ago as lunchtime that she knew they'd be happy in Italy; the babies could learn Italian, she had always been interested in Renaissance painting.

"It isn't Rome," he had pointed out. "It's dirty and hot and full of flies. I've let you down, Cynthia. You had a right to expect something better."

Something better, everyone always expected something better. *But why?* she asked herself searchingly as she paraded before the American colony and their guests. *Why? What right had she, Cynthia Moffat, to lie back in the perfection of her youth, waiting for life to hand out further riches?*

"My babies could be ill," she thought humbly. "Other babies, cared for just as well, get sick sometimes. Fergus could grow tired of me. Some men stop seeing their wives, after a while, even if they're good-looking."

Beauty was not enough, but then, Cynthia conceded, she had never imagined it was. She had trained herself to do whatever she did with a smooth efficiency.

"I ran like a machine, each day just the same, planning in the morning, executing in the afternoon, all cylinders working, and then, for some reason I'll never know, the machine jammed."

When? How?

CYNTHIA remembered a dowdy little woman back in Washington in the State Department. She remembered her own amazement that the little woman should have been the wife of one of the Highest-Ups. But she had been charming and gracious to her even before she had discovered her identity. One of the reasons the Moffats never pulled boners was because Cynthia made it a rule to be charming to everyone, from receptionists to ambassadors.

But a few words spoken in the woman's rather flat Midwestern voice still pricked at Cynthia's consciousness: "I don't see how you do all you do and find time to be a human being, too, my dear."

She wondered suddenly if the little woman who had let her figure go had advised against the Moffats' getting Buenos Aires. Because of course she had known that Cynthia Moffat was too busy in the role of perfectionist to bother with life as a human being.

"Fergus," she whispered to him within the citadel of self, "it's I who have let you down, darling. I've committed the sin of pride, the most deadly of them all because it so often goes unrecognized, and one person was clever enough to catch me out at it. A little woman who needed a facial and a good corset."

Her mask slipped the merest trifle then. The more perceptive of the ladies in the audience realized they were looking at a girl struggling valiantly to keep back her tears. Tears not for Cynthia, but for Fergus, only they couldn't have guessed that.

"You know," whispered one of the committee to the wife of the American minister, "Cynthia Moffat is a beautiful woman, but I've never quite liked her until now." . . .

It was appropriate for Dorcas Llewellyn Forbes to model the stone marten cape. The rumor rippled throughout the room that she had ordered it charged and sent to her house directly after the show.

"Dorcas Forbes gives us the idealized version of the smart cosmopolite on her travels," announced Edwina.

A small uniformed hotel boy, wheeling a pile of new airplane luggage on a carrier, preceded Dorcas. This was a happy touch Dorcas, herself, had suggested. The ladies applauded enthusiastically.

Edwina spoke slowly and kept her eyes on her script. She was afraid to look at the narrow, distinctive face above her, lest the faintly mocking smile peculiar to Dorcas should have slipped. She was aware of B. J. Forbes at the next table. She always knew when he tightened himself against emotion, when his eyes became wary. Now he reached nervously for a cigarette.

The jewels Dorcas Forbes wore were her own. Everyone in Geneva knew that she bought them herself, that B.J. hadn't a penny but his salary. They knew, too, that the vast, elaborately furnished château in the Eau-Vives section had been standing empty for more than a year before the Forbeses came along and Dorcas took it and staffed it, acting on one of the careless whims of the very rich, in a single day. The story was that B.J. hadn't so much as seen it. He came back to their hotel from work one evening and Dorcas, murmuring, "Surprise, surprise," handed him the great, iron key.

EDWINA, despising herself for a coward, forced her eyes upward. She needn't have worried. Dorcas looked exactly as she always did. Her face betrayed no emotion beyond cool amusement. Her narrow eyes, suitable and even attractive above her lean cheekbones, surveyed the audience with an Oriental detachment. She would have been called an ugly woman by a former generation, but in her own era she was striking. She smiled at Edwina in passing, as though they shared a secret joke.

For the first time that afternoon Edwina's voice shook and she swallowed hard for control.

Suppose Dorcas loved the man she had so calmly handed over to another woman at lunch?

"No, she couldn't," Edwina thought uneasily. "She's known so many loves. Men flock around her. She had two husbands before B.J. She'll have others after him."

The boy trundled Dorcas' symbolic

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Wouldn't you rather drink FOUR ROSES?

luggage backstage again and she turned to go. She felt the almost drugged gaze of the women on her rubies, on the glossy combination cosmetic and jewel case she was carrying, on the fur cape she had tossed carelessly across her arm. She was used to the eyes of women; she knew what they were thinking: What would it be like to have millions? Is she happier than we? Deep down, in her secret heart, is she different, insulated against pain?

Dorcas had modeled for charity before, and she had sensed each time that she roused curiosity and a strange lust, the desire for possessions which seemed to lie deep in women, especially in the unhappy ones.

"I shouldn't be up here," she thought cynically. "I'm a snare of corruption, not a nice sight for the innocent young at all. Even Edwina isn't completely dazzle-proof. What would happen, I wonder, if I offered her half a million dollars instead of B.J.?"

This mental vagary was so amusing that she smiled at Edwina as she passed her. She heard the break in the well-modulated Tiernan voice then, and found herself believing, at least for the moment, that possibly the half-million wouldn't have had a taker.

Her eyes brushed B.J.'s. She saw the unsteadiness of his fingers as he lit a cigarette. It was probably hard on a scrupulous man to want so desperately to escape from his marriage.

The trap is sprung, my dear. You don't know it, but you're free.

Strangely, she hadn't done it for him or for Edwina. She had released B.J., realizing she might regret such a quixotic gesture, for the sake of a boy long dead on Anzio beachhead. A boy lost to her years before that. This was the man whose face she saw after the third drink.

"B.J. reminded me of you, Tony. Everyone I've loved has borne your fleeting shadow. Now, perhaps, I can make up for not giving you the one thing you wanted. Our child will never walk on earth, my darling, but theirs, B.J.'s and Edwina's, may."

"Sucker," she told herself savagely in the next instant. "You and your love stories."

Tomorrow night she'd be safe in Cannes, looking over the blue Mediterranean which was Tony's grave, but seeing it through a consoling haze of frenzied gaiety.

There was a loud burst of applause for Dorcas Llewellyn Forbes, who had looked exactly as the ladies had expected her to look—expensive, cynical, and world-weary. . . .

The four principal models made several changes, and the student group appeared again, this time in exquisite ingénue ball gowns.

The waiters brought extra pots of coffee and tea; the crowded room grew warmer; and the redolent clash of women's perfumes seemed heavier on the air.

Irene Ledyard murmured to her husband, "Don't you think we can slip out now, dear? Terry isn't modeling anything else."

Speed Preston suggested they all go down to the bar for a drink, but Peter said he wanted to stay till the end. Since his chin had an obstinate thrust, Irene shrugged and didn't bother to argue. No doubt the little girl from Iowa was scheduled to appear once more. She glanced down at her program and saw the last line: *Bride—Sharon Evelyn Mackie.*

There was a pause in the music, and Edwina said in a voice pitched slightly lower, "Because we believe no spring fashion show is complete without a spring bride, we have chosen a beautiful girl to wear a beautiful wedding gown. The material is the finest Swiss organdy and every inch of lace was made by hand in St. Gall." She nodded to the orchestra leader, and the strains of *Lohengrin* filled the room.

"Our bride is"—Edwina paused a heartbeat—"almost a bride in real life—Sharon Mackie." She let a few bars of music intervene, then held up her hand to signal Sharon to begin her slow, unattended march down the runway.

"We thought of borrowing a father to escort our bride," announced Edwina, "but though we scoured the town, we couldn't find a man in Geneva willing to be the only male in a fashion show!"

There was a tinkle of polite laughter, then an involuntary hush as Sharon advanced slowly into the foreground. No one was prepared for Sharon, the unknown, as she looked in that breathless moment.

Peter Ledyard stubbed out his cigarette with a fierce little gesture, as though he were rubbing it through the ash tray. Irene Ledyard, who had been sipping the last of her coffee, put her cup back in its saucer with a nervous clatter.

On the other side of the runway, a thin young man with dark eyes watched so intently that a pulse throbbed in his temple.

Sharon, who had dreaded for more than a week the time when she must walk alone to the slow rhythm of the wedding march, came serenely down the make-believe aisle, her head held high.

How shall I tell you, my darling, my darling?

She had already forgotten, in the very instant of slipping the billowing wedding gown over her smooth young shoulders, the vengeful trick she had planned to play for the sake of her tattered pride. Her eyes flickered across Peter Ledyard's face in passing, and she had a momentary flash of recognition: *That was Peter, who haunted my house and my dreams; that was Peter, who seemed to pour into my veins whenever I stood in moonlight. Peter, who drove me from him but never released me.*

Peter Ledyard stared upward as men stare at goddesses. He had never looked upon Sharon, the bride. No man had looked upon her.

The girl who had stood beside Jim Mackie and the justice of the peace in her green gabardine traveling suit, the girl who had ordered her new suitcases marked S.E.M. for the journey across the United States and the Atlantic Ocean all the way to a silent chalet in Versoix, was gone as surely as though she had died. No one who knew that girl could have seen her now in the face beneath the bridal veil.

Here Comes the Bride. The measured rhythm went on, beat by sonorous beat.

A thin wisp of veiling fell from the flower coronet, covering Sharon's face as far as her softly curving mouth. When she had reached a point two-thirds of the way down the aisle, she paused a moment and threw the veiling back.

Now, for the first time you see me as I was born to come to you, she thought. *Now, in this room, before all these people, I am ready to marry you, truly and forever.*

Curious onlookers remarked to one another afterward: "Did you see the young man who suddenly stood up as she passed by, almost as though he were in church? Well, my dear, it was really quite romantic. He was Jim Mackie, you know."

Sharon walked toward the thin young man as far as the runway would let her. Her eyes never left his.

She was aware in every nerve of the grace of her body, the proud curve of her breasts, the reed slimness of her waist. She thought of how good it was to be young and still lovely. She had not lost the gift of herself, only mislaid it. Now it was rediscovered, ready in its youth and desirousness, to be given in marriage.

She had been pale, but a slow flush touched her cheekbones, and her lips quivered just before she smiled.

It's been you for so long, my darling, yet I fought the knowing. I lived in that quiet house with my ghosts, never with my flesh-and-blood husband. Then one night . . .

She would tell Jim everything that must be said about Peter's coming; she would admit at last, in words, that the ghosts had all been tenuous images of him, and, afterward, Peter Ledyard's name would be as meaningless to the Mackies as the names on ancient tombstones.

Ah, but you know already, she thought as she saw Jim standing. *You're there, as you've always been there, waiting for me to come to you, patient, gentle, my husband, my lover!*

There was a sudden indrawn breath, a little sound of awe, as some of the ladies nearest her saw the gleam of tears on the lashes of the bride, but then, just

Welding words

Answers to Quiz on page 60

1.	OR	CHEST	RATE
2.	AS	SEVER	ATE
3.	IN	TRACT	ABLE
4.	BUR	DEN	SOME
5.	PEN	I	TENT
6.	DISC	RED	IT
7.	AT	TEN	DANCE
8.	PROP	A	GATE
9.	I	TINE	RANT
10.	RAN	SAC	KING

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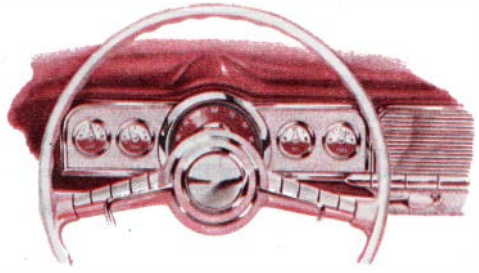
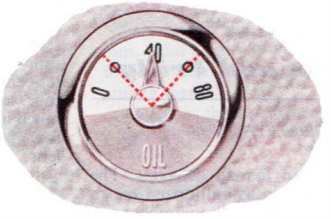
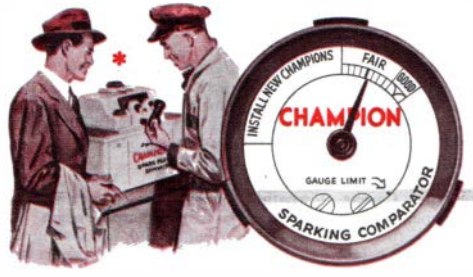


Your instrument panel is a thing of beauty, but primarily it is a practical aid to better driving. Your instruments tell you all you need to know about the operating efficiency of your engine. Good habit, **check them frequently.**



Oil pressure registers the "blood pressure" of your engine. If too low, it indicates low oil level, oil too thin or oil pump inoperative. If pressure is too high, oil is stiff from cold or too heavy. In either case **it's a danger signal—heed it.**



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as they were afraid she might weep, she smiled into her husband's eyes. . . .

"It was a simply beautiful showing," said the head of the benefit committee to Edwina Tiernan, as they went over the cash returns in the emptied ballroom. "The choice of models couldn't have been happier, I thought. The clothes were lovely, and you did a professional job of announcing, Edwina. You never do lose your poise, do you?"

The committee head made a business-like entry in a notebook, and then sighed nostalgically. "Well, dear, some of us must be the practical ones, I suppose; but I certainly would have liked to be young enough and slim enough to be up on that platform this afternoon, wouldn't you?" She added hastily, "Of course, you are young, Edwina! I didn't mean—"

"No," said Edwina slowly. "They were beautiful but I wouldn't have been up there for the world."

She folded her script and put it in her purse. "If there's nothing more, I'd better leave now. I have some work waiting."

It had been a successful spring show, but for Edwina, to go back to her quiet office seemed like leaving a gaudily colored picture post card of life to slip into the muted reality of life itself.

She thought, with a singing heart, of the lighted window B.J. must see from the street below.

THE END ★ ★

Forecast— *Cool and Frilly*

(*Continued from page* 43)

discovery about human behavior. The University of Kansas authorized me to launch an extraordinarily comprehensive project to investigate this odd coincidence further. At different times we had 40 researchers and 200 assistants working on the project.

Millions of items of historical information began going into a 2,000-page master "ledger," which is 7½ feet long. For example, the ledger now lists every battle we can find in history since 600 B.C.—18,000 of them! We also have a file of 65,000 samples of art of all ages and countries, classified by decades. And we have 5,000 samples of literature.

Simultaneously, other researchers were tracking down clues to the climate that prevailed for every decade in recorded history. The tree rings were helpful, but we wanted much more evidence. We checked reports from weather stations around the world as far back as their records go. In addition, we gained valuable information from lake levels . . . from reports of ancient droughts, floods, famines, and crop failures . . . from reports on difficulty of travel through mountain passes . . . from data on advancing and receding glaciers and deserts, and so on. While one group of draftsmen was charting the curves of various human activities, another group was charting climatic cycles.

Last year I moved my research headquarters to the Weather Science Foundation, Crystal Lake, Ill., and joined the faculty of the Babson Institute of Business Administration in Wellesley Hills, Mass. The gathering of data is still going on, and will as long as I live. After 20 years the evidence which we have overwhelmingly supports the view that there are rhythms in all basic human activities and that they parallel quite closely rhythms in the world's climate. Our climate certainly does not rule our lives. But, on the other hand, it is certainly a powerful conditioning factor.

I now believe the most basic and significant rhythm in weather (and human events) runs approximately 100 years. Some centuries it is slightly longer or shorter (just as the short sunspot cycle which rides its back is never exactly 11.2 years), but through recorded history this "100-year cycle" has averaged out to just about 100 years. Just as the year has four seasons, this 100-year cycle seems to have four distinct phases of, roughly, a quarter-century each. In fact, the century's four seasons and the year's four have much in common. Here are the century's four phases and their annual equivalent:

1. Warm, wet phase (spring)
2. Hot, dry phase (summer)
3. Cool, wet phase (fall)
4. Cold, dry phase (winter)

And just as the annual spring and fall —when the heavy equinoctial storms come—are the most stimulating seasons of the year, the two wet phases of the century are the most stimulating and enjoyable. We are now entering the cool, wet fall of our century. Let's look at the century's four seasons:

Spring of a century. This quarter-century always tends to be stormy, windy, and wet as the earth grows measurably warmer. It is invariably marked by a tremendous outbursting of human energy, and great nationalistic movements. Ninety per cent of all the Golden Ages of history have come at this time! Also, most of the great unifying leaders of history appeared here: Pericles of the Golden Age of Greece, Julius Caesar, Alfred the Great, Charlemagne, William the Conqueror, Elizabeth, and Napoleon. Of 53 rulers coming down through history with the title "the Great" after their name, 49 (or 91.7 per cent) reigned during this phase.

The most recent spring of a century was ushered in, for America, around 1900, with a whoop and a holler by the dynamic Teddy Roosevelt. Mr. Roosevelt is credited with the exuberant recommendation to Americans:

"Be a rabbit . . . Get the habit . . . Multiply!"

Springs of a century have produced Shakespeare, the Renaissance, most of the great unifying minds, including Galileo, Newton, and Einstein, and all of the great Industrial Revolutions. The auto, the airplane, the radio, the refrigerator, and the assembly line all emerged from the last one, at the beginning of this century.

Summer of a century. With increased heat and dryness come droughts and depressions. I was living in Kansas when the latest hot-drought phase was climaxed by the Dust Bowl. My wife, daughter, and I lived in our basement for most of six weeks. For two weeks straight the daily temperature exceeded 110. Our sheets were so hot we had to sprinkle them to make them bearable for sleeping. Wells dried up throughout many parts of America, farm animals died by the thousands.

What few people realize is that for centuries severe droughts have occurred around the Thirties. We have records of extremely bad droughts (and depressions) around the 1820's to '40's, the 1730's, the 1630's, the 1530's, and the 1430's.

As a hot-drought phase progresses, people the world over—already nationalistically minded—listlessly allow themselves to become more and more subservient to the state. They turn to totalitarian type cures. This is the time of tyrants, of cruel, bloodthirsty despots, of socialistic swings, of power-mad conquerors, such as Hitler, with his torture chambers, and Alexander, who called himself God. The terrible Attila and Tamerlane were both hot-drought products, as were the "Thirty Tyrants" that terrorized ancient Greece.

In this period you also have a rise of hoodlumism and a decline in morals. People become irresponsible. Society no longer seems to be heading anywhere.

Fall of a century. With cool, wet weather returning, we have a resurging of high vitality. People begin overthrowing tyrants and reasserting their independence. Free enterprise is again cherished, and times become prosperous. The individual now again becomes more important than the state. Practically all of the wars involve internal revolts, such as the famous war between Parliament and the Crown at the time of Cromwell, and the U.S. Civil War. Most of the great advances for individual freedom, such as the Magna Charta and the Emancipation Proclamation, come during this time. Calvin and Luther, the famed Protestants for individual rights, are products of this period.

Winter of a century. As the once stimulatingly cool weather turns cold and dry, human vitality drops off somewhat, and the world is again plagued by fairly serious droughts and depressions. It is a period ending in restless migrations and revolutions, such as the American Revolution and the French Revolution. (That winter Washington spent at Valley Forge was a truly bitter winter.)

Culture tends now to become sterile and gaudy. Almost three-quarters of the weather stations around the world report that the last decades of the 19th century were colder than normal. That's when our "Victorian" culture produced

outlandish gingerbread houses. Both manners and women's styles became elaborately sedate. Men in checkerboard pants strode around with canes, like dandies.

In the cold era of several preceding centuries (around 1780, 1680, and 1580) women's dresses were likewise fantastically beribboned and elaborate. Yet, around 1700, 1800, and 1900 (as warm-wet phases got under way) feminine fashions suddenly became simple, plain, severe, regal!

For some mysterious reason every fifth 100-year cycle is especially violent in its ups and downs, and is marked by terrible droughts and cold waves. (We're in the fifth one now.) Cataclysmic changes have almost always taken place. Around 475 A.D. the ancient world everywhere, including Rome, collapsed . . . 500 years later, around 975, the Dark Ages gave way to the Middle Ages . . . and around 1475 the Medieval world, after decades of violent upheaval, breathed its last. Out of that collapse, beginning around 1500, came the great Renaissance, the most dynamic and creative period in history. A new world was born.

Now another 500-year cycle is drawing to a close. We have just experienced a terrible hot drought. Depression and war. And in agreement with us Dr. C. G. Abbot of the Smithsonian Institution is predicting a great cold-drought period for around 1975. Once again, apparently, an old world is dying and a new one is struggling to be born. Out of the confusion, I believe, will come another great Renaissance—and possibly One World —at around 2000 A.D.

At the moment we have just come out of one of the worst hot-drought periods in recent centuries and it shaped profoundly the course of human events. Weather maps of the world show that temperatures began to rise above average by 1897, and stayed high almost continuously for 45 years. The climax came in the torrid heat-drought of the Thirties. Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo were perfect hot-drought specimens.

The moral fiber of nations rotted with internal decay, and people the world over, in their lethargy, accepted regimentation and the philosophy that the State owes the individual a living.

This heat-wave phase reflected itself in our Jazz Age and in our art and architecture. Everything became streamlined and distorted. Lurid, introverted art by Picasso and Dali became the rage. One of the most famous musical compositions of the era was Stravinsky's *Fire Bird.*

Most serious was our moral decline. Millions of people became hyper-sex-conscious. They necked publicly, dressed immodestly, and condoned sinful women. Our divorce rate became fantastic. There was an appalling decline in the stability of the family, as discipline all but vanished from the home. Paralleling this was a sad decline in the influence of the church.

Last April The American Magazine printed an article reporting Harvard University's study into *What's Going On Inside Russia.* One profound fact shaping

events in Russia, the Harvard scientists reported, was that temperatures over Russia had been rising for half a century. That is true. The steppes have been thawing out. Most of Russia ordinarily is too cold for normal progress, but during this recent great warm spell of half a century, the long backward and primitive nation enjoyed a tremendous awakening.

What the Harvard scientists did not apparently realize, however, is that this warm phase (which was world-wide) has now definitely ended. Russia and the rest of the world above the tropics are turning cool and wet again. We began turning the corner in 1943, when the most brutal winter Russia has experienced since Napoleon was trapped in Russian snowbanks caught Hitler by surprise and paralyzed his armies.

Since then, temperate-zone nations around the globe have been rocked by a series of rugged, old-fashioned winters. Two years ago the Northeastern section of the U.S. was smothered under the worst blizzard since John Greenleaf Whittier wrote *Snowbound*. Then, last winter a record-breaking blizzard struck the western U.S. Rescue planes had to fly food to stranded people and cattle. Oregon's Crater Lake froze over for the first time since weather records have been kept there. It even snowed on the Mediterranean isle of Malta, just off the coast of Africa!

THE wet, cool phase of our century has begun with a vengeance. From now until 1990 at least 70-80 per cent of our winters will be rugged, indeed. Fruit growers whose crops can be crippled by late or early frosts will have to buy smudge pots in large quantity or perish.

For most businessmen and food growers, however, prosperous conditions are indicated for at least the next several years, allowing, of course, for normal fluctuations.

This new era we're coming into will be a period of gaiety, good manners, good humor, and high vitality. Life will be a lot more pleasant to live for most of us.

Don't expect any great, inspiring leaders to arise and lead us during the next few decades, because we are not really in the mood to be led. Most of us now want to run our own lives. Our Presidents in the White House for the next 40 years, I predict, will be mostly uninspiring, average guys like Harry Truman.

The first thing people want when the weather turns cool and their energy level rises—as it is rising today—is FREEDOM. They want to stand on their own two feet.

All over Europe we are now witnessing once-leftist populations turning sharply to the right. We've seen it in Italy, in France, and very recently in Germany. The armed conflicts we shall see in the coming years will be mostly rebellions and civil wars against authority. We already see this trend vividly in eastern Europe behind the Iron Curtain, and in southeast Asia. Titoism will become more widespread, and will eventually reach inside Russia itself. Don't be alarmed if the communistic trend revives slightly from time to time, for with each sunspot minimum about every 11.2 years, there is a sequence of warmer years.

We can safely assume that the new Communist regime in China will be far more democratic than the rigid, totalitarian brand of Communism practiced in Russia, because the season for the ripening of governments into despotisms is over. We're in an era where the people count and must be treated with greater considerateness by their leaders.

It is risky to predict anything about the prospects of an international war soon, because the atomic bomb throws an unprecedented imponderable into the situation. But this much can be said: Never before in history has a major international war broken out in a cool, wet phase, such as we have just entered, or in the cold, dry phase toward which we are heading.

LAST fall, after President Harry S. Truman was swept back into office, he announced he planned to push through a tremendous "security" program. His program would take care of virtually everybody from cradle to grave and make America a real Welfare State. Many industrialists believed he could put it into effect because he had just received a "mandate" at the polls. They began curtailing operations, since they feared the monumental taxes required to launch this "security" program. These curtailments were one factor in the recession earlier this year.

I advised all our clients last December (1948) that they could safely discount the possibility that Mr. Truman could push through his vast program. It did not really fit the mood of the people at this time. I predicted Congress would spurn most of Mr. Truman's program. It has. The growing mood today is for self-reliance and independence from government domination of our lives.

On the other hand, I am advising our industrial clients that they should give their employees a greater voice in the operations of the company, and should broaden the financial control of the company by selling stocks to rank-and-file Americans. I predict there will be a great trend toward democratizing business in the coming decade. Our great industries can no longer be controlled by tycoons and manipulators. I notice that already some of Wall Street's largest brokerage houses are sending trucks out through the farm belt selling stocks to farmers and to laborers. This process of democratizing the control of our great business institutions may, in fact, be America's answer to socialism!

If you are an artist, writer, or musical composer, it is important that you realize public taste is now changing profoundly. It is changing toward more meaningful and familiar subjects and more natural modes of expression.

The public is now in no mood for obscure, distorted techniques for "creative" expression. If you want to write a novel like James Joyce's stream-of-consciousness novel *Ulysses*, save your wind. The public in this phase of the century we're entering will not want Joyce or anything like him. The public, instead, is becoming hungry for a new Mark Twain.

In our family life, significant changes are already apparent, and will become more evident every year. Our moral code will become more and more strict. Dress will become more discreet, and more attention will be given to what "nice girls" can and cannot do.

After rising sharply for 50 years, America's divorce curve now shows evidence of pointing abruptly downward! Our young people are far more serious-minded about marriage than were their own parents, who married during the Jazz Age. They are demanding that colleges offer courses in marriage and homemaking and child rearing. American parents by the million are spending more time with their children. Another significant fact is that sociologists have noticed a trend toward raising large families, despite the housing shortage.

Finally, it should be noted that a nation-wide religious revival is on the way. For the first time in many decades our churches will become full again on Sunday mornings. Furthermore, the basic character of our religious interest is changing. Yesterday, people were searching for a majestic, intellectual concept of God. Today, we want a simple, personal, meaningful faith.

In recent weeks I have noticed two other "revivals" which I predicted and which fit neatly into the kind of era we are now entering. One is the revival of old-fashioned square dancing, which in many sections of America is threatening to replace the slicker ballroom dancing. The other is the revival of that old, distinguished art of needlework. Today it has many thousands of new fans. So also with braiding and hooking rugs.

OUR homes in the next few years will stop being the functional, streamlined machines for living they are today, and instead will be cozy, rather cluttered retreats with even a touch of gingerbread in the decoration. Functional "modern" furniture will be replaced by more ornate pieces.

Yes, and our clothing will become warmer—warmer not only as protection against the cooler weather, but warmer in hue. Feminine fashions will run to gay, riotous colors and elaborate design. Skirts will not go back up to the knee again within most of our lifetimes, so there is no use cluttering up your closet by saving your old knee-length creations. However, you might put them in the attic for your daughter.

While you are in the attic you might dig out some of Grandma's 19th-century hats and gowns. You may be able to touch them up and find them right in vogue in a few years.

If you are a man, you might glance at your face in the mirror and speculate as to what type of beard would suit your personality best. In the next 20 years there will be at least a modest revival of beards.

Seriously, we are moving into a rich, colorful new pattern of life reminiscent in many ways of cultural patterns your grandparents knew during America's last great cool-wet phase.

THE END★★

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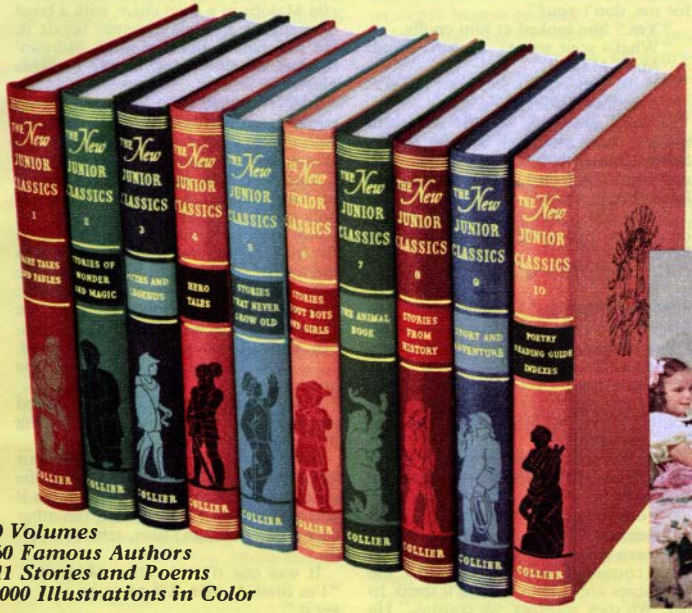

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Dance With Me

(*Continued from page* 25)

Pedro remarked imperturbably, "yet it is true. It is Ramona, not you."

Arturo's eyes flashed. "You think so?"

"I think so," Pedro said, choosing another olive. "I say so, too, with any amount you care to name."

The others at the table were looking at them. At the tables near by men leaned the better to hear, tipping back their chairs. Pedro popped the olive into his mouth, dried his fingers. He nodded as Arturo stared at him. "*Sí.* With, say, Yolande Matales, or—"

Arturo broke in, "Pah! I can take anyone—anyone, you hear?—and still win the prize from you." He gestured. "Even a girl from the watchers outside."

Pedro's smile was barely perceptible. "So? I have five hundred to your one that says you cannot."

Arturo's cheeks were flushed. "*Bueno.*"

He stood up. The faces all around were turned to him. From the windows above, the people in the street shouted at him. Arturo saw the gleam of light on tawny hair, the pale, vaguely familiar oval of the face looking down at him, wide-eyed. He said, "That one. You, Salvatore. Bring her to the door."

There was a slight commotion. Voices were raised outside, and hands gesticulated.

"Bring her," Arturo said.

The girl tried to pull away, protesting. Arturo turned, smiling scornfully, and then the smile faded. Half the dancers were crowding around the table, and Ramona was listening as Pedro spoke to her.

When her liquid eyes met Arturo's he felt his heart sink. He glanced at Pedro, and the full smile on that one's lips made Arturo breathe a soft curse under his breath. He had been tricked. Deliberately and skillfully. "Oh, hothead," he reproached himself, but he smiled at Ramona, bending his head. "A wager, lovely lady. This Pedro must be taught not to speak so certainly."

"Undoubtedly." Ramona's voice was pure ice. She turned to Pedro: "If we are to dance together in the contest it is best that we dance now as much as possible."

ARTURO stood for a moment, hearing the whispers and the laughter. He turned on his heel and made his way to the stairs and out into the moist, cool air.

The girl was there, practically imprisoned by the eager Yborites. Arturo said, "Thank you, *amigos.* Leave us, if you will."

In the light from the wide doors he looked at the girl. He felt his heart sink. She was such a skinny one. He said, "You heard?"

She answered him in English. "I heard."

"You do not speak Spanish?"

"I do, but I don't." Her voice was clear. "I'm an American."

Arturo stared at her. The anger that had been mounting in him moved swiftly to this new focus. He said, in English as well, "So what? We all are. You work for me, don't you?"

"Yes." She looked at him coolly.

"What's your name?" Arturo asked.

"Mary Malone."

Arturo nodded. "I see. Irish father."

"American," Mary said curtly.

Arturo gestured. "And American mother, too, though I bet she speaks Spanish better than English. Come off it, will you? You heard what went on. You know I'm in a jam."

"You are," Mary said, and in the dimness Arturo could have sworn he saw her smile.

He said, "Do you rumba?"

"No."

"Good. Then you haven't anything to forget." He bent to look into her face. "You're going to dance with me in the contest next month."

"And if I don't you'll fire me?"

"I don't work that way," Arturo said coldly. "How did Mirez happen to hire you, anyway?"

"He is a cousin of my mother's. When we came here from New York, Ma spoke to him."

"Your mother—a Mirez?"

"Sanchez."

Arturo gestured. "Then she is sure to be a cousin of mine as well. All the Sanchezes are. Come on. We'll speak to her. We stick together, we cousins." He led the way to the convertible.

MARY lived on 12th Street. Upstairs. *Mamacita* Malone was as dark as all the Sanchezes, but not, perhaps, as plump.

They were, Arturo found, indeed cousins though many times removed. He explained the matter fully to Señora Malone, while Mary stood looking on, slim and straight, her dark-blue eyes mutinous.

Arturo said at last, "This Pedro Garcia is a wily one. He has maneuvered me into a bad position, so he thinks, but I shall make it into a triumph and your daughter shall help me. I shall win, and the money I win from Pedro shall go to Mary's wedding portion."

Mary spoke then: "I don't want the money."

"All right," Arturo said, lapsing once again into English. "But you're going to dance with me in the contest. You have to. I'm ten times better than Pedro could ever hope to be. All you have to do is be half as good as Ramona Haya."

"That fat girl?" Mary said scornfully.

Arturo stared at her, shocked. "Fat? Ramona Haya?"

They glared at each other. Señora Malone said dolefully, "The rumba, *sí.* But Maria never would learn. Jigs and reels my Mike he taught her. But the rumba, no."

"It is good," Arturo said. "I will teach her." He turned to Mary: "Will you?"

"She's fat," Mary said. "All right."

Arturo said, "I have all the records of the Malecondos. We start this very night. Let us go to my apartment."

"Yes, we go," said Señora Malone, and rose.

Arturo held the door. It was only natural that Señora Malone should go. Unthinkable, otherwise.

At his apartment Arturo settled *Mamacita* Malone in a deep chair, with a bowl of mangoes and white grapes beside it. He put half a dozen Carlos Morales' rumbas, all slow ones, on the portable player.

Mary watched him. She was, Arturo guessed, not more than nineteen and her coloring was good, but she was such a skinny one. He sighed at the task ahead.

He kicked back the rugs. "Now, look," he told Mary. "In the rumba there is only one step. A simple one, two, three, pause, one, two, three. Whether you do the fundamental box step or anything in the way of variations, it is just that—the same step. That is all to remember. The bending and straightening of the knees gives the movement to the hips. For the rest you remain erect, relaxed. . . . Now I'll show you the way the knees move."

Señora Malone ate grapes and looked on. Mary frowned, her red hair gleaming in the lamplight.

Arturo told her, "Don't look at your feet. The weight on the stiffened leg, the other relaxed, bent. As you straighten it you step the least bit sidewise, the other foot going out then; bent, relaxed knee. So."

It was one o'clock when Mary said, "I'm tired. I— Oh, I'll never be able to get it."

Arturo said, "It's like swimming. You flounder, and then all of a sudden it comes to you. You'll learn, I promise."

Her eyes met his and he asked, "Or can't you take it?"

He saw her lips firm, her chin go up. "Let's try it again." . . .

AT THREE o'clock Arturo was just relaxing into his pillow, but not asleep. He lay in the dark, wide-eyed. He thought, "*Ai*, that Pedro." He cursed Pedro thoroughly, dispassionately.

But it was his own fault. Arturo knew that. Because he was so cocky, so sure of himself, he had got himself into a position that had already brought the Haya displeasure upon him. And he had got himself into a wager that, after tonight, looked impossible to win.

He might teach Mary to dance the rumba, teach her to go through every step and variation with perfection, and yet they wouldn't have a chance. She didn't have that natural abandon, that instinctive feeling for the beat of the music which result in true rhythmic grace. And she was so skinny.

"But we'll win." Arturo said aloud. "I do not accept defeat." Not in the dance and not otherwise. He'd win, and then he'd see about Ramona. He sighed. There would most likely be lots of other disagreeable circumstances resulting from his hotheadedness and Pedro's duplicity. . . .

There were. By the time Arturo got to the factory on Monday he knew that all Ybor City was smiling; some sympathetically, most with amusement. This Arturo Rubirez, with the sure rumba prize in his hand and the even greater prize of Ramona Haya almost his, had tossed it all away.

At the factory the old men gave Arturo advice and commiseration. The women sighed and clucked, their tongues wagging. Mary bent over her banding, and when Arturo spoke to her she looked up at him with weary eyes. A Sunday of continuous rumba, added to the hours of Saturday night, had worn her to exhaustion.

Arturo said, with more confidence than he felt, "We'll make it."

Mary's red lips curled. "So that you can impress that fat Haya girl?"

"She is not fat," Arturo said coldly.

Mary's eyes flashed. "And I have to go without sleep and dance until my legs drop off so that—" She didn't finish. She said, "Why don't you get someone else?"

Arturo held himself in leash. "Because you were the one I picked at random. Pedro will consider that I have disqualified myself if I take a new partner. So will all Ybor City. You want me to?"

Mary did not answer, her head bent, fingers busy.

Arturo leaned over. "Look. In Ybor City we help if we can. Your mother understands that. I bet your father would have, too. He liked us enough to pick an Ybor City girl. But you—you do not like us. Not even enough to help with grace."

Mary did not look up, but she came again to the apartment that night with Mamma Malone. She came wearing a light print dress that showed her slimness, her hair tied back with a ribbon. She hardly spoke to Arturo but she followed him, her feet seldom missing the beat, and Arturo's spirits rose a little toward the level of his grim determination. . . .

THE Ybor City smiles did not disappear. And there were worse things. Four days later Arturo sent Ramona Haya a box of exquisite orchids. The orchids did not come back, but there was no acknowledgment. Pedro Garcia, Arturo was readily informed, was nightly at the Casa Haya. And the following day Arturo received a letter asking him to attend upon Señor Spoto at the bank.

Arturo went. Señor Spoto did not smile when he rose to greet Arturo in his air-conditioned office. He gestured at the folder on his desk. "These are yours, Señor Rubirez. I regret that the decision of the board was unfavorable."

Arturo let his breath go gently. "It is permitted to ask why?"

Señor Spoto put his finger tips together. "In the matter of credit a great deal depends upon the character of the client seeking the line of credit. You, I am afraid, are a young man of great rashness."

Arturo smiled. "Simply because of my wager with Pedro Garcia? For your information, Señor, I shall win that wager." He bowed. "My thanks for your consideration. *Adios*." But, outside, the smile vanished. Arturo's face grew dark, and his lips set in a grim line.

Such a thing, Arturo knew, would not take long to get around by grapevine. Within the day his friends began to call, offering curses upon a heartless bank and cries of sorrow that they had not the needed wealth to cast at his feet.

Even Mary had heard, for that evening when she came to the apartment with Mamma Malone she looked at Arturo with those shadowed blue eyes, her face almost white in the frame of curling bright hair. "I think it's a shame," she said heatedly. "What has your new building to do with the dance contest?" She breathed deeply. "Let's start, Arturo. Let's show them. Let's win."

Arturo's smile was suddenly full. "That's the girl." The idea suggested itself, became a resolution. "Tonight as usual. Tomorrow we go to Havana. We've almost two weeks before the contest. One week in Havana, dancing to Morales' music. The rest here to polish. All right?"

"All right," Mary said firmly. "We'll win, and you'll show them. Even that—that fat girl."

"She—" Arturo exploded, and then he shrugged. "Let's get at it." . . .

Two hours out of Tampa International Airport, and Morro Castle was below them. The Malecon made a graceful curve at the edge of the blue-green water. Mamma Malone said happily, "Our honeymoon was here. Your dear father and I, Maria *mia*."

Havana was hot, but then Ybor City had been hot, and it was never too hot where people danced and laughed and ate and talked. Carlos Morales was playing at El Paraiso. He came to their table, short and dark as night, perfect of manner. Arturo explained. Carlos looked at Mary. He was most sympathetic and desirous of aiding. There were rehearsals every afternoon; it would be a favor if Señor Rubirez and the Señorita were to practice at such times as well as dance of evenings to his music.

Night and afternoon they danced, with only a few hours given over to sleep. And when the week passed and it was time for them to emplane once more, Arturo was beginning to hope.

Even Carlos Morales said, "*Pués*, it could be. If but the fire were roused." He looked at Arturo oddly. "I shall see you in Ybor City on the night of the third. *Con Dios*, Señor."

THE usual afternoon thunderstorm was making canals of Ybor City's streets when they got back. At the factory, Cousin Mirez was happy to see Arturo. He had much news, but none of it was comforting. "They say Pedro Garcia is as good as son-in-law to the Hayas. But we are all behind you, Arturo. The betting is tremendous. We have forced the odds down to three to one against you."

Arturo heard grimly. He went out to seek the watchman at the Circulo. That night, with the watchman standing by, Arturo and Mary danced on the empty marble of the patio, while the recorded music of Carlos Morales came from the phonograph on the covered stage.

The night but one before the *baile*, Arturo took Mary and Mamma Malone home. At the door Mary turned to him, drooping, white-faced. Arturo said gently, "Tomorrow you shall rest. I shall not see you until the *baile*, Mary. Whether we win or not is in the lap of the gods, but you have been more than

Family Problems

How to get along with mothers-in-law

SOLUTION 1

IT HAS taken me six years to learn to live comfortably with my husband's sweet little mother in our home. As an observer, I laughed at my friends who found mother-in-law trouble serious. Then it happened to me! The going got rough before many weeks, but I was sure it was her place to do the smoothing out. I had read about many women who had made over their lives and fitted happily into their children's homes. I found that many others do not. My mother-in-law belonged to the second group. Therefore, it was up to me to iron out the irritations of living together.

In her kindhearted oversolicitousness, she thought she must take part in every activity, from early morning until late at night. With but one bathroom, each day got off to a bad start. She was definitely in the way. I helped her to rearrange her schedule so that she did not leave her room until the rest of the family were off to work and to school and the morning rush was over. She loved to visit with me, but constant visiting not only hindered, it tired me. So we divided the work and changed the hostess-guest relationship to a partnership. This relieved the tension.

Old people live in the past, and one expects their conversation to be about the long ago, but unhappy memories obsessed her. Finally I tried covering my ears when she began her tale of woe. She was chagrined but took the hint. One move toward my ears now causes her to change the subject. She has discovered long-forgotten happy incidents to talk about.

Her habit of questioning was often embarrassing. What could I say when the answer concerned our private business? I decided to tell her frankly that I would either lie to her or answer her with nonsense, and asked which she preferred. Nonsense won; the more fantastic the answer, the more fun we get out of it.

Mrs. Marion Sargent Connor
Henniker, N. H.

SOLUTION 2

"Mother, will you let me help you with a bath this morning?" . . . "NO!" This was the answer I received from my aged, blind mother-in-law whom I scarcely knew. She had been placed in my care at the death of her daughter, seven months after our marriage.

Recalling that elderly people are often dealt with successfully when treated as children, I reminded her that I would find it necessary to tell my husband of this incident. She yielded to my request immediately, but there was a sour taste in my mouth, because I disliked browbeating this helpless woman. So I decided to try encouragement.

My new approach was, "Just think, Mother, if you get cleaned up now, in half an hour it will be all over. Your son will be home from work and he'll say, 'My, Mother! How nice you look, all ready for dinner!'"

Did we succeed in giving her a completely forward outlook? Certainly not! But we invited other elderly people to visit her, with the result that we often had a roomful of company of all ages, whom she entertained with reminiscent stories and poetry she had learned in her childhood. And it was touching to see the return of self-respect in the elderly woman's bearing as she smoothed her starched apron and clasped her hands in readiness for her evening appointment as Mistress of Ceremonies. My mother-in-law had become a charming asset to our home.

Mrs. Thomas A. McQuillen
Patton, Pa.

HOW mothers- and daughters-in-law can find a way to live together in friendly accord, when forced to share the same home, is most successfully dealt with in this month's solutions of family problems.

It is hard on everyone concerned when an older person must give up her own home and go to live under another's roof, even though it's her own son's. The habits of a lifetime must be changed to fit into another pattern; worst of all, she often feels unwanted.

It is equally difficult for a younger woman to have someone else around the house the whole day, usually giving unwelcome advice as to how things should be run. It calls for adjustments on both sides, and the good judgment and understanding displayed by both daughters-in-law here show how much more can be accomplished by intelligent kindness than by criticism.

MARY BERKELEY FINKE
AND HELEN KNOX

If you have a family-problem question, send it in. Or perhaps you have solved your own problem in an ingenious way that might be helpful to others. If so, write and tell us about it. For every publishable letter of not more than 500 words on "How We Solved Our Family Problem" we will pay $25. No letters will be returned. Address: Family Problems, The American Magazine, 640 Fifth Avenue, New York 19, N.Y.

co-operative. You have been simply swell. Thanks, Mary. About your dress—"

Mary said, "It has been attended to."

"You will let me pay," Arturo insisted, but Mary shook her head. Her eyes met his. "No. Thank you, Arturo." She went inside.

Reaction set in upon Arturo the next day. His spirits went down into his polished shoes. He thought of Ramona. It was certain that her lush charms were lost to him. It remained only to fight and win. To gain that much from the wreckage of his plans. . . .

Saturday, the day of the *baile*, began the long Labor Day week end. There was an air of gaiety and excitement to all of Ybor City. Arturo had told Mary the night before not to come to work. When he left the factory he went right home. There were too many people eager to console him; to assure him that their money and prayers were with him.

Over the phone he ordered a box of gardenias sent to the Malone apartment. He lay down to the soothing roll and crash of the daily thunderstorm. It would most probably be a clear night.

He had his dinner sent in when he woke at nine that evening. Yellow rice and savory chicken. At ten he started to dress

It was past eleven when he arrived at the Circulo Cubano. As he pushed his way through the onlookers at the patio gates, the sound of the music came to Arturo. There was no mistaking the subtle, blood-tingling beat of Carlos Morales' Malecondos.

In the patio itself the tables were ranked in rows about the dance floor. The elite of Ybor City sat at the tables, the men in white dinner jackets, the women jewel-laden and in colorful evening gowns.

They were all there, the doctors, lawyers, judges, factory owners, and financiers. Drinking fine Spanish brandy from thin glasses; eating lush green olives. Talking, laughing, getting up to dance to the soul-stirring music.

Arturo made his way between the tables. It was a slow progress, with so many to speak to him and a courteous word to answer. He saw the Spotos at a table with several other people. One, he knew, was President Vargas, himself, of the bank that had turned him down. He bowed, and received stiff bows in return.

HE CAME to the group of tables where the Haya clan held forth. He saw Ramona in her favorite white, agleam with diamonds, sitting between her father and her mother. Arturo murmured good evening.

There was a polite murmur in reply. Arturo turned his gaze upon Ramona. She gave back his glance with gleaming black eyes. Arturo started to sigh in the conventional Latin manner, with a sincerity born of tradition.

But the sigh would not come. Arturo stared at Ramona Haya as if he saw her for the first time. As if he saw her, not as the heiress of the clan, but as just a girl.

Arturo swallowed, shaken. He did not know what had happened to him to so bewilder his eyes. He looked again at

Ramona, and there was no change in what he saw: a fat girl in a white dress with a lot of jewels.

He closed his eyes, opened them. A resplendent Pedro Garcia said at his shoulder, "There are no hard feelings, *amigo?*"

"None. May the best dancing gain the laurels."

Arturo bowed and moved on. His dazed eyes saw that his cousin Alfredo Mirez and his wife Lucia were the only ones yet arrived at Arturo's own table. He sat down, still aghast at his reaction.

Across from him Alfredo let out a soft, explosive oath, and rose.

Arturo rose, as well. He turned, and he saw Mary coming toward him, followed by her mother in black lace and three of the more notable Sanchezes.

ARTURO stared, unable to believe his eyes. Mary came, walking with the grace of an Asturian peasant girl, or a queen. Her bright hair was piled smoothly on her proud head, the gardenias making a creamy coronet for the rich tresses. Her gown was of green silk that set off her fair skin and her dark sapphire eyes. There were emeralds at her pink earlobes and a necklace of emeralds encircled her white throat. Real emeralds, Arturo knew. The Sanchez emeralds that belonged to gray-haired, bright-eyed Señora Porfirio Sanchez, who walked beside *Mamacita* Malone.

As they came close, Mary's eyes met Arturo's. He moved quickly to bend over her hand. He said simply, looking up into her face, "How lovely you are, Mary."

Her red lips parted. Color came into her cheeks.

As he held her chair Arturo asked, "Scared?"

"Yes," she breathed, and Arturo said, "Me, too. But we've all to win. Nothing to lose."

He could not take his eyes from her. He was barely aware of Porfirio Sanchez offering aged brandy to betoken success. It was incredible that the girl opposite, this creature of cool, flame-inspiring beauty, was Mary, the skinny one.

When the music ended with a flourish the dancers streamed back to the tables. The loud-speaker boomed. It was the announcement of the contest. There would be three dances. All six couples would dance all three. At the conclusion the dancers would remain on the floor until the judges had made their decision.

Carlos Morales read the names into the microphone, and the couples rose as he called them and went out onto the dance floor: Yolande Matales and Henrico Cone, the Portargos, the middle-aged Diazes, Liane Drigo and Salvatore Marsi, Pedro and Ramona Haya, and at last Arturo heard his own name and Mary's.

The beat of hands continued as he took Mary's white-gloved fingers and led her to the floor where the other five couples waited. He saw Ramona Haya deliberately look away. He felt Mary's fingers tighten in his. He looked down into her eyes. He could not breathe.

The maracas began their slow beat,

the music swelled. The sweet, insidious rhythm of the rumba stole into Arturo's veins. He found himself moving, aware only of the music and Mary.

He did not see the others. He saw Mary as part of him, part of the dance. She was as the echo of his own movements. Moving with slow grace the faintest breath past the beat. Handing her in a circle about him, reaching behind with his left hand, knowing hers would be there to take it. Turning her, his arm languorous over her flower-crowned head, to face him again. Only the knees and feet moving, the arms and hands making the gestures, at once courteous and rhythmic.

It was rumba. It was something you felt once in a lifetime. Music and self and partner as one. Arturo forgot where he was, forgot which of the dances it was. He only knew that his blood sang, his heart cried out at the sheer beauty of it.

THEN of a sudden the music was over, and the crash of hands, the din of shouting were all about them. At his side Mary let her breath go. Arturo felt the faint sigh that went through her as her shoulder touched his arm. He raised her hand to his lips, and he saw the three judges come out onto the floor.

Not for a moment did Arturo doubt. He saw the judges pause, facing the line of dancers and then come toward him and Mary. Señor Greco spoke. He gave the silver, rose-filled cup into Mary's arms. The roars and cries and clapping drowned out his words. Arturo spoke, his lips trembling, and then he was escorting Mary back to the table. *Maamcita* Malone cried unashamedly; Cousin Porfirio kissed them both.

Someone touched Arturo's elbow. It was Pedro Garcia. He said, smiling ruefully, "It is useless to try and outdo you, *amigo.* My check will come to you Tuesday, and Ramona wishes you to come to the Haya table to receive the Haya congratulations."

Arturo put his hand on Pedro's shoulder. "Thank you, *amigo mio,* but I cannot attend upon the Hayas. You will express my regrets. And to you, my eternal thanks."

He turned away from Pedro's stunned eyes and found himself facing Señor Spoto.

The banker put both hands on Arturo's arms and cried enthusiastically, "*Magnifico!* I tell you, my boy, sometimes there is greatness in rashness."

"I told you I should win," Arturo said.

"You did," Señor Spoto averred fervently. "I reminded President Benito Vargas of the bank of that, even before you danced. We should have had more faith in you. But it is not too late, Señor Rubirez. If, perhaps, you could come to the bank on Tuesday, there could be good news to greet you."

"I shall come to the bank on Tuesday," Arturo said. "I thank you, Señor."

He did not look again at the banker. His eyes were on Mary as she sat surrounded by clamoring, adoring Yborites. He thought, his throat tight, "It is she. It is because she is perfection that I see all others so truly. She is utterly of beauty and grace, of fire to kindle eternal fire. And I, unworthy as I am, have helped to make this miracle come to pass."

He said to himself, "Oh, stupid one, not to know the sun when you have once felt its warmth." But he knew the sun now. He knew he wanted ever to keep his face turned to its warmth and light.

HE BENT between Porfirio Sanchez and Mamma Malone. He said, "Cousin Porfirio, tomorrow afternoon would you do me the honor, as an elder of the family, to accompany me on a formal call upon Señora Malone y Sanchez? If, that is, she will condescend to receive so unworthy a suitor."

Rotund Porfirio boomed, "*Por Dios,* yes."

Mamacita Malone bent her head. She said with great dignity, "I shall be at home to receive you, Señores."

The music beat, the maracas chattered. Mary's blue eyes met Arturo's. He held his hand to her and she rose, slowly and gracefully.

On the floor she followed like his very shadow, warm and pulsing as the blood singing in his veins. Against her fragrant hair Arturo whispered, "*Yo te amo.* I love thee, Maria. If it be not you, then can it be no other. Tomorrow I call upon your mother—" He broke off to say in English, "Mary, is it—is it all right with you?"

He saw her red lips part, felt the sweetness of her breath against his lips. "*Si,*" said Mary Malone. "*Si, mi corazón.*"

THE END★★

Don't Darken My Door

(*Continued from page* 35)

but most times he smiled and laid a little broomstraw on the floor. There was quite a pile of these little broomstraws on the floor, at least fifty or sixty.

The intensity of the pantomime, and the accuracy in keeping score, made Mr. Parmalee a little uneasy.

He asked timidly, "Is Mrs. Gilpen at home? Dr. Imlay sent a message."

Mr. Gilpen put down his pistol. "Mom! Hit's ole Gumbo Parmalee!"

A burlap curtain parted and Mrs. Gilpen sidled in, wispy and iron-jawed, trailed by three daughters: Flora, a sulky twenty-two; Ella Dorado, sixteen and shy; little Fauna, seven, sucking her thumb and wearing one of her father's shirts as a dress.

They goggled at Mr. Parmalee in hostile silence.

Mr. Parmalee said affably, "I bring good news. Dr. Imlay wants Flora to work for him. Office girl. Four hours a day. Two in the morning, two in the afternoon. Seven dollars a week."

There was no answer. Not so much as the flick of an eyelid.

"Seven big, fat, juicy dollars." Mr. Parmalee repeated. He realized he was talking loudly, and lowered his voice: "Each and every week."

It was like talking to an empty room. The very idea of labor had struck them speechless.

Mr. Parmalee's voice took on its most persuasive horse-trading quality: "Wait till Flora sees the insides o' Dr. Imlay's waiting-room! Working for a doctor ain't really working; it's more like goin' to a strawberry festival or a social. Folks a-laughin' and jokin', strangers prankin' strangers!" Mr. Parmalee laughed jovially. "Yessirree!" He became suddenly foxy: "Flora's goin' to be thinkin' about marriage one of these days. At Dr. Imlay's she meets ever' boy in the county!"

"I know ever' boy in the county now," Flora Gilpen said.

"Course you do, honey," Mr. Parmalee said. "And that's right and proper and I'm glad to hear it. But do you know their bank accounts?"

MRS. GILPEN'S eyes showed a tiny glint. "Bank accounts?"

"It's all there in Dr. Imlay's ledgers," Mr. Parmalee explained. "All wrote down. Who's rich, and who's sorry-poor." He raised his eyebrows. "How do you figger Dr. Imlay got himself that big house? Yessirree! For a young girl aimin' for marriage them ledgers makes very, very interestin' reading." He winked.

Nobody winked back.

Mr. Parmalee tried it again: "I've heered it said that movie stars gen'lly starts as office girls."

This, too, was wrapped up in a blanket of cold silence.

Abruptly, to everyone's surprise, Papa Gilpen got into the conversation. From his cot in the corner he said, "You got the seven dollars on you, Gumbo?"

Mr. Parmalee recoiled. He had the seven dollars—in fact, he had nine dollars. For almost a year he had been saving for a bedside radio. Stiffly, he said, "Dr. Imlay gen'lly pays off. And not in advance. He pays off every Saturday afternoon."

"I asked you a simple question," Mr. Gilpen said coldly. "Put up or shut up."

Mr. Parmalee put up. He put up with a mixture of fierce reluctance and burning rage. That was seven dollars gone forever, and he knew it.

Suddenly the image of Miss Bates came to him. Miss Bates and her screaming tyrannies. Miss Bates ordering him around like he was a half-witted infant, beating his eardrums with her howling and bellowing. He laid seven dollars on the cot and felt that he had made a good bargain.

"She'll be there tomorrow," Mr. Gilpen said. He picked up his pistol and resumed his target practice.

Mr. Parmalee murmured good night and excused himself. . . .

The next day was an eventful one at Dr. Imlay's.

Not only for Miss Flora Gilpen, but

for Dr. Imlay, his patients, and for Mr. Parmalee.

The moment of Miss Gilpen's arrival was spectacular in itself. She appeared on the front doorstep at a quarter of ten, fifteen minutes early, astonishingly clean and fresh in a new dress, her hair neatly brushed, exuding the pleasant odor of dime-store talcum. Mr. Parmalee's heart beat happily as he beheld her. Dazzled by this new personality, he bowed her into the kitchen and somewhat clumsily offered her a slice of bread and jam. This she refused emphatically. It was an auspicious beginning. Dr. Imlay, not due until ten, was out on his early morning calls.

At thirteen minutes to ten Mr. Parmalee ushered Miss Gilpen into the waiting-room. Five patients had already assembled. Mrs. Newcombe was on the rattan sofa, her baby Luna in her arms, and her ninety-year-old aunt, Mrs. Tatum, beside her. A young farmer, known locally as Box Car, sat in a corner reading a magazine. Mr. Taggert, who lived back on Little Hawkbill Creek, drowsed in the sun by the window.

Instantly Miss Gilpen was the center of attention. She seated herself daintily on a cushioned chair and struck up a general conversation.

That was at thirteen minutes to ten.

By ten o'clock she had diagnosed Mrs. Newcombe's stiff back as a sprain and had suggested a poultice of scraped carrots. For Baby Luna's sore throat she advised that the child chew a gold thread and swallow the saliva. "If she was a little older," Miss Gilpen announced to a spellbound audience, "she could smoke dried mullein leaves in a new corncob pipe. You can't beat that for sore throat, but it has to be a *new* pipe."

Old Mrs. Tatum said she hadn't heard about a gold thread since she was a youngster, and that you couldn't beat it. For Mrs. Tatum herself Miss Gilpen prescribed snakeroot tea. "If you can't get snakeroot," she said, "use wild cherry bark. Bark tea makes you sicker for a while but it pays in the long run."

Mr. Taggert's trouble seemed to be an old-fashioned ague.

"Curin' old-fashioned ague's like shooting fish in a barrel," Miss Gilpen asserted. "Soot coffee's the thing for ague. Soot from a chimney, not from a stovepipe. Take a tablespoon o' soot, steep it in a pint o' water, settle it with a beat egg, and take it with milk and sugar. Three times a day."

Mr. Taggert said he thought he'd try it.

The young farmer, Box Car, refused to join in the discussion, but Miss Gilpen noticed he had an open wound on his arm and volunteered that there was nothing for open wounds like ashes or red oak bark and beeswax. "You make it into a plaster," she added helpfully.

"Not me," the young man said. "I come to see a doctor."

His rudeness and presence were pointedly ignored.

There was a brief but spirited conversation, led by Miss Gilpen, on the fallibility of science and the infallibility of ancestral remedies. As the clock struck ten Mrs. Newcombe, Baby Luna, and

Mrs. Tatum left. Mr. Taggert, after a second's hesitation, followed. The young farmer celebrated their departure with a boisterous guffaw.

That was Thursday morning at Dr. Imlay's.

Thursday afternoon, from three to five, Miss Gilpen slept. She slept in a cool, overstuffed chair by the umbrella rack in the dim hallway, snoring like a phantom swarm of homeless bees. Neither the doctor nor Mr. Parmalee nor the greetings of incoming patients could bring her beyond the threshold of a state of coma.

That night after supper Dr. Imlay expressed doubts. "I'm not so sure," he said vaguely. "I mean, do you think this is going to work out?"

Mr. Parmalee's response was gusty and assured: "Course it is! How can you tell by one day? Let's give it a try!"

Later, long after the doctor had retired, Mr. Parmalee left his bed in the basement and came up into the kitchen. Moving with great stealth, and handling the kitchen utensils with caution to keep them from clinking and tinkling, he prepared himself a cup of soot coffee. It was nasty stuff and almost impossible to get down, but Mr. Parmalee drank it.

He'd remembered hearing his mother say that his great-grandfather occasionally took a cup of soot coffee. And his great-grandfather had lived an incredibly long and healthy life.

He didn't sleep too well.

Friday morning Miss Flora Gilpen failed to show up, and Miss Ella Gilpen, her sixteen-year-old sister, appeared in her stead. She arrived twenty minutes late and explained that Flora had gone to Mississippi with a double-cousin; she'd be back sometime. She'd had the chance to take the ride and she'd gone. That was all there was to it. Mr. Parmalee saw his defenses crumbling.

From the moment of her arrival Ella Gilpen cowered. As the day unrolled, the situation worsened. When Dr. Imlay spoke to her, she quivered; when Mr. Parmalee attempted to buck her up, she cried. She hid in closets, she hid in the woodshed, she hid in the sweltering, dusty attic. She quit forty minutes early and even Mr. Parmalee was glad to see her go. Glad but desperate.

Dusk was falling when Mr. Parmalee, making his daily trip to the village for the doctor's mail, encountered Papa Gilpen on a sidewalk chair in front of the post office, enjoying the cool of the evening.

Mr. Parmalee, in righteous anger, came to a halt before him. "Mr. Gilpen," he said gravely, "I got a crow to pick with you."

Mr. Gilpen nodded wearily. "I know, Gumbo. I know."

"What kind of a critter is this Ella?" Mr. Parmalee asked. "I never seen such hidin'. In the attic, in the—"

"She was afeared of the transfugents," Papa Gilpen explained.

"Transfugents?"

"The blood transfugents."

"Oh, transfusions. Blood transfusions. I see. How come?"

"Miss Bates stopped her on the way to work and 'splained 'em to her."

Mr. Parmalee waited.

"She stopped Ella as Ella was comin' up the lane. She was a-standin' there by her gate with a two-quart empty saucepan in her hand. 'Ella,' she says, 'yo're a young girl, hale an' hearty. Don't let 'em do it to you. It'll stunt you, it'll sap off yore beauty and dry up yore hair. I'm a ole woman and I know what I'm talking about.'"

"What *was* she talking about?" Mr. Parmalee asked.

"I'm gettin' to that. That was what Ella asked her. 'I'm talkin' about transfugents,' Miss Bates says, 'blood transfugents. When Dr. Imlay and Mr. Parmlay gits a certain kinda sick patient they got to have extry blood, and heaven help anyone who happens to be standin' around. I dream about it in the dead o' night. They've grabbed me a dozen times and more.' Then Miss Bates holds up the two-quart saucepan and says, 'Many's the time they've helt me on the floor an' filled this here saucepan to the brim. Jest to refill some ailin' patient.'"

Mr. Parmalee looked disgusted. "Dr. Imlay ain't got sense enough to make a blood transfusion. They make them-there in hospitals."

"I don't think they make 'em at all," Papa Gilpen said reasonably. "I never seen nobuddy make one."

After a moment Mr. Parmalee asked, "What about my seven dollars?"

"I give you my word, didn't I?" Mr. Gilpen said. "You'll git yore money's worth. My ole woman will be around tomorrow."

This was more what Dr. Imlay had had in mind. An older woman.

MR. PARMALEE took himself home and fed the chickens. That night Prince proved to be in a particularly evil mood, and Mr. Parmalee emerged from the battle with a lacerated finger.

That night, too, Mr. Parmalee, contrary to his daily custom, gave the supper dishes a private. royal bath of their own. Things in the big house had reached a state of tension; this was no time to make a misstep. Dr. Imlay came bursting into the kitchen just as he was removing a coating of antique, petrified egg from between the tines of a silver table fork with a scrap of sandpaper.

"This is a showdown, Gumbo," Dr. Imlay declared harshly. "I can't stand it. No civilized human could stand it! First that Flora Gilpen with her soot coffee, and now her idiotic sister. It won't work, it won't work at all."

"O' course it won't work," Mr. Parmalee said smugly. "But we livean' learn. That's why I ordered a change."

"Ordered a change?"

"I looked up Gilpen. It won't work, I told him. First Flora and then her idiotic sister! Guess what? Tomorrer Mrs. Gilpen is coming. Think of that, Mrs. Gilpen herself!"

Dr. Imlay seemed mollified, but only slightly so. He said carefully, "We shall see what we shall see." Suddenly he dug into his pocket and came out with a sheaf of papers, grocer's bills. "And here's something else I want to talk to you about. They're from Haverstick's store. Sundries, sundries, sundries. Can't Rush Haverstick spell anything but sundries. Can't he spell bread and meat and things like that?"

"Speaking of meat," Mr. Parmalee said, "tomorrer is Gumbo Parmalee's special-cooked hog jowl and beans!"

As Dr. Imlay left the room, he snorted.

"He's got it bad tonight," Mr. Parmalee thought. "When he doesn't actual drool at the very mention of hog jowl and beans, he's got it bad." Mr. Parmalee was groggy with worry. When would worst come to worst?

Worst came to worst the next morning.

Immediately after breakfast Dr. Imlay was called out to Little T. Hollow on an emergency. Ten and ten-thirty went by, and there was no sign of either the doctor or Mother Gilpen. Terrified, Mr. Parmalee stood in the dim hall and

"Wake up, Henry! I've thought of another way to rearrange the bedroom"

For The American Magazine by Mary Gibson

watched the front yard through the amber glass panel by the door. At precisely fifteen minutes to eleven little Fauna Gilpen, age seven, came pedaling up the cement walk on a shabby tricycle. She rode low over the handle bars. Mr. Parmalee opened the door, descended the steps, and waited. Little Fauna brought her mount to a slewing stop and piled off.

Just at that moment Dr. Imlay drove his old coupé up to the hitching block. Looking unbelievably fatigued, he crawled out and came forward. Absently, he asked, "What's this?"

Little Fauna grinned. "Mommy cain't come, she says. She sent me."

Mr. Parmalee licked his lips. "Sent you to what?"

"Sent me to he'p you 'uns out."

Gently, Dr. Imlay picked her up and set her on her tricycle. "Go home, baby," he said. His tired voice, quavering and overwrought, seemed to come from a bottomless pit. "Home, home, home," he echoed.

Little Fauna zoomed down the walk.

"Monday we talk to Miss Bates," Dr. Imlay said.

Three times Mr. Parmalee tried to speak, but words failed to come.

Dazed, Mr. Parmalee circled the house to the woodshed. Like Ella Gilpen, he wanted to hide.

Lunch was tense and embarrassing. Dr. Imlay devoured his hog jowl and beans, swabbing the last morsel from his empty plate with bread, but made no comment, no cheery compliment. The stroke of doom had fallen, and Mr. Parmalee well knew it.

One o'clock sharp the doctor left the house for his afternoon calls.

After a safe interval Mr. Parmalee put on leather gloves, located a bushel peach basket with its cover in the pantry, and made his way to the chicken run.

For a long moment he eyed Prince through the wire mesh, and Prince, twisting his thick neck, muttering a soft, evil battle cry, eyed him back. Steeling himself, Mr. Parmalee unlocked the door and entered.

Then Prince was on him. He was on him from chest to ankles, front and back, spurring him, beating him, gouging him with what seemed like a thousand beaks.

Seven times Mr. Parmalee grabbed nothing but air. At last he grasped a scaly leg, got the fowl into the basket, and got the basket covered. He could hardly straighten up; his bones and muscles felt as though they'd been pounded with sledgehammers. He left the chicken run, locked the gate, and with the basket under his arm took a small path hidden from the house by a thicket of sassafras.

Down the hill from the house he sat on a log by the roadside. Behind him, the wild timber and brush of the hills concealed him. Directly before him, shimmering in the heat, lay the great highway, the highway from Nashville and the East to Memphis, New Orleans, and the distant West. He permitted three cars to pass, and stopped the fourth, a spanking new convertible with a New York license. He stopped it by simply standing in the middle of the highway. A spectacled young man and a pretty girl leaned out into the sunlight.

Before they could speak, Mr. Parmalee placed the basket beside them on the front seat. "Here's a rooster," he said with dignity. "From us, to you. Just tell your friends that Pember County is the Garden Spot of the World. It gives me pleasure. . . . Where you headed for?"

"Texas," the girl said. "We've bought a small ranch. We've just been married. Thank you very, very much."

The young man was overcome with gratitude. "We'll be good to him, you can be sure of that. He'll like Texas. I don't know what to say. I've never heard of anything like this! What's his name?"

"Prince," Mr. Parmalee said. "Pember County is the Garden Spot of the World."

Prince was thumping the basket with his steam-roller legs and making his own special brand of butcher noise. "He's tryin' to make friends with you," Mr. Parmalee explained with affection. "But I wouldn't let him out till you get there. You can feed him through them slots in the cover." He beamed.

As they drove away, the young man and the girl yelled good-by. "Pember County is the Garden Spot of the World," they shouted.

A Texas ranch was just the place for Prince, Mr. Parmalee decided. Some place where he could fight rattlesnakes

and coyotes. He was going to be very happy. After a moment of reflection Mr. Parmalee returned to the chicken run. He tore out a section of the wire mesh with a claw hammer, and repaired it with new staples. Anyone could see that it had been torn; anyone could see that it had been carefully repaired with new staples. That was his alibi.

When Dr. Imlay was informed of Prince's mysterious escape, and had seen the torn mesh and new staples with his own eyes, he didn't seem too concerned.

"Prince is an extrovert," the doctor declared. "Wherever he is, he's happy."

Mr. Parmalee agreed heartily.

The supper dishes were washed and put away when Dr. Imlay called Mr. Parmalee to his study. It developed that the doctor had encountered Miss Bates on his rounds, and for two excruciating hours he delivered wandering, maudlin speeches on the glorious days when that noble lady ruled the kitchen. There was nothing to do but to listen.

The blow fell the next day, Sunday, at noon. And from an unexpected quarter.

Mr. Parmalee, in a flurry of voluntary labor, was waxing the newel post in the front hall when the doorbell rang. He opened the door, to behold Miss Bates on the threshold, an enormous tray in her muscular hands. She had a set, fierce smile on her wooden face. Instantly he noticed other things, too, little details. Her neck was hung with time-dulled jet, and gold chains. She wore her best black-lace gown, and on her feet were high-heeled pumps.

Mr. Parmalee was thunderstruck. "This is it," he thought.

Suddenly he froze in horror. "It's not only her job she's after—she's after the doctor himself! She's come courting!"

"Step aside," she hissed. "I'm coming in!" She pushed past him, into the hall. "Dr. Imlay!" she bellowed. "Lookee here!"

Dr. Imlay appeared from his study, polishing his spectacles. His face lit up in ecstasy. He said, "Well, bless my heart. Miss Bates. Well, bless my heart. Miss Bates." He kept saying it over and over, like a whippoorwill.

In a fawning whine, Miss Bates said, "It occurred to me, when I ran into you so pleasantly yesterday, that you looked peaked. So I brought you a nice Sunday dinner. You used to always relish your Sunday dinners. I try to be a good neighbor. I can't cook as fancy as Mr. Parmalee, but I do the best I can." She shoved the tray in his face. "How do you like it? Tell me what you see."

Like a child obeying an adult, Dr. Imlay itemized: "I see mashed potatoes and fried chicken and candied yams. I see huckleberry jam and slaw and fried pies. Is that spoonbread?"

"It is," said Miss Bates.

"You must join me!" Dr. Imlay was highly excited. "Gumbo will call us when it's on the table. Shall we go into the drawing-room?"

"That'll be nice," murmured Miss Bates.

Mr. Parmalee carried the tray to the kitchen and slammed it on the table. "He's drooling," Mr. Parmalee thought angrily. "Drooling like a hound dog."

SUDDENLY, Mr. Parmalee smiled. He made a quick trip to his basement bedroom and returned with one of the doctor's shotgun shells. With his jackknife he cut through the cardboard casing and spilled a generous portion of the lead pellets into the palm of his hand. One by one, with an ice pick, he inserted the shot into the fried chicken, depositing them liberally in thighs, drumsticks, and breast. Satisfied, he touched up the surface to conceal his handiwork. He sang a folk ballad softly to himself as he worked.

This done, he carried the meal into the dining-room and set the table. He then smote the dinner gong on the sideboard, and withdrew to the kitchen. Warm contentment surged through him. He relaxed comfortably on the uncomfortable ladderback chair by the stove and listened. He listened to them come into the dining-room and seat themselves, listened to the clink of china and silverware as they ate. He could hear their voices but could make out no words.

Suddenly their voices rose and they were quarreling. The doctor seemed to be accusing, Miss Bates denying. The quarrel swelled to a raging, furious storm and the house reverberated with shouted imprecations.

A chair was upset in anger and Miss Bates's high heels pounded out of the dining-room, down the hall, and out of the front door. The door slammed. Mr. Parmalee fished a crooked finger in his overalls pocket for a chew of tobacco; there was nothing like a chew of tobacco to celebrate a victory.

Almost instantly Dr. Imlay came rushing through the dining-room door into the kitchen. He opened a clenched hand and displayed three greasy shot. "Look at that!" he shouted.

"Just old number five rabbit shot," Mr. Parmalee said carefully. "What about 'em?"

"They were in the fried chicken. Dozens of them."

Mr. Parmalee looked diabolically shocked.

"Did you ever, Gumbo, ever in your life hear of anyone shooting their fowl to death with a shotgun before they dressed and cooked it?"

"Not their own chicken. I've heered of folks shooting neighbors' chickens. Why?"

"Yesterday Prince gets out. Today Miss Bates serves me fried chicken and birdshot. Figure it out."

Mr. Parmalee protested faintly. "Let's take this slow. She's a fine, respectable woman—"

"Oh, she is, is she? Ha!"

"What I'm sayin' is this: Once I read of a feller shot by a rifle. He carried a bullet in his leg for fifty-one years. He died at the age of ninety-two. Maybe Miss Bates had an old chicken carrying around some old shot and—"

"Impossible," Dr. Imlay said crossly. He smiled abruptly, benevolently. "You have a generous nature, Gumbo."

"I'm knowed for my generous nature back in the hills," Mr. Parmalee said.

He tried to look modest, but he wasn't sure just how it was done.

THE END★★

How We Scalp the Indians

(*Continued from page* 37)

continued in the same impersonal tone: "Now I will tell you about the goats. My people had many goats. In the fall of 1933 we were ordered to get rid of the goats, because they did not bring enough revenue. I, myself, had 45 goats. I did not want to dispose of all my goats, so I sold only 12, getting $1 a head for them. Soon I received a notice from the Government that I must immediately sell 28 more goats and eat the rest. The policemen and the judge came to my house and said I must do this or be arrested. So I sold those 28 goats for the best price I could get, which was the price of the hides, about 30 cents for each goat."

His face set like granite. "We ate the rest of the goats, as we were ordered to do. The last one we ate was a gentle old nanny, the pet of my children." He said stolidly, "My children did not enjoy the meat of their playmate."

I asked, "What did your neighbors do?"

He said, "The same as I. One neighbor had no goats, only sheep. But he received an order to get rid of 27 goats. There was no way to appeal from this order. So each of us gave him a goat or two so he could sell 27 goats to keep from being arrested. That is how it was about the goats."

I persisted, "But what about the sheep?"

Sam Akeah rubbed his forehead. "Now I will tell you about the sheep," he said. "Many years ago I started with five sheep. By this time I had built up a flock of 550. From these sheep and my goats and my work on Mesa Verde National Park I was making good money, about $3,000 a year. I depended upon my sheep money to put my children through school.

"In 1934 I was suddenly ordered to sell 80 per cent of my lamb crop. This I did. Then the policemen and the judge came with a new order: I must sell 44 per cent of my ewes. This I did also.

"In 1935 The People received a general order charging that they had not complied with the Government's program to reduce the sheep, and must immediately reduce their flocks still further. Each district was given a quota to get rid of at once; our quota in District 12 was 2,000 head. In addition to this, I, myself, received a personal order to sell 80 per cent of my new lambs and 84 per cent of my remaining ewes."

His big face cracked into a mirthless smile. He said in his rumbling voice, "When it was all over I had 39 sheep left from my 550. That is what happened to my people. That is what happened to the sheep. That is how it was." . . .

A few days later I told this story to an official at the Navajo Indian Agency at Window Rock, Ariz., and asked him to rationalize it. Was it possible that the Government had deliberately reduced these people to poverty and starvation?

He shrugged. "I wasn't here at the time," he said, "but it was part of the national range-conservation program of the drought years. They had more livestock than their pastures would support. It's much better now; the experts say there is enough grass for another 100,000 head. We're letting them build up their flocks."

But the pay-off came still later in the plushy dude-ranch picturesqueness of El Rancho Hotel at Gallup, N. Mex., when I repeated the story to Howard Wilson, a trader among the Navajos all his life.

"It's the gospel truth," he said. "Nobody out here could understand it, least of all those poor Indians. They were scared to death.

"In 1940, I was recruited to take a livestock census on the reservation. One night I stopped at a hogan where there was an old grandmother. I told her what I was doing. She wanted to know if I was counting the old people. I said, no, only animals, and asked why she wanted to know. She said, 'Well, they killed the horses and goats and sheep; now there is talk that they are counting the old people so they can kill them, too.' I had a heck of a job convincing her that somebody had been kidding her."

The fact of the matter is that the Government's Stock Reduction Program, while it may have been sound in principle, apparently got messed up in stupid administration through failure to recognize that the Indians have intelligence, too, and to take them into partnership in the planning and execution of the program.

WHAT most of us don't know about Indians would fill an awfully big void. When I started this 9,000-mile buggy-ride I had a dim notion that the Indians were wards of the Government and were given land, food, and cash allowances like pensions. I thought they had adequate free schools and hospitals; that they couldn't leave the reservations without permission, could not vote or own property, and were exempt from taxes. I thought they were happy in their far-away places, and that they were dying off. Not one of these things is true.

Far from dying off, the Indians have been multiplying for at least 50 years. When Columbus started all this in 1492, there were presumably 850,000 noble red men in what has become the United States. By 1900 we had whittled them down to 237,000, but today there are more than 393,000—and this despite the fact that infant mortality among many tribes is 60 times greater than among white people.

About three-fourths of the Indians live on reservations, but a reservation is not a hunk of land we gave the Indians. We never gave them a square foot. Actually, the 200 reservations comprising less than 60,000,000 acres (about one-thirty-second of our total area) are lands the Indians reserved for themselves when they ceded us the rest of their continent. That's why they are called reservations. It is one of the peculiarly inexplicable twists of our inglorious dealings with the Indians that much of this reserved land wouldn't support a jackrabbit, and a jackrabbit will eat anything that doesn't eat him first.

Yet many white men have coveted—and many still covet—Indian land. In 1887 the reservations included 137,000,000 acres; today they are less than half that area. And we're still gnawing away at them. Since 1934, Congress has taken away 344,000 acres of Indian properties for non-Indian purposes—mostly for military use—and in compensation has added only 333,000 acres to replace them—a loss of 11,000 acres.

EVEN the Supreme Court has been guilty. In 1876, this august body ruled that the Pueblo Indians were not really Indians, whereupon 12,000 land-hungry squatters moved in and filed claims to vast areas of their reservation. Thirty-seven years later, in 1913, the court decided it had made a slight mistake; the Pueblos were really Indians, after all. The apologetic Government paid the Indians off—but did not give them back their land.

Basically, that's the worm in the apple-sauce. What's wrong with the Indians, fundamentally, is that their population has increased as their land holdings have decreased, until now they haven't enough land to raise the necessities of life. That's why Indians are hungry.

And we don't feed 'em, as many people believe. No Indian receives a dime or a morsel from the Government merely because he's an Indian. There are no free frijoles, no allowance checks for any able-bodied redskin, male or female, or any indigent who can sponge on relatives or friends. Small emergency relief allowances ($8.47 a month was the 1944 average) are sometimes granted the despairing, a few old Indian scouts who served our army still get pensions, and we sometimes drop relief bundles from airplanes to victims of blizzards and disasters, but that's all. Indians are supposed to be self-supporting.

Medical facilities in some localities are excellent and in others they are disgraceful. The Indian Service maintains 62 hospitals in the United States, mostly understaffed, although the Navajos have a fine plant and there are some others. Nationally, however, as of last July 1, there were exactly 83 physicians and 567 nurses for 393,000 Indians. There was one dentist for each 19,000 Indians, and a grand total of two sanitary engineers for people who need sanitation desperately. There was not even a pretense of a national program to prevent such diseases as tuberculosis, which kills six times as many Indians as non-Indians, or syphilis, or trachoma, which blinds thousands of Indians, although it is curable.

Government officials know all this. Yet when funds for these purposes were requested by the Bureau of Indian Affairs recently, they were disallowed by the Bureau of the Budget and ignored by the President and the Congress.

What's the result? Here are two personal observations:

At Taos, N. Mex., I saw a lovely little hospital the Government had built and equipped for the 900 Pueblos who live there. There was only one joker: There wasn't a doctor or nurse in it; it was abandoned. When a Taos Indian is injured or comes down with a galloping epizootic he must be carted in a panel truck, used as an ambulance, 75 miles to the hospital at Santa Fe. Several have died en route.

While I was in the Florida Everglades last summer, a terrifying epidemic of a strangling throat infection broke out among the children of the 823 Seminoles. Nothing could be done about it because there is neither a doctor nor a dispensary for the Seminole people. Finally a big-hearted county health officer couldn't stand it; he waded into the swamp country and went to work. Yet when I found him there he begged me not to use his name. "I'm not supposed to be here," he explained. "My people might not like it." . . . They ought to give him a medal.

EDUCATIONAL opportunities for Indian children may be judged from the fact that there are just 180 schools for 100,000 youngsters scattered over more than 100,000 square miles. Of these, 143 are day schools, usually one room, and one frazzled teacher rapidly going nuts. I visited dozens of them. At a typical day school in Wyoming I found 26 pupils of all grades, of whom only four spoke English. Since the teacher spoke not a word of Indian, he was having himself quite a time. In other localities, notably in South Dakota, Oklahoma, and Kansas, I found modern buildings and curriculums.

There are 37 Indian boarding schools in operation. They accommodate 9,138 youngsters, but attendance is restricted to children who are orphaned, homeless, or crippled, or who live too far from any other Indian or public school—or are juvenile delinquents. All schooling stops with the twelfth grade; there are no federal Indian colleges. There are only 33 Indian high schools, all accredited by colleges in the states in which they are located. Since school attendance is not always compulsory for Indian youngsters, about 50,000, or one-half of the whole, are not going to school at all.

Take the Navajos, for example. When we wrote a treaty of peace with them in 1868, we promised to provide them with one schoolteacher for each 30 children. We have never even pretended to keep that promise. Result: 85 per cent of the Navajos cannot read or write and 65 per cent cannot speak English. In October, after 80 years, the Congress finally authorized a $2,000,000 boarding school on the reservation. If and when completed, it will accommodate about one-tenth of the Navajo children who ought to be in school and aren't.

Why should they be in school, you might ask? Why bother about them?

First, because the present policy of the Indian Service is to encourage Indians who wish to leave the reservations and mix with the white population, and if we don't look out we'll have tens of thousands of illiterate Indians on our hands. Second, because they are entitled to schooling as full-fledged American citizens.

The Indians are no longer wards of the Government; every native-born Indian has been a citizen since Congress gave them that status in 1924 as a gesture of gratitude to young braves who, although then exempt from the draft, volunteered and served gallantly with our troops in World War I. They may travel freely, live anywhere, own all the property they can afford. They can vote wherever they live since Arizona and New Mexico broke down the last restrictions in 1948. They pay taxes like all other citizens on their private properties and incomes. They can do anything you and I can do—except buy liquor and control their communal money.

Three-fourths of them live on reservations because they prefer to be near their relatives and friends, not because they have to. They live in a strange half-world which is neither Indian nor white. Legally they are free, yet they are always aware that they risk reprisals from their white overseers whenever they stand up for their rights as citizens, as many of them have had the courage to do. Part of their difficulty in defending themselves has been lack of knowledge of the white man's techniques. Some of the Indian leaders are grasping the elements of these techniques, and their protests are becoming increasingly effective.

CONFUSION is the only word to describe our relations with the Indians and their thinking about us. They are confused because, when they try to assume the initiative of citizens, they bump their noses on special rules and regulations set up by the bureaucracy which bosses them, the Bureau of Indian Affairs. And they don't like it worth a whoop.

Field workers in the Indian Service, generally wise in Indian ways, are confused because policies change almost every time a new politician becomes Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Agency superintendents are forever receiving conflicting and impractical orders from Washington which they must carry out or risk their jobs, although they know they are sure to create fresh resentment among the redskins. And they don't like it, either.

Congress tried to straighten it out in 1934 with the Indian Reorganization Act, which was supposed to prepare the Indians for contact with the white world. In practice, it turned out to be an experiment in self-management, with the Indians as guinea pigs. Tribes were empowered, if they wished, to set up tribal councils which were supposed to work in loving harmony with the Indian Service. The tribe was to be a sort of corporation in which each Indian would be a shareholder, presumably entitled to dividends on the corporation's business transactions. In principle the Reorganization Act was intended to be a step forward for the Indian people. In practice, however, its administration was often far from a happy one, because of the unwillingness of the Little White Fathers to hand over their powers to the Indians themselves.

Many tribes grasped this opportunity for what promised to be freedom from governmental domination, but quickly discovered two jokers: First was the fact that the Indian Service continued to be the boss, regarding the councils tolerantly as little boys playing office. Second was the fact that the bulk of the tribal corporation's money was promptly impounded for safekeeping in the United States Treasury, from which it could only be withdrawn—and only in dribbles—after formal petitions had passed through miles and months of departmental red tape and had been personally approved by the Secretary of the Interior. It was their money, but they couldn't touch it. All this was in accordance with the traditional government policy of holding Indian money in the U.S. Treasury.

Actually, American Indians today are not paupers. On November 1 they had a grand total of $34,183,058 to their credit in the Treasury. Even the hungry Navajos had $2,023,745 on deposit. But getting it into circulation is something else again. Here are two examples:

The Indians of Isleta Pueblo near Albuquerque, N. Mex., were being deprived of irrigation water last summer. The law gives them prior rights to water, but non-Indian farmers above them on the canals were taking most of it except on the days when official inspections were made. In June, the tribal council voted to spend some of the communal money to drill a well. They drew up a petition and submitted it. As of November 1, the petition was still lost somewhere in governmental red tape, and crops which needed water desperately in July and August had died before maturing.

Example 2: Vanadium is being mined by a non-Indian corporation on the Navajo reservation. The Navajos receive a royalty on the ore extracted. Three years ago the tribal council learned that uranium, the immensely valuable mineral used in atomic processes, was being extracted with the vanadium, and after hiring an attorney and sending delegates to Washington they obtained a royalty on the uranium, too. They believe they know where other and more valuable uranium deposits are located. They are eager to set up their own mining company and dig it out. But a Navajo spokesman told me:

"We know from experience that they won't let us do it. If we ask for some of our own money to start our own mine on our own land, they will tell us the matter must be submitted for bidding to non-Indian companies."

They have bought a Geiger counter to locate uranium in the ground and they continue to prospect for the radioactive metal. One day I was shown half a dozen chunks of rock which set the Geiger into a frenzy. The Indian prospector, who spoke little English, said mysteriously, "This Navajo fortune." Maybe so, but it's likely to stay hidden in the ground unless the Navajos get permission to dig it out. They're stubborn about it.

AS FOR the attitude of many Indian agencies toward the tribal councils, this is typical:

Last year the Navajos were told to sit down and draw up a budget of their requirements for 1950. Members of the council left their work and assembled from all over the vast 16,000,000-acre reservation. They talked and argued for three days, and finally arrived at a budget. "But when we submitted it," said Sam Akeah, "we found that the white men in the agency had already drawn up their own budget and sent it to Washington. They had just been kidding us."

Said portly, solemn Zhealy Tso, the tribe's vice-chairman: "The worst of it is, we can't even find out the amount of the budget or the items on it. They don't tell us these things, although we are supposed to see that the money is wisely spent." He said plaintively, "It is very confusing. We don't know what to do."

A wrinkled old-timer standing near by said slowly, "The people believe they are trying to starve us off the reservation so they can take our land."

I asked, "Why would they want to do such a thing?"

The old man only shook his head, but a young man in the circle said, "So they can take our uranium without paying us for it."

There were a dozen Indians standing around and they all nodded solemnly.

I said to the young man, "You are educated. You don't really believe that, do you?"

He said grimly, "We don't know what to believe."

That's just it. In the jumbled confusion of our Indian affairs, no one seems to know what to believe. . . .

Finding the answers is not easy. For 100 years we have lied, cheated, stolen, used our power and their gullibility to give the red men the run-around. Now that they're getting smart, we have set up an Indian Claims Commission to investigate past injustices. Any Indian tribe or group may file a claim before 1951 and all must be settled by 1956.

"You say you rented a seat in a movie theater, and were evicted 12 hours later?"

For The American Magazine by Ben Roth

Although 149 claims have been filed, I found only a handful of Indians who even knew the opportunity existed.

Restitution for past wrongs is not so important to present-day Indians as the right to be treated as equal citizens. To accomplish that might necessitate vigorous reorganization of the Indian Service, overhauling the 5,000-odd laws it is expected to administer, selection of administrators familiar with Indian psychology, and eviction of those old retainers who still consider themselves Little White Fathers. Certainly it should give the Indians equal voice in shaping a new policy aimed at alert helpfulness and honest advice, rather than hypocritical chicanery.

If and when this is done, we stand to create an immensely loyal, valuable body of citizens from a bewildered, distrustful people whose only past sin was protecting their homeland, and who are getting a thoroughly un-American raw deal.

THE END★★

Moonlit Sport

(*Continued from page* 18)

to know," George said. He thumbed the needle point of one ski pole and stared at the glittering steel edges of the skis. "Going down a hill with all this hardware, this sharp stuff. Did anybody ever fall in such a way that the—the point here or—maybe one of these edges—uh—?"

"Why, no! Of course not, Mr. Barker! Once an exceptionally clumsy person managed to—hm-m-m—well, it couldn't happen to you, of course!"

George turned back toward the door. Behind him he heard the wax kits cascade to the floor.

Thirty minutes, and three hot, buttered rums later, George Barker, in all his finery, stood with the massive boots clamped inexorably onto the skis. The thongs of the poles were looped around his wrists. The tinted goggles cut the sun glare.

The wax, he had found, came in little gismos like shaving sticks. He had selected a number 3 X at random. The poles were planted firmly on either side of him. He pushed one foot ahead. The ski glided along nicely. Smiling confidently, he advanced the other foot. As he advanced it, the first ski slid back to its original position. He stopped and studied the problem. He took two more steps and still remained in the same position.

A round little lady with gray hair came bounding out of the inn. She yanked her skis out of the snow, slapped them down, leaped onto them, clicked the harnesses tight, jammed in the poles, and shoved off, turning around to grin in a comradely way at George.

When she had dwindled in the distance George bent his knees, shoved the poles into the snow, and pushed. Five minutes later he was a good hundred feet from the inn. He pried himself to his feet again and looked back at the series of round indentations between the wavering tracks of the skis. The last few indentations were more widely spaced. A chart of progress.

A man with an impassive, mahogany-colored face slid to a stop beside George and looked back over the telltale trail. "You vant lessons?" he asked.

"What do you think?"

"I think yes. I am Hans Schtroigen, teaching individual ten dollars an hour, or five dollars hour in class."

"In my back pocket is my wallet. Take it out and take ten dollars and then teach me how to get over there to the bottom of that thing." George pointed with his ski pole at the lift house. He wavered dangerously, and got the pole jammed in again just in time.

Schtroigen removed the ten and said, "No. I show you how to get ofer to the beginners' slope."

"Uh, uh. Not there. I gotta go up the big hill."

"You are not ready."

"How soon would I be ready?"

Schtroigen shrugged. "You work every day, maybe next year you are ready."

"Give me back my ten and go away. I'll crawl over there."

Schtroigen sighed. "Hokay. Now, putting the right foot along and the left pole, like this. Bringing the left foot and right pole up and pushing with the pole each time."

By the time George had covered the hundred and fifty yards to the bottom of the tow he could go in a straight line and, by moving the toes of the skis a few inches at a time, he could even alter his direction. He was panting.

Schtroigen said heavily, "Forgiff' me. This I do not care to watch any more. Good-by."

GEORGE stood with assumed nonchalance and watched the people glide up to the moving cable, transfer ski poles to the left hand, grasp the cable with the right, and move steadily up the slope. He waited until traffic was light and edged cautiously over to the cable. He grasped it. It was like standing next to a moving merry-go-round and grabbing a horse. It yanked him into the air convulsively and projected him, head down, into the snow.

He clawed his way out. Somehow, the snow had gotten packed behind the goggles. When he could see again, the round little lady with gray hair was beaming at him.

"You didn't do it right, you poor boy. You have to let the cable slide through your hand, and then you slowly squeeze down on it. That starts you off without that horrible jerk."

By the time he worked his way back up onto the skis she was out of sight up the slope. The second time it worked better. A few hundred hours of aquaplaning served their purpose. The skis moved steadily in front of him. He smiled confidently.

Ahead of him the cable disappeared in a hole in the side of a small frame structure. George let go of the cable but the terrain had flattened and he was speeding toward the boards. Both the poles

were in his left hand. He set the points in the snow ahead of him, between the skis. The butt ends of the ski poles made an almost successful attempt to penetrate his stomach. He lay on his back and made small whinnying noises. He used the name of Zissman in vain.

When at last he got to his feet and moved over toward one side, he happened to glance down into the valley. The Crestrun Inn had shrunk to the size of a penny box of matches. It did almost the same thing to his stomach that the ski poles had done. The mountain wind turned perspiration to shale ice. A girl of not more than twelve swung away from the tow, shoving hard with her poles to get a good start, and dropped down over the rim out of sight. She appeared a few seconds later, ducking and bobbing, far below.

If a girl of twelve . . . George clenched his teeth and moved toward the brink. The uptilted points of the skis hung over empty space. He decided suddenly to back up. But this time the stubborn boards, eager to back up when he was in the inn yard, dug in behind him. When he turned around gently to stare back over his shoulder at them, he slid helplessly over the brink. Instinct bade him to sit down immediately. But he was leaning too far forward to be able to sit. By the time he could get his weight shifted, the speed of passage indicated sharply that it would be unwise to do anything except attempt to stay upright. The wind tore at his clothes, flapping his ski pants, numbing his teeth as he tried to yell.

The sunlit world tilted sideways, hung awkwardly in space for a moment, and then exploded. George Barker lay, head down the slope, and whispered, "Good-by, Mary Alice. We would have had fun, we two."

He breathed deeply, waiting for the bubbling in his throat, for the acid pang of the broken rib end in the lung. Nothing happened. Probably the neck or back, then.

Slow amazement flooded through him as he found that he could sit up. Outside of feeling as though he had been thrown through the roof of a convertible, nothing seemed to be wrong.

He glanced back up the slope and saw that he had come only a hundred feet from the brink. Nobody was in sight. Guiltily he unsnapped the harnesses, snagged the skis as they were about to take off independently, and began to walk across the slope toward the shelter of a pine woods.

THERE was a shout from above. George looked up, and froze. A herd was swooping down at him. Two of them were headed for him. He shut his eyes. There was a whisking sound, a spray of snow in his face, and they were gone. He made better time toward the woods. In the shelter of the woods he could creep inconspicuously down to the flat land below, dragging his skis behind him.

He fumbled through the pines and came out onto a clear place. He jabbed the skis and poles into the snow, lowered himself onto a stump, and fished out his cigarettes. He snapped the lighter shut, and smiled as he saw the ski tracks on the trail. So some other fakers came down the easy way, too. . . . He frowned. For somebody coming down the easy way, those skis had thrown up a lot of snow.

He stood up and walked over and looked down at the tracks. There was an angry roar yards away. An oversized citizen swooped down at him like a jet-engined gull. Even as George recognized the man as the Argus Studio agent and tried to dodge back, a heavy shoulder sent him spinning. The man wavered but kept his balance. George realized that he was flat across the tracks. As he tried to get up, he glanced back up the slope and saw her coming at him, that bronze-blond hair streaming out behind her, the gray eyes startled and bleak.

The twin shining points of the ski poles swung toward him. Spitted, he thought, in that last moment, like a marshmallow at a picnic. But somehow the points didn't touch him, and Miss Christina Wiel soared up and over him. She landed beyond him. He watched her as he crawled backward off the track. She landed crouched and went into a long, sliding turn to make the corner looming up at her. She tried to twist her body by the pine trunk, but her shoulder hit it solidly. The impact threw her off the other side of the trail into the brush, and she lay still.

HE PLUNGED to her and dropped on his knees beside her, thinking even in that moment of guilty horror that here was one female athlete who couldn't conceal, under the uniform of the sport, ample evidence of femininity.

He picked up her limp hand and said brokenly, "Christina! Speak to me!"

Gray eyes opened and focused. The accent was tiny and delicious: "You unutterable classification of clown! You—you maniac! Crawling around on your hands and knees in the middle of the fastest part of Thunderhead!" The other hand swung around and connected with the side of his face.

George sat down. "Thunderhead?"

"A ski trail, Mr. Barker. Ever hear of one? As if it wasn't bad enough to hear you breathing on the back of my neck every moment I'm in the inn, you have to come up here on the slopes. Please, Mr. Barker, for the sake of the safety of innumerable people, why don't you go back down to that nice, warm fire? The meet is in three days and I need my practice."

"But I—"

"Bring my ski over here."

He saw it, a dozen feet away. It had snapped out of the binding. He brought it back to her. She was standing on one ski, and there was an odd, strained look on her face, a blue-grayness around her mouth.

"Don't stand there with it. Put it down! . . . Oh, no! Would you mind turning it around so that it heads the same way as the other ski?"

He blushed, and did so. Her ski boots looked as small as a child's. And there was something of a child's sweetness about her lips and temples.

She shoved the boot into the binding and he fumbled with the clamp. He touched her ankle, and she made a small, harsh sound.

"Say! You hurt yourself!"

She ignored him. She snapped the harness herself, glanced up the trail, then pushed out onto the tracks. She went thirty feet, and fell heavily.

"This makes it dandy," George thought. "Just fine! Please sign a contract, Miss Wiel. Right here on the dotted line." . . .

Christina Wiel sat in a big leather chair half facing the fire in the main lounge of the Crestrun Inn. The bad ankle was propped up on a hassock. The Argus representative was named Stanley Sherman. Except for a few morose citizens in casts and on crutches, everybody was out on the slopes except George and Stanley and, of course, Christina. It had been this way for two days.

George sat glumly by the fire. In the beginning he had tried to follow Sherman's conversation with Christina. But it jumped from a discussion of Tuckerman's Ravine, which seemed to have a wall in it, to the Austrian school and tempo turns. Every time he heard Christina's silvery laugh he winced and hunched his shoulders.

"So you're going out tomorrow?" Stanley asked.

"He's going to tape it and I can take the easy runs, but I can't enter the competition."

Stanley beamed over at George. "Thanks to that knucklehead over there."

"You're welcome," George growled.

Christina's glance was colder than the wind atop the mountain.

"If it wasn't so crowded here, Chris, I'd like to talk over something with you," Sherman said.

George stalked out. "Good-by."

ONCE beyond the arched doorway, he veered sharply to the right and crept back to within hearing distance.

". . . I grant you, Chris, that there are a lot of objections to having anything to do with the movies. And I know how you feel about professionalism, but I have an idea that, by making one movie for Argus, you could really make a terrific contribution to the sport. People will see you ski, and this boom that's on already will turn into the biggest . . ."

She hadn't interrupted him. George adjusted his shroud and walked away. That Sherman was slick. A nice presentation and nice timing.

He looked out the windows. The day before the meet, and the slopes were alive with skimming dots. He'd wait for Joey Bellish to arrive and then shove off. Maybe Mary Alice wouldn't find out for a few heavenly days that he was unemployed. You'd never catch Mary Alice running around with boards tied to her feet. In fact, you wouldn't find Mary Alice walking two steps after anything if there was a man within hailing distance. . . . He stopped the train of thought. It seemed vaguely disloyal.

He looked out the window. Strange occupation for supposedly intelligent people, this sliding around. A few nice moments, though. Finding out he could actually move across the level on the

"I was curious...

I tasted it...

Now I know why Schlitz is...

The Beer that made Milwaukee Famous!"

darn' things. That heady sense of terrific speed before he had gone thunk.

"No, sir," he said softly. "Never again." . . .

Schtroigen halted the entire class. "Blease, Mister Barker. Distangle yourself. In the snowplow you haff to push pressure on the legs and hold them there. No pressure, and the skis cross each ozzer."

George spit out a mouthful of melting snow. "So I noticed," he said.

"All together, now," Schtroigen roared. "SNOWBLAU!"

The four children, two elderly ladies, and George went solemnly and majestically down the four per cent grade. And again, and again.

After class was over, George stayed out on the slope. He snowplowed until fine red-hot wires ran up his legs. He snowplowed until he found out that by stepping over with one ski he could make a quite abrupt turn. The first time it worked he was unprepared for it. He lay, glowing with pleasure. Seven falls later he could do a slow, halting figure S down the middle of the beginners' slope. The sun was low in the west.

A hot tub soaked some of the ache out of his bones, but it didn't help to lighten the gloom he had felt since he had reentered the inn and seen Chris, symbol of defeat, nursing her strained ankle. There was a telegram in his box: "BELLISH ARRIVING NOON TOMORROW. ARRANGE INTERVIEW WITH WIEL. ZISSMAN."

He delayed the mission until after dinner. He found Stanley Sherman in the bar.

"Where's Chris?"

"Go home, you bum. She hasn't got time for you."

"Why so cheery? Wouldn't she sign?"

Sherman had a cold eye. "I could bust you one in the chops."

"They don't pay me for that," George said, wandering off. He searched in a halfhearted way for Christina.

OUTSIDE, the snow crackled underfoot and the air was keen and crisp. A huge moon was shading from orange to white as it climbed above the horizon. He squinted at the slopes and saw the diehards out skiing in the moonlight.

They seemed to make those turns so easily. He remembered his own stem turns on the little slope. Maybe, with a bit more speed . . . The hum and grind of the cable tow echoed across the night, punctuated by the thin shouts of the skiers. No, a fellow could kill himself out there in the moonlight and maybe nobody'd even find him. . . .

The dark bulk of the cable house loomed up ahead. George cast off, and used his turn to swing him around onto a line parallel with the drop-off. His heart was thudding. At least, in the dark, nobody would see him make a fool of himself. The moon was bright enough to show him the whole slope.

This had to be planned carefully. A long, diagonal run across the face of the slope seemed feasible. If he started to go too fast he could slow down by turning toward the slope. Then, when the woods got close, make the big turn and come back across the slope in the other direction.

He took a deep breath and shoved off. The skis ran with a small, crisp sound against the snow. The plan seemed to be working. The woods moved steadily closer. He made his turn, but it wasn't enough of a turn. It faced him almost directly down the slope and he picked up speed with a great *whoosh*. He made a desperate effort to turn to the left, remembering to lean in toward the slope. He went into a long skid turn and ended at a dead stop, still on his feet. The surprise of it toppled him over.

"Whaddya know?" he said softly.

On the next diagonal run he braved a steeper angle. The turn at the end went wrong and he broke up a yard of crusty snow with his chin. He laughed out loud and started off again. The turn worked. He angled back, and a dark figure came toward him. The lines of passage intersected. At the last moment he wrenched himself into a turn and the black figure did the same. His flailing arm caught it around the middle and they went down together.

GEORGE sat up. "Don't you know how to steer those things?" he said angrily. "You saw me turning away from you."

"How did I know which way you were going? . . . Is that you, Mr. Barker?" Christina asked weakly.

"Chris!" he gasped.

She began to laugh helplessly. It held overtones of hysteria. "Of all . . . of all the blundering . . . impossible . . ."

He picked up a clump of snow and shoved it into her mouth. She gasped. He caught her wrist. "No, you don't pop me again, friend. If you haven't hurt your ankle again, kindly stand up and slide away from here. I don't have to be laughed at by experts. Go on. Move!"

She stood up, tested her ankle, and brushed some of the snow off. Her voice was cold: "Amateurs shouldn't be on the slopes at night."

"Report me to the rules committee."

"Just what were you trying to do, Mr. Barker?"

"I'm not trying. I'm doing it. I go back and forth across the slope and make a turn when I come to the end each time."

"I saw you the day I jumped over you. You can't make a turn."

"No, smart guy? Watch this one."

He sped away and did the sliding turn to the left that brought him to a stop. "How's that?"

"You don't bend your knees enough, George. Get way down, like this." She sped at him, turned with effortless grace, and skidded to a stop beside him.

He tried. It *was* easier.

"Thanks."

"You're welcome."

"What are you doing out here, Miss Wiel?"

"I couldn't wait. I strapped up the ankle and decided to give it a try."

"Uh, huh," he said slowly. "I can see how you would. Nice out here, isn't it?"

They were standing close together. Her uptilted face caught the moonlight. She cocked her head on one side. "You really like this?"

"I'm no Sherman at it."

She said hotly, "He doesn't like it. It was just a big act with him. Oh, he can ski all right, but instead of skiing he stayed right there in the inn trying to talk me into the silly movie business. He didn't fool me a bit. I don't like sly people."

He glared at her. "I'm sick of this silly-movies routine. What gives you the go-ahead to be condescending? What have you got? Just a lovely face and a rare figure and you photograph well. Is that something you worked for?"

"They want me because I can ski!" she said.

"And they wanted Grable because she could knit, I suppose? Or Sheridan because she could hemstitch." He grabbed her shoulders and shook her and shouted down into her face, "You're the most beautiful thing I ever saw in my life, Wiel, and that's why they want you—because there isn't enough beauty to go around in this hungry old world."

"I *like* you when you're angry!" she said.

"I . . . uh . . . what?"

"Would you work on the picture too, George?"

He swallowed hard. "That could go into the contract."

"Because by the time the picture was done I'd have you skiing as though you knew how, George."

"You . . . you'll sign?"

"Now that you've given me a reason. I just didn't want to be hired to ski. But if you can think I'm beautiful, maybe some other people will, too."

HIS hands were still on her shoulders, the ski poles looped over his wrists. He wanted to be able to compose several symphonies and a half-dozen tone poems about the way the moonlight touched her lips. He bent toward those lips.

She wriggled away and scooted under his arm, headed directly down the slope. "You've got to catch me first, George," her voice came back, fading on the wind.

George angled grimly down the slope, his knees well bent, weight forward, taking the turns in stride. Far below, Christina moved swiftly out onto the flats toward the inn. He saw her stop abruptly, tumbling with a smother of snow.

George Barker turned directly down the last of the slope. The wind cut his face and he felt eight feet tall.

She didn't seem to be in any hurry to get up.

"Yeee-ow!" howled George into the teeth of the wind.

THE END ★★

Week Ends with God

(*Continued from page* 47)

comfort which he would have thought absolutely impossible only two days before.

When the retreat ended on Monday morning, John was extremely reluctant to break the mystical silence, as are most retreatants. But he felt happier than he had for years and he returned to the everyday world a new person. His life was no longer a meaningless merry-go-round. The faith of his childhood had been restored and he knew he had a purpose on earth. That purpose was to worship God and serve him through service to his fellow man, and he resolved to adopt a new rule of life lest the good he had received during the week end dissolve as an emotional mist.

Not all retreatants get as much out of retreats as did John Davis, but most of them are able to attain a new serenity in their attitude toward life, and some of them receive even greater spiritual enlightenment than he did. Occasionally retreatants achieve an intensity of contemplation in which they see sacred visions.

One man whom I know became aware of the presence of God in the form of a radiant light which seemed to envelop the whole world, and a woman of my acquaintance found that when she opened her eyes after a long period of prayer Our Lord was standing before her. He was as real to her as any person she had ever seen and she felt that she could have reached out and touched His hand.

Other retreatants are so swept away by their experiences that they have a desire to renounce the world entirely and become monks or nuns, but such cases are comparatively rare. In no sense are retreats to be regarded as cowardly flights from reality or as narcotic drugs for the afflicted. Rather, they provide spiritual stimulation which helps the average person to lead a better-rounded and more useful existence.

I AM thinking now of Mrs. Johnson, a 60-year-old woman who was very pious. After her children were reared and her husband died suddenly of a heart attack, she felt old and useless. Quite properly, she turned to religion for comfort, but overdid it. She spent so much time praying and pining for a future life that she neglected her home and her appearance and became unsocial in her habits.

Mrs. Johnson made a retreat, in the hope that it would plunge her even deeper into her life-hereafter trance, I believe, but it had quite the opposite effect. This was because she was deeply affected by one of the meditations, which was on the subject of hands.

The conductor asked the retreatants first of all to think of the hands of Jesus —the most beautiful hands the world has ever seen because they blessed all mankind. They were likewise to consider the hands of St. Veronica, who wiped the Saviour's face with her veil when He was on His way to the Cross. Then the conductor asked them to think of present-day hands which perform fine services for others—the hands of the mother, the doctor, the nurse, the farmer, who grows our food, the factory worker, who makes the things we need, even the hands of the garbage collector, who performs lowly but indispensable tasks. Last of all, the retreatants were instructed to meditate upon their own hands.

This meditation made a profound impression upon Mrs. Johnson. Her own hands, she realized, had not been serving God as well as they might, and she resolved to change her way of life. When the retreat was over she interested herself in charity, obtained a job so she would have more money to give to others, and she is now a much happier and far more useful person than she was before.

RELIGIOUS meditation can be practiced without making a retreat, it is true, but the making of one facilitates contemplation because worldly interests have deliberately been laid aside and the retreatant is able to concentrate completely upon his quest for spiritual truth. The fact that he is not alone but is in the company of others who are also seeking divine enlightenment encourages him in his efforts, and the mystical atmosphere which soon pervades every successful retreat is also of great value to him.

Not long ago a young woman who was making her first retreat failed to get much benefit out of it until the second day, when a curious thing happened. A stray cat entered the chapel, stole up to the altar, and climbed into the conductor's lap while he was speaking. The other retreatants were so wholly engrossed in what he was saying that they hardly noticed the incident, and the priest gently placed the cat back on the floor without interrupting his address, but to the girl it seemed that a little miracle had taken place. Even dumb animals were attracted to those who voiced God's message, she felt, and from then on she had no difficulty in participating in the contemplative exercises. By such small phenomena are whole lives sometimes reshaped at religious retreats.

More often, however, it is the great thoughts contained in the Scriptures, in old hymns, and in religious literature which provide the substance for retreatants' meditations. Patient reflection upon the beautiful words of the 91st Psalm almost invariably brings a new feeling of security to those suffering from apprehension and worry, and I have known a retreatant broken with grief over the death of her child to be restored to serenity by meditation on the following lines from St. Theresa:

Let nothing disturb thee;
All things are passing;
God never changeth;
Patient endurance attaineth all things;
Who God possesseth in nothing is wanting;
Alone, God sufficeth.

How can such meditations work such miracles? The answer does not lie in the

realm of the rational. Like the other great manifestations of religion, the deep inner changes which transform men and women during retreats are cloaked in divine mystery.

The majority of Episcopal week-end retreats resemble the one I have described which was participated in by John Davis. A number of attractive Episcopal retreat houses have been built in various parts of the country during recent years. Many other retreats are held in Anglican monasteries, convents, and preparatory schools during periods when the students are on vacation. A few retreats are held in large cities, but quiet rural surroundings are preferred because they make it easier for the retreatant to achieve the spiritual perspective in which he can say to himself, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills."

The Roman Catholic retreats, which outnumber all others in this country, are conducted along lines similar to the Episcopal ones, but with differences in ritual and liturgy. Confession is customary for Catholics at the beginning of a Catholic retreat, and each day closes with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. But the retreatants themselves conduct some of the exercises—the Stations of the Cross, Rosary, and reading at table during meals.

The oldest and perhaps the most famous Roman Catholic retreat house in America is Mount Manresa, on Staten Island, N.Y., which was founded in 1911 and is directed by the Rev. Robert I. Gannon, S.J., former president of Fordham University. Stations of the Cross and other exercises are conducted out of doors on the grounds of the retreat house, and thousands of Roman Catholics, and non-Catholics as well, go there for spiritual refreshment every year.

A Jewish businessman who was baffled by the purposelessness of his existence went to Mount Manresa recently in quest of new spiritual insight. He found it. After the retreat was over, he told his friends that he felt closer to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob than ever before.

THE retreat movement has advanced farther in the Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches than in any others, but it is also making notable headway in the Lutheran church. During recent years, and especially since the war, retreats have been becoming increasingly popular in the Lutheran countries of northern Europe. The idea has jumped the Atlantic and, while a considerable number of American Lutheran clergymen do not favor the movement, or are only lukewarm about it, it is steadily gaining ground.

One of the best known Lutheran retreat centers in this country is housed in the former country home of the late Major Bowes, the radio star, at Ossining, N.Y. Although he was a Roman Catholic and bequeathed large sums to that church, Major Bowes left his Ossining estate to the Lutheran Churches of Greater New York, and a popular retreat house has been operated there for several years under the direction of Pastor Bernhard von Schenk.

This retreat is run along quite different lines from Episcopal or Roman Catholic retreats. The retreatants carry on general conversation during certain periods of relaxation, they take long walks in pairs discussing their individual problems with each other, and there is "witnessing" after meditation. The retreatants do not indulge in extensive self-revelation during the witnessing, but discuss what the meditation has meant to them.

On one occasion during the war, a young woman came to Pastor von Schenk in desperate need of spiritual help. She had just received word that her husband had been killed in Italy. She had loved him very much, without him life seemed entirely empty, and she felt she couldn't go on. The pastor advised a retreat for her, but suggested that it should also include other bereaved women who were suffering from the same kind of heartbreak that she was.

As a result, a retreat was held for 20 young war widows. Some of them were on the verge of nervous breakdowns, and others were close to moral collapse, but the beneficent spiritual influences to which they were exposed at the retreat, and a spirit of religious fellowship which developed among them, exerted a wonderfully curative effect. Today, all of them have successfully readjusted to life and several have remarried.

As at this Lutheran retreat, most of those conducted by the non-liturgical denominations intersperse periods of open discussion with periods of meditative silence. The Quakers, who have long known how to use silence constructively, are leaders in this movement, followed closely by the Presbyterians.

THE most famous retreat house under Presbyterian auspices is Kirkbridge, in the mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania, which is conducted by the Rev. John Oliver Nelson, D.D., director of the Commission on the Ministry of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. At Kirkbridge, the retreatants not only engage in meditation and group discussion, but work together in silence for several hours each day, performing such manual tasks as sawing wood and clearing woodland.

Clergymen, divinity students, and laymen of 15 different denominations have made retreats to Kirkbridge. They include representatives of the Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, and Dutch Reformed churches, as well as other large religious groups. The retreatants are now forming fellowship groups, comparable to Communist cells, to foment the retreat idea inside these sects.

The ever-increasing popularity of retreats is due primarily to the fact that a great many people are receiving practical benefits from them. I have men-

For The American Magazine by Sid Gordin

tioned a few such cases. If I had the space I could tell of hundreds of others.

I know a 16-year-old boy, for example, who was formerly a very poor student because his only real interest was in athletics. Just one concentrated dose of religion, administered over a week end, changed him from a happy-go-lucky idler into a well-integrated young man with a purpose. During another retreat I saw a young businesswoman completely overcome the soul-corroding envy she had felt toward another girl. I have seen two days of contemplation of God convert a confirmed thief into an honest citizen.

Such transformations of character occur frequently among those who seek self-renewal at the wells of religion. They will multiply in number if the retreat movement continues to spread and grow, as it shows every indication of doing.

THE idea of temporary withdrawal from society in order to return to it with greater religious insight and power is by no means new. Long before the birth of Christ, the Hebrew prophets frequently sought spiritual replenishment during periods of retirement from the world, and founders of the great pagan religions did the same. Jesus made a retreat of 40 days in the wilderness before starting his ministry. Most of the saints followed his example.

But the world has never seen anything quite like the present spontaneous desire on the part of so many men and women to seek days of voluntary seclusion with God. In all probability it reflects a widespread revulsion against the materialism of our times. But, whatever the cause, it is a spiritual phenomenon of the first order, and one which contains tremendous possibilities.

Speaking a few years ago in England, where the retreat movement is growing faster than it is here, the Most Reverend William Temple, late Archbishop of Canterbury, said that religious retreat offers the most promising avenue through which the vital power of religion, and lasting peace, might be brought to the world. "The way of advance," he declared, "is the way of retreat."

Thousands of Americans are finding that to be true during their week ends with God. The great religious retreat movement is bringing them peace as individuals. Whether or not it also can bring enduring peace to the world remains to be seen, but it is one of the brightest and most hopeful features of our tragic century.

THE END★★

The Galloping Gaucho

(*Continued from page* 48)

living?" He waved scornfully at the thick rug, the huge mahogany desk, the wall-to-ceiling bookcases, fully stocked, the voluminous draperies at the windows. The whole ensemble had seemed pretty plush to him five years before. It still did. But it wasn't, he considered, in it with that Georgian house.

CAROL flicked off some names on her fingers. "Bresso, of the Met. DeMarkov and Guitry, top dancing team in the country. Paul Slumber, the crooner. Lillian Larman, the actress. Even the names are exciting, Mike. They're tremendous people. But not one of them would have been anybody except for you."

"A few of them had a little talent," he told her modestly.

"And who ever would have heard of them if you hadn't been around to remove the bushel? Oh, Mike"—she leaned forward over the desk, her face nearly perfect in close-up—"when are you going to let me handle one by myself?"

"Soon," Mike said wearily. "Any day now."

She was radiant, and Mike felt like a heel. For the plain truth was that he wasn't handing over any clients for her to build up. It *was* a fascinating business, the kind that got a grip on you despite the headaches and the ulcers and the insomnia. She could get to like it, and the Georgian house would crumble into dust, unused, unloved, tenantless, while two busy little people harnessed unknowns to fame.

It wasn't going to happen that way if he could help it.

"That man outside," she said. "Want to see him now?"

"No. But I will, anyway."

SHE went out, and then the door opened again and a diffident, shy, well-constructed young man walked in. He offered Mike his hand, and for a fraction of a minute Mike wondered how long it would take before he could use the fingers again.

When the young man spoke, it was with respect that suggested Mike McKay might be a fine old institution, or eighty years old. "I'm Dick Marshall, sir. It's good of you to see me."

Mike prided himself on his ability to size them up, but this one was tough. An educated voice. Quietly dressed, but the suit had been carefully tailored by expert hands. This was no singer, no bit actor. He could have been a dancer, judging from the build, the walk, but dancers weren't, as a rule, shy. Nor did they have that fresh, outdoor look.

"Sit down," Mike invited.

He sat down, and eyed Mike hopefully. Mike tried to look impressively professional while Dick Marshall decided how he was going to tell all about himself. And Mike waited some more while Dick examined the rug, the books, the ceiling, and the excellent view of the skyline afforded by the wide windows. Mike was beginning to wonder what his visitor would offer for the lot when he noticed the dull flush that was creeping out from under the immaculate white

collar. The guy, Mike realized then, was tongue-tied with fright.

He leaned forward kindly. "Harry Smith sent you?"

The younger man nodded. "That's right, sir."

Mike said patiently, "Harry thought I'd be able to help you?"

The blond head bobbed again, and Dick Marshall sighed and relaxed in his chair. Clearly, as far as he was concerned the ordeal was over, and now that Mike knew everything his future was assured.

"What's your racket?" Mike asked with frank curiosity.

"I'm a wrestler, sir."

One of the grunt-and-groan boys. Mike did a second take. He wasn't kidding. "Been wrestling long?"

"A few years, sir. I fooled around with it some at school and I think I'd like to continue as a pro. I've had a few matches, but I felt if I were going to get anywhere with it I'd need some help."

He was a nice kid, clean-looking and hopeful with the hopefulness of youth. Mike felt like a fiend sticking pins in a toddler's balloon just to hear the pop. Because, as far as publicity went, wrestlers were poison. Fighters, okay. The most hopeless pug could get a notice somewhere, even though it might be on the back page of his home-town paper.

But wrestling was a farce, a gag. They weren't even permitted to call them contests any more. Wrestling exhibitions. No human interest. Nobody cared whether wrestlers won, lost, or drew.

Mike shook his head. "No dice. I'm sorry."

Dick's eyes widened. "But Harry said—" He sat forward, looking earnest. "That is, I was sure—"

"I'm sorry," Mike said.

Marshall looked uncertain for a minute, then he smiled shyly and got to his feet. Mike knew exactly what he was going to do. He'd make the rounds until he found some little guy somewhere who would promise to get his picture in the papers, and he'd live on hope and promises until he learned, expensively, that there wasn't anything much any publicity man could do for him.

"Wait a minute," Mike said, and Dick sat down abruptly.

Here was Dame Fortune smiling overtime, Mike thought, and he had been on the verge of kicking in her pretty, white teeth. If nobody could do much for Marshall, why couldn't Carol be the one? Let her beat her nice brains out for a while on this job, and then, when she turned her disillusioned back on the whole business, the Georgian house would look downright alluring.

It would teach her a lesson, and at the same time it could conceivably take care of that stubborn streak for good.

"I think I've got just the girl for you," Mike told Dick Marshall, enjoying himself hugely. . . .

"Listen," Mike said: "what goes on anyway? I haven't seen you except in passing for a couple of weeks."

Carol buffed her nails against a tailored lapel and examined them airily. "My good man, I have my duty to my client to consider."

"How's it coming?" He tried not to look smug.

"Very well, thanks. Very well, indeed."

"What have you done so far?"

Brightly: "Oh, this and that. . . . Look, Mike; I've got to get down to the library before it closes."

"Been reading many good books lately?"

"This is research. I want to find out something about the Argentine Gaucho."

"They're cowboys with Spanish accents."

"What else do you know about them?" She looked solemn and beautiful.

Mike put his hands resolutely behind him. "That's all, kid. Is there more?"

"I don't know. That's what I'm going to find out."

"Let's have dinner tonight," Mike said. "I'm feeling lonesome."

She shook her head. "Not tonight, Mike. I'm eating with my client. We're going to St. Nick's afterward."

Mike's face fell, and Carol relented. "Why don't you come with us?"

"Deliver me from wrestling. I wouldn't want to intrude on your party, anyway."

"Oh, Mike, this isn't pleasure. This is business."

"The amount of time you spend on it, you must enjoy your work."

Carol smiled happily. "I'm having a wonderful time." She examined her boss's face. "Hey, I do believe the man's jealous."

"Don't bet on it," Mike said shortly....

"Gentlemen, I have finally persuaded Monsieur Henri to honor us with a visit. Monsieur Henri is the man who decides what women are to wear—who made skirts shorter, longer, then in between—whose unbounded imagination creates a complete new wardrobe each season, which our wives so eagerly await"

For The American Magazine by Al Mueller

Several weeks more went by, weeks during which Mike was tortured by an odd feeling of frustration. Carol was doing something. That much was obvious. You couldn't spend all that time rushing around without accomplishing anything. The thing that bothered him most was that Carol and the wrestler were thrown together a lot, and no matter how you looked at it, that wasn't good.

There was that old business of propinquity.

He groaned aloud. "I ought to have my head examined," he informed the empty office.

Once, when Marshall and Carol were conferring in her office, Mike left the adjoining door on the hinge. What did they find to talk about? He didn't eavesdrop exactly. He just happened to be reading some papers in the file that stood close to the door.

What he heard didn't, after all, make very much sense. It had to do with Gauchos. It concerned, in some odd fashion, Margarita, who designed startling creations for some of the better shows and for many of the worse, if well-heeled, people.

Carol did most of the talking and Marshall's contributions were confined to murmured assents, which surprised Mike McKay not at all.

Mike closed the door soundlessly. He wished, for the thousandth time, that he had insisted she work under his direction instead of giving her a free hand. He was

right, of course. He knew, with a sure knowledge, that she didn't stand a chance, but the thing that left him in a state of baffled fury was the length of time it was taking her to discover what he had known from the start.

When Marshall had gone, Mike flung back the door and strode into her cubicle. "The time has come," he announced ominously, "when I learn what's going on in my own office."

Carol March looked up from the papers on her desk. She was the picture of a trimly competent young executive, and Mike blinked because, oddly enough, superimposed on the image, was a ruffled apron. That crazy illusion was growing worse instead of better. He cleared his throat, looked away, and when he looked back cautiously everything was normal. "Let's take inventory," he said.

She smiled at him mistily. "You've been wonderfully patient, Mike. Tonight's yours."

"You mean you're going to spare one whole evening for me? Just for little old unathletic me?"

"Don't be that way," she said. "It's just that I want to make you proud of me."

"I never considered you exactly repulsive."

"Oh, Mike," she pouted nicely. "Don't you want to go out with me?"

"I'll steel myself," Mike told her. He was beginning to feel better. The prospect of a nice, quiet evening with Carol alone somewhere was tempting. They'd have dinner uptown, and if he couldn't get tickets for a show maybe there would be a concert going on. "Any place in particular?"

"Certainly," Carol said briskly. "St. Nick's."

Mike drew himself up in outraged dignity. "That's the trouble with women in business. They never know when to relax. Just forget the whole thing."

"You mean you won't go with me?"

"Give the little lady a cigar," Mike said. He strode angrily into his own office. With admirable restraint he refrained from slamming the door. . . .

THE arena was hot and smoky and crowded. In the ring two behemoths were belaboring each other. They seemed, to Mike, highly inept, amazingly awkward, and patently phony. He said as much to Carol.

Carol was bent forward, examining their antics with a connoisseur's interest. "They're not too good," she admitted. "But they're crowd pleasers."

"There hasn't been a legitimate hold since they started," Mike said in disgust.

"These are only the prelims," Carol said pleadingly. "It'll be over soon."

Mike lit a cigarette, sat back in his seat, and closed his eyes in pain. After a while the bell sounded. the referee consulted with various people outside the ropes, came back, and indicated a draw.

He reached for the mike dangling from a cord above the ring. "The next event," he bellowed, "ladeez and gennulmen, is our main attraction, one fall, sixty minutes." He drew a hoarse breath. "From Bos-ton, Mass-a-chu-setts, weighing two

hunnerd and twenty pounds—the Mighty Mite—Tiny Tor-RENTO."

A mighty roar went up from the crowd.

"His op-ponent," the announcer howled, "from Argentina, South A-merica, weighing one hunnerd and ninety-five—the Galloping Gaucho, Ric-ardo Mar-TINEZ."

The audience screamed approval. It sounded to Mike as if there might be a preponderance of shrill female cries.

Tiny Torrento, a barrel of a man with shoulders three feet wide and legs like matchsticks, climbed into the ring and stood heavily patient in his corner.

There was a restless stir in the crowd, and then, as shrill, delighted sounds came from one side of the arena, a startling apparition materialized from the entrance to the dressing-rooms, ran lightly down the aisles, and vaulted dramatically over the top strand of the rope.

RICARDO MARTINEZ was a beautiful sight. His jacket was fashioned after those worn by the Gauchos, but the interpretation was pure Hollywood. On his head he wore a sombrero, which he whipped off as he bowed right and left, to the hysterical cries of admiration that rose shrilly from a few hundred female throats. He blew kisses to the crowd from the tips of his fingers.

"That blond Gaucho is wearing sideburns, isn't he?" Mike put his lips against Carol's shell-like ear. "I'm not just dreaming it, am I?"

She smiled blandly. "Aren't they cute?"

Mike McKay made a strangled sound, and Carol March turned to him inquiringly.

"Must have been something I ate," Mike explained hastily.

With calm deliberation the Galloping Gaucho folded the gorgeous jacket in a clean white towel and handed it to someone below. Tiny Torrento, his patience at an end, advanced across the canvas ominously. With a catlike agility, Marshall-Martinez spun around, his lariat whirled, and Tiny's arms were pinned helplessly to his sides.

The crowd howled. The crowd roared in mirth. The crowd went out of its collective mind with glee.

"I wouldn't have believed it," Mike said to no one in particular.

Carol nudged him with a meaningful elbow. "Watch him now. He's good."

She sat forward, her face rapt, her eyes riveted on the beautifully proportioned body that moved with elegant disdain just beyond the reach of the scowling, beetle-browed Torrento.

Tiny—called Tiny, Mike supposed, for the same reason that bald men are called Curly—got a head scissors on Dick.

"Watch him now," Carol breathed. "He'll spin out of it."

Dick did a head stand, spun halfway around, and fell to the canvas. Sure enough, he was clear of the thrashing legs. He jumped swiftly to his feet, crouched with his arms extended defensively, sneered fastidiously at the bristling Tiny, and then deliberately turned his back and sauntered away, his walk a masterpiece of amused contempt.

The din was deafening.

"Listen to them," Carol screamed joyously. "They're mad about him."

Dick Marshall-Martinez proved, beyond a doubt, that he was fast and strong and knowing. He made you forget that he looked better than he was because Torrento was clumsy and slow.

Torrento got a full Nelson on Dick and, for a half-minute, Mike hoped that he would have to reach the ropes to break it. But Dick bent over, straightened, twisted, and Torrento was flying overhead. He landed heavily on his back.

Carol was pounding excitedly on his knee. "Isn't he terrific, Mike? Isn't he marvelous?"

When, at last, Torrento delivered a series of what appeared to be shattering forearm smashes, Mike was appalled at the vicious tide of jubilance that welled up inside him.

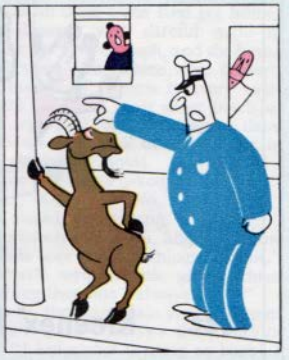
Then Tiny was, suddenly, top dog. He pulled Dick's light hair, and when Dick bent forward automatically to ease the pressure, Tiny brought his knee up in sharp contact with Dick's chin. Dick staggered drunkenly, and Tiny rushed in for the kill. He had Dick pinned beneath him, when, with lightning reversal, Dick shifted a fraction of an inch and pinned Torrento with his own hold for the count of three.

The crowd went out of its mind.

It's the Law!

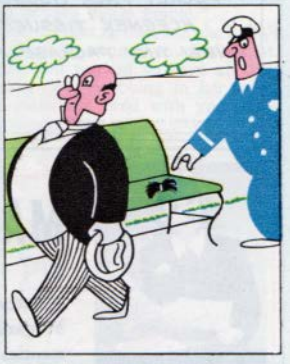
by DICK HYMAN

Illustrated by O. Soglow



In Bedford, Mass., it is against the law for a goat to stand on the sidewalk

Tenants are forbidden to bite their landlords in Rumford, Maine



It is illegal for anyone to throw or leave his hair in a Boulder, Colo., park

Indians are allowed to pitch wigwams on the town common in Hatfield, Mass.

Has your state or town some curious law or ordinance? If so, send it to "It's the Law!" The American Magazine, 640 Fifth Ave., New York 19, N.Y. We will pay $5 for each acceptable contribution. None can be returned.

Dick smoothed his hair, threw back his shoulders, sauntered casually to his own corner to await the official announcement, and whiled away the time graciously signing autograph books which were handed up over the ropes by breathless and youthful fans. Female fans.

Mike looked at Carol suspiciously. "Where did you find the girls?"

Carol preened herself. "I only needed a couple of them the first few times. The rest followed suit. He's the new sensation."

"Let's get out of here," Mike said.

They fought their way through the crowds to the exit. Outside, Mike took a deep breath of the fresh, sharp air. "And now where do we go?"

"There's a little place around the corner. Dick will meet us there after he dresses."

"I can hardly wait," Mike said.

When they were seated Carol leaned forward, her eyes anxious on Mike's. "How did I do, boss?"

"That's not the question. *What* did you do?"

She looked startled for a minute. Then she waved her hand. "I did all of it—the outfit, the bits of business, blowing kisses, the lariat trick, even the walk."

"And he's satisfied with that?"

"Why shouldn't he be? That's what he came to us for."

Mike was thinking fast. And he wasn't happy with his thoughts. "No pictures in the papers? No handsome write-ups?"

Carol shook her head. "All he wanted was a personality. Something that would catch the imagination of the crowd."

"You certainly gave it to him."

"He's wonderful to work with. Cooperative and sweet. At first he was so colorless, but now—well, you wouldn't believe how much he's changed. Even outside the ring he seems different."

"Just a sweet guy," Mike said bitterly, trying not to look at her shining eyes.

"Wrestling isn't like boxing. It's a kind of act. There's a hero and a villain. There's a certain amount of suspense. There's meanness and cunning and cruelty, and then right wins out in the end. It's—I don't know—it's kind of satisfactory to watch, even though you know it's phony."

"The public gets tired of its heroes. Anyway, it's still an act."

She slumped back in her chair. "Yes, it's only an act."

STICKING pins in balloons again, Mike thought. "You're a nasty guy, Mike McKay," he told himself. He reached over and covered her hand. "It's no act the way you handle it, baby. It's a production."

Her eyes brightened. "You really liked it, Mike?"

"It was swell."

Suddenly the dim, smoky atmosphere, the dark, wooden tables, the hubbub of talk and laughter faded away, and Mike was back in the suburbs again, in a deep chair, with Carol on his lap.

Mike shook his head to clear it. A happy thought had occurred to him. "You got what you wanted," he said. "And you handled it like a master. Now can we play it my way?"

"Not now," Carol said breathlessly. "Not just yet. This is my baby, Mike. Let me hold on to it a little longer."

Mike felt groggy. Fate had placed her within his grasp. Almost within, he amended. And Dame Fortune had handed him the means with which to complete the job. But what had happened to the Dame's smile? The smile had changed to a leer, that's what it had changed to. He should have kicked in her teeth in the first place. . . .

Dick came into the bar, and he was the same quiet young man who had appeared in Mike's office some months earlier. Only the sideburns were new. He grinned bashfully at Carol and offered Mike his hand. "How are you, sir?"

"Just dandy, but I'll feel better in time."

Carol looked up eagerly. "Margarita will have some new sketches ready by tomorrow afternoon."

"Swell," Dick assured her. "I'll be there."

"How," Mike asked, "does Margarita fit into this business?"

"She designed the Gaucho jackets," Carol said. "She's tops. There's been a lot of comment on the jackets. They're even being copied around town."

The waiter approached. "What'll it be?"

"Beer," Carol told him.

"Beer," Dick echoed.

"Hemlock," Mike said. . . .

THE summer wore on. In June, Carol announced that Dick's manager had torn up his contract and presented him with a new one. In July, Carol got a two-page spread in one of the top national magazines for Dick. Not for Dick, exactly. For the Gaucho jackets. But Ricardo Martinez, the Galloping Gaucho, was mentioned only a few times less than Margarita, and he posed resplendently for the pictures. It was impossible, but Carol had done it. She had had to sneak Dick in through the back way, disguised by a jacket, but there he was, in black and white and in color.

In August, Mike had a heart-to-heart talk with Margarita, and by the end of August there were a few scattered mentions of an odd twosome making the rounds of the bright spots. "What famous designer and what wrestler?" they asked.

By September, Carol began to look thin and drawn.

Mike called her into his office. "Take a couple of weeks off, kid. You look terrible."

She smiled at him, a smile that tore at Mike's heart. "You're no collar ad yourself."

"What's the setup, baby? You can talk to old Uncle Mike. Did you fall for the guy?"

She twisted her hands together helplessly. "I don't know, Mike. I just don't know. I've never felt like this before."

"It could be overwork," Mike suggested hopefully.

"It could be indigestion," Carol said. "But I don't think it is."

"Does he know?"

Carol shook her head and her eyes brimmed. "He doesn't think I'm quite human. He"—she took a deep breath—"he *looks up* to me."

"I've got a little cabin in the Adirondacks," Mike said gently. "It's quiet and peaceful. Have yourself a rest."

"Thanks, Mike." She stopped behind his chair and lowered her cheek to his hair. Mike McKay wanted to cry.

AFTER she had gone he put in a call to Margarita. "Call off the dogs," he said. "It wasn't one of my better ideas."

"Thank heaven!" Margarita breathed gratefully. "All that bounding youth and vitality made me feel like a drained hag."

"Anything I can ever do for you—" Mike offered.

"Just be happy," Margarita said.

"Yeah," Mike told her.

Just be happy. Just like that. He paced the floor of his office. Up and down. Back and forth. Dick Marshall was just another wrestler. Until Carol had gone to work nobody had even heard of him. She had taken an ordinary guy and turned him into a hero. As far as she was concerned he'd been a pretty unpromising project until she had glamorized him. And now that she had created this—this Gaucho, she'd gotten so she believed in him herself. That was it, she believed in her own illusion! Mike stumbled over the edge of the rug in his excitement. It was just possible . . .

He put in a call to Dick Marshall. "Stop around when you get a chance," he said. "I'm taking over your public relations myself."

"Why, certainly, sir."

Mike sat back in his chair and looked thoughtful. Then he crossed his fingers carefully. . . .

He was at the station to meet the six-forty on a Wednesday night early in October. The three weeks had done her good. She looked better except for the circles about her eyes. Mike knew what they were from. He hadn't done much sleeping, himself.

"Hungry?" he asked.

"Starved," she said. "For food and for—news. I feel as if I've spent a couple of centuries on Mars."

He steered her into a small, quiet restaurant near the station. And then he just sat and looked at her across the table. Even with the strain, even with the circles, Carol March was beautiful. With snow-white hair and fine wrinkles and grandchildren, Carol March would still be beautiful.

"What's the matter?" she asked uneasily. "Have I come apart somewhere?"

"I was counting the freckles."

"Anything much happen while I was gone?"

"This and that."

The silence stretched thinly between them.

"How is he, Mike?"

"Coming along nicely. We could stop by the arena later."

"That would be nice." The color warmed her cheeks. . . .

They missed the preliminaries. They found their seats just as the announcer was naming his opponent: "Jack—STRONG."

Carol frowned. "Must be a new one. I don't believe I've seen him."

"This is his first week in the East. He's been traveling the Midwest circuit."

Strong climbed through the ropes, a clean-limbed, well-built, muscular ex-lifeguard. There was a scattering of applause. Then the Galloping Gaucho vaulted over the ropes, removed his sombrero, acknowledged the plaudits, blew kisses, and began the deliberate and ostentatious removal of his jacket.

Jack Strong waited quietly in his corner, refusing to be drawn forward. At last, with a sigh and a shrug, Dick Marshall-Martinez tossed his lariat down to the waiting hands and turned to face the referee.

Carol frowned again.

After the inaudible instructions, they circled each other warily. Then, suddenly, Jack Strong had a finger-lock on Martinez. Dick forced his arms down, slowly, painfully, and broke it. They moved quickly, both of them lithe and young and resilient. It was fast, all of it, the holds and the breaks, and when they wriggled away after breaking, they were on their feet in one fluid motion.

Mike McKay was wholeheartedly enjoying that match.

As it progressed, though, it became apparent that Strong was the more experienced of the two, and his strength, if anything, was superior to Dick's. Once, in rage, real or simulated, Marshall-Martinez roughed Strong up against the ropes, and Carol whispered in bewilderment, "Who told him to act like this?"

Strong got Martinez in a figure-four leg-lock, and Dick twisted on the canvas. He turned his head to learn the whereabouts of the referee and, satisfying himself on that score, reached up and pulled Strong's head down by the hair.

Carol drew an outraged breath.

She sat stiffly after that, her face mask-like. When Martinez used his fist instead of his forearm and was warned by the referee, Carol turned white.

She put her hand on Mike's arm. "I've seen enough. We can wait for him in his dressing-room."

While they waited she paced the floor, her color high, her eyes dark. When, at last, the door opened and Dick came in she whirled on him furiously: "That was a fine exhibition you put on upstairs."

Dick took an involuntary step backward. "The crowd liked it."

"I don't care if the President liked it," she cried. "I created a character for you. And you've made a caricature out of it." She put her hands on her hips and glared at him. "Have you any idea of what you looked like?"

Dick opened his mouth, and, without giving him a chance to reply, Carol told him what he looked like: "You looked like a musical-comedy foreign spy. That's what you looked like."

"Now, wait a minute," Mike said soothingly.

Carol turned on him: "You keep out of this."

"But I thought—" Dick said.

"You thought with what? I've done your thinking for you. *I* was the one who built you up. The Galloping Gaucho is more me than you. Why, you're nothing but a stooge!"

"Hey, wait," Dick said reasonably. "Heroes capture the public fancy for only a short while, but a good, mean, dependable villain goes on forever."

Mike McKay held his breath then, because the sentence was quoted verbatim and Carol might just possibly recognize the fact. But Carol was too overwrought to notice anything.

"If that's the way you feel about it," she stormed, "you can create your own villain. But you're not going to link him to my Galloping Gaucho." She lifted her chin and hooked her arm in Mike's. "Let's get out of here," she said. "I seem to have trouble breathing."

She strode with long, furious strides along the dark street, Mike at her side. Then, with a little shiver, she drew her collar closer around her throat. When they passed under a street light Mike could see the tears making little streaks down her cheeks.

"Hey," Mike said softly. "It isn't worth crying about."

"I've got a cry coming," Carol March said stubbornly.

Mike McKay considered that maybe she had, at that.

"Do you know what it's like to make something, to see it take form and turn into something whole and beautiful, and then to watch it twisted all out of shape?"

"It's tough," Mike said quietly. "But it happens."

"It's more than that," she said, after a pause. "I guess underneath I really believed in the man I made up. But all I saw was a reflection of my own dreams—a phony reflection."

Her steps slowed and they walked along in silence. After a while Mike saw that the tears were finished. She stopped and looked up and smiled shakily. "I think I've got it out of my system now. Lend me your handkerchief."

Mike handed it to her, and she wiped away the last faint traces of sorrow. Then she blew her nose.

Mike McKay expelled a long breath. It was what he had been gambling on. She hadn't gone overboard for Dick Marshall. It had been the Galloping Gaucho all the way.

Dick, Mike knew, would have wound up a villain in any event, and it was as he had said—a good, mean, dependable villain went on forever. Mike had only hastened the metamorphosis a trifle.

"It wouldn't be like that with a baby," Carol mused thoughtfully. "Once you created him and showed him the right way, he'd stick to it." She looked at Mike out of the corner of her eye. "Wouldn't he?"

"He might," Mike admitted.

"We could try it," Carol said shyly. "We could try a couple of experiments like that."

Mike noticed with interest that the Georgian house was materializing again, right in the middle of Fifth Avenue.

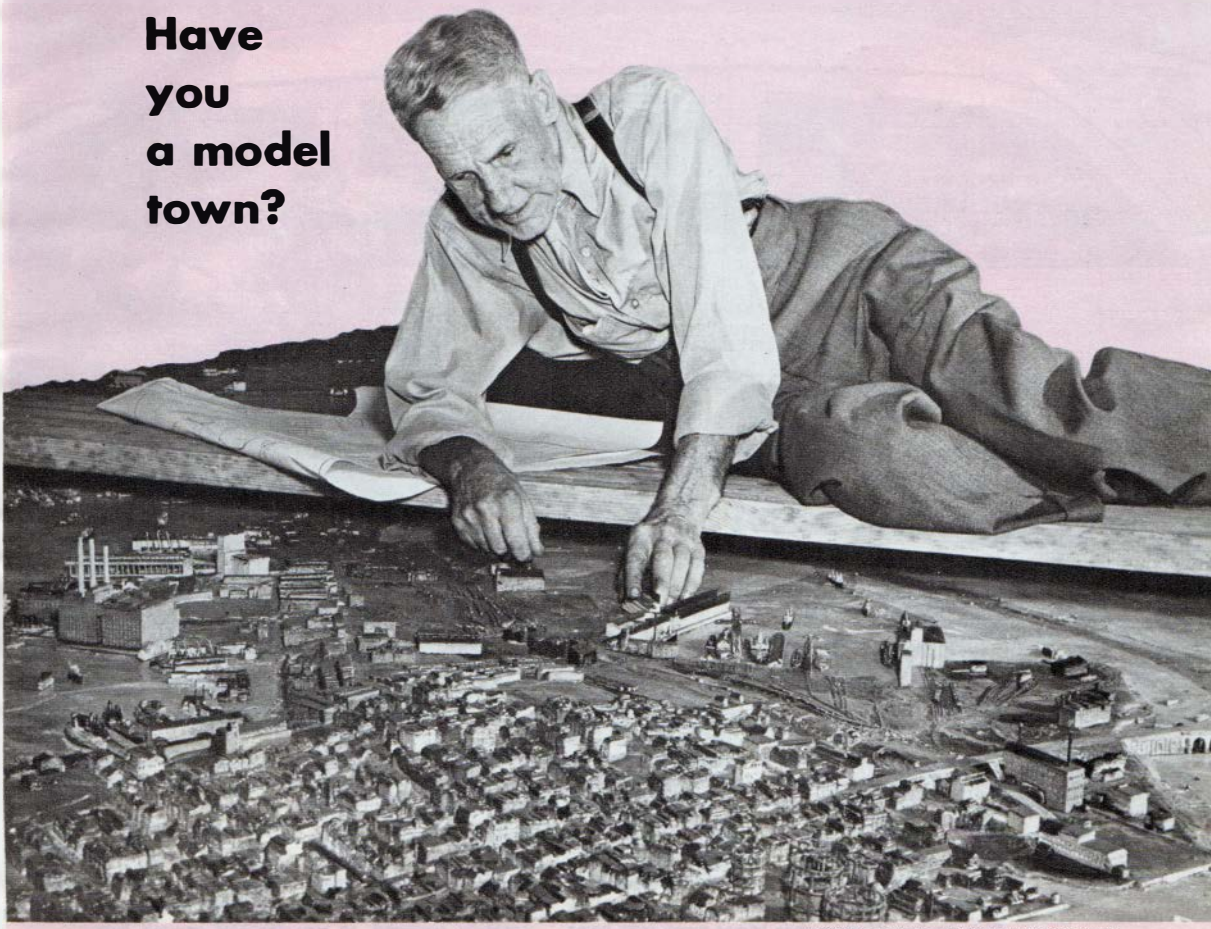
"No wrestlers, though," Carol said firmly.

"No wrestlers," Mike echoed devoutly.

THE END★★

Interesting People

Have you a model town?



PHOTOGRAPHED BY HANS MARX FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

HOW'RE THINGS in your town? Is industry beating a path to your door? Well, many cities are using Phillip V. Clayton's talent to lure new businesses and developments their way. Clayton makes models of cities. He is shown here placing a new building on a model of Baltimore, Md., one of his creations.

He has also modeled Denver, Houston, New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and many others. City governments and trade organizations use the models. They supply quick, comprehensive views of the business district, harbors, industrial areas, residential sections, and save officials hours of time and miles of travel in showing visiting businessmen what the town has to offer. Clayton's models are built usually on a scale of 1 inch to 200 feet. He used to be a draftsman, and learned from this that it was hard for a layman to follow a blueprint. He was working as a draftsman for the City of Baltimore several years ago, when he was called upon to paint and clean up a model of the city's upper harbor. He didn't just clean it up, but spent 2 years on his own time expanding the model until he had built the entire city. He then decided to make this his lifework. At the age of 65 he has become known throughout the nation.

In addition to cities, he has made models of large estates. He uses ordinary materials. With a little sawdust and paint he'll come up with a cluster of trees. Pieces of copper wire suggest railroad tracks. Not only does he make the original model, but he goes back to a city from time to time to make changes as the city grows. Although he models cities, Clayton will not live in one. His home is in Severna Park, Md. He is interested in taxidermy and painting.

Go west, little doggie

PHOTOGRAPH BY THEDA AND EMERSON HALL FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

Hollywood actors *frequently vacation their pets at the unusual Dude Ranch for Dogs owned by Gladys and Dick Diaz in California. Here Actor Douglas Dick and Starlet Terry Moore say good-by to two cockers, Jack and Jill, held by Gladys, while her husband looks on*

INTERESTING PEOPLE

NOW WE'VE HEARD EVERYTHING, neighbors—a Dude Ranch for Dogs, no less! Gladys and Dick Diaz run two Western-style homes away from home for pampered pooches in southern California. Their winter wonderland is at Palm Springs, and the gay dogs summer at Big Bear Lake, near San Bernardino. Both ranches are everything the name implies.

Each canine "dude" has his own corral and bunkhouse. He struts around with a colorful bandanna, making like a real cowdog; takes his grub from a chuck wagon; hunts squirrels and chipmunks and has a yippy ol' time doing everything a real ranch dog wouldn't be found dead doing. Letters are written regularly to the dog's family to keep them well posted.

While the atmosphere is Western and rugged, Gladys and Dick see to it that the "tenderpaws" don't rough it too much. A qualified dietitian personally supervises all menus in accordance with the master's instructions. Daily sunbaths are the order of the day, and lake swimming under the watchful eye of lifeguards. There's a guesthouse with heat for city pooches not accustomed to roughing (?) it. Guests are carefully screened, so you can rest assured Fido meets only the socially acceptable. Every breed of dog can be found at the ranches, from Chihuahuas to great Danes, and prices vary according to the size of the pooch.

Gladys and Dick went out to California 18 years ago to carve careers for themselves in the movies, but they quickly decided it was more fun pursuing their hobby of caring for dogs. Originally, they confined their activities to breeding, but then the idea of the dude ranch developed, and it has been most successful. Many of their most frequent guests are the dogs of Hollywood stars.

Each ranch has 20 acres, and it requires a staff of 15 to care for the temperamental canines. The same dogs frequently return each year, and one has been a guest for 12 seasons. To many, it is their first experience away from the city. Some have been retired to the ranch on trust funds; others as a result of the

Beautician Jerry Rose *gives Topper a Royal Dutch trim after the French poodle has spent a vacation "roughing" it at the ranch. All the guests are prettied up in the Diazes' Town House at Pasadena after their life in the outdoors*

COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR L. CHILD FOR THE AMERICAN MAGA

A Sealyham *takes over as "ranch foreman" at the ranch. The guests have their own bunkhouses and private corrals. Note chuck wagon on right where dogs obtain their grub*

A Scottie *looks over supplies, such as bandannas, boots, hats, at the general store at ranch (below). Every effort is made to create a Western atmosphere for the guests*

domestic difficulties of their masters. The Diazes say that at least one reconciliation has resulted from owners meeting at the ranch to see their dog.

The Diazes raise French poodles and Norwegian elkhounds and have a well-equipped maternity ward at each ranch. Many masters like to have their dogs raise their families at the ranch, feeling it is much better than in a crowded city. In addition to the two ranches, the Diazes have a Town House for Dogs in Pasadena, Calif., where dogs meet to be transported to the ranches. There they are examined before becoming "dudes," and there also all evidences of the rugged life are removed after the vacation. They get bubble baths, pedicures, oil shampoos, and an experienced dog cosmetician sees to it that Fido is ready to take his place in high canine society again.

Dick was born in Boston and Gladys hails from New York. During the war, both were in the K-9 Corps. Dick was a trainer with 2,000 dogs under his direction, and Gladys was in charge of dog induction.

Scientific sinkers

THERE'S MORE to the doughnut than meets the eye. In fact, to keep the nation dunking happily, David Levitt, president of The Doughnut Corporation of America, world's largest producers of doughnuts, has opened a 5-story laboratory in New York devoted to research on sinkers.

A doughnut, to you, may be just a succulent sphere with a hole in the middle, but to 32-year-old Levitt the business involves many shapes, sizes, and flavors to suit the tastes across the country. There are several hundred varieties of doughnuts. Upper New Englanders want their sinkers heavy, highly spiced, and with a high fat absorption. Southern New England wants the same doughnut, sugar-coated. Ohioans take a mild flavor, but their Michigan neighbors go along with the East and want 'em spiced. As for eastern Pennsylvanians, they'll take vanilla flavor. The South likes light, puffed-up doughnuts with a glaze coating. The West Coast favors "crunch" doughnuts above all others. These are rolled in nuts, coconut, or cake crumbs. On a national scale, men prefer plain doughnuts; women and children, sugar doughnuts, which are the largest sellers.

Levitt's father founded The Doughnut Corporation of America, but young Levitt's first job was his own bakery route. Later, he worked as a laborer in one of his father's doughnut restaurants under an assumed name. He unloaded wheat from trucks and was a factory hand. He attended Yale University; and then, last June, became president of the company after having worked in every phase of the doughnut business. He started the laboratory because he said that in order to enable the company to stay at the top, it was necessary to keep coming up with new sinkers.

Born in Milwaukee, Wis., Levitt is married to his childhood sweetheart and has 3 children.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JACOB LOFMAN FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

PHOTOGRAPH BY BERNARD NEWMAN FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

Madam butterfly

WHEN MARGARET SHERBAUM was a little girl in Vienna, Austria, she found routine schoolwork dull. Instead of studying, she spent hours looking over her collection of post-card reproductions of famous paintings and wishing she could be an artist. At the same time, she was fascinated by the butterflies her brothers collected.

Today, she combines her two loves, paintings and butterflies, in the unique "Butterfly Shop" in New York. There, using the brilliant insects, Miss Sherbaum—she is married, but uses her maiden name in business—makes pictures, lamp shades, dresser sets, serving trays, earrings, pins, bracelets, and other things. The lamp shades are made from two sheets of plastic, between which are fixed the butterflies, along with flowers which Miss Sherbaum either buys or picks and then presses. The shades sell for as much as $50. The insects are extremely fragile and difficult to handle. In addition, Miss Sherbaum sells equipment for catching and mounting butterflies, books on them, and mounted butterflies, moths, and beetles.

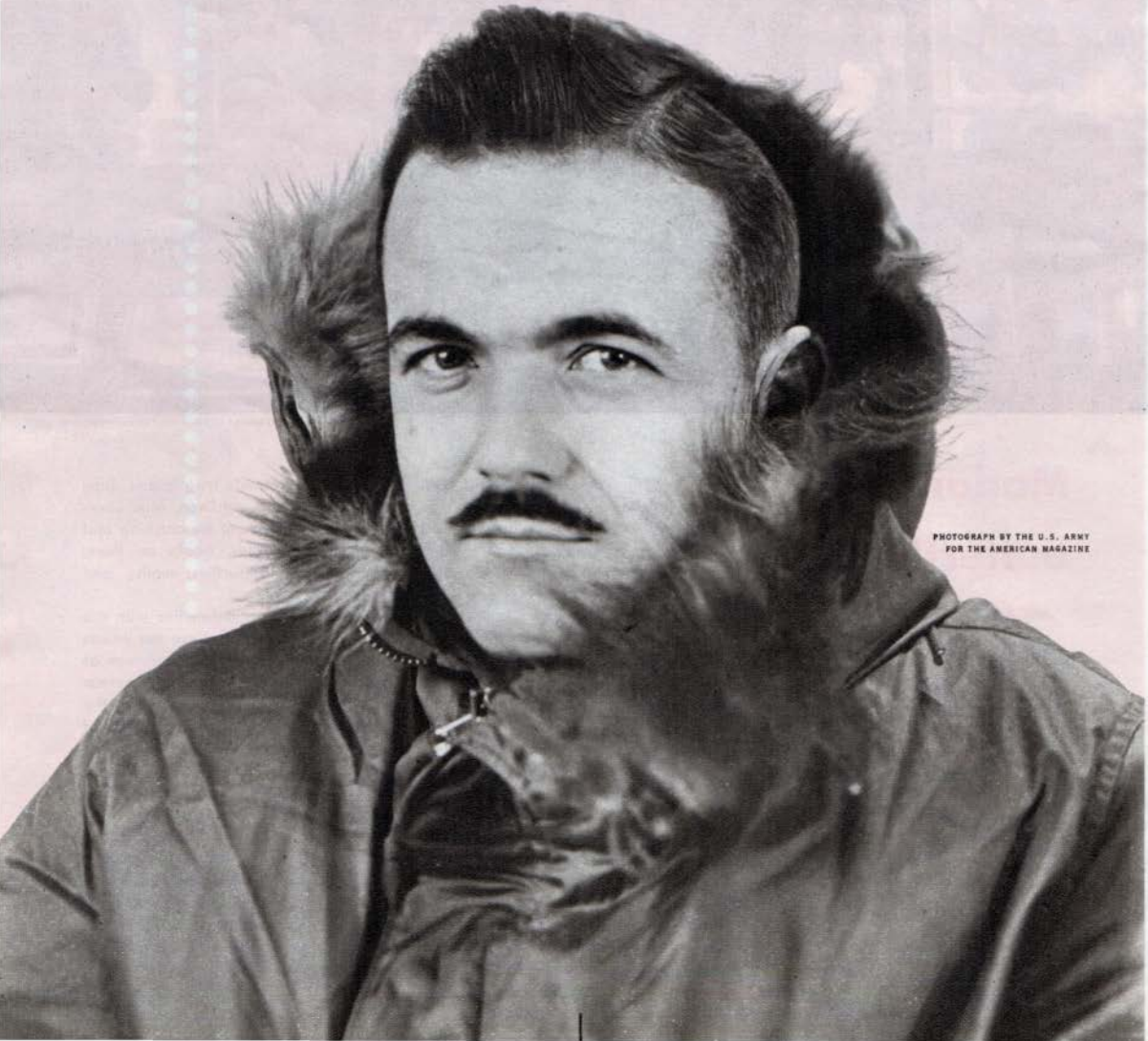
Many customers unfamiliar with the Butterfly Shop can't believe the insects are real and accuse Miss Sherbaum of painting them. Occasionally a person will bring in a butterfly caught in the garden in the hope of selling it. Most of these are common varieties and, captured inexpertly, are unusable. Occasionally, however, a rare find will turn up in someone's back yard, and Miss Sherbaum buys it. In addition to liking art and butterflies, Miss Sherbaum as a child also wanted to travel. This desire brought her to the United States 35 years ago and led her across Europe to see the originals of the paintings on the post cards of her childhood.

How to keep warm

WHAT DO YOU WEAR when it's cold outside? So many clothes you look like a hibernating grizzly bear? Do you bundle up in your heaviest coat? Well, according to 1st Lieut. William D. Hackett, who tests polar and mountain-climbing clothing for the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps, you're all wrong. Weight doesn't necessarily mean warmth.

Lieutenant Hackett has been responsible for reducing army garb from 23 pounds in winter to a streamlined 14. A coat of closely woven fiberglas lined with windproof nylon he has found is warmer than the thickest wool. Instead of airtight boots, Hackett prefers felt-lined mukluks, heelless footgear favored by the Eskimos. To wear them, you may have to learn to walk like an Eskimo, but these mukluks permit air to circulate inside, which prevents damp socks, and thus frozen feet. Hackett also suggests you stick to longies, wool shirt and trousers, and, if you're thin-blooded, a sweater. Add felt and wool socks, wool mittens topped by arctic gauntlets, and you'll be comfortable even if the bottom drops out of the thermometer. Hackett learns about clothing the hard way. He once spent 60 days on Mt. McKinley, Alaska, with nothing to do but just keep warm in every kind of weather. He started climbing high at the age of 12 by scaling Mt. Hood in Oregon. In all, he has made 260 major ascents, and he has looked down on the highest peaks in Germany, Austria, Italy, Mexico, Canada, as well as the United States.

Hackett is 30 and spent his boyhood in Portland, Ore. He was a bank clerk, managed the sporting-goods department of a hardware store before entering the Army 7 years ago. An expert skier, he served with the U.S. Mountain troops. He was awarded two bronze stars and a silver star for outstanding service.



PHOTOGRAPH BY THE U.S. ARMY
FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE COVELLO FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

Big timer

CHANCES are pretty good that the church or courthouse clock in your town shows the fine hand of the gent in this picture. He's Rudolph Lamm, president of the Howard Clock Sales & Service Corp. in New York, and his firm has either built, serviced, or repaired most of the tower clocks in the country. From coast to coast, Lomm labors to keep the big clocks of the country on time. He travels 50,000 miles a year, has installed and serviced clocks up to 3,000 pounds and with a face diameter of 22 feet. Upon receiving an order for a clock, Lamm will buy basic parts from manufacturers, assemble them, and install the timepiece. Clocks around the country he has either installed or serviced include those in the Boston, Mass., Custam House; Old Union Station in San Francisco; Old Capitol Building, Williamsburg, Va.; the Courthouse at Vicksburg, Miss.; the Wrigley Building Tower in Chicago. Lamm is shown in the photo working on one of the nation's most famous clocks, in Trinity Church, New York, a clock his firm has serviced for years. He entered the clock business as a mechanic 29 years ago. He has advanced through all phases of the business up to the presidency. One of his busiest times comes when daylight saving changes the time. His crews cover New York City and New Jersey changing the clocks. He is 52, married, and his hobbies are hunting, riding, and fishing.

Date bank

THERE'S hardly a high-school teacher who, besides being plagued by his own financial problems, hasn't had the bite put on him by some of his students. J. B. Stephens, principal of Noblesville (Ind.) High School, has devised a method of relieving this situation and also helping his students. He has opened a "date bank" at the school. Now, when a strapped swain needs eatin' money for the lovely young thing he's carrying a torch for, he goes to the bank at school and floats a modest loan, anything from 50 cents to $2. Vice-presidents in charge of the romantic "touch" are the 10 members of the Student Council, who receive applications from the Good Time Charlies and vote on them. No interest is charged, but loans must be repaid in 10 days or else you get a bad credit rating, and in the future your dreamboat must settle for an old-fashioned walk. Money for loans comes from sale of supplies to students. There are 5 girls on the Council and they are no tougher on applicants than the boys. After all, girls have an interest in dates, too. Most of the borrowers are bays, but girls have also tapped the bank. Some guys believe in equal rights for women up to and including paying half the expenses of a date. Stephens started the idea last September and says it has proved quite popular. He is 41, a native of La Fontaine, Ind., is married, and has 3 daughters. He is shown here looking on while members of the Council consider an application for a loan.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TOWER STUDIOS FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

PHOTOGRAPH BY DORSEY AND PETERS
FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

Hospital at home

IF YOU LIVE in one of the many communities in the country which are many miles from a hospital, perhaps you can get some tips from the Ratcliff, Texas, Good Neighbor Club. Sparked by Mrs. Maude Chandler (left), president, and Mrs. Willie Pyle (right), secretary, 4 Ratcliff women formed the club in 1946, to provide emergency hospital service for their isolated town, which is 20 miles from the nearest doctor or hospital.

Unable to raise funds to build a hospital of their own, Good Neighbor Club members did the next best thing: They bought a hospital bed, syringes, thermometers, a sterilizer, and other equipment. Now, in an hour, any room in Ratcliff can be transformed into a hospital room. The 56 members of the club are organized in teams and, working in shifts, provide 24-hour nursing when necessary, administer medicine on doctor's orders, carefully prepare the patient's diet. They even keep the patient's house in order and feed other members of the family. Last but not least, the patient will usually find a bowl of flowers in the room, or a new book to pass the time. Money for the equipment is raised by Mrs. Chandler, Mrs. Pyle, and the other members from square dances, pie suppers, quilting bees, fish frys, chicken suppers, and a carnival. Caring for the sick is only one of the problems any town faces, and the Good Neighbor Club has answers for some of the others, too. Members reserve some of their canning to help less fortunate families over the rough spots. They sew for hospitals, infants, and small children and keep a supply of clothing on hand for emergencies.

Mrs. Chandler and Mrs. Pyle are not without problems and responsibilities of their own. Mrs. Chandler has one child and Mrs. Pyle has 12. Despite the manifold club duties, both women have time for outside interests. Mrs. Chandler and Mrs. Pyle are shown here attending two-year-old Charles Ginn.

Shipshape

IF NANCY OLSON ever decides Hollywood is not for her, she won't have to worry about keeping the wolf from the door—the kind that's strictly from hunger, that is. She can always sign on as a deck hand on a ship.

Nancy is an expert sailor and owns her own boat. However, the chances of her going down to the sea are limited, because Paramount plans to keep her ashore for a long time. Nancy, only a little over a year removed from the campus of the University of California at Los Angeles, will soon be seen in a starring role in *Sunset Boulevard*, opposite Gloria Swanson and William Holden. She is now working in the forthcoming Bing Crosby extravaganza, *Mr. Music*. And this is only the start of her long-term contract.

Nancy is a native of Wisconsin. In her family there were a number of educators and it was expected that she, too, would teach. However, she was interested in the theater, and for a time charted a course that was to lead to becoming a drama teacher. In her high-school days she won a state oratorical championship and took part in many school plays. When she appeared in an amateur production on the Coast of *The Play's the Thing*, she made sufficient impression to merit a screen test, and the aforesaid contract followed. She has definitely decided to make acting her career.

In addition to sailing, Nancy's other chief athletic interest is also connected with the water: She is an expert swimmer and diver.

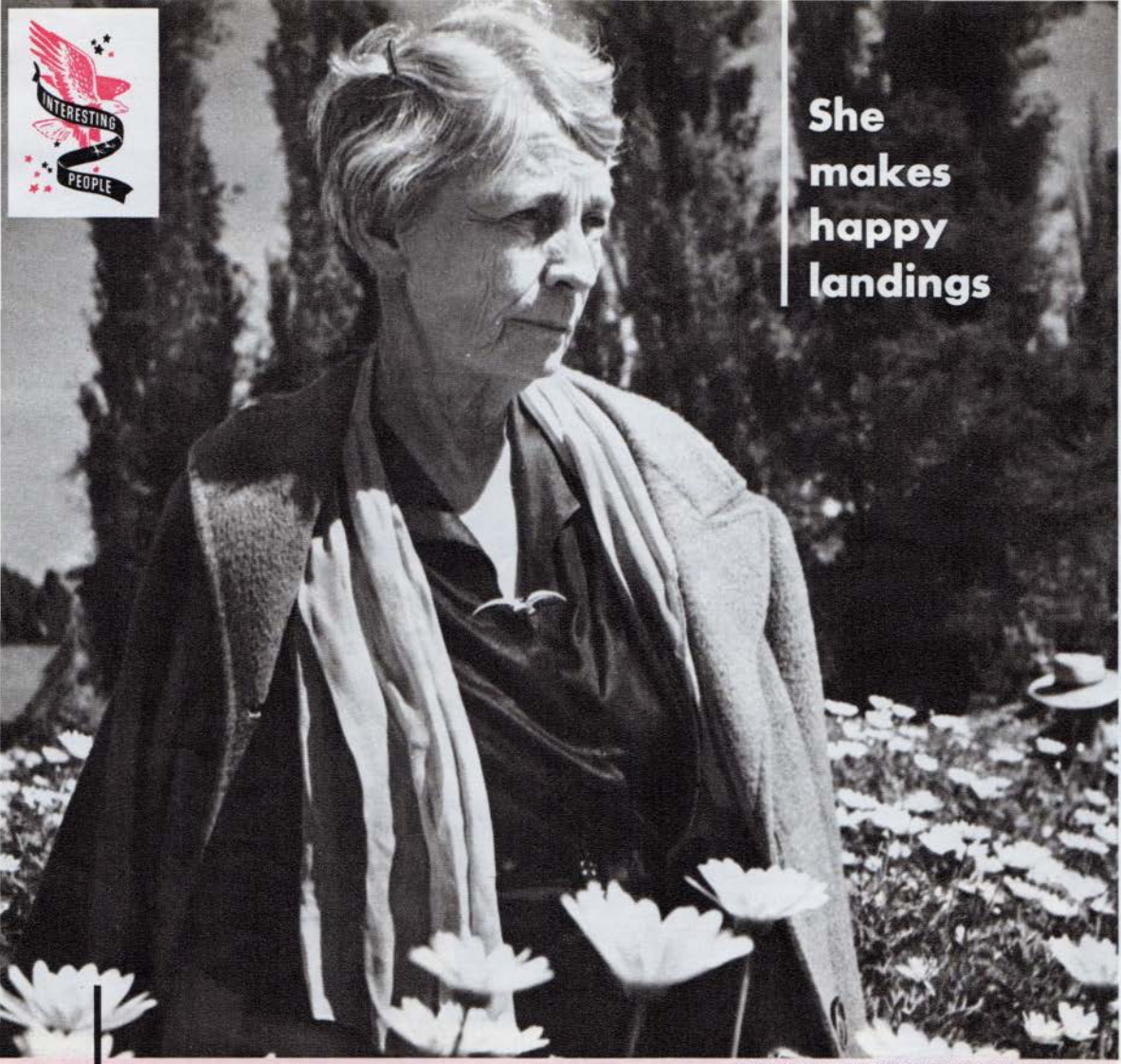
PHOTOGRAPH BY BUD FRAKER
FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

Wanta swap that Xmas tie?

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHARLES R. PEARSON FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

WELL, DAD, as you sit there, wearing one of your sad Christmas ties and looking over your sad Christmas bills, it does seem as if you ought to be able to do something about it. Well, you can. If you'd really like to get rid of that tie, it just so happens there's a guy in Seattle, Wash., named William Henry Horsley, who'll take that piece of horse blanket you got from Aunt Millie and trade you another tie in exchange, even Stephen. Of course, you may get another horse blanket, but at least you've got the first one out of the house. Horsley, who runs his own advertising agency, has a hobby of swapping ties. He's been doing it for 15 years, has swapped ties with people all over the world, and now has over 500. He started doing it because he likes pattern variety. He finds it fun and hasn't bought a tie himself in ages. He cautions against sending the tie that binds—meaning one from the wife. This leads to broken homes and noses. All you do is send Horsley a tie, and he'll send you another in return. If he gets a $2 tie, he sends you a $2 tie in return. Send him one with added shades of purée of split pea, and you'll get back a clean one, also a cleaning bill. He'll swap bow or four-in-hand. He calls his hobby Horsley's International Necktie Exchange, and will send you a card showing where the tie you receive came from.

Born in Yakima, Wash., Horsley was graduated from the University of Washington. A navy flier in World War I, he was a commander in the U.S. Coast Guard in the recent war. Over the years, he has had a flair for unusual organizations, and during the depression started The Royal Order of Hairy-Chested Men, dedicated to those who were plugging through the tough times. He is shown here (left) swapping a tie with Lincoln Deller, who owns Radio Station KXOA in Sacramento, Calif.



She makes happy landings

PHOTOGRAPHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

IF A THING CAN'T BE DONE, that's when Bessie Johnson, of Brownsville, Texas, and Mexico City, decides to do it. At 74, this tiny, fragile woman looks as if she should be poised daintily on a sofa, a teacup in her hand. Chances are she's riding a bulldozer with a box of dynamite balanced in her lap.

As chief landscape gardener for the flying fields of Compañia Mexicana de Aviación, a Pan-American Airways affiliate, Mrs. Johnson has little time for tea. She is too busy making flowers bloom at airports where none grew before. Mrs. Johnson's husband helped found CMA to fly payrolls to workers in the Mexican oil fields. The first airport at Brownsville was as colorful as a slab of concrete, so Mrs. Johnson took over, and soon had things blooming. Then she proposed to CMA officials that they let her landscape the Mexican airfields. They were more than skeptical. How, one of them asked, could such a delicate lady boss dozens of laborers, make long and frequent air trips, and, especially, grow flowers on barren strips where even cactus couldn't live? "Young man," she replied, "you just tend to your flying; I'll grow the flowers." The executives subdued, all she had to do was lick the desert. From a tractor at boulder-strewn Mérida, Mexico, she directed workers to blast craters from solid rock and put in dirt fill. Ants, sand flies, hard clay, and even scarcity of water, yielded to Mrs. Johnson. Thus far she has transformed 11 airports into a panorama of hydrangeas, hibiscus, almond trees, royal poincianas, bougainvillaeas which draws the admiration of every visitor.

Mrs. Johnson digs flowers from the Floating Gardens of Xochimilco, Mexico, where she buys all her plants. She is shown here among her flowers, and a corner of one of the air strips can be seen on the extreme left. Where she is standing was once gray sand and boulders.

I Fish for Monsters

(*Continued from page* 51)

they melted right into the riotous painting of the rest of the reef, and in spite of these blobs of rich color, the clams were so well camouflaged that we had been swimming about among them for some time before we had seen the first one.

When I had found these clams I'd been swimming along under water grabbing hold of a piece of coral now and then to hold me down when I wanted to stop and look around. What if I had grabbed at this piece of "coral" for an anchor and stuck my fingers into the camouflaged trap? Even the thought of it makes me shudder.

Another day Cheyne and I were scouting fish near a little jungle-covered islet in Munda Lagoon. The native, San Carlos, who had warned me before about crocodiles, had by this time appointed himself as my personal guardian. He had given up trying to teach me to be careful around the reef, and now, over my protests, he came along with me on every trip we made to the reef to protect me from my foolhardiness. This day he remained in the shallows near shore, standing in the shade of an overhanging palm, with his big spear cocked over his shoulder, watching Cheyne and me as we dived out in the deeper water.

The day was peaceful and quiet. It was good to be alive and working in this strangely beautiful place. As I came up from a deep dive, gasping for air, San Carlos screamed a warning. I jerked my head around just in time to see him heave his spear in my direction. San Carlos was such an expert with a spear that he could have plugged me through the ear at that distance, but my blood chilled at his scream and I instinctively ducked under again before the spear could strike. When I surfaced again, weak from the shock and the quick double dive, San Carlos' spear was floating alongside. Impaled on its tip was a writhing sea snake.

The green- and black-banded thing was hardly more than a foot long, but instead of cursing him for the great fright he had given me I thanked my lucky stars that San Carlos was such a good hand with a spear. This was a coral snake. The navy doctor at Ondonga had told us that it has the fastest-killing bite of any poisonous snake.

WHO had the idea of sending a Fishery Mission out into a Pacific full of war I do not know. On paper it sounded like a right pert idea. It would save, for instance, a good deal of transport space if you caught the fish right at the islands instead of shipping frozen haddock fillets out from Boston, as was being done.

Obviously, a good deal of planning had gone into the preparation of the mission over the desks back in Washington. The planners had misjudged certain items, however. The needs of a successful fishery are simple. What is required is boats, fishing gear, trained fishermen, and a fishing captain who knows what he is doing. What our outfit lacked was boats, fishing gear, and trained fishermen. For fishing captain there was I, who had never seen a piece of coral or a tuna before I was dumped ashore at Midway.

It is incorrect to say we did not have gear. We had considerable quantities and variety of gear, and it was all of first-class quality. But it had been bought in Boston and was designed for New England fishing. About nine-tenths of it we never found any use for, but the other tenth served us as raw material. We could tear it apart, put it back together in shapes that could be used on coral grounds, and bring in fish with it.

Boats we bummed, cajoled, blackmailed, or otherwise obtained from the Army or Navy, whichever happened to be in charge of the islands. Seldom in the annals of the tuna fisheries of the world has a successful fishery of that kind been conducted with motorized whaleboats, but we did it. We even did pretty well with the Commodore's gig at Midway, until one evening when the Commodore came down and caught us before we were washed down, with tuna blood and gurry all over his lovely craft.

FROM the above it might be thought that the mission was not a success, but it was a bang-up sellout every place we went, which surprised nobody more than me. We even paid off in the Solomons, where it didn't look as if we had a chance. The one place in the South Pacific where I recommended completely against trying to start a fishery, after having made a preliminary survey, was Guadalcanal. Toward the end of our work Cheyne took a vessel down there under duress, and even there he began to land fish in good quantity.

Don't think that Cheyne or I had much to do with this success. We stumbled onto the key to the business accidentally and used it over and over again without a failure. The trick was to find a smart native boy who knew the waters and could bring a bunch of willing workers with him. Give him what gear you had, put him in any boat you could scrape up, and then stand back out of the way and let him bring in the fish.

If you tried to tell him how to fish, the spell was broken, for the white man's word is the gospel in the South Seas. If you just kept quiet and stayed out of the way he wouldn't have any orders, and since the native workers all liked to fish, they would fish. They know everything there is to know about the fish in the islands. After a month or so of telling them how it should be done, which always turned out to be the wrong way, I learned to shut up and let the natives work.

In Bai Sebastian, up the coast of New Caledonia, we found a French fishing captain who helped us a great deal with our work. It was entirely on account of him that we brought back 7½ tons of barracuda the second trip we made out of Nouméa. This was 2 tons more than the vessel was supposed to carry, and on the strength of this the general in command of the island was so dumfounded that he gave us a couple more vessels with refrigeration and set us up in busi-

ness. We loved that Frenchman like a brother.

One noon we were anchored a couple of hundred yards offshore in the lee of an island in the quiet bay, waiting for our Frenchman to come back from the morning fishing and tell us what to do next. While we waited I jumped in and swam to the beach to look for shells. When I saw his vessel approaching I swam back to our ship, and climbed over the rail as he was making fast to the other side.

At once he jumped over on our boat and began throwing French at me excitedly. Never, never, he said, was I to swim in this bay again. It was virtually alive with hammerhead shark and they were viciously dangerous. He, himself, had lost three native helpers to them in the past fifteen years. The last one had been torn to pieces in front of his eyes. His story dripped blood as he told it. He was very angry with me because he saw that I was skeptical.

My point in this argument was that, as far as I knew, big hammerheads just didn't come into the shallow waters behind the reef. They stayed out in the deep waters of the open sea. I said as much. A guy gets tired of everybody telling him he is wrong at all times about a subject on which he had hired out as an expert. It shakes the very foundation of employment.

While we stood on deck arguing the point, the Frenchman suddenly grabbed my elbow and pulled me to the rail. There, swimming lazily at the surface, halfheartedly chasing a school of scad-mackerel, was a hammerhead shark fully 25 feet long. I gulped. My skepticism had nothing to do with not believing that a hammerhead could chew a man in two. I had had a shark take all except the head of a 60-pound tuna off my hook in one snap of its saw-toothed jaws. The baleful look of a hammerhead eye close up is guaranteed to chill the marrow of the bravest bone. It did mine. I was convinced. I shed another theory.

We struck it rich in the Solomons on surgeonfish. I had never seen one before except in an aquarium and thought that they were rare zoological curiosities. The reefs of the Solomons were alive with the things swimming around in big schools just waiting to have somebody put a net around them. They were fat as butter, and when you have been living on type "C" rations for a while a surgeonfish fried in deep fat is out of this world. The boys fought over them every time we brought a load to Munda.

Surgeonfish are named that because they have a folding spine on each side of their tail which is razor-sharp and is supposed to resemble the lancet of a surgeon.

In the first few weeks of fishing with our Solomon Island natives we got extremely irritated at one phase of their activity, or inactivity. With a brilliant combination of skill and genius they would get the net set around a school of surgeonfish on top of the coral. Then, instead of landing the catch and taking a well-earned rest, they would go off hunting shells, or otherwise make themselves useless for 15 or 20 minutes.

Now, the sun is hot on the open reef under the equator and work in the water wears you down quickly. You want to be done with it as soon as possible and get back to the shade. One day my patience wore thin and I upbraided the natives for their plain laziness as vigorously as I could in pidgin English. In the islands a white man is always right, even when he is obviously wrong. White men have been saying this truth beyond the memory of the oldest grandfather, therefore it is so. When you give a flat order it is usually obeyed, no matter how silly it is.

My scolded boys hopped directly into the net and in no time at all had the fish in the boat. When they were finished with the work the boss boy came to me and said he was sick.

On the inner side of his arm was a cut as neat as if made by a razor. The lancet had hit a vein, and blood was spurting out. The hurt look in his eyes was more painful to me than the cut was to him. He had been right and I had been wrong, and we both knew it without a word being said. The reason why the natives always waited a while before getting into a net full of surgeonfish was that the fish were dangerous when they were excited. Those lancets on the tail were not decorations; they were very effective weapons. If you let the fish calm down a few minutes after the net went round them, however, they became as tractable as sheep, and you could get right in among them and work.

It took quick work to get the flow of blood stopped, and when we got the boy to Ondonga the medicos took eight stitches to put him back together again. This was, I believe, the last time I ever flatly ordered a native to do something he objected to even mildly. The natives always seemed to be right.

Eels proved to be one of the greatest surprises to me in the islands. They look too much like snakes to be really appetizing. Furthermore, some of the medicos claimed you would get sick if you ate them. But the natives thought they were the best eating fish around, where there were hundreds of kinds to choose from, and none of them ever got sick. I tried one myself one day. The natives were right again. After that we never gave the eels we caught to the Army. We ate them ourselves.

The natives tell stories about moray eels killing a boy on the reef now and then. But this is one fish that I *knew* from experience was practically harmless. Many times while swimming along deep down on the reef I have come face to face with a moray's head sticking out from its den.

Don't let anyone tell you that such an experience is not frightening. No matter what you know, that big mouth with the stiletto-like teeth that could take your whole face in one bite, fills you with unreasoning terror when it opens unexpectedly in front of you. But no moray had ever struck at me and I doubted if one ever did at anyone else.

My friend, Vernon Brock, Director of Fish and Game of the Territory of Hawaii, felt this same way about morays, and he knows more about the reefs than I do. In fact, he had written, in a manual he was preparing on underwater fish collecting, approximately as follows: "Moray eels are completely harmless and can be safely ignored by both the skin diver and the suit diver."

Last June, Vernon was down helping the Navy with some fish work on Johnston Island. One afternoon he poisoned a large cavern in the reef to get a sample of fish. His native helper came up after a dive into the gloomy shadows of one part of the hole to announce that he was not going to dive after any more dead fish in that particular coral cave, because there was the biggest moray he had ever seen at the bottom, and it was by no means dead.

Vernon is a better skin diver than most natives and fearless of the coral to an extent that worries his friends. He immediately dived into the hole with a spear in his hand. At the bottom was the granddaddy of all morays—about 12 feet long and as thick in the body as Vernon.

To Vernon it was just another specimen. In the dim light of the deep cavern he thrust his spear lengthwise down the eel's mouth, bulldogged the still alive and unhappy moray and swam upward with it, holding on to the end of the spear sticking out of the beast's mouth. On the way up he noticed that the eel was swallowing the spear and getting close to his hand. Being a logical person, Vernon let go all holds and swam for the surface as best he might. So did the moray.

The next thing Vernon knew the moray was wrapped all around him like a boa constrictor and acting quite uncongenial. Vernon freed himself as fast as he could manage and headed for the skiff, 100 yards away, as fast as his swim fins would take him—and he is a fast swimmer in his bare feet.

The moray went, too. Just as Vernon got started on his swim he looked around, to see an enormous mouthful of teeth aimed directly at his head. The spear in the eel's mouth had disappeared down the big gullet. Vernon threw up his arm to defend himself, and the eel seized him by the elbow, held on for a moment, then let go.

Vernon looked at the holes in his arm before the blood started to gush, saw the bare bone in several widely separated places, and then really began to swim. The moray struck twice more. It missed, and then retired from the field of battle.

The boys in the skiff hauled the exhausted and bloody Vernon aboard, put a tourniquet on his arm immediately, and rowed at once to the ship anchored near by. The navy surgeons spent 2½ hours injecting blood plasma into him. After a couple of weeks he was up and around again—but it was only because expert surgical aid was right at hand that his arm, and his life, were saved.

I am told that the first thing Vernon did, when his arm got so he could bend it again, was to write changes in certain sentences of his manual. The chief moral of the eel story seems to be that naturalists should not be too impressed by what they read among their own writings. . . .

Everywhere we went we found fish in

quantity. Every place it was a different kind of fish that could be had in abundance. One island produced goatfish, another Spanish mackerel, another barracuda, another parrotfish, and so on, but the big bonanza we hit was tuna. Tuna were abundant everywhere in the Central Pacific.

Tuna is already the biggest cash crop taken out of the ocean. The tuna fishery is the most valuable single fishery that the United States has. Last year it produced $125,000,000 worth of canned tuna. The Japanese tuna fishery is even more productive than ours.

But our fishery is right close to our mainland and off-lying islands of the Americas. The Japanese, on the other side of the Pacific, are fishing rather close to the Asiatic mainland and islands.

There is a stretch of Pacific Ocean 7,000 miles long and 1,000 miles wide, big enough to hold two United States side by side without touching or being much of an impediment to navigation, in which nobody is doing much tuna fishing. And it is full of tuna.

When we got to comparing our experiences with those of other fishermen who had been out in the Pacific in the Army or Navy during the war, we found that they had found the same thing in their areas—Tahiti and Samoa to the east of where we had worked, the Carolines, and the Marianas and Palau Islands to the west.

AFTER our people got into Japan and got hold of their fishing records they found that the Japanese had discovered this El Dorado themselves just before the war and had kept it a closely guarded secret.

Don't let anybody tell you that the mandated islands are a watery waste and an economic liability to whoever has them. The Japanese discovered just before the war that the ocean just south and west of Truk Island is perhaps the richest tuna spot in the world.

Nature always makes it as tough as possible for fishermen. Here is an ocean full of tuna, worth $310 a ton at dockside, but there is very little bait down there to catch them with. This held up the Japanese development of this gold mine, and it is holding us up, too.

The Congress, on the weight of the evidence of the riches which the Central Pacific can produce, is gambling a million dollars a year that American ingenuity and enterprise can find a way to harvest this immensely valuable crop. It has provided the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with nearly a million dollars for each of the past two years to make the necessary scientific investigation. This is the most money that any government has ever put into a single fishery research program, and it is money well invested, for the stakes are high.

THE END★★

The Idol

(*Continued from page* 41)

"Nonsense! A woman's never too young. Tell your mother to take you shopping today."

That coat had been her favorite, more than the supple mink that was a wedding gift. . . .

Ken moved and caught her hand. "You're not asleep, are you? We'll be home for supper. Glad, Carla?"

She looked at him, at the high-bridged nose, the bright, hazel eyes, all of him so dearly familiar and yet exciting, unknown, strange. And her mind veered to the present from the past.

"Glad?" she said. "Oh, yes, oh, yes!" You didn't regret what you had lost; you reconstructed it. With herself she could bring to her husband all the richness she had known.

SO THE new life began in the wide, green town, in a ranch house spread on the pleasant avenue where the prosperous younger couples were building. Carla indulged herself with broadloom and Provincial fruitwood; she had the blue coupé brought from home for excursions to Baltimore and country outings. They had friends, or, rather, Ken had them. It was proud and exciting to learn what they thought of him—these people who had known him all his life. And they took Carla in with them, into the Women's Club, to Thursday-night bowling, Sunday suppers, hearty football days.

Then, of course, there were the times alone. Coming home to the fresh little house in the sharp night air, and up to their blue-and-white room. And breakfasts. And the setter puppy Ken brought one afternoon.

It ought to have been so good, for the ingredients were there. And much of the time it was good. But much of the time it was all wrong, too.

In the beginning Carla thought that perhaps it is not really so bad. Only a few quarrels—all couples had them; one had to adjust. Perhaps it was only that she had grown up in a house where there were no quarrels.

But this was such stupid, brutal wrangling. It came in the innocent afternoon, on tender evenings in the pleasant livingroom. Out of nothing the anger might come bursting. Like that night just before the elections . . .

Ken was for Cunningham, Carla for Larkin.

"I know Tom Larkin," she explained. "I met him at home. Vin thought a lot of him."

"Is that why you're going to vote for him?" Ken asked.

"Well, after all, Cunningham's an unknown quantity to me, and Larkin isn't. Besides, he's a very suitable candidate; you can take my word for that."

"You mean," Ken pursued, "not your word, but your father's. What do *you* know about Larkin?"

"Well, what do *you* know about Cunningham?"

"I've heard what he has to say, and I happen to approve what he stands for."

"Well, vote for him, then. But I shall vote for Larkin."

Ken said quietly, "Of course. Husbands and wives don't have to vote alike. That's not my point. If you really knew anything about your man's principles it would be different. I'd even be pleased to have you disagree with me for sincere and valid reasons. But you're voting for him because your father liked him."

"What of it? Vin knew more about those things than I'll ever know. Or you, either, most likely. After all, he did spend two terms in the Senate, and—"

Ken interrupted: "Again you miss the point. Vin knew what he knew, but he and I saw things differently. I'm not a politician."

"Well, maybe it's too bad you're not. Because I have a pretty good idea I could get Tom Larkin interested in you. He likes 'bright young men'; he might even put you on the ticket two years from now."

"I'm not honored," Ken said.

Carla was infuriated. It was so hard to get *at* him when he was like this. "You should be. Vin got his start that way."

"I say again, that was fine for him. But I am I."

Carla by this time was hot and stubborn, Ken was cold and positive; there was no retreat from anger. The words mounted.

IN THE end this, too, was settled. It always was, and the settling was sweet. But not sweet enough. It was, each time, a reunion only of the flesh; Carla knew that perfectly. The wound was unassuaged, the apologies never unsaid what had been said in savage anger.

Not that dreadful Sunday at the Elrays', nor that single week end when her mother had been visiting and they'd had to quarrel in whispers behind their closed door. Nor the time they'd taken that trip and, having to stop over in a third-rate tourist cabin because the hotels were full, Carla had innocently wondered how it was that Vin had always been able to wangle accommodations. And Ken had chosen *that* to be angry over.

"My father," Carla thought, in disbelief; "we fight because of Vin. Why?"

She knew about fixations, about complexes, all the modern patter of psychology. But she had none of these. Her marriage had been eager and willing. It was just that Vin had been no ordinary father; it was natural to talk about him, to reconstruct his ways. All her life, traveling, at school, people had said, "Vin Mallow? You're Vin Mallow's daughter?"

"I just don't know," Carla thought. And she thought, "I am alone, I am so alone." . . .

At midsummer she went to Baltimore to meet Uncle Douglas, there on business for the day. He took her to lunch, a good Baltimore lunch with oysters and crabs and white cake.

They had reached the dessert when he put his fork down abruptly. "I met some people who know you, Carla. They told me something I was sorry to hear. That

you and Ken aren't getting on very well."

"I'm afraid that's true, Uncle Douglas."

He spoke gently: "I don't suppose you'd like to talk about it?"

She looked up miserably, mutely, thinking, "I can't, I don't know where to begin."

"All right then, Carla. But may I say this? Whatever your problem—and almost every marriage has one—it is bound to be aggravated by the circumstances of your father's death. And of his life," he said, enigmatically. "If we understand the reasons for a thing, we have half the solution."

"Theories," Carla said bitterly. "Children of successful marriages are supposed to make successful marriages. Then I certainly ought— Oh, Uncle Douglas, I miss Vin so! He would have been able to help. He understood life. Mother doesn't at all. We talk about cooking when she comes to visit, or upholstery. She's kind, but there's no emotion in her."

She was not sure whether he drew back or whether she had only imagined it. But quite definitely he closed the subject: "Well, you'll work it out. As the proverb goes, 'All beginnings are hard.'"

It was small comfort.

If only she could have gone to Ken and asked him how to find the way back to their beginning. But you couldn't reconstruct emotion. Always, now, there was the tension between them, even in the good times; always the question: How long can this last?

The crash came on a fair, soft summer night. They were giving a supper, Carla's first important social effort.

"You've got a whopper of a cold," Ken said that morning. "Think we ought to call everything off?"

"Heavens, no! I've got some pills that'll help. I wouldn't think of it."

She didn't tell him that it couldn't be called off. That caterers were on their way from Baltimore, that she was giving this her gala best.

It was all done when Ken got home: Carla dressed, with careful make-up masking her fevered flush, and the house transformed. Everywhere were flowers, great masses of blooms in every vase.

There were two great silver bowls of punch, one fruit, one champagne; there was caviar in a shell of ice, lobster in aspic, sherbet in molds.

"Like it?" Carla asked.

"No," Ken said. "No, I don't."

She stared, disbelieving.

"It's much too lavish, and you know it. People here don't do things like this."

"What's wrong with giving them something they don't always have?"

"Carla, these are plain young couples on salaries. How do you think they're going to feel about inviting us back? I appreciate your wanting to do things nicely, but really you've gone overboard, and it isn't as if I hadn't asked you often enough to keep things simple."

It was true that he had, but she hadn't really given the request much thought. And she had worked so hard all day, with that sick throbbing in her head. "You make me tired with your simplicity fetish," she said.

"Would you like to look at a flake through a magnifying glass, dear?"

For The American Magazine by Jeff Keate

"Nothing of the sort. But you aren't entertaining millionaires at Mallow Hill any more."

"Millionaires! As if we counted our guests' money! Do you think we were snobs about money?"

"All right, then. Not millionaires. But don't quibble."

"The trouble with you is that you feel inferior."

"You think I need to?"

Over the flowered and fruited table they stood with hostility between them. Then the doorbell began to ring. They opened the door; they smiled. But this time, after everyone had gone, there was no sweet rush of forgiveness. . . .

KEN had left in the morning when Carla woke. The house was gray and silent; the strong rain drummed on the windows.

Aloud Carla said, "I can't stand it—I can't. We have had too many bitter mornings."

She was not well, but the room and the bed were hateful. She rose and dressed, thinking, "I will go home."

There had been tenderness at home. On her wedding day Vin had told her, "Remember that this is yours. If ever, whenever, you want to, you may come back."

Leaving a curt note for Ken—*I've gone to Mallow Hill*—she took the wheel of the little car and turned northward. . . .

"So you've left Ken," Doris said, standing in Carla's old room.

There was an unreadable expression on her face, or perhaps, more accurately, no expression at all. She was stolid; what would she understand of Carla's emotion?

Yet, in her desperation, Carla began to explain: "We quarrel all the time. I always seem to say the wrong things. It's as if he couldn't stand being reminded that I had a life before he knew me. That sounds crazy. But it's true. And I've been so homesick. I thought if I could just see this place I would have peace. And I want to stay."

There was a small silence. Then Doris spoke: "Carla, you won't be able to stay. I'm selling the place."

"You're selling Mallow Hill?"

"Yes." The pale eyes went wide, almost pleading. "I shan't need this house. Douglas and I are going to be married."

"Married? Vin's been dead ten months and you—"

The pleading gaze strengthened, becoming sure of itself. "Yes. When the year is over. We've waited a long time."

"I don't understand," Carla said.

"Don't you, Carla?"

"Douglas," Carla said. "After Vin. I don't see how you could."

Her mother walked to the window, standing there as if she were gathering herself for a great effort. But when she turned back her face was compassionate. "Oh, my dear, my dear. I have loved Douglas for fifteen years."

Carla could not speak.

"Vin knew it, Carla."

"He *knew?*"

"Yes. And he didn't care. Nothing touched him very much, you see."

"Nothing touched *Vin?*"

"Aesthetically, yes. Music and color and form. But not human things. Not deep inside. I know."

The horror burst in Carla. "You don't know! Why did you marry him?"

"You think I haven't given days and nights of thought to that? Certainly it was not because I could have had any special glamour for Vin." The smile was wan, but without bitterness. "I think it was simply because, in the beginning, I adored him. And because he liked to be adored."

"Then," Carla said, "then there was Douglas."

The silence was reluctant. Presently Doris answered: "Carla . . . There were —Vin had—other women before that."

"*I don't believe it!*"

"But it is true," Doris said pityingly.

Now Carla's words were swiftly thrown, with cruel intent: "Then why did you stay with him?"

Doris hesitated. "The truth sounds so —it makes a martyr of me and I'm not that. Vin wouldn't give me a divorce. He wanted to be governor, he was afraid a divorce would ruin his chances. And it would have broken your heart to take you away from Vin."

"You could have left me with him, couldn't you?" Carla said with unconcealed hatred.

"No," Doris said, "I couldn't. You would have been wretched. Even though you idolized him. With all his generosity, his love—and he loved you as much as he was able to love—one couldn't count on Vin for the important things."

"No? You think you'll convince me with a few wild words? All the life, the peace, the lovely years—" Carla was forced to stop.

"You speak of peace. Because we did not quarrel, you mean. But there was nothing between myself and Vin to quarrel about. It was—nothingness." The small hands clasped, the rings flashed in the light. "Oh, for you, for a child, it was good. I hope it was, I wanted it to be. But for me—I want to get out of here," Doris said. "I want a home. My own. Where I can walk around with a hole in my sweater if I feel like it—"

Carla stood up. She walked through the tall windows to the sun deck and stepped to the railing. The wind came coldly. The lawn spread below to the bay; the far stretches of grass and water merged to a green-and-silver sea.

She thought that she could take only one shock at a time. For a few minutes she had forgotten about her personal disaster. "Now this," she thought. "How am I to bear it all?"

From the wind and water came a sighing and a blowing. Then over the rush of sound she was aware of Doris:

"—pitied his weakness and his restlessness. He had nothing within himself. He had to find stimulation in crowds; he couldn't bear to be alone. And he never knew love, Carla. Not truly. Wherever Vin is he will forgive me for saying this. He will know that I am not being bitter, that I am saying these things only because I have to."

"People adored him," Carla heard herself say, "because he took them away from their dull realities. You, too. He kept you a child—"

"Vin could never face the ugly truth. Dr. Squire tells me Vin had a bad heart; he'd been told a long time ago that to save himself he must live quietly. But he refused to believe it. He died because he was afraid to think of being ill."

"After all this time why do you come to me with these things now?"

"Because of you—you and Ken; I thought—"

"Why should you care about Ken? You didn't even want me to marry him."

"You thought I didn't like him? It was because I liked him so much! I didn't want you to fail—"

"Oh," Carla said. Suddenly it was unbearable. She began to cry, with her face in her hands.

"Carla, listen to me. We've never been—close. I would have liked us to be. But the life I lived here, with everything shut up inside— I thought it was right, yet lately I don't know." Gently Doris put her hand on Carla's shoulder.

Carla shrank. "Don't."

The hand was withdrawn. "Some day you will see things differently. Many things, Carla."

It was a long time later when the weeping stopped and Carla went downstairs. She went outside. She did not know where she walked; her feet brushed through the murmurous grass. She did not know what she felt. At the garden's end, in the vine-screened pavilion, she sat down.

So many things, so different from what they seemed. The devoted Mallows—a façade, a show. So you never, never know about people.

Your mother is a remarkable woman. From time long past Ken's voice came sounding. What had he seen? What had he guessed?

At the crest of the slope the white house spread its wings. It had poise, it had grandeur. But Carla shuddered. For it was a cold house; it had deceived her; there had been no love in it.

Then she thought, "How must it have been for Doris, living in it with a man who did not love her?"

On the terrace two figures were just visible, Doris and Douglas, in the sun. They looked—peaceful. A laugh rang out, a bright sound, young. "I've never heard her laugh like that," Carla thought. She sat for long minutes, perfectly still, hearing that laugh in the ear of her mind; it did something to her.

Vin wanted to be governor. Mother's voice, saying that. But you didn't do that to a woman, you didn't just take her life and waste it for your own ends.

Now, with a new significance, the memories crowded. The time she'd been so ill, so proud of Vin. But it was Uncle Douglas who had sped her to the hospital. It was Mother and he who had waited without sleep or food, without even the reward of one of Carla's smiles, so gladly given to Vin.

That horrifying time when Aunt Jo's boy had been killed in an auto accident. Everyone, all the family, had rushed to be with her except Vin. He hadn't been able to bear it. He'd written the most

moving, poetic letter, but he simply hadn't been able to face the sight of poor Aunt Jo.

Oh, when you were in trouble Vin had the smooth, lovely words, the check for clothes, the ticket for a cruise. Anything, so you would go on being blithe and not think too much, not make him think too much.

Poor, gay, insecure Vin. . . . She was horrified, she was astonished, at having come so naturally to the use of such adjectives for Vin. Astonished, too, that her violence of an hour ago, her sick resentment were gone. *Mother*, Carla thought. The cocoa at midnight, the steady presence . . .

Ken knew. Carla hadn't. She hadn't even known about Ken. How she had hurt him, in a hundred unmeaning ways! *Vin did this; Vin said that.* A human being had to follow his own pattern.

No, Ken was not "emotional." He might forget to bring flowers; when he was angry he would shout; he was not adept at pretty words. He didn't know how to say, "I need you; I can't be without you." But neither would he run out on his emotions. Like an adult he would stay and make his marriage work. She knew that, surely.

"Ken," she thought, starting up in terror, "I want you as you are. I don't want to re-create anyone's life for you; I want to make a new one *with* you."

She began to walk, she began to run, through the moving sunlight to the telephone.

THE END★★

Be Glad You're Free to Laugh

(*Continued from page* 15)

dressed in rented formal attire for the sad occasion. Gradually, I became aware that they presented a very strange spectacle. The musician standing at the foot of the casket was a little fat man, and he wore a top hat which was much too small and perched high on top of his head. At the other end of the casket was a tall, thin man whose top hat was much too large and rested heavily on his ears. Suddenly I was smiling through my tears. "If Father could only see this," I said to myself, "he would certainly die laughing."

Immediately I was shocked at this thought, until it occurred to me that this was, indeed, a spectacle my father would have enjoyed, and very likely at that moment he was laughing over the ridiculous performance we were playing around his grave. All at once I felt close to Father again and ceased to pity myself.

Since that day I have tried not to take anything, including myself, too seriously. In fact, making fun of the superserious is the thing I most enjoy. The beginning of my career, however, was not a promising one for a comedian; I was one of those little nuisances known as a child prodigy, and played my first piano concert at the age of 10.

Like most youngsters, I found it impossible to be serious at all times. When I was 15 years old I was invited to play a concerto with the State Symphony Orchestra in Copenhagen. This was a great honor, of course, and I attacked the piano with all my strength while the 100-odd members of the orchestra supported my efforts. In the middle of the concerto I came to a long trill which I played with two fingers, the entire string section accompanying me on their violins, violas, cellos, and basses. The sight of these serious old musicians grinding away for all they were worth while I twiddled my fingers was suddenly too much for me, and I looked over my shoulder and winked at the audience.

There was a roar of laughter in the crowded auditorium, and of course afterward a good scolding for me. But although I may have spoiled the concert for a few musical purists, I think the majority of listeners appreciated the wink and had a better time than usual that afternoon. At any rate, that is what I am still trying to do today—combine music and laughter so that more people can enjoy concerts.

Fortunately for me, American audiences appreciate this mixture. Most people in this country see no reason why one should not make jokes while sitting at the piano, and are perfectly willing to take their serious music mixed with a bit of foolishness. In Denmark, my methods were at first considered so far out of order that they even got me into a bit of trouble with the government.

For several years after my first mischievous wink at an audience I continued to study music seriously and to behave myself on the concert stage. Then one night I was asked to substitute for a comedian who had become ill just before the opening of a musical review for which I had written some songs. Although I had occasionally been guilty of being funny at the wrong time, I had seldom tried to be funny on purpose. I didn't know exactly how to go about it, but I walked out on the stage, sat down at the piano, and began to play. In between selections I made whatever remarks came into my head. I decided that I enjoyed talking to my audience as well as playing for them, and have never stopped since.

I continued to give concerts and make jokes, until one day I received a visit from a government tax collector. This gentleman informed me that I could no longer consider myself a concert artist, but that I was a vaudeville performer.

"You mean you don't think my playing is good enough any more?" I asked.

"Not at all, Mr. Borge," said the precise bureaucrat. "But you make jokes while you play, and therefore you are giving a vaudeville show."

"Very well," I said, "but what difference does all this make?"

"Only this," said the tax man, with a charming smile. "The government collects a 10 per cent admission tax for a concert and a 40 per cent tax for a vaudeville performance. Naturally, we are very happy over your success as a comedian."

At this point, naturally, I insisted that I still considered myself a concert pianist, and that no one had a better right to decide this question than myself. I pointed out that I had studied music all my life, and that when a musician gave a performance it was invariably referred to as a concert. The tax expert replied just as firmly that only vaudeville entertainers made jokes, and not musicians.

"Please come to my *concert* this evening," I begged at last. "Maybe you will change your mind."

That night I made a little speech to the audience before sitting down to play. I warned them that they must remain perfectly quiet throughout the performance, and requested that under no circumstances was anyone to laugh. "The government is strictly opposed to laughter," I explained. "They have decided that if you enjoy this evening too much, then you will be taxed 40 per cent to hear me in the future. However, if no one has a very good time, then you will be taxed 10 per cent."

This solemn speech had the effect I had hoped for. Everyone roared with laughter, and the tax collector evidently felt too foolish to argue the subject further, since I never heard from him again. I am happy to say that the U.S. Bureau of Internal Revenue has never decided that a comedian should be taxed more than a musician.

Of course, no one likes to be laughed at, which explains why laughter is feared by politicians—especially bad ones. In a democracy such as America I believe that most great leaders have known how to make a joke, or at least how to take one. Abraham Lincoln, for example, needed no gagman or ghost writer to get a laugh from an audience. When a newspaper reporter, during his first campaign for president, asked whether his wife, Mary Todd, came from good stock, Lincoln is said to have snapped back with this line: "Since there are two 'd's' in Todd and only one 'd' in God, obviously she comes of the best stock."

And on the subject of music, President Ulysses S. Grant said, "I know two pieces of music. One is *Yankee Doodle*, and the other isn't."

Among our modern presidents, I think everyone will agree that while Franklin D. Roosevelt may not have been famous for comic repartee, he at least had a sense of humor and loved a good laugh. The same may be said of Mr. Truman. Consider also Winston Churchill, whose mother, at least, was an American. Besides being an extremely witty speechmaker, Churchill knew how to win people by playing the clown. When he zipped up his "siren suit" and posed like a large kewpie doll with a cigar, the wartime Prime Minister won his people's laughter and love at the same time.

I don't mean to suggest that it's necessary for a successful politician to be a comedian to get elected (though it's been done that way). It would be more accurate to say that a politician needs a sense of humor so that he will know how *not* to make a fool of himself. This is something a man like Adolph Hitler could never understand, and it's also a reason why a Hitler could never come to power in America. He would be laughed at as heartily as all the little *Führers* who have tried it here.

Laughing at Hitler in prewar Europe, however, was not always a healthy thing to do. Even completely humorless people like the Nazis know when they are being laughed at, but instead of coming back with a better joke, they only know how to smash their opponents.

I DO not remember all the jokes we made in Denmark about the Nazis, but the more we learned about them, the more fantastic and absurd they seemed to the Danish people. Our humor was actually our only defense in such a tiny country.

Imagine, if you can, how ridiculous it seemed to us when the Germans warned us that Denmark would have to alter her menacing attitude toward the Third Reich, or suffer the consequences. I remember addressing a little radio speech to the German people assuring them that our intentions were peaceable and that they need lose no sleep worrying about an invasion by the Danes.

My most successful anti-Nazi joke, however, was somewhat more insulting. On the stage one night I assured my audience that it was quite wrong to call the Nazis *dogs*, as I had heard some people doing, because there was, after all, a very great difference between the two. "Observe," I said, "that a Nazi always lifts his arm."

This joke was so widely quoted that I am sure it would have earned me free room and board in a concentration camp had I been in Denmark in 1940, when the Germans invaded the country. Fortunately, I was giving a concert in Stockholm, Sweden, when this unhappy event occurred. Although I do not flatter myself that Hitler invaded Denmark for the sole purpose of capturing Victor Borge, I was pretty sure that there wasn't room for both of us.

I learned that a ship was sailing for America in a few days, but it was already jammed with refugees, most of whom were U.S. citizens hurrying home to safety. I had no papers and little hope of being allowed aboard, but I went to see the American consul anyhow, and told him what I wanted.

"So you are Victor Borge," he said, and burst into loud laughter. I picked up my hat and started for the door. "Wait a minute," he said. "My wife and I saw your performance last night. If you can make people laugh like that in America, I guess we can squeeze you into the ship."

Thus, it was an American's sense of humor which made it possible for me to escape from Europe and finally become a U.S. citizen myself. Perhaps this explains why the subject of what makes Americans laugh has interested me ever since.

Not that I consider myself—or anyone else, for that matter—an authority on laughter, about which no one really knows anything except that it's a peculiar muscular reaction characterized by a twitching of the face and mouth and noisy explosions of breath.

An old professor of mine at the University of Copenhagen, who was collecting material for a learned book on the subject of humor, once asked me, "Victor, what is the secret of making people laugh?"

"If I knew it," I said, "then it would be no secret." Today I might add that if it were possible to write down rules for being funny, so that anyone could learn them, then Bob Hope and Bing Crosby would not own baseball teams and race horses.

The truth is that no two persons' laugh muscles are exactly alike or respond to the same things. An Eskimo won't laugh if I sit down at the piano and play a burlesque of a Brahms lullaby; he would probably find my serious playing just as funny. An American audience, on the other hand, will laugh if I render the lullaby with every note played exactly as it should be, but with an expression of utter boredom on my face. The joke is that I have played this old chestnut a thousand times, everyone has probably heard it a thousand times, and we have all been secretly bored to death with it. So simply by expressing a natural reaction I tickle a laugh muscle.

Personally, I prefer humor that comes about naturally. I realize that everyone does not agree with me. Some people prefer the practical joke, like a wealthy New York businessman who became famous for such pranks as this: He would carry a set of false teeth in his pocket, and when he ordered soup in a restaurant would drop the teeth into the plate. He would then make a big scene with the waiter over finding "the cook's teeth" in his soup.

I've heard that this joke caused convulsions of laughter. Personally, I find it distasteful, mainly because I am opposed to making fun of physical disabilities.

A NOTCH above this practical form of humor is what I call a constructed joke. Some time ago, for example, I walked up to the piano in a night club and announced that I was about to play "the Deep-Freeze Concerto in A Major . . . General." Then I counted the rhythm: "Vaughan-two; Vaughan-two." Everyone had been reading about Major General Vaughan's interest in certain deep-freeze units given as presents to important people in Washington, so the joke naturally got a laugh.

I call it a "constructed" joke because it is carefully planned in advance. Almost any comedian can get by with such humor; if he is too lazy to think of it himself, all he has to do is hire a gag writer.

The rarest form of humor, however, and the kind Americans appreciate most, is completely natural, and therefore unexpected. Most of us behave artificially so much of the time that anyone being himself is almost sure to appear funny.

Will Rogers was one of America's greatest practitioners of this sort of humor, and he also had the ability to build humor on a foundation of logic.

I found that Bing Crosby, when I appeared on his radio show, was another master of the natural style of humor. I think this has something to do with his musicianship, since the quality of Bing's timing, when he tells a joke, is as sure-fire as his delicate phrasing when he sings *White Christmas*.

As for piano playing, no one has ever explained why one person can get prettier sounds than another out of the same instrument. This is generally written off as a matter of "touch," which we are either born with or forever lack. It's as puzzling as the fact that one individual can tell a joke and bring down the house, while someone else will make the same joke sound as flat as the landscape in my native Denmark.

I've discovered that the best humor is sometimes accidental. One night I was dressing for a concert in Chicago and found I had no collar to wear with my evening clothes. There was no time to buy one, so I simply tucked my chin down low, hoped no one would notice, and walked out to the piano. But I realized almost immediately that I must look like a man suffering from a stiff neck. I gave up trying to hide my predicament and explained it to the audience instead. The result was an enthusiastic burst of laughter and applause, and afterward a friend complimented me on having created a shrewd "gag." Of course, no one would believe that it hadn't been planned.

One evening I was playing Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* to a hushed supper-club audience when a woman dropped her lipstick. It clattered to the floor and rolled over near the piano. I stopped, picked up the lipstick, and returned it with a bow to its owner; then went back and started to play again. Although people laughed, the point is that I wasn't trying to be funny; I was simply doing the most natural thing in the world. If I had ignored the incident, the lady, as well as everyone else in the room, would have been embarrassed. After all, music is not necessarily something sacred which we must sit and worship; it is to be enjoyed.

This may explain why I like to make jokes and music together. It's not because I think I'm the funniest fellow in the world, or the greatest pianist in the world, either. Nor is it true that I don't take music seriously, as some of my friends have suggested. I've even been told that I must have had a piano teacher who made me hate music as a child.

I don't believe this for a minute. But, as I tried to explain to the tax collector in Denmark, is there any reason why music should be a solemn affair? We all know that it can express sadness, gaiety, or almost any shade of emotion in between, yet somehow the idea has grown up that when people go to a concert they must leave their sense of humor at home and sit through 2½ hours without once daring to smile.

No one loves great music more than I do, and I would like to make it as enjoyable as possible for as many people as possible. A man in Texas told me after a concert of mine: "I always thought guys like Beethoven and Mozart were stuffed shirts, and so were most of the characters who played their music. Now I know that it ain't necessarily so."

The fact is that Beethoven and Mozart could both be pretty amusing fellows when they chose, and they would probably laugh as loudly as anyone else at some of the solemn antics performed by their worshippers today. Is there any reason why the rest of us shouldn't enjoy a laugh with our music, too?

I think there are few things so sacred that they can't be laughed at once in a while. Unfortunately, in some parts of the world it's not safe to make fun of anything without first consulting the authorities. In such countries, laughing at the wrong things can land a man in jail or cost him his job. Not long ago, for example, the editor of a Russian humor magazine was fired because he made jokes the Communist bosses didn't think were funny. One of these was a cartoon showing a couple listening to the birds singing in a park. "Do you like the song of the nightingale?" the woman in the cartoon asked, and her companion answered, "I can't say until I know who composed it."

The joke, of course, refers to the purge of the Russian composers a while ago and, personally, I think it's a pretty good one. Russian editors were warned, however, that in the future it would be much better to make fun only of foreigners.

In my opinion, when the rulers of any nation decide they are too important to be laughed at, it's time to turn them out. Because, even though it has never been written down in the Constitution, Americans know very well that there is no freedom at all without the freedom of laughter.

THE END★★

We Can Save a Billion Dollars

(*Continued from page* 31)

firm in Portland, Ore., bought $325 worth of asphalt tile from a Vancouver manufacturer, paid the estimated duty of $97.67, laid the floor, and collected from the customer, thinking the deal was completed. But no soap. A smart customs official had a chemical analysis made of the tile; it was discovered that the resins in this particular tile were synthetic, which made it an entirely different item. Six weeks after the floor was laid the American firm was billed for additional duty of $949.05. The tile was in use, could not be returned, so the American company paid, wrote off the loss, and stopped importing asphalt tile.

An American importer was interested in selling in the United States a new type of table-top cooker, made in Canada. He imported a few to San Francisco for demonstration purposes and as a test shipment—hoping to get a definite ruling as to import duty.

The cookers were classified by the U.S. Customs as "cooking stoves and ranges having as an essential feature an electric heating element." The duty was 17½ per cent. The San Franciscan decided he could pay that duty and sell the cookers at a fair profit, and ordered 1,500 of them. He paid the duty of $4,465 and started to sell them.

This was a new gadget, and somebody in the customs service discovered a way to raise the duty. Three months after the importer had started to sell the cookers, he was notified that they had been reclassified and now were "household utensils," and since the duty on that classification was 40 per cent, he owed an additional $5,714.

Most of the cookers had been sold on the basis of the 17½ per cent duty, so he lost a lot of money. He quit the import business.

After one shipment, a Dutch paper manufacturer found that the New York appraiser would classify a certain kind of paper as "simple, uncoated printing paper, free from rags." So the Hollander made another deal with a West Coast American, to sell a large quantity at a certain price, and the Hollander was to pay the duty.

The paper was shipped to San Francisco instead of to New York, and there the appraiser, seeking the top duty, classified it as "bible paper," which had to pay about four times as much. That ended the manufacturer's attempts to sell paper in the United States.

Customs officials tell about an American who lived near the Canadian border who raised some chicks in an incubator. A Japanese, a few miles away in Canada, was an expert at determining the sex of chicks, so the American hauled his chicks over to the Jap (who was not allowed to enter the United States), and the Jap separated the males from the females and the farmer took them back to the United States and sold them.

By law, the United States Customs officials, in most cases, will let you take stuff back and forth across the border, without paying any duty—unless it increased in value while it was in Canada. If the law were enforced literally, if you drive to Canada and while there have your car waxed and polished, it has increased in value and the U.S. Customs men could collect a duty when you come back. If you have a pair of shoes half-soled in Canada, legally you would have to pay to bring them in. In justice to the Customs Department I must state that they won't do that to you.

However, in the case of the chicks, a smart customs man decided that because a chick is worth more if you know whether it will grow up to be a hen or a rooster, these chicks had increased in

value when the males were divided from the females. The chick grower was notified that he would have to pay duty if he had the Jap do any more classification. The farmer didn't hire a customs lawyer and go to court. He just let the rest of his chicks grow up, and sold them as broilers.

A California manufacturer imported from Canada two carloads of short pieces of cedar for making beehives. The duty on the lumber was $35 a car. When he ordered a third carload, the stuff was classified as "woodenware," the duty set at $1,500 a carload, and he was billed for that on all three carloads. For two years the importer tried, without success, to get a final decision. Finally, after he had stopped importing such lumber, the Customs Department decided that this material was "agricultural implements" and free of duty.

Imported jewelry usually pays a 55 per cent ad valorem duty, but when it can be classified as "artificial flowers, fruits, or leaves," the duty is from 60 to 90 per cent.

If the producers of the musical comedy *Oklahoma!* imported the surrey with the fringe on top they would find that they were importing fringe and would pay a 45 per cent duty. That comes under what customs people call "Old 1529a," which they admit is the most absurd and most irritating paragraph in all the customs laws.

Anything with a "garnishment" on it, according to this law, pays the high duty that would be assessed if it were all "garnishment," which includes fringe, braid, lace, or embroidery. The old rate on fringe of 90 per cent has been cut in half, so a carpet or rug with fringe on it pays a duty of only 45 per cent now. But without fringe it pays 25 to 30 per cent. A recent shipment of men's sweaters from England paid a high duty because the neckbands were appliquéd, so the entire sweater was classified as appliqué work.

A few years ago an importer brought in a quantity of cotton dresses and the duty was set at the usual 37½ per cent. Months later, after he had sold them, he was billed for additional duty of 52½ per cent. Somebody in the Customs Department discovered that a little piece of elastic was sewed inside the waist, so they were classified as elastic.

An American couple a few years ago received two sweaters from a friend in Australia. They were appraised at $35 each. The duty was 40 per cent on the man's sweater, but there was tiny silk embroidery on the woman's sweater and she had to pay 90 per cent.

Our tariff regulations are so antiquated that the valuation to be placed on articles that have been invented since 1930 drive the importers crazy. New stuff may be classified either as similar to another article, or as merchandise "not otherwise enumerated," paying whichever duty is higher. Plastics, synthetics, and nylon products have no standard rates. The classifier must decide whether a certain plastic is similar to glass or leather or wood, or what not, or whether it is not covered by the law. Hundreds of these cases are finally decided only after years of litigation.

Of course, the 1930 law says nothing about synthetic rubber. It contains carbon black and rayon, so truck tires are now classified as rayon, and passenger tires are classified as carbon black, because this hocus-pocus will bring the highest duty.

Nobody yet has made a definite, final decision as to what a television set is, except that it is generally agreed that it is not a radio.

One of the main reasons why the present regulations discourage imports is that they provide no way of giving the importer immediate, definite, and final decisions on the amount of duty he must pay. Instead, as you can see in some of the cases I have mentioned, they subject him to endless red tape, costly delays, confusion, and uncertainty.

Take one instance: Canada needs American dollars so as to buy more of our goods. In Canada is a manufacturer of vinyl plastic, a new commodity. The men who made our customs laws had never heard of plastic, so there is no regulation regarding it. Since December, 1945, the company has been trying to get a ruling as to how much duty must be paid when the plastic is sent to the United States. American officials don't expect the case to be heard in the clogged-up United States Customs Court of New York for about a year. In the meantime, the company has been forced to reject millions of dollars' worth of orders from the United States—one single order for $2,500,000 worth—because nobody knows what the duty will be and what price should be charged to the American buyers.

A European manufacturer of earthen ash trays was anxious to sell his goods in the United States, but changed his mind when he learned that not until they had entered the United States could he get an idea as to the price he would have to charge for them. If he had luck, they would be classified as a household article (15 per cent duty), and he could sell them at a profit and compete with American ash trays. If they were classified as a smoking requisite, the duty would be 30 per cent, and it might be difficult to sell them. If a customs official happened to decide that they would be classified as luxury earthenware (50 per cent duty), he would be priced out of the market and would have to sell his ash trays at a loss, or ship them back home. Some of those duties have been reduced, but he still can't find out where he stands.

Harry Radcliffe told me, "The most formidable barrier to a steady expansion of import trade in consumer goods is that American importers are constantly frustrated and discouraged by their inability to calculate their final costs with any degree of accuracy.

"An importer frequently does not know and cannot find out what form of customs valuation will be applied or what rate of exchange will be used to convert his foreign invoice prices into U.S. dollars. The only thing he can be quite sure about is that he probably will not pay the duty rate specified in our

tariff on the price he paid for the goods."

Therefore, the importer often must make his selling price higher than he would like, because he has to hedge against news that may come months later from the Customs Department—that he has to pay more duty.

TAKE Christmas trees. If yours was a tree imported from Canada or Newfoundland, you probably paid more than the importer wanted to charge you because he added enough—he hopes—to cover the duty. He probably won't know what the duty is until some time after next Fourth of July. In the meantime, the Customs Department holds his bond, which guarantees payment of whatever sum they decide he owes.

Here we get into the law regarding valuation, not classification. Fortunately for the importer, Christmas trees are classified definitely as Christmas trees. He pays a duty on their value, but what is the value? Here the law gets so complicated that it takes months to find out. Hardy agents may have to go to Newfoundland and tramp through the woods to learn the answers.

Long after you have solved the problem of how to get rid of your tree and have got the cotton and tinsel off the rug, the importer of Christmas trees is still baffled when he tries to balance his books. A recent count showed that, 7 months after they had been imported, the Customs Department had made no decision regarding duties on 2,328 shipments of trees. So many customs men work so many hours collecting tiny facts about trees, to fix the duty, that it is unlikely that the total duties collected ever equal the cost of collection.

All the law does is to discourage importers of Christmas trees and reduce the amount of dollars that otherwise would go to Canada and Newfoundland. If a flat duty of so much a tree were assessed, the whole procedure would be simplified. But the legislators who wrote our customs laws, back in 1930, wanted to keep stuff out, not to facilitate its entry.

The foreign-exchange problem is another of the big headaches for importers. When the appraiser gets, for instance, the price Spanish dealers are paying for a certain kind of olive oil that has been brought to the United States, then he has to translate the price to get the value in American dollars, and in many cases the problem of figuring out foreign exchange is shocking to behold. The recent devaluation of the pound and other currencies helps some, but in many nations there still are several different rates. Spain has more than 20 rates for the peseta. Argentina has 4 different rates for the peso. The Chinese situation is just about hopeless. Final rulings on what the Chinese dollar is worth have taken as long as 10 years to decide.

Other provisions of the law that harass importers include the rules as to marks of origin. If possible, every article must be marked indelibly, in a conspicuous place, with the name of the country of origin spelled in English. Apples from Canada must be individually wrapped in paper stamped "Canada." If the marking is improper, usually the proper marking can be put on after it arrives here. However, cutlery, surgical and dental instruments, scientific and laboratory instruments, and a few other classifications must be marked abroad. If they arrive without the markings they must be destroyed or shipped back to be stamped. Why, nobody seems to know.

One of the minor irritations, part of the endless red tape, is the fact that there are more than 50 customs forms, affidavits, and declarations which require, by law, oaths or notarization. More than 1,000,000 of these forms are used every year, and the customs officials themselves admit that notarization in nearly every case is absolutely unnecessary.

Under the present laws, the Customs Department never can catch up with its decisions. The last survey made, showed that on June 30, 1947, 84,472 cases of appraisal had been held up more than 30 days. Of these, 6,470 were in court, 31,000 were blocked because of difficulties in determining exchange rates, and in 12,000 cases the examiners hadn't got around to them. In about 8,000 cases, the appraisers were waiting for further information from abroad, to determine the foreign value.

John W. Snyder, Secretary of the Treasury, two years ago got $100,000 from Congress and employed a non-government corporation to make a management survey of the Customs Department to tell what was wrong with the picture. The survey said the department was operating as effectively as the average corporation, but came up with 179 major recommendations, more than half of which are being put into effect. The National Customs Service Association, composed of officers and employees of the United States Customs Service, has prepared a report on the survey, and the association looks with little favor upon most of the recommendations, including some that might simplify procedure and reduce the number of employees in the department.

Practically everybody in high places in Washington wants action that will encourage more imports. Secretary Snyder has indicated that he is in favor of new laws that will change the methods of valuing merchandise, "including the elimination of the use of foreign value as a basis for valuation."

THE Department of Commerce and the Economic Cooperation Administration sent abroad last May a mission made up of 8 experts who spent three months learning from European government officials and merchants how best we can encourage imports to help foreigners get dollars with which to pay for our goods. This mission recommended, among other things, simplification of United States Customs procedures, simpler methods for conversion of foreign currencies, and speedy revision of classification methods so that importers can get a binding ruling in advance of actual importation, and a guarantee that once goods have been classified, the Bureau of Customs will not change its mind for at least two years. Retroactive classification would be abolished.

The National Council of American Importers has been applying the heat ever since 1945, when it presented recommendations for revision. The United States Council of the International Chamber of Commerce and the Commerce and Industry Association of New York have been pounding away.

The International Trade Organization, which is tied into the United Nations, adopted a charter at Havana in March, 1948, that provides for revision of laws by United Nations members to provide for new regulations for world trade. This charter, supported by the State Department, if passed by Congress would automatically make necessary a revision of our tariff laws.

When you go around Washington asking questions as to why Congress doesn't do anything about the situation—apparently is not interested in the I.T.O. charter, nor in revision of American laws—nobody appears to have a definite answer.

A senator told me confidentially, "We all realize that we can't keep handing out billions through the ECA for many more

"I saw it first!"

For The American Magazine by George La Mendola

years, and that the ECA countries can't buy from us until we buy more from them. But this customs and tariff situation is so darned complicated that nobody wants to tackle it."

A representative's secretary confided, "There's no big lobby working for the consumer. No candidate can get more votes by advocating customs revision, because most people don't understand how it will save them money. There are too many citizens who still think we ought to keep foreign goods out of the United States."

Indications are, however, that the Treasury Department may get some action at the new session of Congress. The department is working on proposed legislation and hopes to have a bill that can be presented to the proper committees, with explanations so simple that almost anybody can understand what the bill is all about.

So perhaps, one of these days, Congress may be persuaded to make an intensive study of this complicated situation and may produce a new tariff law. Then you can buy English sweaters with embroidery on them, rugs with fringe, and Christmas trees, too, at a reasonable price. And the dollars that flow abroad will not all be the taxpayers' dollars, handed out for nothing.

Based on your knowledge of the past performances of Congress in cutting down the give-away department, you may doubt it. But we can dream of saving $1,000,000,000, can't we?

THE END ★★

Love Letter

(*Continued from page* 29)

year, Granny, and I took my Bible down from the shelf, and reread it all. Magic, melting words: *My beloved is mine and I am his—his banner over me is love. Spikenard and saffron—set me as a seal upon thine heart . . .*)

Then, darling, I wrote The Letter. If *Calais* was engraved on the heart of Bloody Mary, I can say that practically every word of that letter was seared on my heart for a long time to come.

You see, I posted it.

I can remember more of it, phrase for phrase, right this minute, than I would repeat even to you. Neal, as he carefully informed me, burned it, though he more or less implied that spontaneous combustion should have reduced it to ashes.

The general idea was that I loved him as Juliet had loved Romeo, or Cleopatra, Antony. I admitted that I was young, while I recalled to him Juliet's fatal but adequate fourteen years. My girlish bower had no balcony, but I was willing to build one with my own hands, if necessary.

When Neal appeared at our house, his hair still smelling of burnt paper, I honestly thought that he had come to claim me as his own. For years afterward I shied and trembled, passing our summerhouse, the way a horse will shy at a spot where he's seen a rattlesnake, because it was in the summerhouse that Neal talked to me. He was twenty years old and handsome, wearing the uniform of the Navy, and he was consumed with embarrassment and genuine concern for my future.

I don't know how Dutch uncles talk, but Neal talked for my own good. At least, he meant it for my good. He told me how lucky it was that I had written such a letter to him, my brother's and my family's friend. He described the humiliation, the disgrace which would have been my lot had I written it to another young man. *He* understood, he assured me, but other young men could not be expected to understand. As though I could have written such a letter to anyone else in the world!

From the moment I realized that he was rejecting me I don't believe I said a word. I just listened, going hot and cold, and wishing that I could drop dead. I didn't protest his assumption that I was commencing a career of letter-writing which any tabloid would be grateful for. I didn't protest anything.

When it was all over and he said, "You're a cute kid, Cricket, and some day you're going to be a very attractive woman. Some day you'll be grateful to me for this," I still didn't crack. He looked solicitously at my frozen face. He said, "I guess your mother was right, Cricket. This was at least a year too soon. You be a good child, and when you do grow up, take Uncle Neal's advice and remember that it's the girls who are hard to get who get what they want."

Is there anything in the world more devastating than shame? I wonder. I was so ashamed that I did not see how I could ever look anyone in the face again. I had done the unforgivable. I had bared my heart, without modesty or restraint, and the unforgivable, the unforgettable, had been returned to me like a dagger-thrust. . . .

Mac went to the Pacific, and so did Neal. I used to pray that out there Neal would forget, that all memory of that letter and of me would be obliterated from his mind.

Do you remember, Granny, when I was adolescent how I cultivated the pose of being a man-hater? It was funny when I was sixteen; by the time I was eighteen Mother began to worry about it. I believe at one time she even considered getting a psychiatrist for me. The letter would have taken a long time to disinter, I bet, though he probably would have pounced upon the hope chest at once. Because there it stayed in my room, with Neal's initials in the corner and the two lone dish towels on the bottom, and never another stitch did I sew. I played a lot of tennis and determinedly beat all my male opponents. I said I disliked dancing and thought parties a waste of time.

Then the war ended, and Mac came home. The Barrys had sold their white

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house after Mrs. Barry died, and while I hadn't forgotten Neal, or the letter, I seldom thought about him consciously. Things you can't resolve or endure get buried awfully deep. But they're like clams, Granny, in a mud flat; they blow up air holes through the murk.

"Bet you can't guess who's coming this week end, Cricket," Mac said to me, in the summer of '45.

I could guess. I knew before Mac told me. It was almost three years to the day from the last time I'd seen Neal Barry, in the summerhouse. Air bubbles popped around me, for a minute.

"What a pity that I won't be here!" I said.

Mac didn't suspect anything. I had been just a kid when Neal went away. Nobody but he and I knew that there had—or should I say hadn't?—been anything between us. I prayed again, fervently, humbly, that he wouldn't tell.

College helped me. Being with a bunch of girls naturally made me think about men, and to Mother's relief—and I suspect yours, too, Granny—I began to acquire suitors. Billy Winton was the first serious one, and I had fun with Billy until he kissed me and I slapped his face. That shocked me as much as it did him, and I never did that again. I never had the opportunity to do it again to Billy, incidentally.

By the time I was twenty I wanted desperately to get married. Most of the girls I knew were either married, engaged, or in love. But I was a pretty handicapped young female. For one thing, I was almost physically incapable of writing a letter to a man, which discouraged romance while I was in college. I was so terrified that I would commit myself again, imply actual interest in my correspondent, that I'd cross out and rewrite and revise until my letters sounded as though they'd been composed by one of the more intelligent apes.

The reason I left college and took that secretarial course in New York was the hope of finding a man—and I did. I found Pete Dunning, the first month I was there, nearly a year ago.

You've met Pete, Granny, so I don't have to describe him. I don't know whether he reminds you of Neal or not. He does me. He has the same laughing eyes, only Pete's lashes are thick and stubby instead of thick and long like Neal's, which is rather engaging. Pete is older than Neal by three years, which makes him thirty. Pete's been around. He was twenty-five when he landed on the Normandy beachhead. He had finished college and had a couple of years of newspaper work behind him.

As you know, he writes special articles for his paper, so he is constantly going away from New York. The first time he went on a longish trip and asked me to write to him, I thought, "This is the end. Once he has read one of my letters, he'll give me up as the illiterate type."

Instead, when he returned he took me to dinner. "Lydia, were you ever taken for a ride by the press?" he asked me.

I said, "Say that again."

He smiled. "I am referring to your epistolatory style," he explained. "From long experience, I'd say that only a person who has had indiscreet letters displayed to the vulgar public gaze could achieve such studied discretion."

He was joking, of course, but I blushed.

He looked at me, and said. "Good heavens, Lydia, not really!"

I took a swig of ice water. "No, not really," I was able to say, then.

His eyes were bright and curious. "But almost?"

"No, not almost, either," I answered.

He waited, and when I didn't explain any further, he grinned, wickedly. "So you won't sing!" he said. "You did write some letters, though!"

I just looked at him. I'd stopped blushing.

"You got them back," he went on, watching me closely. "Was he married, Lydia?"

"Have your fun," I told him.

"You interest me strangely," he said. "There are few things I like more than solving a mystery."

Granny, I don't know why I couldn't tell him, then, about Neal. A lot of the future would have been different if I had. It ought to have been easy to say to Pete Dunning, "I wrote a love letter to a young man when I was fifteen and he was twenty, and he scolded me for it." After all, it would have been just a humorous anecdote of my childhood.

Pete wouldn't let go of his mystery. *Why did Lydia blush?* he called it. He approached it directly and indirectly, fairly and unfairly, with a disarming candor and from blind alleys. Maybe it's part of the make-up of a born newspaperman to be that curious.

Two months ago Pete asked me to marry him. Characteristically, what he said was, "Surely you're going to tell your husband about your spotted past, Lydia?"

"Meaning who or whom?" I inquired. "Also what?"

"Meaning me," he answered. "And the real low-down on those compromising letters."

"You're taking several things for granted, don't you think?" I asked.

"Oh, come off it, Lydia," he said. "I'm just kidding."

"No, you're not!" I contradicted him.

"Yes, I am," he said, grinning at me. "Surely you can't believe that I give a hoot about anything in your past? I'm a realist, Lydia, and I wasn't born yesterday. I have a past, myself. Who hasn't?"

You know, Granny, I didn't like that. Just as it had nearly killed me, in the summerhouse, when Neal assumed so easily that I could have written that letter to somebody else, it hurt me, now, for Pete to be so casual about things I hadn't done. He was assuming, easily, too, that I had written letters far less innocent than that one unfortunate declaration of love.

"You may not care," I said, "but you'll always be curious."

Pete may sometimes be devious, but he's honest. He said, "I'm afraid you have something there, Lydia. But if you want me to bottle up my curiosity on this particular subject, I will." I was angry, and he knew it. "Let's go on over to the Hamiltons'," he said. "They're having some people in, and it may be amusing."

Amusing, Granny! The first person I was introduced to was Neal Barry.

"You know Lydia Wheeler, don't you?" Kay Hamilton asked him.

"I don't believe I do," said Neal. He looked at me as though he'd like to know me.

I don't know whether my lower jaw dropped or not. At least, it stayed attached. Pete was talking to Rex Hamilton, and there I stood like an oaf, tongue-tied.

"Can't I get you some punch?" asked Neal politely. "Why don't you come with me, and then I won't lose you in this mob?"

He took hold of my elbows and steered me across the room to the punchbowl. There was the usual mob of thirsty people around it, and while Neal waited his turn at the ladle, I stared at myself in the mirror behind the refectory table.

Seven years. I weigh twenty pounds less and my hair is darker, though not a lot darker, and I've given up permanents. I was fifteen, then, and now I'm twenty-two. Somebody's eyes met mine in the mirror, amused at my apparent self-interest, but I didn't care. I was interested, all right. I was fascinated and incredulous.

Seven years before, I had stared at the reflection of the girl whom Neal Barry had just kissed good night. I remembered her dress, too old for her and not very smart, her shell earrings, her flushed cheeks and starry eyes. The reflection I was looking at, now—if you'll pardon a touch of vanity, Granny—was considerably more attractive. I was wearing a very good red silk-jersey dress, for which I had paid not too much but a lot, and my lipstick and nail polish matched it exactly. I've learned how to use mascara so that my own mother thinks my lashes have darkened, and my eyes are still blue. My eyes, I told myself, are pretty much the same.

I thought of all the times I'd prayed that Neal Barry would forget me completely, but I wasn't either religious enough or egotistic enough to believe that this was an answer to prayer. My emotions were pretty scrambled as I realized that Neal had probably never really noticed how I looked. It had amused him to take Mac Wheeler's kid sister to a dance, and he had kissed her good night out of habit and convention. During the scene in the summerhouse, he had been so embarrassed that he had scarcely looked at me at all.

He had the ladle, and he filled two glass cups. "Let's find a place where we can sit down," he suggested.

Pete had disappeared in the crowd. We threaded our way, Neal and I, across the room, and Neal stopped before a divan where two young men sat, talking.

"According to Hoyle," he told them, "a girl and a man are better than two men."

One of them said, "Hi, Neal." They both got up, and we sat down.

"Thanks, boys," said Neal.

I was still tongue-tied.

"I'm a dope about names," Neal said. "What is yours?"

"Lydia Wheeler," I said faintly. I waited.

"Miss?" he asked, without a flicker of recognition.

I nodded.

"Mine's Neal Barry," he informed me. "Also Miss." Neal could say that without worrying. He had put on the twenty pounds I had lost, which made both of us just about right. His hair was not darkened. It's the color of clover honey and has precisely the amount of wave to be handsome without being pretty.

My numbed mind was slowly beginning to function. I had always been called "Cricket" at home. It was only since I'd gone away to college that people began to call me Lydia. Wheeler is a rather common name in the United States, and I knew that Neal and Mac had not seen each other in years.

"Do you live in New York, Mr. Barry?" I asked. It was not a social question. I wanted to know.

"I do," he answered. "I'm a wage slave for a steel company. I don't tell everyone this, but my place of business is in New Jersey."

From his clothes, which he wore well, and his general manner, it was easy to see that he was a wage slave more than adequately paid.

He smiled at me. "Do you live in New York, Miss Wheeler?" When I said yes, he said, "That's nice."

"*I bet the big girls are still crazy about him*," I was thinking. "*The little girls, too.*"

I saw Pete looking for me, and I waved. Neal stood up to shake hands. They really do look alike, Granny. Neal is better dressed; he always had a flair for wearing clothes, even dungarees, and Pete doesn't care. Pete's hair is darker; Neal's eyes are bluer. They are bluer than any eyes I ever saw.

"You go everything you need, Lydia?" Pete asked, establishing the fact that he was my escort. "More punch?"

"You hold down my seat, and I'll get three," Neal offered. "I have a system."

Pete watched him go. "Pleasant guy," he murmured. "Who is he?"

I could have told him, then, but I didn't. "Member of the mob," I answered. Sometimes I think it is true that women like to complicate their lives.

NEAL returned, and the three of us talked for a while. People were dancing in the next room, and Neal said, "Would you like to dance, Miss Wheeler?" He looked at Pete.

"I can give her everything but that," Pete informed him. "Two left feet is what I was born with."

"*I've danced with you before, and you don't remember*," I kept thinking. "*The first dance I ever went to was with you.*"

"We do all right, don't we?" said Neal, when the record ended. He looked down at me and grinned, just as he used to grin when he was a kid. "Do I take you back to Mr. Dunning, or are you free to dance again?"

That was asking me, Granny.

"I'm free to dance again," I told him.

He put his arm around me. "I'd already observed a satisfactory absence of rings," he said.

After that dance he asked, "Are you in the telephone book, Miss Lydia Wheeler?"

"Not at the moment," I said. I was getting over some of my panic. "I'm at a party."

"But if I looked up the W's—say, tomorrow, around five-thirty?" he suggested.

Suddenly I was back in the summerhouse in Hendonport. *When you do grow up, take Uncle Neal's advice and remember that it's the girls who are hard to get who get what they want . . .*

"There are plenty of W's," I told him. I added, "I think I'd better go back to the man I sit my dances out with, now."

Neal did not bring three glasses of punch, this time. He took me back to Pete, reappeared with two glasses. "Thank you, Miss Wheeler," he said, and disappeared.

I didn't see him again, that evening.

GRANNY, for nearly a week I didn't know whether to answer the telephone or not. I did answer it, of course, every time it rang, and it never was Neal. Men can play at being hard to get as well as women, I told myself. Then, six evenings later, I answered it, and it was Neal.

"I finished T-U-V, yesterday," he said. "It's nice to be on the W's." He added, "I hope."

I couldn't think of an answer.

"I had lunch with Pete Dunning yesterday," he went on, and a feather would have knocked me down. "He said he was going to Washington for a week or so, and I wondered whether by any chance you were free for dinner and a show, tonight?"

I was too surprised and apprehensive at his having lunched with Pete to say no. "Well," I comforted myself, as I dressed for the evening, "I'll say no next time." I didn't, though. Nor the time after that.

When Pete returned from Washington, by way of Chicago, I was a pretty confused girl. He asked me what I'd been doing, and I said I'd been out with Neal Barry a couple of times.

He looked at me sharply. "So?" he murmured. "Have I a rival for your hand, Lydia?"

It was the letter scene all over again. Pete needling me, teasing, and me losing my temper.

"You're altogether too curious, Pete Dunning!" I told him. "I'm not engaged to you. I have a perfect right to go out with anyone I like!"

"Sure, you have," said Pete soothingly. He added, "You have my permission to correspond with anyone you like, too."

Of course, I blushed. How could I help it? The letter, with its overtones and undertones of Solomon's Song, appeared in my head as clearly as something flashed on a television screen. For a minute I was almost afraid that Pete could see it too. And I knew, then, that I couldn't bear to have Pete Dunning see it or hear about it. I didn't have time right then to explore my reasons.

"Why does Lydia blush?" asked Pete

rhetorically. He was laughing at me.

"As a matter of fact," I said furiously, "I am going out with Neal tonight."

Pete just laughed a little harder. "That's odd," he said. "I saw Barry about an hour ago and he said that he was dining with the Hamiltons. I told him we might drop in there, later."

There wasn't much answer to that.

"What are you seeing so much of Neal Barry for, anyway?" I demanded crossly.

His eyes glinted. "Probably not for the same reasons you are," he retorted.

"You're spying on me!" I said, practically losing all control. "You have no right—"

He stopped me. "Lydia, be your age. Barry and I are both members of the Harvard Club. Since we met at the Hamiltons' party we have had an occasional drink together at the bar. I like Barry. Have you any right to object to that?"

It is a very uncomfortable thing to know that two men you are interested in are seeing each other alone. Especially when you have built up a mystery and a web of falsehood about one of them, and the other is diabolically clever and fiendishly curious.

I didn't dare *not* go to the Hamiltons', that evening.

Pete went into a huddle with Rex about politics, and Neal got me off in a quiet corner. I am not implying that he had to drag me there, Granny, because he didn't.

He said, "Dunning is a nice guy, Lydia."

I didn't want to discuss Pete. I said, "You seem to have a mutual admiration society."

"Can a mutual admiration society have three members?" Neal asked.

"I wouldn't know," I said shortly. I was still in a bad temper, and I was frightened. I not only didn't want Pete to know about the letter; I desperately didn't want Neal Barry to remember or find out that I was Cricket, Mac Wheeler's kid sister. Not yet, anyway.

Neal's blue eyes, with the long, dark lashes, were serious. "I suppose you know that I've fallen in love with you, Lydia?"

I didn't say anything. I couldn't think of a thing to say.

"I told Pete that I had," Neal went on. "It seemed only fair, under the circumstances."

I didn't ask what circumstances.

"Pete said that you and he are not engaged." Neal was not smiling; he was deadly in earnest.

I still sat like a bump on a log.

"You're not being very helpful, Lydia," he said at last.

"What do you want me to say?" I asked.

He smiled. "I know what I want you to say, all right, but I don't believe in miracles." The laughter went out of his eyes. "I do think, though, that if you have any inside information, you might turn it over to the interested parties."

"I'm afraid I haven't," I told him.

He looked at me, hard. "You couldn't be playing hard to get, could you, Lydia?"

Granny, that settled it. Every bit of the shame and anguish I'd suffered in the summerhouse came back burning into me like live wires. "I'll make you sorry for that, Uncle Neal," I thought.

I said, "No, Neal," and I lied in my teeth. I said, very softly, "After all, I've known Pete a long time and I've only known you a little time." I added, even more softly, "By the calendar."

That did it. His eyes looked stricken. He said, "Please forgive me, Lydia. I had no right to speak to you like that."

Granny, you've got to remember how much he had hurt me, seven years ago, and how much money I saved the Wheeler family by working this out for myself, instead of having to go to a psychiatrist for years on end. Because I am not proud of the weeks that followed.

I went home from the Hamiltons' apartment a young woman with one idea. It was a bad idea, too—revenge. I was going to pay Neal Barry back for his lack of understanding when he was twenty, for the humiliation he had made me endure. For the Thing, the Complex I'd been nursing for seven long years.

For almost two months I played Neal and Pete against each other, and I had to be careful, and subtle, too, not to lose both of them. Sometimes I think it would have served me right if I had. At least, I can honestly say that I didn't get any pleasure out of it.

It was Pete who blew up. Just two weeks ago. He said, "Okay, Lydia. The time has come to shoot or give up the gun." He didn't sound very pleasant.

"How can I?" I asked pathetically. I had been playing my role so long that it came natural. "Pete, darling, I don't know—"

"Don't Pete-darling me," he said. "It's time to cash in your chips, baby."

I had been standing up, and I sat down. "All right," I agreed. "Only, I've got to have a little more time." He smiled, meanly. "I can't explain, now," I floundered on. "But there are things you don't know."

"Are you telling me?" he retorted. Then he grinned. "Does Neal Barry know that you used to live in Hendonport, too?"

I was sitting down, and I jumped up. "Pete, please don't tell him! You mustn't tell him! You must promise me—"

He kept on grinning. "I'm a man second and a journalist first," he said grimly. "Are you going to give?"

I sat down. This was a different Pete from the one I knew, a tougher one, and one I wasn't sure I liked. This was the Pete who didn't give a hoot about my past because everyone had one.

"Pete, please give me a week," I begged.

He laughed. "Lydia, I'll admit you've got me baffled," he said. "What do you think you can do in a week that you can't do tonight?"

"I'll tell you in a week," I promised desperately. "I'll tell you everything."

"Will you tell me yes?" he asked.

I looked at him, at his eyes that are like Neal's but not quite, with their stubby lashes, their impudence and intelligence. "Pete, I honestly don't know," I answered.

He looked back at me searchingly. "Baby, I believe you," he said. "In the vulgar phrase, you don't know from nothing. You really think a week is going to change things?"

"I promise," I said.

"Okay," said Pete. He reached for his hat. "In a week I'll either collect or bow myself out, Lydia." He added, "I'm assuming that it's Barry you want to concentrate on?"

Granny, after he had gone I knew that I wasn't going to do a single thing, in my week. I was so disgusted with myself that I wanted to run away and hide. I didn't want to humiliate Neal or make him

"Me and the missus would like to see one of those baby corrals"

For The American Magazine by Charles B. Williams

suffer. I didn't want ever to see Neal again. I was right back where I had been in 1942, and not a bit smarter.

I telephoned my boss in the morning and told him that I had to have a week's vacation. He gave it to me, and asked where I was going. I didn't know and I didn't care, and I said so, bleakly.

He laughed. "Would you like to go down to our place on Long Island?" he asked. "Marian and I are going away, too, but the servants will be there. Actually, it would be a favor to us."

I went to Long Island. The Barnwell servants must have thought I was having a nervous breakdown, and maybe I was. I cried most of the time.

I had been there five days, when the letter arrived. It had been forwarded from the office.

Granny darling, I not only can recite every word of that letter, but it is never going to be burned. It is the most tender, the most beautiful, the most passionate, all-out love letter I ever read in my life, counting the famous historical ones. It didn't leave its writer a shred of protection. It offered his heart and soul, without any strings or cellophane, and it left no doubt of how he was going to feel if they were refused.

I read it over three times before I rushed to the telephone and called him. I read it over and over, all the way from Oyster Bay to New York.

He was standing by the gate in Pennsylvania Station, and I went straight into his arms, where I want to remain the rest of my life, Granny dear. Apparently, he didn't want to remain in Pennsylvania Station for the duration, because after a while he asked groggily, "Where shall we go?"

"We're going to my apartment," I told him. "There's something I want to tell you, and something I want to show you."

You know what it was, don't you, Granny?

Mother had shipped me some books from Hendonport when I rented the apartment, and she had what I then considered the lack of tact to ship them in your hope chest. Right on top of those two forlorn dish towels, at that.

What I wanted to show Neal, of course, was his initials, carved there in the summer of 1941.

THE END★★

The Race against Pain

(*Continued from page* 27)

pneumonia, for example, the physician may not have to make tests to determine what type of pneumonia he is fighting. He may merely prescribe aureomycin and be reasonably sure it will clear up the disease, whether it is caused by one type of germ or another.

This drug is also expected to increase America's production of milk, butter, and cheese by providing a cure for the most common and most costly disease of dairy cows. This is mastitis, an inflammation of the mammary glands which often curtails or completely stops their milk yield. A few injections of aureomycin into a cow's udder may cause the disease to disappear. The use of the new drug in this field alone promises to save dairy farmers $30,000,000 a year.

Just as new as aureomycin is another infection killer which was discovered under dramatic circumstances. A few months ago a small girl was run down by a truck on a New York street. One of her legs was badly mangled, and an amputation was indicated. Before surgeons were called in, however, bacteria taken from her wound were subjected to study in a laboratory, and it was found that a new type of "good bugs," never isolated before, were putting up a terrific battle with the "bad bugs" in the child's body.

This led to saving her leg and the development of a drug called bacitracin. Already it has proved to be highly effective against certain types of surgical infections, and also useful in the treatment of boils and carbuncles. Officials of the Pure Food and Drug Administration told me they regard bacitracin as one of the half-dozen most valuable drugs to come to light during the last year.

Still another, neomycin, is so new that it has not yet been extensively tested in human beings. In experiments with laboratory animals, however, it shows indications of being effective against certain deep-seated infections. In test-tube experiments, neomycin murders tubercle bacilli, germs of tuberculosis, but there is as yet no proof that it will be useful against t.b. in people.

A more hopeful approach to a tuberculosis cure appears to lie in tibione, a chemical new to medicine which has been discovered by a German scientist, Dr. Gerhard Domagk, winner of the Nobel Prize in 1939 for his work in perfecting the sulfa drugs. Used as an adjunct to streptomycin, tibione has shown impressive results against tuberculosis of the larynx and intestines, but it is not yet known whether it will be of value against tuberculosis of the lungs.

Tuberculosis today is one of the most treated yet least conquered of diseases. I learned, to my surprise, that it still kills more Americans between the ages of 15 and 35 than any other one malady, and its toll in other countries is far greater than in the United States. Streptomycin is effective against it in some cases, but the bacillus usually becomes resistant to the drug within 75 to 90 days. As a result, a tremendous effort is being made on many fronts to find a better remedy for the disease.

In one of the country's largest medical laboratories, for example, even old wives' tales are being run down and investigated in the quest for a t.b. cure. Lupulin, the substance in hops which makes beer bitter, is one of the materials which has been screened.

Another is usnic acid, derived from a Spanish lichen, which the researchers thought for a time might be related to usnea, a moss which grew hundreds of years ago on the skulls of criminals who were hanged in chains, and was once used in medicine.

Unfortunately, neither substance showed any power against the tubercle bacilli in animals, but they show the lengths to which scientists are going in their hunt for a sure-fire weapon against t.b.

Even more progress is being made in science's war against another age-old scourge—syphilis. This disease, which formerly afflicted one out of every ten humans, has been controlled during recent years with arsenical drugs, sulfas, and penicillin, but never with anything approaching complete success. The arsenical treatment was long-drawn-out and agonizing; the sulfa drugs became largely ineffective as the syphilis germ, called the spirochete, developed resistance to them; and many patients who were given penicillin discontinued treatment before they were completely cured.

Now a new compound has been discovered which promises to overcome these difficulties. It has not yet been made available to doctors, but extensive experiments indicate that just one injection of the compound cures syphilis, even in its advanced stages. Furthermore, it causes no pain or harmful aftereffects.

The potentialities of this drug, which also cures gonorrhea, are immense. Dr. Delmas K. Kitchen, one of the nation's leading researchers, told me that it will give doctors a tool with which they may eventually wipe venereal disease off the face of the earth and alter the economy of nations.

In Haiti, for example, he said that 80 per cent of the rural population suffers from a disease called yaws, which is similar to syphilis and just as crippling. One shot per inhabitant of the new compound, and Haiti could become a healthy nation instead of a sick one.

Not enough time has elapsed, it is true, to prove definitely that these new drugs will provide a permanent panacea against all the diseases they now knock out.

Certain bacteria may develop armor against them, just as the spirochete built up immunity to sulfa. Some people are allergic to the drugs and can't take them. But the antibiotics, on the other hand, may eventually be found to have other tremendous therapeutic qualities only dreamed of today.

Vitamin B_{12} another new drug which has just become available—gives a hint of this. In the past, the only known source of the vitamin was mammalian liver. Four tons of liver were required to make one gram of B_{12}. Now it is being derived from the same fermented broth which yields streptomycin. It is the most

effective drug yet found for treating pernicious anemia and suggests that, in addition to being germ-killers, the new drugs may unlock secrets concerning the cell-building functions of the body. Some doctors think they will throw new light on cancer before very long.

In its assault on the common cold, which costs the nation $1,000,000,000 in lost production every year, science is also making important gains. For several years it has been known that colds are caused by viruses—infinitesimally small organisms which are not much bigger than molecules. But it was not understood *how* these viruses did their mischief.

Now science has a great deal of evidence which indicates they make you sneeze and sniff and cough because they exert an allergic effect upon the body similar to that which pollens exert upon hay-fever victims.

As a result, cold researchers have turned to so-called antihistamine drugs —medicines which have been used effectively for some time in the treatment of other allergies. Two of those which are now on sale in pill form are reported to have produced impressive results against colds in large groups of people. If taken early enough, they are reputed to relieve the malady in most cases.

However, in the National Institutes of Health, a man who has devoted his life to studying colds told me there are apparently several different types of cold viruses. No drug is yet in sight which will knock out all of them, he said, but we are steadily getting closer to one.

We are also apparently on the verge of discovering a vaccine for polio. Back in the 1930's, a vaccine was produced which was not safe. Several children who were inoculated with it contracted polio. Specialists in the disease are determined such a tragedy shall never be repeated. They are determined that when a vaccine is brought out—as they expect it to be in the not distant future—we can be sure it will be safe as well as effective.

Other vicious cripplers of children, the spastic and neuromuscular diseases, may also yield to science before very long. A new synthetic compound called myanesin, which was developed from glycerin in England not long ago and is being distributed in this country under the name of tolserol, is opening a whole new field in the study of these diseases.

The drug has already been found to improve the condition of certain victims of paraplegia (a type of paralysis which affects the lower part of the body), multiple sclerosis (a hardening of cell tissues), and a malady of the nervous system known as Parkinson's disease. It is now being tested against cerebral palsy, facial tic, and various abnormal mental conditions.

According to a medical report from England, a patient suffering from the common type of insanity called schizophrenia was recently treated with myanesin. He had not spoken to anyone for years, but after a few doses of the drug he started talking intelligently. Another mental patient who was in a highly agitated state became calm and rational due to the action of the medicine.

It is too early to predict that myanesin will be of wide general use in treating spastic, nervous, and mental disorders, but, like so many other new drugs, it appears to hold great promise of helping to combat these disorders.

THE same may be said of two substances now being used experimentally against the most deadly degenerative diseases of aging people—arteriosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) and coronary thrombosis (one of the principal forms of heart trouble).

The substances are choline bicarbonate, derived from a synthetic chemical compound, and inositol, taken from corn syrup. Both drugs appear to combat certain deficiencies in the body's processing of fats—deficiencies which lead to gradual clogging of the blood vessels, with consequent high blood pressure and heart strain.

Evidence of this has been gathered in experiments in Los Angeles. Two hundred patients who had suffered severe

Did you write a better gag?

For The American Magazine by Al Kaufman

This cartoon was published in the November, 1949, issue, with the original gagline: "When I grow up I'll never eat anything that's good for me!" Readers were invited to write a better gag. Here are the 10 most original contributions:

"Why do I have to eat everything and you only eat what you like?"
Mrs. Ray Jogodyniski, Toledo, Ohio.

"I wish I were twins so I could say NO twice as hard!"
Mrs. Mabel W. Leckney, Providence, R.I.

"Poke some of that in Pop's mouth for a change!"
Jennie Dalla Santa, Joliet, Ill.

"No, thanks. I got tired liking the first bite!"
Tommy Constable, St. Louis, Mo.

"Gosh, Mom, every time I open my mouth you put something in it!"
J. Burda, Davenport, Iowa.

"If it's so good why won t the dog eat it?" *Nancy Phillips, Detroit, Mich.*

"Why can't we ever have something interesting, like a double banana royal chocolate nut marshmallow float?" *Mrs. F. Bennett, Bronx, N.Y.*

"Honest, Mom, all I had was two candy bars, an apple, and four cookies after school." *Nellie Schleidt, Fort Madison, Iowa.*

"I'm too full to eat that; I want my pie and ice cream now."
Mrs. Robert Motlock, Sparks, Nev.

"Is this what was burning when I came home from school?"
Betty Anne Kraemer, Columbus, Ohio.

America takes stock at mid-Century

Here we are—a free nation 150 million strong—half-way through the Twentieth Century.

A nation to which the world's free peoples look for leadership. A nation vigorous, resourceful, unafraid—and dedicated to progress.

Let's take a look at what we have accomplished here and how we've been able to do it. Maybe that will give us a picture of what the future holds—if we just use the common sense the good Lord gave us.

Who could have predicted in 1900 that the next 50 years in America would be the greatest period of social, economic and industrial progress in history?

Who could have foreseen the wonders that lay ahead? That by 1950 the amount of goods consumed by the average person in the United States would have risen two and one half times—that nearly every family would own an automobile, a telephone, a radio—that real wages (wages in terms of what they will buy) would more than double while we were reducing the work week from about 58 to 40 hours?

Every American ought to understand the system that has made all this possible. For it is the newest, most revolutionary, most productive way of life this old earth has ever seen. It has done more for the average man than any other ever invented—because it is built on freedom, competition and opportunity.

Now is the time for every American to take stock of the system that has made us the world's most fortunate people. Here is a chance for communities, companies, trade and labor groups, civic and religious groups to celebrate this milestone of progress.

Today the eyes of the world are on us. Everywhere the free and slave systems are at grips. It is a time for new resolutions—for thought and prayer. It is time for every free man to make his voice heard. It is time for us to understand not only how our system works but how each one of us can help make it still better. The answers are in the free booklet. "The Miracle of America." Send for it now!

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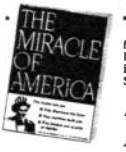

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heart attacks were studied. Half of them were treated with choline bicarbonate, and the other half were given conventional treatment, which uses nitroglycerin and other drugs to expand the blood vessels.

According to predictions based upon mortality statistics gathered over many years, 28 per cent of all the 200 patients were due to die within a year. In close line with this forecast, 29 of the 100 who received the conventional nitroglycerin treatment did die. But only 4 of the 100 who were given choline died, and they died during the first few months of treatment.

The dramatic results of this experiment do not prove conclusively that choline will be of help in all cases of high blood pressure and heart trouble. Neither it nor inositol—which is believed also to retard the advance of deafness in some aging people—are yet accepted as adequate answers to the degenerative diseases which claim the lives of 500,000 people in this country annually. But they are medicines which are creating immensely promising new fronts in science's war on the maladies.

ANOTHER common disease which you don't hear so much about is also under heavy fire by science. It is amoebiasis, a form of amoebic dysentery, which is believed to afflict between 8 and 9 per cent of the entire American population. Its early symptoms are recurrent diarrhea and constipation. Later, it causes abscesses of the liver.

Since amoebiasis is difficult to diagnose, it is often confused with other ailments of the gastrointestinal tract. And when it kills one of its victims, as it does thousands every year, death is frequently attributed erroneously to cirrhosis of the liver.

Now, after years of work on the problem, research scientists have come up with two drugs, milibis and aralen, which in hundreds of clinical tests have arrested the sinister disease. They are just two more of the new remedies which promise to make the human race of tomorrow healthier and longer-lived than ever before.

I do not have space even to mention all of the other important new medicines. One of them is phenurone, a synthetic taken from phenobarbital, the sleeping powder, which is proving of use against epilepsy. Another is banthine, which in tests seems to relieve peptic ulcers just as effectively as cutting the vagus nerve. Still another is a drug containing Vitamin K, the antibleeding vitamin, which relieves chilblains. A new thyroid extract has been found which is said to establish normal birth processes in many women who previously lost their children prematurely.

Then there is metopon hydrochloride, which doesn't cure anything but will be a tremendous blessing for thousands of people who suffer unendurable agony. It is a new pain-killing drug which is the result of co-operative study carried on ever since 1929 by the Universities of Virginia and Michigan and the United States Public Health Service, under grants provided by the Rockefeller Foundation and the National Research Council.

Dr. Lyndon F. Small of the Public Health Service, who directed the research, told me that metopon is derived from morphine, but has immense advantages over that narcotic. It is not as rapidly habit-forming as morphine. It does not make the patient feel as sluggish mentally as that drug. It can be taken by mouth in capsule form as well as by hypodermic. It does not cause nausea and vomiting. Yet the drug stifles pain just as effectively as morphine.

Metopon was developed primarily for the relief of cancer patients, and it is in this field that it is expected to have its greatest usefulness.

Thousands of people who suffer from malignancies cannot afford hospital care or the regular services of nurses to give them hypodermics. For them especially, and for their loved ones who witness their pain, metopon is a gift of incalculable value.

NO CURE for advanced cancer is yet visible on the research horizon, although many early cancers are being conquered every year with surgery, X ray, radium, and other implements of modern therapy. But the knowledge concerning cancer is increasing rapidly all the time. Through a steady screening process, scientists are cataloging more and more of the things which are *not* true about cancer. They feel certain that by this process alone, if none other, they eventually will arrive at the truth about the disease.

"Less than a year ago," one eminent research director said to me, "arthritis was more of a medical mystery in many respects than cancer is today. Cortisone now appears to be opening the door to the development of a practical palliative for arthritis. Who can say cancer will not be next?"

That attitude, I found, is a general one among science's treasure hunters. They no longer apply the word "hopeless" to any disease.

During the last few years they have made greater discoveries than during all the long history of medicine. They are now digging deeper into the unknown than ever before. They still have a long way to go before they discover remedies for all our ills, but they are marching steadily toward that goal.

THE END ★★

America's Biggest Umpire

(*Continued from page* 21)

strike-ending court injunction. It took a federal subpoena to drag Lewis before the board to testify. He bitterly assailed members of the board as biased against him, and the panel included such big names as Sherman Minton, the new Supreme Court justice. Lewis ended his caustic statement with "In attendance is Ching, a truly remarkable man, who sees through the eyes of United States Rubber."

"Vergie's" comment, to a friend, on the attempt to belittle her husband was: "I didn't know Cy had rubber eyes."

Ching, likewise, was undisturbed. The fact-finding board reported to the President, and the strike injunction was obtained.

When Lewis and his United Mine Workers ignored the order by continuing the strike, they were fined $1,420,000 for contempt of court.

Again, in last fall's long coal strike, Lewis attacked Ching several times, the mediator's "crime" being an all-out effort to persuade the miners and operators to settle their differences over a new contract. On one occasion, Ching invited the mine owners and Lewis to a conference in his office. An aide mistakenly sent the invitation to the union's Washington headquarters instead of to a Chicago hotel where Lewis was staying at the time. Although he received the notice in time, Lewis refused to appear, and castigated Ching for not consulting him in advance about the time for the meeting. In talking to reporters later, Lewis referred to the incident as "the Ching fiasco." A night later, a newsman, a close friend, called the Chings at home. "Vergie," who answered the call, nonchalantly inquired if the reporter wished to talk with "Fiasco Ching."

A criticism of Ching is that he intervened in the coal strike too early last fall. He called the operators and Lewis to an early October conference, two weeks after the 52-day strike started, and the meeting got nowhere. It did appear to have the effect of ending any semblance of bargaining, which was small in the first place, between the miners and owners. Once Ching had stepped into the dispute, the operators, especially, seemed content to sit back and rely on the Government "to take care of John L." In defense of Cy's actions, it should be said that the disputants were so far apart that it is highly unlikely they would have reached agreement anyway.

Another critic of Ching's is Secretary of Labor Maurice Tobin, the so-called "glamour boy" of the Truman Fair Deal. Ever since he came into office in 1948, Tobin has cast covetous eyes at Ching's Mediation Service, which was part of the Labor Department until made independent by the Taft-Hartley labor law in 1947. That was when Cy came to town. In its last years in the Labor Department, the Mediation Service got in bad with Congress, alienated industrial leaders, some of whom accused the service openly of favoring unions. It is generally conceded that Ching has built up the agency to the point where it now commands the confidence of most industrialists.

Tobin and other Truman Administration stalwarts tried in vain to take over

Ching's agency in their unsuccessful push to have the last session of Congress repeal the Taft-Hartley law. Undeterred, Tobin has gone right along with his attacks on Ching and his service. In the midst of the "speed-up" strike at the Ford Motor Co. last spring, Tobin, for example, told reporters that the strike would not have occurred if he had been directing government peace efforts. However, many Congress members who favor Taft-Hartley repeal also believe Ching's agency should remain independent. That belief is a tribute to Ching and the reputation for impartiality he has gained in dealing with both workers and the bosses.

CHING, because of his unusual height, expressive face, pipe, and other distinctive features, is a man who commands attention everywhere he goes. Entering the dining-rooms of fashionable hotels in New York, Washington, and most other points is like old home week to Cy. Even those who don't know him stare in some wonderment.

One thing Ching is not noted for is neatness in dress. He is usually attired in a rumpled, bulging suit with a battered felt atop his head. Mrs. Ching, who regards her husband in usual wifely fashion as to virtues and faults, has something to say about his dress.

"People should know," comments Vergie, "that Cy is not the shape he appears to be. A good part of that shape is glasses, of which he carries four pairs, pipes, of which he carries four, and other things stuffed in his pockets."

Mrs. Ching tells of the time they went to a tailor shop to pick up an expensive new suit for her husband. The tailor, a sort of Rembrandt with scissors, was justly proud of the job he had done in the difficult task of fitting the big man. Cy liked the suit, too, and decided to put it on immediately. After a bit, the tailor came rushing from the room where Cy was changing attire. According to Vergie, the man was virtually in tears.

"Do you know what he is doing?" the tailor screamed. "He is taking everything out of that old suit and stuffing it in the new one!"

Ching's formula for dealing with labor-management disputes is impossible to describe accurately because his own unique personality plays such an important part in his success. Suffice it to say that he employs enormous patience, gentle, though firm, pressure, and a persuasiveness backed by a thorough understanding of human relations.

When there is generated in a labor "peace" conference more heat than reason, Cy often calls on his large stock of stories to break the tension. He tells about the time things got a bit hot between him and a union man named Lee. Finally he turned to Lee and said, "Maybe we had better get out of this labor business and start a little laundry together." After a bit the man got the point, laughed loudly, and the air was much clearer from then on.

A favorite story Cy uses on an irate labor or industrial boss is to ask the man if he has heard about "Rule Six" of the British navy. The story, probably fictitious, goes like this:

During World War I, Secretary of Navy Josephus Daniels was conferring with British Admiral Beatty. In the session a British captain began sounding off on how the war should be run. Beatty reprimanded him harshly: "You are violating Rule Six of His Majesty's Navy." It silenced the captain. Later, Daniels asked Beatty what "Rule Six" was. The Britisher replied, "Never take yourself too damn' seriously."

In handling disputes and strikes, Ching, and the several hundred mediators under him, do not have the authority to order anyone around. The only power they have is that of persuasion. He would have it no other way. Although the Mediation Service most certainly is a part of Uncle Sam's far-flung operations and is instructed by law to step in and help prevent strikes, Ching does not regard his agency as government, in the usual meaning of the word. Even so, he is always reluctant to enter a dispute if he thinks there is the barest chance of the disputants reaching agreement on their own. That is the democratic way.

"It is the duty of our service," says Ching, "to keep the heavy hand of government off the free actions of labor and management. The injection of too much government means the sacrifice of liberties and will lead to the setting of price, wage, and production levels. Certainly, we do not want that."

When the stubbornness of either or both disputants threatens a strike, Ching always pounds it into them that it is much easier to settle their differences before rather than after a declaration of war. He points out that strikes are like wars in that neither side actually emerges winner in the final analysis. Ching and the men under him spend a lot of time in what he calls "dispute prevention," conferring with unions and management in advance of important negotiations. He says, "I want to convince the unions of the futility of strikes to gain their objectives. These problems all have to be settled eventually anyway, and there is no reason for a strike until every available alternative is exhausted.

"I want to sell employers, too," Ching continues, "on the idea that it is to their best interest to get along with unions. After all, our national policy calls for collective bargaining—it's the law. That doesn't mean simply recognizing a union officially and then fighting it from then on. It means a frank and friendly talking out of a problem until a solution is reached. I may be a voice crying in the wilderness but I am going to continue my yowling."

IN ADDITION to his work in last fall's great steel strike, Ching is due full credit for settling the dockworkers' strike of November, 1948, which tied up New York harbor and all ports on the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico, and numerous others. Ching has a first-name relationship with every important industrial tycoon and union leader in the country. Just how many strikes he has prevented and settled through confidential use of his own influence will never be known.

As for the box score of accomplish-

ments of the Mediation Service, Ching has this to say: "Our statistics cannot possibly reflect to anyone's satisfaction the extent to which the mediator deserves credit for the settlement of a dispute. It is like asking a country doctor how many common colds he cured last year."

That Ching, with his understanding of men and appealing personality, is a master of labor relations is borne out by the fact that the United States Rubber Co. had no strikes from 1920 to 1942. During most of that period he had full charge of personnel and employee relations. So far as is known it is a record unmatched in the big, mass-production industries. And the period included the middle and late 1930's, the hectic years of labor strife when the CIO, using the sit-down strike as the spectacular weapon was busy organizing the big industries, including rubber.

CHING, according to those who have known him a long time, was always far ahead of the times in dealing with employees, unions, and related problems, too far, in fact, for old-guard industrialists, some of whom still regard him with suspicion. When John L. Lewis, then head of the new-born CIO, dispatched his men to unionize steel, automobiles, rubber, and other big industries, most of the companies decided to resist to the bitter end. The ensuing turmoil brought incalculable production losses.

Seeing what was happening elsewhere and knowing the union men already were busy at the back doors of U.S. Rubber's plants, Ching convinced the company's directors that unionization was inevitable, resistance futile. U.S. Rubber opened its front door to the organizers. The policy made the company no friends in industry, but it paid off in labor peace and in continuous production. Ching gives the credit to the directors, who he says co-operated with him 100 per cent.

When Cy was pondering whether to accept his government job, a news account put his U.S. Rubber salary at $100,000 a year, considerably more than he was making. Seeing the chance for a bit of fun, he went to the corporation treasurer and said, "I see by the papers you have given me a raise. Of course, you will make it retroactive?"

Ching learned a lesson in employee relations in 1904 that he has never forgotten. That was four years after he came to the States from his native Canada. He had been promoted to trouble shooter for the Boston Elevated Railway, and was fixing a shoe fuse on a stalled train when he slipped, and fell, and 5,000 volts went through his body. His hair was burned off, his body was charred. Doctors considered the injuries fatal, but somehow, months later, he recovered. Ching still bears scars of the accident. But what impressed him most was that no one from the company management came to see him during the long convalescence. It started him thinking, and when he rose to be a boss he put the lesson to good use. It was simply that consideration for those at the bottom of the ladder will go a long way toward keeping the peace.

The introduction of unionism on the Boston Elevated was accompanied by strikes and violence. Finally the union gained a foothold, but none of the Back Bay officials of the railroad wanted to deal with "those roughnecks." So Ching, who had become assistant to the president, stepped up and took the job. His first act was to abolish the company spy system, a sore point with the workers, and relations showed immediate improvement. Things picked up further when Ching introduced the idea of frequent conferences with employees for discussion of mutual problems, a practice he also put to good use later at U.S. Rubber. The door of his office was never closed to the workers. They could get things off their chest easily.

Ching's handling of employee relations paid off many times for the Boston railroad, but one such occasion stands out. The issue of a wage increase had been kicked around to the point where the workers finally set a deadline for action. They scheduled a mass meeting for midnight on a Wednesday. Ching consulted the company directors, and they promised an answer before the meeting. But the board adjourned without making a decision. Ching wrote out his resignation and handed it to a vice-president, saying: "You will have to settle this thing sometime, but I won't be around."

He then went to the union officers and told them the directors had failed to act, he had failed to prevent a strike, and had turned in his resignation. An officer was about to announce to the massed workers that the strike deadline had arrived unheeded, when someone pulled the light switch in the hall. That broke up the meeting. A couple of union officers had darkened the hall because they knew a strike-call would mean Ching's departure from the company. There was no strike, the workers got their pay raise, and the whole affair ended happily for all except the directors, who finally gave the employees more money than they could have settled for earlier.

IN 1919 Ching had the urge to move to another field, and a friend advised him to go into the rubber industry. In characteristic fashion he telegraphed the president of United States Rubber: "I don't want a job. I want to help you run this company. My references are the motormen, conductors, and directors of the Boston Elevated."

Ching's 28 years as a top official of U.S. Rubber was broken twice by service on government boards. President Roosevelt made him an industrial member of NRA in 1933, and in 1941 appointed him to the National Defense Mediation Board, which later evolved into the National War Labor Board. Cy for a year was an industry member of that panel which umpired the labor-management disputes in wartime.

It took a lot of persuading from President Truman and his assistant, John R. Steelman, before Ching agreed to take over direction of the Mediation Service in 1947, because he was within six months of retirement on good pay from U.S. Rubber. Steelman, who had directed the service for 10 years when it was attached to the Labor Department, told Ching the urgent public call would be a fine way for him to round out his career. Cy answered that his career already was rounded out, but he finally gave in. Just why he did so he can't say, except that the newly independent agency seemed to offer a chance to do a job in spreading his Golden Rule approach to labor relations. Most people I have talked with in Washington think he is doing that job.

CHING's handling of the apparently hopeless steel dispute last year was a masterpiece. On several occasions, when both the CIO union and the steel producers crawled out on a limb, he provided them with avenues for graceful retreat from the uncompromising positions. He utilized to the fullest his friendship with Benjamin Fairless, president of the United States Steel Corp., and CIO President Murray. President Truman co-operated, and came through with appeals to the disputants whenever Ching signaled the time was right.

When the strike finally broke, October 1, after Ching had won a 10-week stay, he looked carefully over the forces arrayed against each other for a likely spot to start a peace movement. He knew that Philip Murray could not give up his fight for free pensions and live with his union, because the rival United Mine Workers already had such a retirement plan and Ford had just given one to the automobile workers. However, Ching thought Murray might be willing to compromise his demand for company-paid welfare insurance.

Several of the steel companies already provided small free pensions, but U.S. Steel, the giant of the industry, was not one of them, and the rest of the industry traditionally waited for "Big Steel" to act before they signed a labor contract. Nevertheless, Ching selected one of the companies already committed to the principle of free pensions—Bethlehem—and went to work hard on it. The trick was to persuade the company to increase the size of pension payments and to include the plan in a written contract.

Ching announced meetings with United States Steel in a New York hotel, and, at the same time, arranged secret conferences with Bethlehem in another hotel. He knew that U.S. Steel, which had led the fight against Murray and free pensions, would not now do an about-face. He used the talks with the U.S. Steel as a screen to give needed secrecy to the real conferences with Bethlehem. When Murray came to New York to make a political speech, Ching talked to him and arranged a meeting with Bethlehem.

It was not long before agreement was reached. It was a compromise. The company agreed to raise pension payments so that workers, without contributing, themselves, would get a minimum of $100 a month on retirement. Murray consented to a welfare insurance plan whereby the workers paid in equal amounts with the company. And the union head further agreed not to make a demand for larger pensions for five years, an important point with the companies, who have seen John L. Lewis double his

welfare-pension fund year by year. The rest of the companies, including U.S. Steel, followed Bethlehem's lead, and the strike was over.

Ching worked day and night to crack the steel strike, but his easy good humor never deserted him. For a while his negotiations with Bethlehem seemed futile. In one long session, Joseph Larkin, company vice-president, turned on Cy and asked, "Well what would *you* do if you were in my position?"

"If I were in your position," answered Ching calmly, "I would buy a drink."

Larkin did just that, but two of Ching's aides were shocked by the seemingly flip treatment of a big corporation executive.

"Oh, I have known Joe Larkin for twenty years," Ching told them. "I could see we wouldn't get anywhere tonight. Somebody had to break it up." . . .

The chief relaxation of the Chings is obtained during a month's stay at Cy's fishing club in Canada. The two of them duel to see who can catch the most salmon. In 1948 they finally got away on vacation after Ching had "wrestled" with John L. Lewis for an interminably long time. After arriving at the camp, Vergie wrote a friend: "Guess the name of Cy's fishing guide? It's Lewis!"

Ching earned a law degree at night while working for the Boston Elevated, and since then has received several honorary degrees from Eastern universities, but the most unusual honorarium was bestowed upon him by the Abrasive Wheel Manufacturers Association, who gave him a sheepskin and made him a member of Sigma Omicron Beta (S.O.B.). Dr. James B. Conant, president of Harvard, is among the other notables to receive the "honor." A short man, using a stepladder, presided at the Ching ceremonies. After presenting the diploma, he told Cy it was a pleasure to shake hands "with the biggest S.O.B. in the country."

One day, during the strike crises of last fall, Washington reporters were unable to find Ching anywhere. Suspecting there was about to be a big news "break," they checked every place for him, finally calling his home. Vergie answered the phone. She said she had no idea where they could find Cy. "Must be something like losing a bass fiddle," she said.

THE END ★★

Mirror, Mirror

(*Continued from page* 17)

a program. Pretty soon she had a couple of regular spots, and even some fan mail. Letty never let her radio work interfere with anything Bart wanted to do, or with the house, but she seemed to manage both without any trouble. Efficient, was the adjective for that.

Letty and Bart liked to entertain their friends with small, delicious dinners, and Marshall Ames, the radio friend, was invited often. Marshall, a bachelor whose avocation was food, loved to be invited.

"Nobody but Letty serves two desserts," he used to say. "Sherbet with the meat course, and another dessert with coffee."

He was eating his second helping of the second dessert one evening when he made an announcement.

"Television is the coming thing in entertainment," he said earnestly.

"To television!" Bart declaimed.

"The station has been getting ready for it, you know, and I learned today that I am to be program director."

"That's wonderful," Letty said. "I'll miss you, though, Marsh. I'll miss working with you."

Marshall nodded.

"You can go into television, too," Bart said.

And then there was an awkward little silence.

"Sure," Marshall said, bridging it. "I understand it's tricky," Bart said. He looked almost angry. "You can't tell who is going to televise attractively."

"That's right," Marshall said.

"Quit it, boys," Letty said. "I enjoy the little radio work I do, of course, and I like to sing. But I'm a housefrau first of all." She grinned. "When television puts radio out of business, I'll be ready to retire. I don't sing well enough to pay people to look at me."

"What's the matter with looking at you?" Bart demanded. "You look pretty good to me. And if it's your nose you're talking about, why, you can change that if you want to. There's a fellow at the office whose wife had a plastic job done. He said it wasn't bad at all to go through, and it didn't cost a lot."

Letty's face tightened but she said quietly, "Who was that, Bart? You didn't tell me."

Bart stirred his coffee. "Ferdie's wife. Of course, she needed a plastic job on her whole face." He laughed.

"I didn't know you objected so much to my nose," Letty said.

"Me? Who said anything about me? But you harp on it all the time."

"I guess I used to." Letty had to be honest. "But lately it hasn't bothered me so much. I suppose I'm just getting used to it." Her laugh was almost natural. "Of course, I don't have to look at it as much as you do. Maybe I ought to get it changed."

"Not on my account," Bart said stiffly.

Then Marshall said, "To people who know you, Letty, your nose is you. We like it. But an audience is another thing. If you've got a regulation pretty face—".

"The kind you find on a magazine cover," Letty said.

"That's right. If you've got that kind of face, you've got your audience right off the bat. Maybe you're a housewife, but some housewives turn out to be stars."

Letty shook her head. "Not me, Marsh. That isn't what I want. If I had the operation"—she raised her head in a little gesture of defiance, of pride—"it

wouldn't be for professional reasons. It wouldn't be for an audience. It would be for me, because I like pretty girls, because I'd like to be pretty, too."

Her heart was beating fast and she felt on the defensive, alone, at bay. Then both of the men smiled at her with affection, and that brought tears to her eyes. She blinked them back and went on:

"Maybe that's vanity, but it was vanity that made me change my denim shorts for my best dress when it was time for you two to arrive tonight."

"I like you in shorts," Bart said.

"The fat girl diets, and boasts of the pounds she's lost," Letty said, ignoring him. "Everybody congratulates her and thinks she's smart. Why should I be ashamed to reduce my nose?"

"You shouldn't," Marshall said.

"Ferdie's wife had something the matter inside her nose," Bart said; "crooked septum or something; and she had that fixed at the same time."

Letty looked at him coldly. For the first time she saw him, not as Bart, whom she loved, who was indistinguishable from her very being, but as that man sitting across the table from her who had been unpardonably rude and obtuse. For, in some ridiculous fashion, she felt Bart had let her down. Her love had survived the fact that he didn't find her beautiful, maybe it had even been deeper because of that, but now she felt it had received a blow. The idea of a plastic operation interested her. It even excited her. But, illogically, she felt that she would never forget or forgive that Bart had made the suggestion.

"There's nothing the matter with the inside of my nose," she said stiffly.

"There's nothing the matter with the outside, either," Bart raised his voice. "Don't have the job done for my sake. I only suggested it because I thought you'd like the idea."

"I like the idea fine," Letty said. And then she burst into tears. There was no warning at all. She was more aghast than either of the men, and the tears stopped as abruptly as they had gushed out, but she got up from the table, avoiding their eyes. "I seem to be very tired," she said. "If you will excuse me, I'm going to bed."

Letty had never done anything like that before in her life.

Marshall decided to leave immediately, though it was early. Bart didn't try to detain him. They spoke in low voices, as if someone had died. . . .

WHEN Bart went into the bedroom he found that Letty was asleep. Fast asleep. This was the first night of their marriage that she had ever gone to bed before him, the first night that they hadn't said good night. It made him feel a little desolate. He stood looking down at her, feeling sorry for himself, and suddenly he was feeling sorry for her.

As far as he was concerned, her nose was all right. He meant it, but she'd never believe it. Well, if she wanted a new nose, he'd get her one. He felt big with the wish to give her whatever she wanted. Then something about her stillness caught him. She wasn't asleep! He moved angrily to confront her. Then he stopped. If that's the way she wanted it, that's the way she could have it. All because of a nose, he thought violently. . . .

Letty had the plastic operation, of course. She and Bart never discussed it again. They talked about it but they never discussed it. There were no more tears, no more going to bed without saying good night, but it wasn't good. It was the first thing—big or small—that they hadn't shared in their marriage. It was happening to them, but they weren't sharing it. Letty was eager for the operation, eager to show Bart what she would look like if only her nose was different. Bart was eager for the operation, eager to have it over with, so they could begin forgetting about it.

Bart arranged for Letty to meet Ferdie's wife, and Ferdie's wife came with snapshots showing her nose before and after. There wasn't any great change, just enough to make it less noticeable. It was a very sensible kind of job. Ferdie's wife gave Letty the name of her surgeon.

Dr. Sidney Lee was a young man with none of the brisk, antiseptic characteristics of a surgeon as Letty pictured a surgeon. He had dark, rather visionary eyes. He was tall and loosely put together. He was very shy except about his work. Letty would have said he looked more like an artist than a surgeon.

He pointed his long fingers together and considered for an uncomfortable time. When he asked her why she wanted her nose changed, Letty brought out the radio work she did, the possibility of television, a little ashamed of her hypocrisy, but feeling that perhaps that was a more valid reason for wanting a new nose.

"A singer uses her voice, not her nose," Dr. Lee said.

LETTY flushed, then grew angry. Dr. Lee was a plastic surgeon. His job was to do plastic surgery for whoever wanted it, not to cross-examine them on why they wanted it. Just the same, she would tell him. The real reason. She was not ashamed.

"I don't want a career. I don't care about television. I only sing because it's fun, because it's something to do. I want my nose changed because I want a beautiful nose. I want a profile I can turn on anyone, a profile I can be photographed in, a profile to try hats on. I want a nose I can wrinkle, a nose that will look cute when I pout, when I yawn, or when I brush my teeth, so I won't have to wonder what I look like when I drink through a straw."

She talked until she was empty; then she stopped talking and just sat there and let Dr. Lee look at her. He placed her in several positions, in various lights. He studied her close up and from a distance. Letty felt very grateful to him. He didn't try to say her nose was all right. He didn't try to persuade her that beauty is only skin-deep. He said she was a very pretty girl except for her nose. He said it didn't fit her face. In the end, he sent her home with sketches of a dozen different noses.

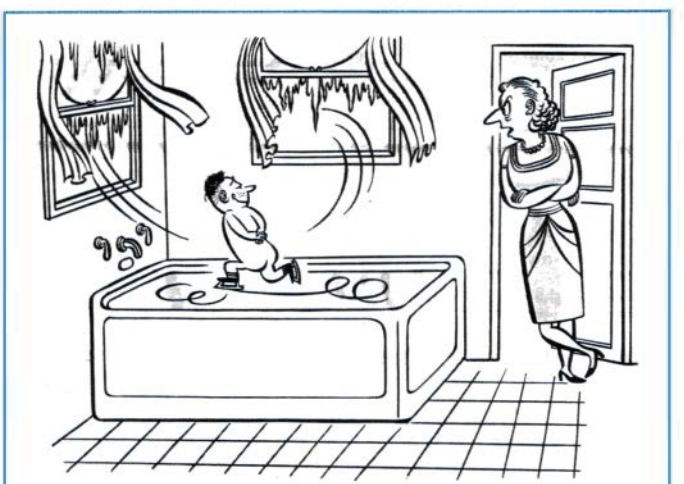
After dinner, Letty brought them out. "What's your favorite kind of nose?" she asked Bart, but he only grunted from behind the newspaper.

"Here's one," Letty said, "that looks about like mine does now. Who do you suppose would have a plastic job done to get a nose like mine?"

Bart threw down the paper. "Lots of people," he shouted. "There's nothing wrong with your nose!"

"Except for television and magazine covers," Letty reminded him. She handed him the batch of sketches and he looked through them angrily.

"This is silly," he said. "You're not going out to buy a new nose like you'd shop for a new hat. He did a very sen-



"I was wondering what was taking you so long"

For The American Magazine by Irwin Caplan

sible job on Ferdie's wife. Didn't you tell him that's what you want?"

"I told him what I want," Letty said. "A nose to him is important. He thinks certain noses belong on certain faces. He's going to give me the kind of nose that belongs on my face. He's an artist. He's not going to do a sensible job; he's going to do an aesthetic job."

"If he knows what he's going to do, why did he bother to give you these sketches?"

"He's interested in getting my opinion of myself. He may not give me the kind of nose I want, but he wants to see what I'd like. In the end, he'll use his own judgment."

"Whose nose is it, anyway?" Bart asked.

"His," Letty said calmly. She leaned over and pulled out a sketch from Bart's hands, a picture of a very straight, very short nose. "This is Eve's nose."

"You don't want Eve's nose," Bart said.

"Why not? You think Eve's pretty. You've said so many times."

"Maybe she is pretty. But she's selfish. She's cold-blooded."

"We're just talking about my sister's nose," Letty said coldly, "not her character."

"I don't want you to look like her," he shouted.

They stared angrily at each other, and then suddenly Letty smiled, as if everything had become clear. "Shall we forget the whole business?" she asked softly.

There was a curious look in Bart's eyes, and she held her breath. They were on the verge of discussion now, not just talking. They were beginning to act as if this concerned both of them. Then Bart remembered.

"It's Dr. Lee's nose," he said; "ask him."

"I will," Letty promised. . . .

The first time Bart saw Letty after the operation she burst into tears. Then she realized that she couldn't blow her nose, and she stopped quickly. The sight of her in the hospital tore at Bart and he went to gather her into his arms, but she held him off.

"Don't hurt me," she said.

He withdrew stiffly. "I was just going to kiss your cheek."

"Please, Bart."

This was the first time she had ever turned down his kiss for any reason. Even when he had had the mumps she had kissed him, and she had got the mumps, too.

He sat down beside her and she held out her hand. After an interval, he reached out his.

"Does it hurt?" he asked.

"Not much."

"You hold your head funny."

She laughed. "I have a feeling that if I move hurriedly, it might fall off." Then she loosened her hand from his so he wouldn't feel how much it meant to her, and asked, "How do you like it?"

"Can't tell much now."

Letty dropped her eyes. "While he was at it, Dr. Lee said he removed a lot of old scar tissue from the left side. He said it was a wonder I could breathe at all. He said I must have had an injury at some time, so he took it out. I guess the operation was worth while from that standpoint anyway."

"Sure," Bart agreed.

Letty waited. Prickles of embarrassment broke out all over her. When he left it at that, when he had nothing more to say to her, she went cold with anger. . . .

Dr. Lee brooded over Letty like a mother over a newborn baby, and Letty clung to his solicitude, letting it fill her need for Bart. At each visit his elation grew. He lost his shyness, he called her Letty, and on his last visit he kissed her. She returned the kiss with affection and gratitude, and resentment against Bart's attitude.

"You're beautiful," Dr. Lee said.

Something stirred in Letty, something that had been stifled for twenty-one years.

Then he went on: "You're my most beautiful job."

Of course, Letty thought, his interest was professional, scientific.

Marshall came to see her, and he kissed her, too. He said, "It's sensational! You're beautiful!"

After he left Letty asked for a hand mirror. The hand mirror was still on her bed where she could reach it when Bart came again. He started to come in, started to back out, gave her a swift second look, then entered sheepishly.

"Hello, Bart," she said; "you can kiss me tonight. Two other men did."

He looked wary.

"The doctor and Marshall."

Bart came around the side of the bed and kissed her carefully. Letty's eyes misted over. It was very like the first kiss he had ever given her.

"It seems strange," he said.

"It's been a long time," Letty said.

"The swelling's all gone," he said.

She nodded.

"It went fast," Bart said.

"Sidney said it would."

"Sidney?"

"Dr. Lee."

"Oh."

Letty's fingers reached for the handle of the mirror and held on to it. "How do I look?" she asked.

He nodded. A smile came quickly, and vanished quickly.

"Very pretty," he said formally.

Letty smiled.

"You always had a pretty smile," he said. "And pretty eyes and pretty hair."

"Do you like the kind of nose he gave me?" She turned her profile to him confidently. It was one of those noses that dip just the slightest, and tilt just the slightest, are too straight to be called anything but straight, and end the tiniest bit abruptly.

Bart nodded, and that funny little smile came and went. Then he said, "It's shiny."

Letty didn't seem to mind at all. Before, she would have reached for a compact, flustered and anxious. Now she just laughed.

"I know," she said, "but I'm afraid to powder it." . . .

For the first few nights Letty said she'd better sleep alone. She was afraid

of being hurt. Also, Bart liked lots of fresh air at night, and Letty was afraid of getting a cold in her nose. So Bart moved into the spare-room. For the time being. Only, once out, it was hard to get back. Not that Letty made it hard. She stiffened when he kissed her, but he knew that was because she was afraid he would hurt her. She was always in a hurry to move away, but once at a safe distance she tried to make up for it by reaching out to him.

"All we seem to do any more," he said, "is hold hands."

She laughed, and finally he had to laugh, too.

"Darling," she said, "you know why. Just as soon as my nose is fully healed."

"I thought it was," Bart said.

"Well, *I* don't," Letty argued. "Maybe I'm being silly. Maybe it's hysterical. But I have this feeling, and you'll have to be patient with me."

Letty had never been silly. Never been hysterical. "Maybe it's a feeling that you don't want to be kissed by me."

"Now *you're* silly. If you'll hold still, I'll kiss you." And he did, and she did, but it wasn't too good. They stood back and studied each other, and then, because they were both a little afraid, they passed it over. "It's just because of the operation," Letty thought. Once she could be sure her nose was healed, things would be the same again.

"It's just because of the operation," Bart thought. Things would never be the same again. . . .

THE radio station began to announce Letty as their lovely little singer, beautiful Letty Brown, glamorous Letty Brown. There were pictures of her in the lobby—in full face, in profile.

"All you got was a new nose," Marshall marveled, "but you're gorgeous!"

She was getting more calls to sing, and she was finding it more difficult to take care of the studio and the house. She was handling the two jobs with less efficiency. Of course, that adjective simply couldn't hold out against adjectives like beautiful or glamorous.

Now, instead of two desserts, there was often none. Marshall, when he was invited to come home for potluck, didn't complain. He didn't complain when he was invited to get the dinner. Letty, radiant and beautiful, would tie an apron on him, and then, poised by the kitchen table, would direct the preparations. Bart would come to stand in the doorway and watch morosely.

When Marshall wasn't there, Dr. Lee nearly always was. He dropped in at odd hours, often quite late.

"Hasn't he any regular hours?" Bart complained.

"He's so busy," Letty murmured. "He works day and night."

"He can stop working on you."

"He's interested in me," Letty said.

"I know," Bart said moodily.

"He says I'm his most beautiful case. After all, it's almost as if he created me."

"All he did was operate on your nose," Bart pointed out.

"He feels toward me as doctors do toward babies they deliver," Letty said.

Usually Bart got tired of waiting for the doctor to go, fed up with the interminable conversation about Letty's nose, and he would excuse himself and retire to the spare bedroom. He would get into his pajamas and sit on the edge of the bed smoking until he heard Letty go into her room; then he would put out his cigarette and listen to her movements. When he heard her get into bed, he would get into the spare-room bed, and lie there sleepless for a long time.

LETTY was radiant and glowing, like those laughing girls in magazine illustrations with the wind blowing in their faces. But sometimes, when she came in late and things went wrong in the kitchen, she would get impatient with the dinner, with Bart if he came out to help, with Bart if he didn't come out to help. Sometimes she would go off to bed saying she wasn't hungry, leaving him to eat alone and scour the pans she had burned.

When there were to be guests, sometimes she would spend too much time getting herself ready—Letty, who hardly had looked in a mirror—and then, when the time was short and the house and the food weren't ready, she would go to pieces—Letty, who had never had a nerve in her body. Then she would have to fix her face all over again, while Bart ran around the living-room with the vacuum sweeper at the last minute, and then dashed out to the frozen-food store.

Lots of girls not half so beautiful as Letty do things like that, and get away with it, and more. Letty couldn't have been blamed if she'd done it on purpose. She had a right to be a prima donna now when she had been a supernumerary for so long. But she didn't do it on purpose. She thought she was acting just the way she had always acted, only now she was beautiful.

Of course, she knew when she was hysterical, but she laid that to the operation. Operations are a shock to the nervous system. It takes time to get over them. When Bart reminded her that she had had only a local anesthetic, she looked as if he had slapped her face.

Things never stand still. If they don't get better, they get worse. From Letty's point of view, they got better. She came home one day with an armful of the little publicity magazine that the radio station published. A dozen copies of the same issue, the current one, and on the cover of each one was—well, it's easy to guess: Letty was a magazine-cover girl.

Bart was home and sitting in the living-room. Letty stood in front of him and dumped the magazines at his feet. They spread out in an arc, and there was her picture, smiling up from every cover.

Bart didn't change expression. He looked at each cover as if it were a different picture. Then he said, "Congratulations."

Letty was very forbearing. She didn't remind him of the time he had expressed his opinion about her and magazine covers. Instead, she kissed him on *his* nose, and went out to the kitchen to prepare dinner. This night she didn't get flustered, she didn't burn anything, she washed the pans as she went along, the way she used to, and there was even dessert—shortcake—but she whipped the cream with a touch of almond flavoring.

After dinner Bart helped her with the dishes, and then they sat in the living-room. No one called to see them—not Marshall, not Dr. Lee.

When it was time to retire, Bart started for the spare-room. Letty stopped him as he was entering. She stood in the doorway of their bedroom and said, "Aren't you going into the wrong room?"

Her expression was a little arch, but he recognized that that would be from strain. He, himself, felt strained. She was saying what he'd been wishing her to say for weeks, what he had imagined her saying in his dreams. But now something was wrong.

"I don't know," he said slowly.

Truly, he didn't. He saw her stiffen. He saw what had been in her eyes, retreat. He had said the wrong thing, of course. But he didn't know! The spare-room had been his for too long. He hadn't liked it, but he was used to it. Maybe if she had put her arms around him when she said it . . . Good heavens, did he want her to woo him? No! But he wanted to woo her. He started for her, but he saw that it was too late. Letty wasn't arch now. She wore the haughty expression that he had always found insufferable in certain beautiful women.

"If that's what having your nose remade does for you," he said unpleasantly.

She jumped at the word, as if she had been waiting for it. "You don't like my nose, do you? You still don't think I'm pretty, do you?"

The question stirred him, and he knew just how beautiful he thought she was, but he couldn't tell her now, now that everybody else was telling her.

"If you were a woman, I'd think you were jealous. Maybe, being a man, you are jealous."

"Of whom?" he asked, stiff with anger. "Of Marshall? Of your Dr. Sidney Lee?"

"Why not?"

"If that's what having your nose remade does for you," he repeated.

LETTY flushed. She deserved it. She'd been cheap. And unfair. Unfair to Sidney, who had been falling in love with her, and so had said good-by. Unfair to Marshall, who thought she was a knockout, but who had reminded her that day of her ambition first to be a housefrau, Bart's housefrau. Unfair to Bart, who was her husband.

"You liked it better the old way," she said. "Well, it's too late now." Then she went into the bedroom and shut the door.

It wasn't locked. Bart could open the door and go in. Into his wife's bedroom, his bedroom. Go in to his wife. And he wanted to. He wanted to so badly that the strain of not doing so made him feel sick. Then why didn't he? He wasn't jealous of Marshall or of Lee. If he had been it would have been easy. He would simply have taken Letty into his arms and kissed her, showed her that she belonged to him and not to another man. No. it wasn't that.

Then. was he jealous of her nose? The suggestion made him livid, made him want to hit something hard, smash some-

thing. When the rage subsided, he admitted helplessly that the nose had made a difference. The new nose, the operation, had pushed him out of his place in Letty's life. He had had nothing to do with it. It was the biggest thing that had ever happened to her, and he had had no part in it. He had wanted to share the experience with her, but something had made him reticent after that first evening's quarrel, a feeling of loyalty to Letty herself maybe, and Letty had been no help. She hadn't turned to him, she hadn't leaned on him, she had pushed him out.

Now, with her new beautiful nose, she was different. He'd been ready for that, for changes. He'd been ready to get acquainted again. He had looked forward to it. But she hadn't needed him. She had everybody's admiration now. He had nothing to give her. His whole being denied that, and he put his hand on the doorknob, but before he turned it he withdrew his hand. Letty had said it was too late now. . . .

THEY got over that night by ignoring it. It was a little like ignoring a dead body, but it's surprising what you can live with. Letty was busy at the studio, but she didn't talk about it much. They didn't have a whole lot to talk about.

The station had installed television, had been sending out its test patterns, and was ready to launch its first program. Letty was going to make her debut, a small part, but a beginning.

"I have to be there early," she said to Bart, "for a final rehearsal, and for make-up. It's been rugged. You have to unlearn everything you know, and learn a whole new—" She had started to pour out her excitement, and then she seemed to remember to whom she was talking, and she stopped. "You'll be there?"

"I'll stay home and see how it comes over our set. I'll be audience reaction," he added with more enthusiasm.

Something leaped up into her face, something that he recognized with a wrench. It was the way she used to look at him. . . .

He was sitting in front of the television set when she left, and he was still there when she came home.

She sat down in the chair nearest the door and said, "Well?"

He lifted his head out of his hands and looked at her, and then looked down at his hands as if there might be some explanation written there.

"I didn't see it," he said at last. "I didn't see the program."

Her eyebrows pulled together in a frown. "Didn't it come over?"

"I don't know. I forgot about the program," he said.

"You forgot?"

He looked foolish. "I got to thinking about something else. I didn't know it was so late." His expression changed. "I got to thinking about us, about how I've lost my wife," he said.

"You don't like my working," she said. "Well, you don't have to be worried."

He shook his head. "Your working has nothing to do with it." That was one of the answers that was hard, but he had it now. "This is between us."

"I didn't make it easy," she admitted. She put her hand to her forehead, found her hat was on, and took it off. "Maybe I was trying to get even; I didn't think of it like that, but maybe I was taking a small revenge."

"It wasn't you," he said; "it was me." That was the hardest answer of all, but now he had it, too. He already felt better. "Look," he said, leaning forward with elbows on his knees; "there are a lot of things I should have said to you. You're beautiful," he said, "breath-takingly, shatteringly beautiful." He seemed out of breath. "Dr. Lee did a wonderful job."

"Thanks," Letty said.

"I was a stupid fool," he said, "that time you asked me if I thought you were pretty."

"And I've never let you forget it," Letty said. "I knew you really thought I was pretty."

He looked at her in surprise, and then he nodded. That was another of the answers, but he hadn't expected to get it from her. "You were beautiful to me. I should have told you so. Then you would have been beautiful. That's what makes the big difference now—not what Lee did, not the new nose. It's the people who tell you that you're beautiful who make the difference."

"When did you find all this out?"

"Now. Sitting here. When I should have been watching your program." He smiled at her apologetically.

"I wish I had my old nose back," she burst out passionately.

"Why?" The word was like a blow.

"Then maybe you'd find your wife."

They had been sitting across the room from each other. Now they were standing in the middle of the room locked in each other's arms as in combat.

"Hold me tight," Letty said fiercely, and tears were running down her face. "I wanted you to tell me I was beautiful, but now I just want you to say you love me."

"I love you, my beautiful," Bart said.

A LONG time later, and they were no longer standing in the middle of the room, Letty said with no great effort, "The program was a flop, Bart."

He kissed her eyes.

"I was a flop. My face looked empty."

He bit her ear.

"But that's not why I wanted my old nose back," she said fiercely.

"No, of course not," he soothed her, and kissed her nose.

"I guess the operation wasn't a bad idea, though. I got rid of all that old scar tissue," she said.

He held her off indignantly. "Of course it wasn't a bad idea. And not because of any old scar tissue. Who cares about scar tissue?" He glared at her.

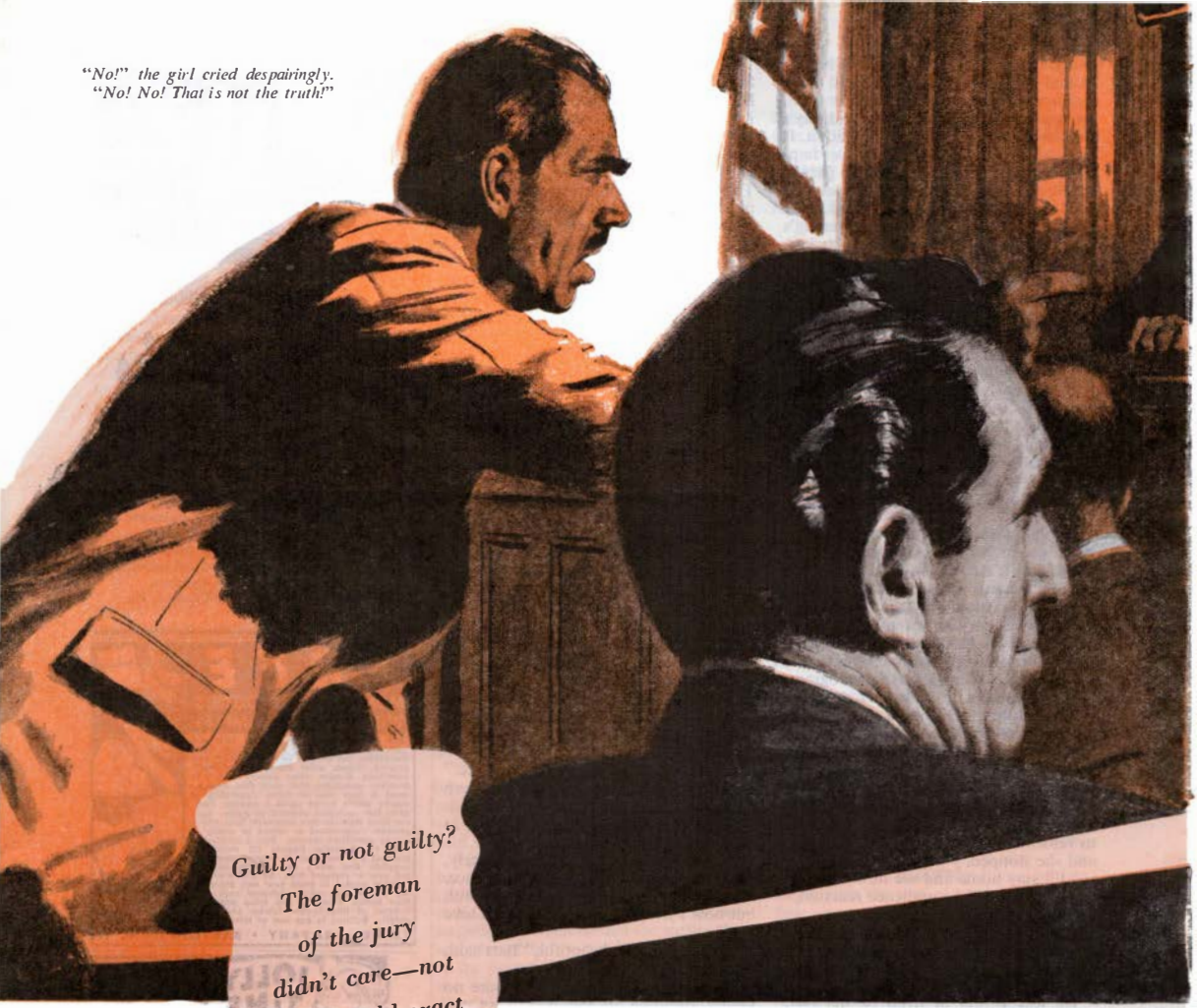
"I don't," she answered honestly.

"You got a new nose, a beautiful nose, an exquisite nose, a tantalizing nose," he gloated. "A bad idea? It was a wonderful idea!"

"I like the idea, too," Letty admitted.

Then they looked at each other and burst out laughing. Bart knew he had got his wife back again, by a nose.

THE END★★



"No!" the girl cried despairingly. "No! No! That is not the truth!"

Guilty or not guilty? The foreman of the jury didn't care—not if he could exact his terrible and secret revenge

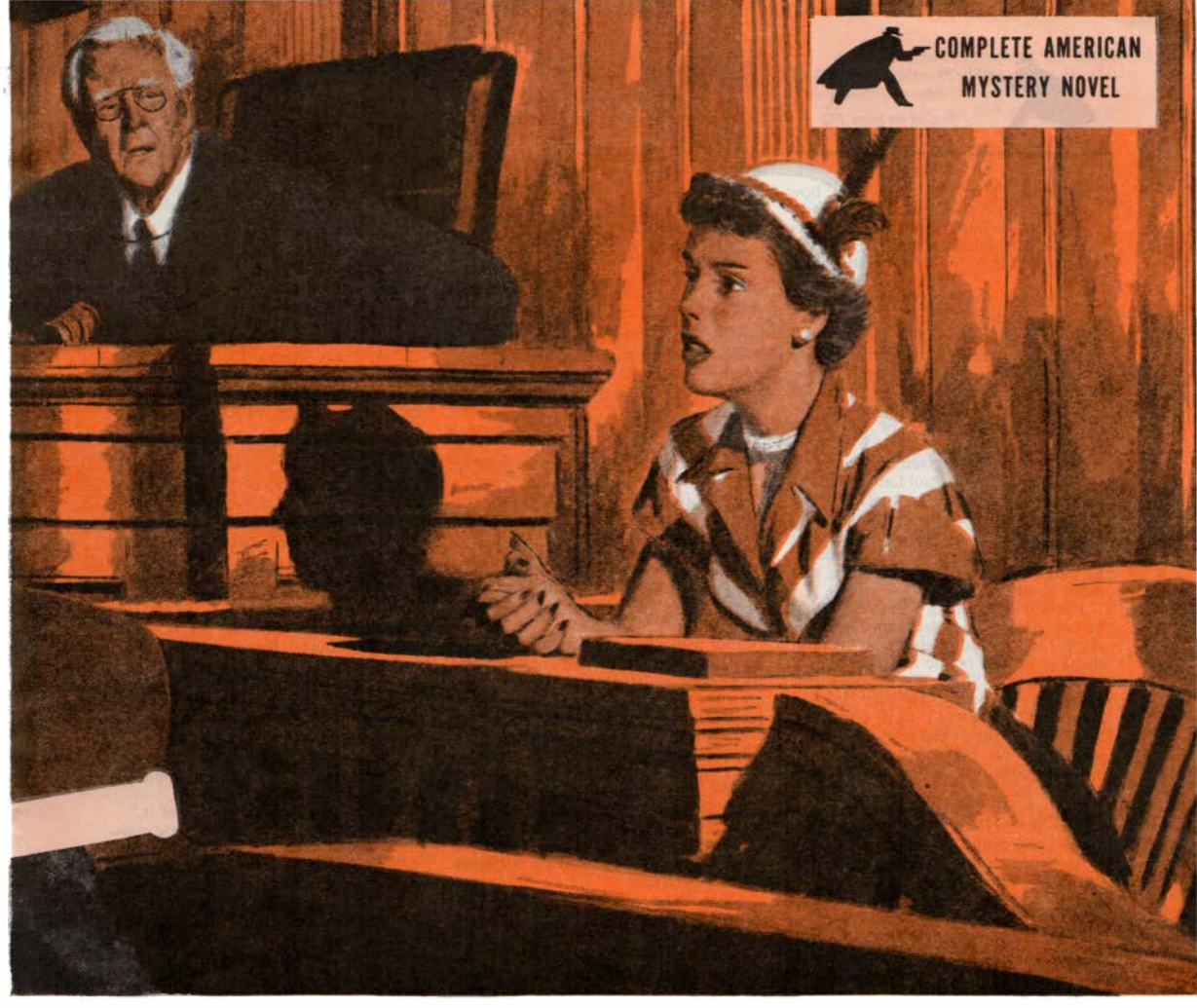
THE TRIAL OF

NOW the jurors were retiring to deliberate upon their verdict in the trial of Steven Kent, accused of the murder of Andrea, his wife. No inkling had come to them that in one hidden circumstance the trial had been unique. None of them had discovered that Bart Gibson, their foreman, had hated Steven Kent for as long as he could remember.

Because this had been a secret hatred, woven through his life like a black thread, there had been none to challenge him when the jury was chosen. Until he had seen Bart Gibson that first day of the trial, in the stale, sweltering atmosphere of an antiquated courtroom, Steven Kent had neither heard his name nor looked upon his face.

For Bart, the situation had a peculiar relish, his interest in the defendant scarcely keener than his interest in his fellow jurors, eleven men and women who might have been picked at random from any bus or street corner in Dover City. As human beings, they could not have been more commonplace, their individual prejudices and weaknesses playing like dark little fish under their conscientious attention to the matter at hand. Ever since the trial began Bart had been watching them out of the corner of his eye, but he had kept his own face free from any play of inner thought. This had not been difficult, for it was a shrewd gambler's face with a false geniality upon it sometimes like the gleam of a neon light.

Solemnly, a little like half-frightened children, they had listened to the opening



STEVEN KENT

by Josephine Bentham

ILLUSTRATION BY
VINCENT GUISE

address of the prosecution. Hodges, the District Attorney, a heavy-set man with beetling black brows and a square, powerful jaw, had roared at them in mighty and righteous wrath:

"What manner of man have you here on trial? I am going to tell you what manner of man! Then I am going to prove that what I tell you is true. You have—and this shortly will be clear to you—a man who has not become a common criminal through poverty, through wretchedness of birth, through any of the extenuating circumstances that might plead for your pity. No, ladies and gentlemen of the jury! You are concerned with a man whose life from infancy has been strewn with rose petals, who has had every opportunity that wealth and position could give him. You will discover a man so accustomed in his arrogance to the favors of fortune that he could not endure the turn in the tide that a less privileged man might have accepted with humility and fortitude.

"We are going to prove beyond any reasonable doubt that Steven Kent could not bring himself to accept the blow of fate that chained his lovely wife, a helpless victim, to a wheel chair. Was he thinking of *her* suffering? No! In his monstrous selfishness he was concerned only with the curtailing of his own pleasures, of his own lustful appetites. Oh, yes, ladies and gentlemen! We shall show how he turned to the young girl who came into his home as a companion to the stricken wife, how he dazzled this girl with his handsome appearance

The Mouth's AMERICAN Mystery Novel
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and his well-bred, charming ways, how he came, in his own infatuation, to decide upon the murder of his wife, solely because that unhappy woman stood between him and this new, exciting love affair.

"We shall produce witness after witness who were close to these three people, who saw this sordid drama unrolling before their eyes. We shall prove Steven Kent actually purchased the sleeping pills that brought about the death of Andrea Kent—purchased those pills, moreover, *on the very day of her death.*"

But the jury had given the same respectful attention to Paul Lansing, attorney for the defense, an agile, slender little man approaching the sixties, who had a dramatic way of tossing back a shock of pure white hair, and a tendency to make knifelike gestures with a thin white hand.

From the beginning it was clear that he was not going to let them forget his client's high standing as an architect in the community, or the fact that he had served in the South Pacific and had twice been decorated for valor. In delicate derision he had torn down the State's picture of a vicious, money-rotten weakling who could have murdered, cold-bloodedly, the unfortunate girl he had married.

Lansing promised to reveal the case against Steven Kent to be a tissue of coincidence and malice, and managed to hint at evidence pointing, actually, to the suicide of Andrea Kent.

Days had passed. The witnesses, one after another, had given their testimony. And some who had most longed to help Steven Kent had dug the pit for him a bit deeper. At long last the defendant himself had taken the stand.

Everyone had been looking forward to this moment. Would the accused break on the stand? Would he confess? What fresh revelations would there be when Harry Hodges began to cross-examine?

The dreary courtroom, simmering with heat, was hushed to an almost painful silence as Lansing called for Steven Kent.

Bart eyed the defendant uneasily, wondering how much the jury would be taken in by that look of quiet courage, combined with so much undeniable charm. Bart was especially afraid of the women. Kent, now in his late thirties, was as lean and hard and fit as a man ten years younger. Fair-haired, with far-seeing blue eyes, he had the look of one whose forebears had sailed the seven seas.

It soon became evident that not even this ordeal could shatter a poise so rooted in blood and discipline. He had taken the oath gravely, and fastened his gaze on his attorney, answering the preliminary questions without effort. Only at Lansing's first mention of his wife had he turned a shade paler. There was no break in his voice.

"Will you tell this court and jury, Mr. Kent, in what year you were married?"

"In 1933."

"What was the name of your fiancée?"

"Andrea Morrow."

"She was a young lady who occupied a certain social position?"

"In Dover City? Yes."

"Her family was not impoverished?"

"No."

"They were, in fact, people of a certain affluence?"

"Yes."

Here Hodges had frowned, and moved his expressive furry brows as if in perplexity. But he had not objected to the questions, and Lansing had gone on without hindrance:

"You were also, even at that time, a person of considerable means?"

Kent nodded, a bit uncomfortably. "Why, yes, that's true enough."

"Was there, then, any monetary reason for this marriage?"

"Nothing of that kind."

"On either side?"

"No."

"You would say it was a love match?"

"Yes. . . . Yes, I would certainly say so."

The witness was speaking with less readiness now, plainly finding it distressful to speak of these intimate matters. His attorney gave him a moment's pause, and resumed the questioning: "Now, would you say it turned out to be a happy marriage? In those first years? I am speaking now of the years between 1933 and 1946."

"We were reasonably happy."

"Will you clarify that statement for us, Mr. Kent?"

"I will try. We were as happy as we could be, I think—considering our tastes were so different."

"Was there anything objectionable, on either side, in these 'tastes' you speak of?"

"Oh, no! It was just that my wife was fond of gaiety—parties, dancing, having people around. . . . That was natural," Kent added hurriedly. "She was young and exceptionally attractive. But, as time went on, I got more and more studious—serious-minded, I suppose one might say. There were just these temperamental differences between us."

"Yet you both adjusted to these differences?"

"I believe we did the best we could."

"Now, will you tell the court and jury what happened in the year 1946?"

"Yes. It was in that year—in the summer—that Andrea was thrown from her horse. It was a bad accident. She suffered a serious injury to the spine. She was never able to walk again."

"Did you bring in specialists?"

"Yes."

"From where?"

"There were at least three from New York, as I recall—one from San Francisco—one from London."

"In addition to her own local physician?"

"Yes."

"Then you would say you did everything possible to help your wife?"

"I believe I did."

"But to no avail?"

"They told me it was quite hopeless."

"Mrs. Kent was informed of that?"

"Never in so many words. But I'm afraid she realized it well enough."

"How did she feel about it? Precisely what emotional effect did the accident have upon her?"

"Naturally, she was depressed. It was hard for her, very hard. Then, of course, she was cut off from all her former interests."

"Did you encourage her to make new interests?"

"I tried."

"With any success?"

"No. I failed completely."

"Did this depression of Mrs. Kent's let up a bit—fade, so to speak—as the time went on?"

Kent shook his head. "She continued to be—well, to be extremely unhappy."

"But you made every attempt you could to bring her some sort of happiness?"

"Just what any decent husband would do."

"You continued to spend your evenings at home?"

"Yes."

"All of them?"

"All of them," Kent repeated.

Lansing paused for a moment, shifting some papers in his hand. The pause seemed to warn his witness—and the jury—of the importance of the testimony to come.

"Now, then, Mr. Kent, was your wife sleeping badly?"

"She sometimes complained of it."

"When did she first make these complaints?"

"About two months before her death."

"Did her physician prescribe anything to relieve this condition?"

"Yes. He prescribed sleeping pills—barbiturates."

"Was she taking these pills regularly, as prescribed?"

"I do not believe so."

"Did you believe so at the time?"

"Yes."

"Then what has made you change your mind?"

"The fact of her death."

"Will you elaborate that statement?"

"Yes. I now believe my wife was secretly planning to take her own life. I believe she was hoarding the tablets until—well—until there should be enough for that purpose."

"Did you have any such fear before the actual event?"

"No. That would not be the word. I had never felt anything so concrete as fear."

"Had you ever any idea at all of such a thing?"

"I had a certain uneasiness, but I refused to recognize it, consciously."

"Did you act on this sense of uneasiness in any way?"

"Well, I would always see to it that my wife never had a large quantity of the sleeping pills at hand. When I had the prescription filled I would give the bottle to Mrs. Pardridge, our housekeeper, who would give the pills to my

wife, but never more than one or two at a time."

"But you took no precaution against any hoarding of the pills?"

"I'm afraid not. Of course, I was not acknowledging to myself that any precaution was really necessary."

"That is clear, I think. . . . And now will you tell us what happened on the evening of April twentieth, in the year 1949?"

Steven Kent's eyes moved from the attorney and seemed to fix themselves, unseeingly, upon a door in the back of the courtroom. His voice was level, almost toneless.

"On that particular morning," he began, "my wife had asked me to have the prescription refilled. That is, the prescription for the sleeping pills. On my way home from the office I stopped at a druggist's and had this done."

At this point Bart Gibson's mouth could have been observed to twist in derision. The druggist had already testified about filling that prescription. Kent wasn't going to gain any ground for himself by admitting a fact he would have been forced to admit.

Kent continued, "I put the package, along with a camera I had had repaired, on the seat beside me in my car, an open roadster. I had started to drive home when I discovered I was out of cigarettes. As I wanted to smoke, I pulled the car up to a curb near a corner tobacco store. I went in for the cigarettes and had to wait a few minutes—there were four or five customers ahead of me. When I got back, the camera and the package were gone. Someone had stolen them."

Here there had been an audible murmur in the courtroom, for this particular morsel of information had been the subject of conjecture ever since the trial began.

Lansing had thrown back his shock of white hair. "Now, Mr. Kent! Did you notice that at once?"

"No, I did not."

"Have you any reason to give for that? Any explanation?"

"Nothing but ordinary human carelessness. I am frequently careless and absent-minded in that way."

"When did you become aware of this loss?"

"Not until the next day. Not until the police questioned me."

"Then did you advertise?"

"I did. I offered a reward for the return of the package with the druggist's label, but there was never any reply."

Lansing, having made a swift, conclusive gesture with his thin white hands, turned to the district attorney with an air of smiling confidence. "Your witness," he said.

Hodges eyed the defendant for a full moment. Then, with unwonted silkiness, he began his cross-examination:

"Now, you have stated, Mr. Kent, that your wife had access to a large number of sleeping tablets on the very night you 'lost' this large new supply. Do you ask the jury to accept that fact simply as a rather remarkable coincidence?"

"Yes," Kent said slowly, "I suppose I do."

"You 'suppose' you do? You are not clear about what you are asking?"

"I am not clear about what happened."

"Oh, I see! You are in some sort of daze about these events?"

"No. I am not in a daze. I am trying to say I have no positive *knowledge* of what happened."

"Then," said Hodges sardonically, "suppose we go back to this astonishing 'coincidence' of yours. Do you—I am putting the question, Mr. Kent—do you ask the jury to accept it?"

"I don't know! It may have been a coincidence, astonishing or not. Or—"

"Why do you hesitate, Mr. Kent? Have you some other theory to put before us?"

"Only that Andrea, my wife, was not in a really sound mental condition. Since the accident she had come to hate me, I think. She may have planned everything to happen—just this way."

Hodges drew back, and allowed a second or two to go by, as if allowing time for some altogether monstrous suggestion to sink into his consciousness.

"Are you trying to imply that Andrea Kent committed suicide—and at the same time tried to cast suspicion on you? Are you accusing your own dead wife of a crime so base?"

"I am not accusing her! She would have been irresponsible. She would not have known what she was doing! But it may have happened. . . . I don't know, I tell you!"

"Then let us leave these theories of yours, if you please. Let us get back to those earlier prescriptions. . . . You have stated it as your belief that Mrs. Kent was taking the sleeping medicine all along?"

"Yes."

"And you felt she was getting the proper amount of sleep?"

"Yes, I suppose so."

"You 'suppose' so?"

"I took it for granted."

"Now, however, you believe she had been hoarding those pills?"

"It is the only possible explanation."

"Yet in that case she would have been going without sufficient sleep? For a period of two months?"

"Well—not necessarily.

"But you have said her own physician prescribed these sedatives?"

"Yes, but she may not have told him the truth. She may have merely pretended to need them. After all, she was planning this thing! Whether or not she intended to implicate me—*she was planning this thing!*"

For the first time the witness's tone indicated he was nearing the end of his endurance. Hodges closed in quickly:

"And you, Mr. Kent—you weren't planning anything at all?"

"No!"

"Although there were problems, were there not, weighing rather heavily on your mind?"

"I was not making plans—of any kind."

"Well, now, let me see. . . . At the time of the tragedy a certain young lady was living in your home, was she not? Wait a moment—I meant to be specific. I am

referring, of course, to Miss Cicely Driscoll, who has already given her testimony."

"What is your question?"

"Was Miss Driscoll living in your house with your approval?"

"Yes. She was a companion to my wife."

"A paid companion?"

"Yes."

"You were in love with her?"

Kent looked steadily at the district attorney. He answered without hesitation: "Yes. I was—and I am—in love with her."

"Feeling as you did, you felt perfectly comfortable about having this young woman in the house with your invalid wife?"

"Not comfortable, no. But we—"

"Yes?" Hodges prompted as the witness seemed to grope for words. "Will you go on, please?"

"The relationship was innocent. I couldn't help feeling that that made some difference."

"You felt free, then, to tell your wife about it?"

"No."

"Yet the relationship was innocent?"

"I could not tell my wife I was in love with someone else."

"Yet you could keep this other woman in the house?"

A QUICK anger flared in Kent's eyes. "I would not put it that way!"

"Disregarding how you'd put it—you did permit Miss Driscoll to stay on in the house?"

"Yes, I did."

"You felt that was honorable?"

"I persuaded myself that no one was harmed by it."

"Now, Mr. Kent, on the afternoon of April fifteenth you drove Miss Driscoll to a cottage you maintain at Kennicott Lake?"

"Yes."

"On that occasion you told her of this great affection you have for her?"

"Yes."

"How long did you and Miss Driscoll stay at the cottage?"

"About twenty minutes."

"Then what did you do?"

"We drove home."

"How far is the cottage from your house in town?"

"About sixty miles."

"You drove that distance just to spend twenty minutes at the cottage?"

"I hadn't planned any exact time."

"You hadn't planned to make love to Miss Driscoll?"

"No!"

"You just wanted to have this little chat with her?"

"I just wanted to talk to her—yes."

"You understood that Miss Driscoll returned your love?"

"Yes."

"Then what did you feel when she told you she was going to leave you? To leave your house for good and all?"

"I felt it was the wise thing for her to do."

"You accepted her decision?"

"Yes."

"Knowing you were going to lose this girl you were so much in love with—didn't you actually feel desperate about it?"

"No, I wouldn't say I was 'desperate.'"

"Extremely unhappy?"

"Yes."

"Unhappy enough to wish with all your soul you could be in a position to marry this girl?"

Steven Kent lifted his head. "I accepted the situation as best I could," he said. "God knows I wished no harm to my wife."

At this point the cross-examiner dismissed the witness rather hurriedly. He had evidently felt a slight discomfiture, for his final question, so charged with meaning, had in some curious way failed of its mark. In Steven Kent's last statement there had been a warmth of conviction that rang like a true coin. Among the spectators there had been an instinctive, spontaneous murmur of sympathetic response. . . .

"So that's the Pacific Ocean—somehow I always pictured it as being much larger"

For The American Magazine by W. A. Vanselow

Certainly Steven Kent's testimony had left the most lasting impression upon the men and women now assembled in the jury-room. All the rest of the trial, Bart told himself irritably, had been knocked clean out of their heads.

Cass Bentley was the first to voice his opinion. Bentley, a manufacturer of children's garments, was a plump individual with a receding hairline and a bulbous nose. There was no tightness about his face. He would be as flexible as rubber in his notions and beliefs.

"Now, why am I lighting a cigar?" he was demanding genially. "I won't even have the time to smoke it! That poor fellow no more killed his wife than I did. I guess we can go right back and say so, can't we?"

Mrs. Dora Munson, a middle-aged housewife, beamed upon the speaker. She was a dumpy woman with eyes that had a permanently startled look, and a little chin that faded into four or five ropes of pink cultured pearls.

"Yes," she said, "and I'd just like to see the expression that man Hodges will get on his face! My, isn't he ferocious-looking!"

"It's just his eyebrows," said Bart.

"Well, why can't a man have his eyebrows plucked same as a woman?"

Bart grinned. "I hope you ladies don't go so much by a man's looks. That doesn't leave much of chance for me!"

Miss Vida Newhall, schoolteacher, had been clicking the table with clean, sharp, unvarnished fingernails. "This seems a bit trivial, Mr. Foreman. We're here, after all, to consider a matter of life or death."

Jason Meers, salesman of barroom supplies, looked at Miss Newcomb without favor. He came to Bart's defense: "A little joke never hurt nobody," he said.

He smiled a fat smile at Mrs. Bette Wendel, a juror who was pretty. She responded with an expert little flash of spiked black lashes. "Now tell us," she said, "what *you* think, Mr. Meers?"

"About the case? Oh, he ain't guilty. Naw. First place, he wouldn't have the nerve."

THIS was annoying to Mrs. Frances Perry, department store executive. "I don't know what you mean by 'nerve.' He was decorated for gallantry in action."

"That ain't the same thing."

"No? Are you an authority, Mr. Meers? Were you in the South Pacific?"

Mr. Meers leered at her. "Nope. I was in Africa. I was decorated three times."

Mrs. Perry colored slightly. "I apologize."

"Lady, I ain't sensitive."

"One might wish," said Miss Newhall, "there could be some sort of concentration on the matter at hand."

Her eye fell on Mr. Irvin Potter, printer, who spoke out of pure nervousness. "Well, I say he behaved in a very gentlemanly way throughout. I was struck by it," said Mr. Potter.

Bart controlled a quick, impatient movement. "But we couldn't take that as any angle, could we? I mean, afterward if the reporters started asking us questions and all like that. We'd look

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kind of class-conscious, wouldn't we?"

"Oh, that wouldn't do," Mr. Potter said hastily. "We wouldn't want a thing like that said! I didn't mean that!"

He subsided, and Bart turned smoothly to Mr. Dean Austin, accountant: "Well, now, how do you feel about this thing, sir?"

Mr. Austin, a thin little man with mulberry green eyes, answered with some acerbity, "It's the *facts* I'm going on. I don't think he's proved guilty on the *facts*."

"Character," Mrs. Perry observed, "is also a fact. I've done a good bit of personnel work, it so happens—and I have always found it advisable to trust my own judgment of character."

"You think he's innocent?" Bart asked calmly.

"I most decidedly do!"

"I agree with you," said Miss Newhall.

ALSO in agreement, it developed, were Miss Christina Kilburn, photographer, Miss Jessie Slater, bookkeeper, and Mr. Dwight Thayer, dealer in antiques. Miss Kilburn's agreement had a bitter, reluctant flavor; Miss Slater's was timid and self-conscious; Mr. Thayer's was calm and precise.

"Well, that's the lot of us!" Cass Bentley said. "Or, no—wait a minute—How about you, Chief?"

Bart assumed a conscientious expression. "Only thing is—now, this is just another slant on it, of course—but how would it look?"

Mrs. Munson pursed her soft little mouth in surprise. "How would *what* look?"

"Well, maybe it would strike the Judge we were in too big a hurry—not taking the time to deliberate the way we should."

Miss Newhall nodded. "You have a point there. Rather definitely."

"It was kind of bothering me a little," murmured Bart. "But how about the rest of you?"

The rest of them, after a certain amount of discussion, were finally in accord. They would take a little more time to consider the verdict.

And he would have that verdict right where he wanted it, Bart promised himself. Even now he was getting a line on these people. . . .

Bart was good at getting a line on people. That was what had made him useful to Boss Dickerson, who had much to say about the political situation in Dover City. Bart had performed a number of useful services for the Boss, and in return had been given remunerative commissions hovering on the precarious edge of rectitude and respectability. Sometimes it seemed that Bart Gibson, at thirty-eight, should have traveled farther than he had. He was smart enough—the Boss and his henchmen were accustomed to speak of Bart as a very smart little guy—and yet the breaks had always seemed to go against him.

The bad breaks had begun in childhood, when he had lived with censorious grandparents while his widowed mother worked as cook in the home of the Barkley Kents, who were wealthy, socially prominent, and as far removed from the Gibsons' sphere as a maharaja of India. On her afternoons off Emily Gibson had fondled her little son, wept over him, and talked continually of the superior advantages of young Steven Kent, who was just Bart's age. It was an endless saga, borne along on a veritable stream of maternal indignation.

There was the time young Steven had jumped into an icy lake to save a four-year-old girl from drowning. This had made a hero of him, but the fact that he didn't want to talk of the exploit, or accept any praise for it, made him even more of a hero. Emily Gibson had been especially waspish when she talked about that, and Bart knew *he* should have been the one given a chance to jump into an icy lake to save that silly, screaming little girl.

Then there were all the stories she had told of Steven's fine electric train, of his pony, of the wonderful birthday party where all his rich little friends had stuffed themselves with ice cream and caterers' cake, and found costly toys wrapped up beside their plates. And again Bart understood that *he* was the one who should have had the train and the pony, the party and the toys. Instead, he had had to accept the slightly worn but still serviceable pants and caps and sweaters his mother had brought home from the big house. In school their origin had been suspected. One bright little girl had composed a sensationally successful jingle about it:

Hand-me-down shoes, hand-me-down clothes!
Bart's hand-me-down from his head to his toes!

In shame and in loathing, Bart had worn the cast-off garments of Steven Kent.

After his mother left the Kent household, even after her death, he could not break the torturing link with a man who was unaware of his very existence. In a town the size of Dover City the glamorous doings of people like the Kents were chronicled in the newspapers and gossiped about, rather proudly, by less spectacular citizens. Every failure in Bart Gibson's life had been emphasized by some bright favor of fortune tossed at the well-shod feet of Steven Kent. . . .

BART was absently fingering one of his own shirt cuffs. Even now he could not buy the kind of expensive, monogrammed shirts he wanted to buy. And he had to wear his shirts too long a time. They got a limp, gray look.

He came out of this reverie to find the jury amiably concurring on the personal appeal of Paul Lansing, attorney for the defense.

"Well, yeah, but a lawyer's got to have what it takes," Bart said, "or nobody would be hiring him, would they? I mean it's part of his job. Like an actor."

That, they agreed, was true enough.

"I think," Bart went on cautiously,

"we ought to take a look at those witnesses. That doctor, for instance. Now, he's a good professional man. He ought to be reliable."

Miss Slater spoke with the defiance of a brave rabbit. "I don't like doctors," she said.

Mrs. Munson was mildly offended. "Why, my own family physician is just like a father to me! Still, I must admit I wasn't much taken with Dr. Ewing."

"I thought he was kind of cagy," Mrs. Wendel said.

Jason Meers winked at her. "A doctor can't blat out everything he knows!"

"But he was hedging," Miss Newhall said. "Hedging for all he was worth."

There was a general murmur, blending doubt with agreement. Frowning a little, with a new sense of their own importance, the jurors considered the testimony of Stanley Ewing, M.D.

The doctor, the first witness called by the prosecution, had been the one least intimidated by the act of testifying.

Hodges had addressed him with a certain deference: "Is it a fact, Dr. Ewing, that you were the sole physician in attendance upon the late Mrs. Andrea Kent?"

"At the time of her death? Yes, to the best of my knowledge."

"How long had Mrs. Kent been your patient?"

"Since the summer of 1946."

"That was the time of her serious injury?"

"Yes."

"Now, in your own words, Doctor, would you be kind enough to tell us what you know of the accident."

The doctor deliberated a moment. "I should say my own part in the affair began when I was summoned to the house by telephone by Mrs. Morrow, Mrs. Kent's mother, who was one of my patients. She reported that Mrs. Kent had been thrown from her horse and carried to the house by a gardener who happened to be near by."

"Carried to her own house?"

"Yes. The accident occurred on a path near the stable maintained by the Kents on their property."

"Now, would you proceed to tell us, Doctor, something about the nature of this accident?"

"There was a vertebral fracture, with injury to the spinal cord."

"And will you tell us, please, if there was any injury to the brain."

"No."

"You are quite sure of that?"

"Yes."

"You continued to pay professional visits to the patient?"

"I did."

"In the three years or thereabouts that followed the accident?"

"Yes."

In a casual fashion Hodges turned over some papers in his hand. "You would say, under these tragic circumstances, that your patient bore up with some courage?"

Lansing objected to the question as leading, and the objection was sustained. The judge peered amiably at Hodges. "Will you re-phrase your question, Counselor?"

Hodges turned back to the physician: "How would you say your patient bore up under her misfortune?"

"As well as I could have expected."

"I see. . . . Now, let me ask you if you ever prescribed any sedatives in this case?"

"Yes. Two months prior to her death Mrs. Kent told me she was not sleeping well, and I prescribed barbiturates."

"And you knew that a sufficient number of these pills, taken at any one given time, would result in a patient's death?"

"I would scarcely be unaware of the fact!"

Hodges paused. The heavy brows came down, seeming to move like caterpillars. The members of the jury leaned forward a little. Hodges was looking steadily at the witness. "Then you would not normally prescribe sleeping pills for a patient of suicidal tendencies?"

"Not without taking special precautions, provided, of course, I had any suspicion of such a thing."

Hodges continued carefully, giving his next question great weight: "Now, you never warned anyone in the household to take these special precautions in regard to Mrs. Kent?"

"No."

"Then it never occurred to you she might take her own life?"

"No. . . . No, it did not."

"Well, now, let us be quite clear about that, please. You, as a physician of considerable experience, *never thought this particular patient would commit suicide?* That is your sworn testimony, is it not?"

"Yes," the physician said, rather acidly. "I could have been mistaken, of course."

Hodges's deferential gesture and smile indicated that the witness was underestimating himself. "You would say the patient was merely subject to the little moods of depression and discouragement to be expected in such a tragic circumstance?"

Again Lansing objected, and again the objection was sustained.

Hodges resumed his questioning: "Now, did you ever feel your patient was afraid of anything? Was there ever any sign of fearfulness?"

The doctor considered this a moment. "Yes," he said, "I suppose one might say so."

"Had you ever suspected she might be fearful of her husband? That she suspected him of a growing homicidal intent?"

This time Lansing's objection came like a whiplash. But the district attorney assumed an air of quiet satisfaction as he yielded his witness for cross-examination.

Lansing began rather crisply: "Now, Doctor, we all know that in the course of your medical career you have had wide experience in the field of human behavior, if we may put it that way. Is that not a fact?"

"Yes, I should say so."

"And you have known other cases of suicide?"

For so large a man, the district attorney could get very rapidly to his feet. He was roaring an objection, which the judge promptly sustained.

Lansing altered the form of his question: "You have known a number of men and women who have committed suicide?"

"Yes."

"And some have acted on an unpredictable impulse—on the spur of the moment, you might say?"

"Yes."

"But others have entertained the idea in their minds for a long time before the actual act?"

"Certainly."

"Even managed to be quite crafty and clever about it?"

"Yes."

"And there was nothing in Andrea Kent's attitude or actions inconsistent with the theory that she was hoarding those sleeping pills with the regrettable intention of taking her own life?"

"Not actually inconsistent—no, I wouldn't say so."

"Now, you have stated there was no injury to the brain?"

"That is correct."

"Yet it is possible—I am speaking now in general terms—that a psychosis may exist—or a state of extreme mental de-

pression—even though the actual brain of the person be entirely sound and normal?"

"Well, those are layman's terms, but—yes, of course, that is true enough."

"Now, assuming that suicide was Mrs. Kent's intention, would you say she was intelligent enough to conceive and carry through such a plan?"

"Why, yes. Certainly she would have been."

LANSING smiled at him. "You have said, Dr. Ewing, that you found some evidence of 'fearfulness' in the last years of Mrs. Kent's life. Did I understand that correctly?"

"Yes, you did." The doctor drew out a fine white handkerchief and wiped his hands. "Mrs. Kent was neurotic."

"Now, is it possible for a neurotic person to have irrational fears?"

"Quite possible."

"Would you say, in fact, you would even expect a neurotic to have such unreal or imaginary fancies?"

"Yes, I would say so."

"But, in addition to wholly irrational fears, would you say Mrs. Kent might have had *justifiable* fears?"

Even the judge could not control a start of surprise. But Lansing was almost placidly waiting for the answer to his question.

The doctor hesitated. "I am afraid I don't quite understand you."

"Well, for instance, would you say this unfortunate young woman might have had fear of further suffering?"

"Possibly."

"Of the neglect and indifference of her former friends?"

"Perhaps."

"Of her future as a helpless invalid?"

"Yes, quite possibly."

Lansing quirked one eyebrow. "Then, Doctor, you admit a woman might conceivably have fear of something other than her husband?"

There was a ripple of laughter in the courtroom, followed by the pounding of the judge's gavel.

The doctor had reddened. "I have no doubt," he said.

Lansing inclined his head. "Thank you," he murmured. Like his opponent, he seemed well satisfied with Dr. Ewing's testimony. . . .

The jury found, now, they could not share this satisfaction.

"Why didn't he come right out and say what he *thought?*" Bette Wendel demanded. "After all, he was her doctor and he must have known her awfully well, and if he thought she took that batch of sleeping pills, well, then, she most likely *did* take them. Why didn't he come right out and say so?"

"I didn't trust him one little bit!" said Miss Slater sternly.

"I don't see why you didn't!" snapped Miss Newhall. "A distinguished-looking man, and highly intelligent."

"He acted," Miss Slater insisted, "as if he had something up his sleeve."

"He did, at that," Jason Meers put in. "It's just like Mrs. Wendel said. If he really thought it was a suicide, why didn't he say so?"

"Well," Bart suggested, "maybe he didn't think so! Maybe he thinks Kent is guilty."

"Well, say!" said Meers excitedly. "It sure did look as if he was doing Kent a favor! Playin' dumb that way. Yes, an' no, an' I may have been mistaken, and all that malarkey. And here's another thing—Kent could have made it damn' well worth his while. *Stables* on the place! Why, the dough that guy must have!"

"I think," said Mrs. Perry, "that is a shocking suggestion. Dr. Ewing has been practicing in this town for years. His reputation is beyond reproach, Mr. Meers."

Mr. Meers dropped a cynical eyelid. "There's always a first time," he said.

"How absurd!" said Mrs. Perry.

Bart made a pacifying gesture, as gentle as the smoothing of a baby's bed. "Well, now, we've all got to say what's on our minds," he reminded her. "The way I look at it, that's what they expect of a jury."

There was a general chorus of agreement with the foreman's point of view. Bart, meanwhile, was congratulating himself. He had Meers and Miss Slater on his side now. He could be practically positive of that.

"How about going out for a meal?" Meers demanded. "I could eat!"

So, it was admitted, could the rest of them. The attending officer escorted them to a private dining-room in a hotel across the street, while the newspapermen rushed frantically to the telephones to report that interesting fact.

ON THE return to the jury-room, in a little over an hour, Bart led away from any further consideration of the doctor. "You know what I'd like to hear about?" he asked, "I'd like to hear what all you good people thought of that mother-in-law."

"Oh, I was so *sorry* for her!" said Mrs. Munson.

Almost everyone had been sorry for her. Beatrice Morrow, mother of the dead girl, had been the sort of witness beloved by the press. A fragile figure in the misty black of mourning, she had evoked all the sympathy that even Hodges could have wished. He had treated her with such extraordinary chivalry that one reporter was reminded of an elephant treading delicately among bluebells. Even Lansing had hesitated to object to the testimony that glorified her daughter at the expense of his client.

Mrs. Morrow had been a dangerous witness, even in her prejudices. Nor had she harmed the State's case in revealing herself as the plain-little-brown-wren sort of mother, given to blind and abject worship of a beautiful daughter.

In her testimony she had displayed a tendency to wander from the point, but Hodges did not choose to correct her, and Lansing did not dare.

Hodges's tone was soothing, almost apologetic: "If you would tell us, Mrs. Morrow, something of the circumstances of your daughter Andrea's marriage in—1933? That was the year?"

"Yes."

"Did you approve this marriage?"

"I never approved it altogether. I

think I may have had some sort of premonition—"

"But was there also some concrete objection on your part?"

"Well, yes, I felt they were such children—hardly out of their teens. I thought an older man might take better care of Andrea."

"Did you express this feeling at all?"

"Yes, but Andrea was a high-spirited girl and, like all young people, she wanted to have her own way. Oh, I hadn't the heart to object too much!"

"Well, now, in the years between—let me see—the marriage in 1933 and the accident in 1946—yes, roughly, those thirteen years—what was your general impression of the marriage during that time?"

"I still felt Andrea should have married an older man, who would have traveled more, given her a more interesting life. Andrea was bored with Dover City, and no one could have blamed her! A girl with her wit and charm and beauty—she would have been an ornament to society anywhere!"

"Well, yes, I've no doubt—" murmured Hodges. "But would you say that Andrea's marriage went on well enough, all things considered? In those thirteen years?"

"Yes," the old lady admitted, "I could say that, I suppose."

"Now, will you tell the jury, please—but take your time, Mrs. Morrow; we understand how difficult this is—"

"I'm all right, thank you. Andrea would not want me to break down in any way."

"No, I am sure not. . . . Well, if you would tell us now about the years following the accident in 1946—if you noticed any change in the relationship between your daughter and your son-in-law."

"Oh, yes! Yes, indeed!"

"Will you elaborate on that?"

"Oh, all of it was so terrible for Andrea—all of it! She had always loved sports so, and dancing—and she had always been so popular. And now that dreadful wheel chair—the poor darling—No wonder she got a little fretful sometimes," the mother went on fiercely. "No wonder!"

"And did you feel her husband resented this occasional fretfulness?"

"Oh, it was plain enough to *me* he resented it! Sometimes, when Andrea would—well, perhaps complain a little—he wouldn't say anything, but he would get a look on his face as if *he* were the one who had been in that accident, as if *he* were the one who was tied to that wheel chair!"

"He didn't sympathize?"

"Oh, he said he did! But he didn't really *understand* Andrea at all! No one did! Even her nurses were unreasonable—the servants—"

Hodges led her back gently: "But her husband—you felt he was losing his love for her?"

For a moment the old lady stared at the defendant. He smiled a little sadly, and shook his head. She trembled, and turned swiftly back to her questioner: "Why, he *hated* her! Sometimes when she'd be a little cross about something he'd look as if it would make him happy to be a million miles away—"

There was a sympathetic pause here while Mrs. Morrow mopped her eyes with a little handkerchief and sipped from a glass of water.

"Can you go on, Mrs. Morrow?"

"Oh, yes! Andrea would want me to."

"Then will you tell us what you know of how Miss Cicely Driscoll happened to be employed in your daughter's home? That was two years after the accident, a little over a year ago, was it not?"

"Yes. Andrea needed someone to read to her, now she had so much time on her hands, and she couldn't use her own eyes too much any more. I wanted to help her, but Andrea was right—I read rather badly, I am not at all gifted in that way—and all her nurses had been so impatient with her—"

"So Miss Driscoll was employed in that particular capacity?"

The mother nodded, her eyes clouding with bitterness. "Andrea was too trustful! Oh, I wanted to point out the danger to her! Andrea used to laugh sometimes about how awkward that girl was, with her small-town ways. Poor Andrea had no idea that a mousy little thing like that could attract a man. And I didn't like to say anything—to make her wretched—"

"But as the time went on did you begin to feel your fears were justified? You became convinced there was a certain state of affairs existing in that house?"

"Naturally I did! Why, over and over I caught Steven Kent looking at that girl with his whole heart in his eyes—as if she were the sun, moon, and stars—as if Andrea and his marriage vows meant nothing to him—nothing!—compared to that commonplace little creature!"

"And did you feel Miss Driscoll welcomed this infatuation? Reciprocated, let us say?"

"Of course she did! The way she was all smiles and blushes whenever he looked at her. Why, she was his slave!"

"Supposing your son-in-law had any nefarious plan in mind in regard to your daughter, do you believe Cicely Driscoll would have encouraged it?"

"I do!"

"Now, would you tell us, please, of the scene you witnessed on the morning of the day preceding your daughter's death?"

Mrs. Morrow spoke slowly, pronouncing every word with painful distinctness. Small and frail though she appeared, she was, in her maternal pride, like some avenging angel:

"I had driven over to my daughter's house that morning to see if there was anything I could do for her. When the housekeeper admitted me she tried to keep me from going into the living-room, but naturally I brushed past her. I had some instinct that my little girl was in trouble.

"I went into the living-room and found Andrea and her husband. It was a Sunday, and so, of course, he had not gone to the office. Neither of them saw me right away. Andrea was a trifle upset. She was talking about something she wanted Steven to do for her and that he refused to do. Suddenly he interrupted her. I saw his face. It was as gray as ash. And he spoke with a voice of a man ready to do any desperate thing. He said, '*I'm not going to take much more of this, Andrea!*' Then he strode out of the room. Right past me. He hadn't even seen me."

She looked into the distance, tears shining in her faded blue eyes. "The next day—my Andrea was gone."

Bart Gibson had wondered, at this point, if Lansing would have the courage to confront this particular witness, so strongly was the sympathy of the room running in her direction. But apparently Lansing thought it essential to cross-examine.

He was even more considerate, if possible, than Hodges had been: "Are you familiar, Mrs. Morrow, with the way in which Miss Driscoll was employed? That is, was she found with the help of an employment agency?"

"No. She answered an advertisement in the paper."

"Were there other applicants?"

"Yes. Six or seven."

"But your daughter chose Miss Driscoll?"

"Yes. Obviously."

"In the presence of your son-in-law?"

"No."

"Then your son-in-law had no part in this selection of Miss Driscoll?"

"I don't see how that makes any difference!"

"But he had no part in bringing Miss Driscoll into the house?"

"Well, no, he hadn't."

"Now, Mrs. Morrow, in your opinion, would your daughter have invited a strange young woman into her home if she had ever had cause to distrust her husband?"

"That's got nothing to do with it! I wasn't talking about the past!"

"You don't believe a man's past—thirteen years of fidelity and good faith—should stand as a silent witness of his character?"

"I believe what I saw with my own eyes!"

But Lansing's point had been made. He sent a fleeting glance toward the jury:

"Now, in regard to the scene you observed between your daughter and her husband, would you say your daughter had been quite reasonable in the request she had made of him?"

"She was an invalid!"

"I understand that, Mrs. Morrow, but will you tell us the nature of this request?"

"Well, it was just that she wanted him to dismiss the housekeeper—Mrs. Pardridge. . . . After all, it was Andrea's own house! She should have had something to say about it!"

"How long had Mrs. Pardridge been employed in the house?"

"Why—for about fifteen years, I should say."

"To your knowledge, had there been any previous trouble about her—that is, during those fifteen years?"

The witness hesitated. "Well, no, not that I know of."

"In your opinion, had she been a capable person?"

"Capable enough, I suppose."

"And loyal to her employers?"

"Yes. Why wouldn't she be!"

"But now, after this long record of faithful service, she had displeased your daughter?"

The mother looked at him defensively. "Andrea took her little notions, the way a sick person will do!"

"And what was this particular little notion? About the housekeeper?"

"Well, she felt Mrs. Pardridge was partial to Steven, made too much of him, always thinking of his comfort, ordering what *he* wanted for dinner, even if it was something Andrea didn't care for. Andrea felt, considering everything, *she* was the one who should have had the attention—"

"And so she wanted Mrs. Pardridge to be fired?"

"Yes."

"Did you hear Mr. Kent's answer to that?"

"Oh, he took the servant's side, of course! He claimed she'd done everything humanly possible for Andrea. He said he couldn't tell Mrs. Pardridge to go, couldn't bring himself to do anything so 'terribly unfair.' That was the position *he'd* take in the matter, naturally!"

"And Mrs. Kent was angry about that?"

"Well, she was a little upset."

"You have stated the housekeeper tried to keep you from the room. Did you gather your daughter had been making these recriminations for some time?"

"I don't know. It may have been some little time. She was upset."

"Thank you," said Lansing.

Then, most courteously, he had dismissed her. . . .

In the jury-room, Mrs. Munson had become almost tearful. "I was just as sorry for her as I could be!"

Dwight Thayer frowned. "Yes," he said, "but while she was testifying I was also a bit sorry for Steven Kent!"

"Well!" said Mrs. Munson. "How would you feel if you were a mother?"

"I don't know," said Mr. Thayer. "Perhaps, like Mrs. Morrow, I'd be a prejudiced witness."

Mrs. Munson looked at him defiantly. "I'm not so sure she was prejudiced! You can't just laugh off a mother's instinct!"

"No," said Miss Newhall. "I know my own poor, dear mother had almost a sixth *sense*."

"Yes," Dwight Thayer murmured. "So has a tigress with its young. But in either case you wouldn't look for any great amount of justice or reason or fair play."

"Of course not!" Dean Austin agreed. "I think we ought to discount the old girl entirely."

Mrs. Munson, shocked past speech, had an ally in Miss Newhall.

"Mrs. Morrow was a lady through and through," the schoolteacher said heatedly. "She wouldn't have given such a bad impression of her son-in-law if she hadn't had something to go on. And you can mark my words!"

Now, the foreman observed with satisfaction, both Mrs. Munson and Miss Newhall were beginning to confuse the issue. Suddenly the forlorn mother was on trial, needing to be defended against cynics like Mr. Thayer and Mr. Austin.

"Well, I can see both sides," Bart said, "but that old lady's testimony has me a little buffaloed, to tell you the truth."

He would postpone any positive statement as long as he could, he thought. Things were beginning to boil nicely enough with only an occasional suggestion from him. Now he could chalk up Miss Slater, Mr. Meers, Mrs. Munson, and Miss Newhall. He was ready enough to agree with Cass Bentley, who felt they were all too tired to reach a verdict that night. . . .

The jurors had been escorted to their hotel, but for hours Bart Gibson could not sleep. From the darkened window of his room he looked down on the crowds streaming forth from a late movie, the aimless strollers seeking a breath of air in the humid August night, the boys and girls on their way home from beer parlors and juke-box joints. One boy had an arm around his girl as he led her to a car by the curb. Plainly, he was bursting with pride, pride in the girl, pride in the car. Bart watched him as he slid behind the wheel, started the motor going, swung the car into the street. He understood the feeling very well. The boy was about twenty-one, and that was the time a boy appreciated a car more than he ever would again. Bart remembered . . .

Yes, even now he could summon the image of the garage mechanic who had seen fit to tell him about Steven Kent's twenty-first birthday, which fell not a week before Bart's own. Very clearly he could see that mechanic, sweat trickling in rivulets down a smudged, good-humored face. "You know there's a rich young fellow comes in here sometimes—Steven Kent, the name is—"

Bart waited, dreading to hear, yet wanting to hear.

"Well," his informant went on, wiping his hands on an oily black rag, "there's a darned nice guy, if anybody should ask you! I keep hearing about him from Quinby—that's their family chauffeur. Seems Quinby got laid up with pleurisy a while back; had it bad. Well, he got his salary all along and all, but, on top of that, this Kent kid kept goin' to see him, taking him fruit and stuff. You ought to hear Quinby tell it—thinks the world of him!"

Bart eyed him bitterly. "When a guy has that much dough he can afford to buy maybe a couple of apples for somebody that works for him. I can't get excited."

The mechanic grinned. "Yeah? I'd like to see *you* buyin' apples for anybody—dough or no dough. . . . But what I started to tell you— It seems young Kent was twenty-one the other day. His birthday, you know. And his folks gave him a big convertible. A honey."

The mechanic had more to say, but Bart was busy with his own thoughts. This was the way it would happen, of course. Steven Kent got an expensive convertible for his birthday, but Bart wasn't going to get as much as a ride on a bus.

The contrast was bitter, and almost in-

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tolerable. At that time in Bart's life a powerful car was more than a large, expensive object. It was a symbol, and more than a symbol. It could almost be thought of as a man's own drive and force in the world. Without a car a man had no armor, no shell, no skin.

That night Bart borrowed a small red roadster its owner was accustomed to park before the bar across the street from Bart's rooming house. The keys had been left in the ignition. It hadn't seemed much of a risk. At least, the risk was nothing compared to the overwhelming desire Bart had to take a girl he liked—a girl called Millie Fleming—for a little run around the park.

The police had never known about it. But Bart had been compelled to drive that car back with a badly dented fender. And the owner, coming across the street, had caught him just as Bart was parking.

The owner, amiably disposed to remember his own youth, had been willing to overlook both the escapade and the dented fender in return for the forty dollars Bart had been saving to put on the races. It had hurt to lose the forty dollars. It had hurt a good deal worse to lose Millie. "Cheap punk," she had called him. Those had been her exact words which, in almost twenty years, he had not forgotten: "Cheap punk."

But Steven Kent wasn't losing any girl-friends. A man with a car like his could have any girl-friend he liked. In a Sunday paper Bart saw a picture of the girl-friend he had chosen: "Miss Andrea Morrow, whose engagement to Mr. Steven Kent, son of Mr. and Mrs. Barkley Kent of Riverdale Road, has just been announced." Even from a newspaper photograph, Bart could see she was a luscious little plum. . . .

THE street was almost deserted when Bart finally left the window.

He had decided, on the morning that followed, to bring the jury's attention to the testimony of William Seton. It was a net, he thought, that ought to catch at least one fish.

William Seton, a tall, clumsy, loose-mouthed youth, was a boat attendant at the lake near which the Kents had a summer cottage. On the stand he kept twisting his moist hands and running his tongue over a gross upper lip. But Hodges had striven to make this nervousness appear a lovable trait of youth. His attitude toward Seton was almost paternal:

"Now, where were you exactly on the afternoon of April fifteenth of this year?"

"I was on the lake, sir."

"The name of this lake—?"

"Lake Kennicott."

"Just what were you doing that afternoon?"

"Well, there was a little kid with me that his folks wanted rowed."

Hodges translated this with an indulgent smile: "There was a child whose parents had employed you? You were to take the child on a little excursion?"

"Yes, sir, that was it."

"You are familiar with the cottage owned by the defendant in this case? A cottage known, I believe, as 'Fisherman's Rest'?"

"Yes, sir. Sure, I am. I been workin' around that lake every summer for six years."

"Well, just confine yourself to the questions, please. . . . Now, on the afternoon of April fifteenth last, did you or did you not see Steven Kent, the owner of that cottage?"

As if unwillingly, Seton's eyes had turned to the man on trial. Steven Kent answered the gaze, in his own eyes no hint of recognition. Seton turned quickly away. "Why, yes, sure I seen him!"

"Was there anyone with Steven Kent?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you recognize this other person?"

Seton's answer was accompanied by a sly grin. "I sure did, sir! It was that girl! It was Cicely Driscoll!"

THERE was a stir among the spectators in the courtroom. And the reporters, who had been rather wilted and listless, were suddenly looking like bird dogs.

"You were acquainted with Miss Driscoll?"

"Well, I seen her out at the lake once before and I asked somebody who she was."

"And now on this afternoon of April fifteenth you saw Miss Driscoll with the defendant?"

"Yes, I did! I sure did! I seen 'em huggin' an' kissin'!"

Again, but now in lascivious satisfaction, the witness sought the eyes of Steven Kent. Kent looked at him steadily, his mouth set in a straight, hard line.

"I don't care who calls me a liar!" the boy shouted. "That's what I seen and I've swore it on my Bible's oath!"

"Yes," Hodges said. "No one is calling you a liar. . . . Were Mr. Kent and Miss Driscoll aware of you and the child, and the boat?"

"No, sir. They were too busy huggin' an' kissin'."

Cross-examining this witness, Paul Lansing had the air of one prodding some pitiful but distasteful object with a long pole: "You have stated you work as a boat attendant during the summers. Is that right?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you any employment in the wintertime?"

"What's that?"

"I am asking you—what is your work during the winter?"

"Oh, I work."

"Now, this is fine," purred Lansing. "We're beginning to make some headway on this difficult question. . . . Could you tell the court what is the nature of the work? What you *do?*"

"Why, I sweep the floors—carry out the trash—all like that."

"And *where* do you do these things? Where do you work?"

"The Home."

Lansing, now a model of patience and consideration, nodded affably. "Is it a Home for children? An institution?"

"It's for boys."

"What is the full name of this Home?"

"Well, it's the Elizabeth Sorkin Home."

"And that is a home—a sort of school—for backward and delinquent boys, is it not?"

The witness hesitated, and Lansing, having made his point, waived the matter aside. But his next question was a sudden, inspired thrust: "*You were given the job because you, yourself, had been an inmate of that home?*"

Seton darted a perplexed and frightened glance toward the bench, but he answered defiantly: "Well, what of it? Sure I was!"

Lansing had dismissed the witness in a manner again suggesting pity, and a vast distaste. . . .

Talking it over, now, in the jury-room, the jurors were inclined to share Lansing's sentiments.

"I've had boys like that in my classes," Miss Newhall said. "They're borderline cases, you know. In some respects you'll find them quite safe and reliable, but you can never really depend on them. And they always seem to be malicious, antisocial."

"A nasty fellow," said Cass Bentley.

Mrs. Perry looked thoughtful. "I wonder why Hodges put him on the stand."

"The D.A.'s no fool," Meers said. "He must have had a reason."

"Why, I don't even believe that couple were at the lake at all!" Irvin Potter declared. "Let alone all that love-making!"

Bart brought a match to his cigarette, and languidly waved it out. "Well, as far as the love-making goes I suppose Hodges thought we could figure it out for ourselves. But Kent and the girl must have been at the lake, all right. Seton must have seen them. It would be too easy for those two to prove they weren't there, *if* they weren't."

FOR the first time, Miss Christina Kilburn, an over-quiet, dark-eyed woman with a bitter mouth, looked at Bart with some measure of approval. "I think that's good reasoning."

"And there's another point," Bart said modestly. "If Hodges was going to spring a phony witness on us, he wouldn't have picked out a character like that, would he? Not even right in the head?"

"Now you've got something!" Meers exclaimed.

"Well, I don't know—" Cass Bentley put in. "I'd sure hate to take a murder rap for every pretty girl *I've* gone on a lake with."

"But this supports the State's case," Miss Kilburn said incisively. "There's no doubt of it. Those two didn't go to that cottage to discuss the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, you know."

Jason Meers snickered, and Bart looked almost affectionately at Miss Christina Kilburn. He had not expected to get her hooked so easily. But it was best not to give any more importance to William Seton or his testimony. The others all too plainly detested him.

"Well, now," he inquired, "what did you folks feel about the housekeeper?"

Dean Austin snorted. "Like the mother-in-law—only in reverse. Too biased."

"But she was important," Miss Slater pointed out timidly. "She was the one who made the hot chocolate."

Cass Bentley nodded. "And she sure was nervous!"

"She's devoted to Kent," Mr. Thayer remarked detachedly. "Old family retainer, I take it."

"She'd naturally want to be loyal to him," murmured Bart. "Even if she *had* noticed anything suspicious she wouldn't have admitted it."

"She admitted a lot," Cass Bentley said. "Now I come to think of it—yes, she admitted more than she wanted to." . . .

Trina Pardridge, it was true, had been a most reluctant witness. A middle-aged woman, stout, slow-moving, immaculate, and capable, she was possessed of an innate dignity that commanded the respect of the courtroom.

"Now, Mrs. Pardridge," the district attorney was asking, "what is your position in the home of Steven Kent?"

"I am the housekeeper, sir."

"And how long have you served in that capacity?"

"Ever since the second year of Mr. Kent's marriage."

"Will you tell us briefly what your duties are?"

"Why, I've always run the house, sir, same as if it was my own. I plan and order the meals, tell the servants what to do; keep everything running, like."

"And have you been entirely happy in your position?"

Mrs. Pardridge hesitated. She sent a quick, anxious glance toward Steven Kent, whose eyes warmed in response. The bond of affection between the two was quite evident in that moment. She turned back to answer Hodges defiantly:

"Well, I wouldn't be what you'd call bursting with happiness these past three years! It wasn't a happy house, with Mrs. Kent in the mood she was. I'm not letting any cat out of the bag when I say that."

"If there are any cats in any bags," thundered Hodges, "they *must* be let out, Mrs. Pardridge!"

"I'm not keeping anything back, sir. I was just trying to think how to put it."

"Well, that's right. Take all the time you need. . . . But why do you say it was not a happy house?"

She looked at him with troubled eyes. "Nobody likes to speak ill of the dead, sir, and that's a fact. But Mrs. Kent was never what you'd call a sweet-tempered young lady. Treating her own mother like dirt the way she did—oh, it made my blood boil many's the time! Only, before the accident she could have things pretty much as she pleased. She could go to her parties and her night clubs, and she could dance all night and have this one and that one making a fuss over her. Mr. Kent always let her have her own way, and it made things easier, I must admit."

"Did you feel Steven Kent was still in love with her, during those first years?"

"Well, she knew how to get around him, sir. She was so gay and excited."

An amused little titter ran through the courtroom, promptly rebuked by the judge.

"Now," Hodges went on, "did a change take place after the accident? Mrs. Kent was no longer 'gay and excited'?"

"Oh, no, poor thing! Oh, no, she wasn't, sir!"

"You would say she became difficult to live with?"

"She was miserable and she wanted everybody else to be miserable! Why, I've seen Mr. Kent holding his tongue when even a saint would have snapped back at her—"

"If you will confine yourself to the questions, Mrs. Pardridge—"

"Yes, sir."

"Now, did you feel that Mr. Kent, although he may have held his tongue, as you say, had changed in his feeling toward his wife?"

"What man could have helped it!"

"Will you answer the question, please?"

"Maybe he'd changed—a little."

"Did you notice he was becoming interested in Miss Cicely Driscoll?"

"It wasn't my place to notice, sir."

"You are under oath, Mrs. Pardridge. . . . Did you or did you not observe any signs of sympathy or attraction between Cicely Driscoll and Steven Kent?"

Trina Pardridge twisted her plump, gloved hands in her lap. "Well, they might have been drawn to each other—just a bit."

"They *were* drawn to each other?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you ever see them embrace?"

"No, I did not, sir!"

"Did you ever see them look at each other—in a sentimental manner, let us say?"

"Objection!" Lansing cut in.

There was some wrangling here, highly diverting to the spectators. It was Lansing's contention that no one could weigh, measure, or otherwise calculate the expression in the eyes of a lover. From Hodges's viewpoint, anyone past the age of sixteen was perfectly capable of doing so. The judge decided, to Mrs. Pardridge's obvious relief, to accept the argument of the defense.

Hodges changed the subject entirely: "Now, Mrs. Pardridge, if you will listen carefully, I wish to ask you about the events leading up to the death of Andrea Kent on the night of April twentieth. Were you in the house at the time?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you make a cup of hot chocolate for Mrs. Kent on that particular night—shortly before she was to retire?"

"Yes, sir."

"At whose request?"

"Mr. Kent came out to the kitchen and asked me."

"Was it Mrs. Kent's custom to have this cup of chocolate?"

"Not every night. Sometimes she was in the mood and sometimes she wasn't."

"But it was not unusual?"

"No, sir."

"It did not surprise you?"

"Why, no, sir."

"To your knowledge, had Mr. Kent himself suggested the chocolate on this particular occasion?"

"I don't know, sir. She may have suggested it herself."

"But it would not surprise you if Mr. Kent had suggested it?"

The witness moved uncomfortably. "Well—no, sir. He was forever thinking up little things to please her."

"But whoever it was who suggested the cup of chocolate, nobody could have been surprised about it?"

"No, sir."

"Now, did you, yourself, take this chocolate to Mrs. Kent?"

"No, sir. I made it and gave it to him."

"Was he still in the kitchen?"

"No, sir. He'd gone out."

"Would you not have expected him to stay and chat with you in a friendly way while you performed this little task?"

"There was no special reason he should, sir."

"Were you and Mr. Kent not on friendly terms?"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"Did he not sometimes stay and talk to you in a friendly way?"

"Yes, sir."

"But tonight he went out of the kitchen?"

"Well, he happened to."

"Did you feel he was under a strain, not in the mood for a friendly chat?"

The witness hesitated.

"Yes, Mrs. Pardridge?"

"Well, he'd been under a strain for years! Any man would have been!"

"Yet on other occasions he'd stayed in the kitchen and talked to you?"

"Sometimes he had."

"Did he come back to the kitchen for the chocolate?"

"No, sir, I took it to him."

"Where was he?"

"He was standing in the hall."

"Not reading? Not telephoning? Not doing anything?"

"He was waiting for the chocolate!"

"But apart from that he was not doing anything?"

"No, sir."

"Did you not find that rather odd?"

"No, I just thought maybe he was thinking about something."

"I see." Hodges paused, and glanced at the jury before he asked his next question: "Now, Mrs. Pardridge, what did your employer say when you gave him the chocolate?"

Trina Pardridge hesitated, a look of utter wretchedness upon her honest face.

"What did he say? What were his exact words?" Hodges persisted.

"He said, '*I hope it won't be bitter tonight*.'"

"Then he took the chocolate from you and went upstairs?"

"Yes, sir."

Hodges turned to Lansing: "Your witness," he said.

"Mrs. Pardridge," Lansing began easily, "were you sometimes guilty of making bitter chocolate?"

"No, I never was, sir."

"But Mrs. Kent would sometimes complain about the chocolate?"

"Oh, yes, sir! She was always criticiz-

ing the food and drink in the house."

"You felt without cause?"

"Oh, yes; it was just her way, you know."

"Then suppose Mr. Kent had dreaded her being in a bad temper. Might he not have said, 'I hope the chocolate won't be bitter tonight'—just as a phrase, just as another way of saying, 'I hope she won't be in a bad temper tonight'? Something like that?"

"That's the way I took it!" the witness cried gratefully. "That's exactly the way I took it!"

"Well, now—as to this 'change' you found in Mr. Kent's attitude toward his wife—was it displayed in any harsh or cruel way?"

"Never, sir!"

"Then in what way did you observe it?"

"Just that he looked so worn down and tired with her complaints and temper, sir. Just laid out flat almost."

"You felt it was the inevitable response to the change in *her* attitude?"

Hodges objected vehemently to the question, but not before the housekeeper had voiced a firm affirmative. . . .

Reviewing this testimony, almost word for word, at least two of the jurors had become increasingly dubious.

"As I said," Dean Austin reminded them, "she was biased."

Cass Bentley shook his head. "I'm beginning to think she *knew* there was some hanky-panky about that chocolate."

"Yes," said Irvin Potter, "and she had to admit he had his eye on that Driscoll girl. Motive enough!"

"But it's that hot-chocolate business," Bentley muttered unhappily. "That's what doesn't look so good."

Well, that took care of Bentley and Potter, Bart told himself. Giving no hint of his extreme satisfaction, he reminded the jurors it was time for lunch.

He was a little absent-minded during the meal, perhaps just because his pork chop wasn't too appetizing on this August day, and the accompanying mashed potatoes were thin and watery. His attention had wandered from his companions, but suddenly he overheard Dean Austin talking to Jason Meers about the war. "—and I wanted to get into the Air Force, but my age was against me, for one thing, and—"

THE war. Well, the war was over, but people didn't forget. . . . There was Steven Kent, getting his commission in the Navy, and coming home with those decorations on his chest. Bart had been a 4-F-er—glad enough of it at the time, but it would have been pretty soft, that business of coming home in a uniform, all the girls going batty about you.

Moodily Bart attacked a portion of pallid-looking apple pie. . . . Well, it had been easy enough for Kent, going back to a career all ready and waiting for him. And of course that had to be the time Bart had got his first big break from Boss Dickerson; a little matter of a city housing project for which a friend of Bart's was going to supply the materials. That had been arranged by Bart, who was to receive a sizable commission, for the materials were not exactly what they should have been.

But the friend had met him one day with a long face. "It's off," he said. "The whole damn' deal!"

"Off?" echoed Bart. "You're crazy!"

"Yeah? Talk to the Boss! He can't do a thing about it. It's a home-for-veterans proposition and the Boss finds it ain't safe to give it to Ham Simms or Al Moreno or any of the boys who'd play ball with us. No. He's got to hand it to a veteran. I forget—some big shot in town—an architect, some guy who was in the Navy."

Bart swallowed, because suddenly his mouth had gone very dry. "It would be Steven Kent, wouldn't it?"

"Yeah, that was the name." . . .

Now he signaled for the waiter, and smiled absently at somebody's comment about his woolgathering. He was still thinking how queer it was the way things had worked out. Kent had been getting away with everything all his life, having everything fall in his lap, making things tougher for Bart Gibson and not even knowing Bart Gibson was on earth. But when he didn't get his own way, he couldn't take it. Had to ease his wife off the map just because he had a yen for a new girl-friend.

Well, that was the way that kind was. Even the jury was beginning to get past the good looks and the polished manners. . . . Thoughtfully Bart considered the ones who were still holding out: Mrs. Wendel and Mr. Thayer, Mrs. Perry and Mr. Austin. . . .

IN THE jury-room he gave particular attention to Bette Wendel, allowing his dark eyes to rest on her in the way of the mentally caressing male. . . . "Now, what do you say, Mrs. Wendel? Don't you think, before we take any vote, we ought to consider little Cicely and what she had to say for herself?"

"Well, yes, I do!" Mrs. Wendel asserted. "I wouldn't trust her an inch. And I don't think she's so attractive, what's more. Sort of washed-out-looking, if you ask me. I can't imagine why he fell for her."

"Maybe," drawled Mr. Thayer, "she had some old East Indian love charm."

"She's a mighty sweet little girl!" Cass Bentley declared indignantly. "No matter what *he* did, she didn't have a thing to do with it!"

In general, the gentlemen of the jury were not in accord with Mrs. Wendel's views. Cicely, the first witness for the defense, had made an agreeable impression upon every man in the courtroom.

There had been no Hollywood appeal. She was a slender young woman with steady gray eyes and a mouth suggesting humor and courage. Appearing on the stand, she had worn a simple brown and white sport dress, and her small hat didn't hide brown hair as smooth and gleaming as satin. She had sat very still and erect, her feet, in their small, high-heeled pumps, placed firmly together on the floor. Her manner had been wholly modest and disarming.

LANSING, having elicited her name, her position in the Kent household, and the circumstances of her employment, had put a question that brought a quick and audible gasp from the courtroom: "*Are you in love with Steven Kent?*"

The answer was low, but clear and unafraid: "Very much in love with him!"

Almost everyone turned, then, to the defendant, who was gazing at the girl with a tenderness in his eyes that was like a spoken response to her avowal. This was the moment for which the newspapers had been waiting. The reporters scribbled avidly. Lansing was in no haste, allowing the startling admission of his witness its full value and significance.

"Now, can you tell us," he resumed, "just when it was you fell in love with Steven Kent?"

"Not exactly. From the beginning I had felt liking for him, and respect—a very great respect. I suppose I began fall-

"Light?"

For The American Magazine by Les Collin

ing in love with him before I realized it."

"How had this realization come to you? What had happened?"

"Nothing—nothing I can explain very well. Mr. Kent had been laying a fire in the living-room fireplace. He was serious about it—like a small boy—as if it were important. When he put a match to it, and it started blazing, he looked at me and smiled, as if he were proud of himself. I don't know what there was about it—but just all of a sudden I knew I loved him."

"And did you find the defendant returned your love?"

"Yes."

"When?"

For the first time the low, clear voice was shaken. "I don't know—it came out in little ways. I was just more and more sure abour it—"

"And this feeling—this conviction—made you happy, would you say?"

"Happy—and most dreadfully unhappy!"

Lansing looked a t her quizzically. "At the same time?"

"Yes. Any woman would understand that."

"And so—happy and unhappy—you stayed on in the house?"

"We hadn't said anything. I thought it was all right to stay near him. Especially when we hadn't said anything."

"On the afternoon of April fifteenth of this year did you and the defendant visit the Kent cottage at Lake Kennicott?"

"Yes."

"Will you tell the jury just how that visit came to pass?"

"One day I encountered Mr. Kent in the hall—I mean in the hall of his house. He looked haggard and wretched. He said he wanted to talk to me. He said, 'We must get things straight between us.'"

"Yes," the lawyer prompted. "And then—?"

"Then he said we should get away from the house. He suggested we drive to the lake cottage."

"And you agreed?"

"Yes. It had been so dismal and stuffy in the house—and it was a lovely day. Well, we got to the lake, but we did not go into the cottage, after all. We sat and talked on a little green bench by the door."

AGAIN her voice had faltered. She sent a swift, frightened glance toward Steven Kent.

Lansing waited a moment. "Now," he said, "will you tell us the nature of that conversation?"

"Yes. Of course, this all began during the drive—but we admitted our feeling for each other. We were not ashamed of that feeling; but we both knew that Steven must not be unfaithful to his wife. We thought—it was wrong, but we thought then—that we could just go on in friendship."

"You mean," Lansing said quickly, "you did *not* 'go on in friendship'?"

"Of course we did! I meant we were wrong to think that could be any permanent solution. It was only a few days later that I decided to go away."

"Yes, but will you stay now with this story about April fifteenth? Was there anything else of any consequence that was said in that conversation?"

"No, I don't think so."

"Now, will you please answer carefully, Miss Driscoll. Did the defendant embrace you that afternoon, as the two of you sat together on that little green bench?"

The girl flushed scarlet. "No—not really."

"'Not really'?"

"Not what anybody would call an embrace."

LANSING smiled a little. "Then will you describe this—this occurrence?"

"Yes. I— It wasn't his fault! I'd started to cry. Just a little. And I put my head against his shoulder. Just for a moment or two. I couldn't seem to help it. And he put his arm around me. But then I got up and went over to the car. Right away we went back to the city."

"You would remember if the embrace had been more ardent?"

"Yes—" she said, almost in a whisper. "Oh, yes, I would remember!"

"Now, you had planned a t that time to stay on in the house indefinitely—just as a friend?"

"Yes."

"Did you continue to harbor that plan?"

"No. As I said, I realized it wouldn't be right. I decided to leave the house—even the city—so that I should never even see him any more."

"And did you tell Mr. Kent of this decision?"

"Yes."

"What was his response?"

"He knew it was the right thing."

"Can you recall his exact words?"

"Yes. He said I should be free to fall out of love with him—and marry someone else."

"Now, did you tell Mrs. Kent you planned to leave?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"I hadn't time. It was that very night she took the overdose of sleeping medicine."

As she concluded this statement, Cicely looked levelly at the district attorney. The latter seemed about to frame an objection, and then to change his mind.

On cross-examination, Hodges opened with an attack on the lake story: "You ask us to believe that when the man you loved had his arm around you—and when you had your head on his shoulder because, as you stated, you 'couldn't seem to help it'—you want us to believe he did not kiss you?"

Cicely lifted her head proudly. "He did not kiss me!"

"And you did not kiss him?"

"No!"

"Would it not have been entirely natural—with the two of you sitting on that little green bench, in that very romantic setting—and both of you so much in love?"

"Yes—yes, perhaps."

"But you both had such extraordinary will power you could resist the idea?"

"We knew it would take more will power if we—if we started anything like that."

Hodges shifted his great weight from one foot to the other. "You say you planned to leave the city?"

"Yes."

"And you have asked us to believe that, when you told him of this plan, your lover said, 'Fine! You just get out of here— Run along and marry somebody else'?"

"No! I didn't ask you to believe such a thing! But he *did* say I should go! He knew I should go!"

"So, Miss Driscoll, you now admit he was disturbed about this imminent departure of yours?"

"Well, yes, of course he was disturbed —a little."

Hodges drew down his heavy brows. "I suggest to you he was so disturbed by the thought that, rather than lose you, he made away with the one obstacle that barred his way to you!"

"*No!*" the girl cried despairingly. "*No! No! That is not the truth!*" . . .

BETTE WENDEL finished penciling her mouth with a raspberry-colored lipstick.

"Of course, she'd *say* it wasn't the truth, for heaven's sake! What else could she say?"

Jason Meers laughed. "Yeah, and what's more, she'd *say* she didn't get that huggin' an' kissin'!"

"She was either telling the entire truth," Frances Perry said slowly, "or it was all a lie from beginning to end."

"Oh. I don't know about that!" Cass Bentley objected. "I don't think a nice little kid like that would have an affair with a married man, but at the same time—"

"Of course she had an affair with him!" Bette Wendel cut in angrily. "That's perfectly obvious! It was written all over her! And why men are always taken in by a girl like that is a mystery to me. Always has been and always will be!"

Bart examined his fingernails. "That story about the green bench is a bit hard to swallow."

"Hodges was coloring it," Dwight Thayer pointed out. "He was carrying on like somebody writing a soap opera."

"Why, I don't agree at all!" Bette Wendel said. "Hodges just happens to know something about human nature."

Miss Newhall's mouth tightened. "If they were capable of committing adultery, right under that poor woman's roof, well, then, I'd believe them capable of anything. If I felt there was that much *hypocrisy*—"

"Well," Bart said softly, "we can't ignore the evidence. As Hodges said in his summing-up, there would be a good deal we'd have to ignore—"

"Perhaps," Hodges had declaimed, "you could ignore the fact that the defendant had motive enough for murder —tied to an unhappy, quarrelsome, invalid wife—passionately attached to a young woman who was threatening to leave him forever. *But can you ignore the opportunity for murder—and can you ignore the evidence?* Can you believe that, as he claims, he conveniently 'lost' that box of sleeping pills? That it was

stolen from his car? A remarkable coincidence, ladies and gentlemen of the jury! Remarkable!

"But my distinguished opponent asks you to accept it. He asks you to believe that Andrea Kent, never giving any hint of suicide to anyone, had nevertheless plotted the taking of her own life! Had hoarded sleeping pills for that purpose! Had dissolved those pills in her hot chocolate drink on the very night her husband lost the new bottle, or had them stolen, or otherwise managed to account for their mysterious disappearance!

"Are you prepared to accept such a coincidence—*or* that strange hint we had from the accused that his poor wife may have done this terrible thing out of *spite?* And can you—can you with a clear conscience—ignore so many arrows pointing straight to the guilt of the accused?"

"He was right," Cass Bentley said hoarsely.

Dean Austin nodded in austere agreement. "He put forth the facts," he said.

Bart glanced at Frances Perry. "Yes—" she whispered. "*Facts.*"

Miss Jessie Slater began to cry a little. "It's awful—just awful—but if it's our bounden duty—"

BART GIBSON'S heart began to pound against his ribs. "I'll take a vote," he said.

They turned to confront him. Their faces were grim.

"Dean Austin—" Bart began.

"Guilty."

"Cass Bentley—"

"Guilty."

"Christina Kilburn—"

"Guilty."

"Jason Meers—"

"Guilty."

"Dora Munson—"

"Guilty."

"Vida Newhall—"

"Guilty."

"Frances Perry—"

"Guilty."

"Irvin Potter—"

"Guilty."

"Jessie Slater—"

"Guilty."

"Dwight Thayer—"

Dwight Thayer lifted one eyebrow. "The man's innocent," he said.

There was a shocked silence, broken by Mrs. Wendel: "But that's ridiculous! We've all decided he's guilty! I was going to say so—and you were too, weren't you, Mr. Gibson?"

Bart nodded, not trusting himself to speak. But, turning to Dwight Thayer, he managed an ingratiating smile. "We can't all be wrong, you know! You can't hold out on all eleven of us!"

"Oh, yes, I can—" the other said easily. "I can hold out for the next fifty years if I have to."

"But we've been all over the evidence—" Cass Bentley began, in bewilderment.

"Oh, but if I only could be convinced I was wrong—" stammered Miss Slater. "I'd be only too glad—only too glad—"

Bart's smile had become a forced and ugly grimace. "What's taken you in, Thayer? Kent's looks?"

"Oh, no! I'm never much impressed by the appearance of a man, one way or the other. But it seems quite evident to me that Steven Kent isn't a fool. That's the point all of you seem to have overlooked."

"I don't understand—" faltered Mrs. Munson.

DWIGHT THAYER lit a cigarette. For a moment he seemed wholly absorbed in the slow, gray ribbon of smoke.

"I think," he said, then, "you've forgotten to look at Kent's record—merely from the standpoint of intelligence. Here, after all, is a man who is highly successful as an architect. You know that. A man who had a brilliant career in the Navy. You admit that. Yet you are ready to believe such a man would turn into a bungling idiot when he planned a crime! He had three years to plan this thing. Don't you suppose he could have thought of a better way of getting hold of those sleeping tablets?"

"Well, it wasn't very smart," Jason Meers assented. "I was struck by that myself."

"Let Mr. Thayer go on!" Mrs. Perry said sharply.

"Oh, it's easy enough to figure what he *could* have done," Dwight Thayer continued. "You heard him say on the stand, and the statement was unchallenged, that when he had the earlier prescriptions filled he would give the bottle to the housekeeper. And she would give the tablets, one at a time, to Andrea Kent. Why didn't Kent take charge of these bottles, and keep holding back a few tablets? It would have been the simplest thing imaginable! But now you're asking me to believe he murdered his wife with a batch of pills *he couldn't account for!* Only a fool would plan a murder on a story like that—and Kent isn't a fool."

Cass Bentley stared at him in wondering admiration. "Well, by golly!" he exclaimed.

"It's good reasoning," Miss Newhall said approvingly.

Bart cast an angry gaze around the table. The jurors' faces were beginning to brighten as, one by one, they reflected the relief from a grim and heavy burden.

Bart struck the table with his fist. "The hell it's good reasoning! A guy with his breaks could get a fancy college education and be an architect with a big front—even if he was the worst fool in the world!"

"But he'd hardly have such a fine reputation—" Christina Kilburn began.

"Who wouldn't have a fine reputation," shouted Bart, "if they had enough money to buy it? Why, I'm telling you this fellow's had it soft all his life—even when he was six years old gettin' credit for being a hero—"

"Where did that come in?" Mrs. Perry asked quickly.

Bart could not see his questioner. The room had become a red haze before his eyes. He heard his own voice, lifted in a frenzied shout: "I *know* about this man, I tell you! My own mother had to cook for those lousy, rotten, rich snobs—"

He managed to check himself, but it was too late. With one exception, they were staring at him in utter amazement.

The exception was Dwight Thayer, who was considering him with a faint smile. "Well, that explains your attitude, Gibson. It hit me as rather odd, even from the beginning."

"That's right!" Irvin Potter cut in excitedly. "Remember when we wanted to acquit Kent that first day? And Gibson was the one that queered it!"

"I can have my own opinion—" Bart began. "I can see to it this jury never acquits Steven Kent! I can do that much!"

"Can you?" Dwight Thayer asked him calmly. "What's the penalty for a juryman who has formed his opinion before the trial?"

Bart looked frantically from one face to another, all darkening with wrath. "Well, if you'll just take it easy—" he stammered. "I didn't say I wouldn't go along with the rest of you! You didn't hear me say that—" His words had faded into a craven mumble. . . .

FIVE minutes later the jury had reentered the courtroom, hushed, now, to a breathless silence.

Slowly the judge leaned forward. "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, have you reached your verdict?"

Bart Gibson moistened his lips. "We have, your Honor."

"What is your verdict?"

Bart's eyes went to Cicely Driscoll, who was awaiting his words in torment, tears trembling unheeded on her lashes, rolling down her smooth young cheeks. Then his gaze went to the accused man, who was standing erect, blue eyes burning and intent in a white face. Bart stared at him for a moment that seemed interminable in that courtroom. Then, slowly, heavily, he said what he had to say:

"We find the defendant—*not guilty.*"

THE END ★★

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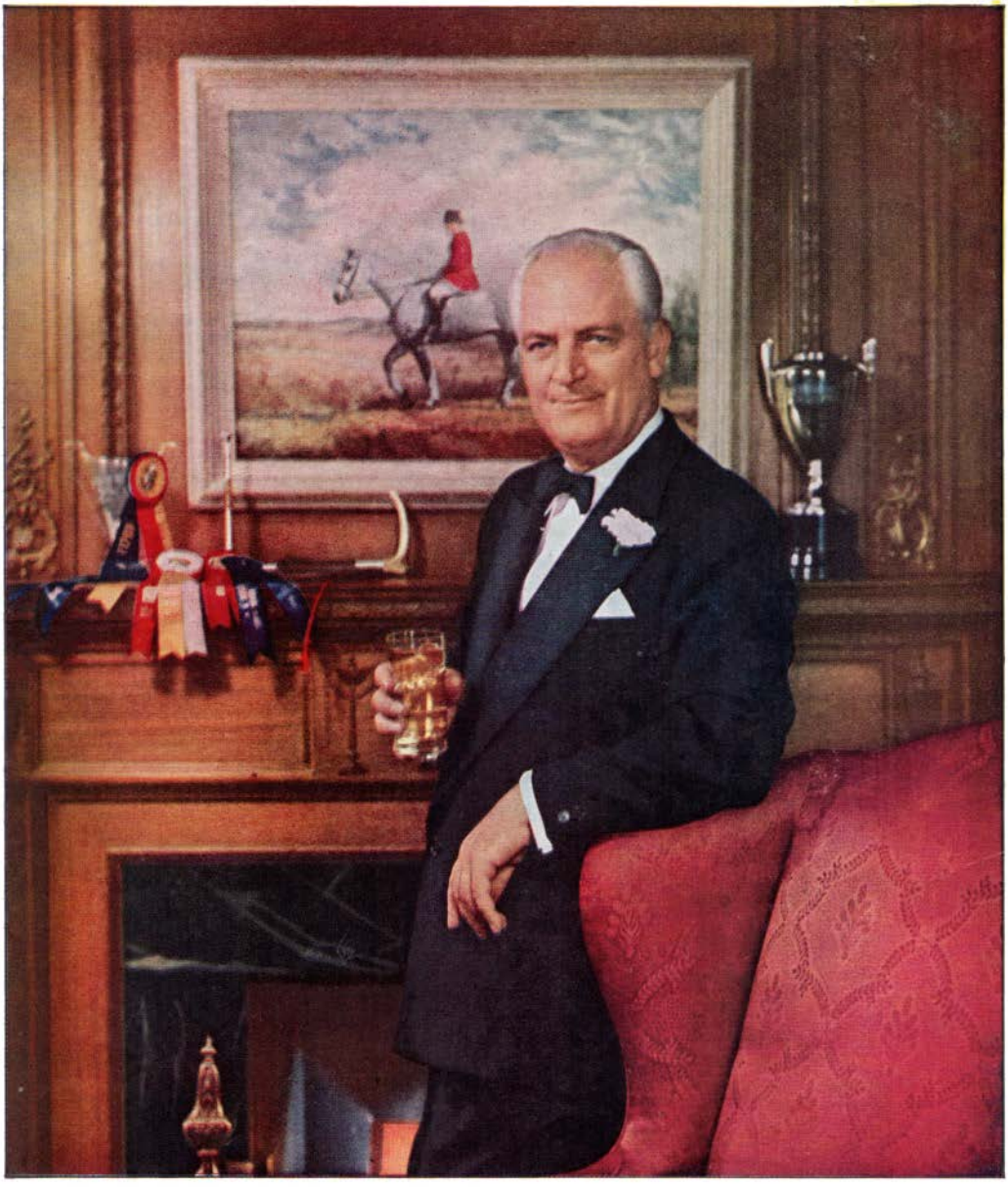

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