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Hearst's International combined with

Cosmopolitan

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Never take chances with "pink tooth brush" —heed its warning!

WHEN YOU SEE "pink" on your tooth brush—*see your dentist!* He may simply tell you that eating soft, creamy foods has denied your gums the exercise they need for health. And, like many dentists, he may suggest "the helpful stimulation of Ipana and massage."

For Ipana is designed not only to clean teeth thoroughly but, with massage, to help make your gums firmer. So each time you brush your teeth, massage a little extra Ipana onto your gums.

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METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER'S LION'S ROAR

Published in this space every month

The greatest star of the screen!

When "Cabin In The Sky" was playing Broadway a couple of years ago, we went to the Martin Beck three or four times to hear the cello-voiced Ethel Waters singing "Taking a Chance on Love" and all the other melodies by Vernon Duke.

★ ★ ★ ★

Here was a musical play with a real plot, a touch of poetry, too. What a film it will make, we said to ourselves, lion to lion.

★ ★ ★ ★

And now Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer is getting set to release "Cabin", happy in the knowledge that preview reports have branded it "a honey", "a dream" and just plain "excellent."

★ ★ ★ ★

M-G-M rules the raves.

The trio of star entertainers heading the cast are Ethel Waters, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson and Lena Horne.

★ ★ ★ ★

Lena is a find. She is destined to become another Florence Mills.

★ ★ ★ ★

Nor must we fail to tell about Louis Armstrong, Rex Ingram, Duke Ellington and his orchestra, The Hall Johnson choir. They're all there in "Cabin In The Sky".

★ ★ ★ ★

It's another excellent musical production by Arthur Freed. The screenplay is by Joseph Schrank. It is the first film that has been directed by the talented artist Vincente Minnelli and he is to be congratulated.

★ ★ ★ ★

A few additional numbers appear in the film by Harold Arlen and E. Y. Harburg. One in particular is entitled "Happiness is a Thing Called Joe."

★ ★ ★ ★

No more paragraphs on "Cabin" for the moment. Turning to other films, we recommend emphatically the current Spencer Tracy-Katharine Hepburn "Keeper of The Flame".

★ ★ ★ ★

If you liked "Mrs. Miniver" and "Random Harvest", you will recognize the same M-G-M touch in this adaptation of the novel by I. A. R. Wylie.

★ ★ ★

How are the New Year's resolutions coming?

★ ★ ★

Well, they were too tough at that.

—Leo

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Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

Frances Whiting • Editor

VOL. 114, NO. 3

1 THE MAGAZINE — March 1943

Novelette

Seven Short Stories

Two Serials

Eight Articles

Ten Special Features

COVER GIRL, JOAN FONTAINE, BY BRADSHAW CRANDELL

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IT'S the little things that disturb courageous men. Butch came through a couple of bombings and never batted an eye. But when it came to a second date with Lulu "he wanted out."

It was "Sailor, Beware!"

Sure, Lulu was a good-looker. Good gams, and plenty of "oomph". But when shore leave is short, a man doesn't want to spend it with a girl with halitosis (bad breath).

If men and women would only realize how offensive bad breath can be, they wouldn't risk offending this way. There's no doubt of it, off-color breath is two strikes against you from the start.

Why take a chance when Listerine Antiseptic offers such an easy, delightful and quick precaution? Simply rinse your mouth with it before any date.

Note how Listerine Antiseptic freshens and invigorates your mouth. And how much sweeter and more agreeable your breath becomes.

How it Acts

Listerine Antiseptic quickly halts bacterial fermentation of food particles in the mouth, then overcomes the odors it causes. Fermentation, you know, is held by some authorities to be the major source of off-color breath, although some cases may be of systemic origin.

Before Every Date

Don't take your breath for granted. Put your best foot forward so that others will like you. Never, never omit Listerine Antiseptic. It's part of your passport to popularity. Lambert Pharmacal Co., *St. Louis.*

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for oral hygiene

ATTENTION PLEASE! *There's another member of the Listerine family that you ought to try. It is Listerine Tooth Paste. From the standpoint of gentle and thorough cleansing it yields to none, and the big 40¢ tube lasts many as long as 90 days.*

What's Going On

"Life in a Putty Knife Factory"! That, my friends, is the absurd and delightful title of H. Allen Smith's new book. We'd like to adopt it as a descriptive subtitle for this column of allegedly inside stuff, for it covers people, events, opinions or what you will. We will publish part of it in April as a Preview of the Month. Random House and Harcourt-Brace are taking bows on last month's previews—both hits—"Guadalcanal Diary," by Richard Tregaskis, and Saroyan's "The Human Comedy."

FLASH! There will be a SURPRISE preview in the same issue—something new and different. When the movies wanted to film the exploits of Dr. Wassell, winner of the Navy Cross, they asked James Hilton to write the story. This he did, so brilliantly that Cosmopolitan is proud to publish for the first time what Hollywood calls a screen treatment. Cosmopolitan calls it a novelette—a brave and tender story of the American Navy.

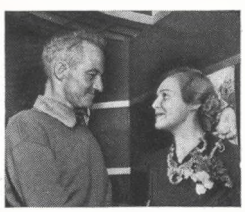
John Henry in "action."

Very hush-hush, until now, was Ernst (Putzi) Hanfstaengl's inside story of his pal Hitler, beginning on page 43. Contracted for soon after Putzi left Nazi Germany one step ahead of the Gestapo and before war broke out, it had to be cleared before publication through innumerable government agencies of Great Britain, Canada and the United States for obvious reasons. We should like to thank all officers and personnel of the departments involved for their extreme patience and co-operation in making this interesting document available to American readers. The wood carving used on page 43 in the cover layout was made in a Canadian internment camp by a fellow internee.

Speaking of covers, we promised to explain to everybody on behalf of John Henry, INS correspondent just back from Casablanca, that he did not go around North Africa posing for cameramen in heroic attitudes. We wanted to symbolize the modern newspaperman in action for our Fighting Fronts feature on page 59 and Mr. Henry kindly consented to be symbolized. Well, perhaps it would be simpler just to show you how it was done . . . Remember Pierre J. (Pete) Huss, whose Cosmopolitan articles early in 1942 gave Americans such a thrilling inside view of Nazi Germany? Pete is now Private Huss of the U. S. Army, the *first* and *only* famous American war correspondent to wear that proud title, if we are not mistaken.

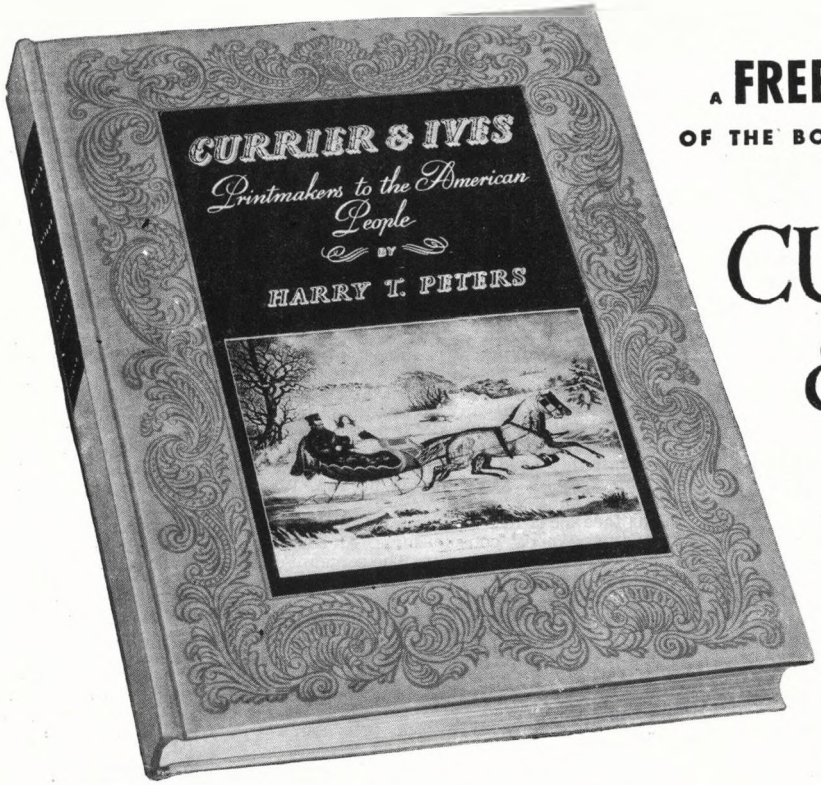
Private Pierre Huss, U.S.A.

We hope you're going to like the Carringtons, who make their Cosmopolitan bow next month. They grew out of a talk with Gladys Taber (over a "meatless" lunch which genial Andrew of the Stork Club supervised personally because we told him Mrs. Taber was a gourmet). It isn't hard to be valiant, we decided, when great victories or great defeats touch our emotions and demand our best. The true test comes when we have to carry on day by day with all the nagging *little* irritations of wartime—carry on *and smile!* "The Family on Maple Street" are grand folks. You'll like them. Their adventures will make exciting reading in 1943, beginning in April . . . Nancy Titus, who sold her very first story to Cosmopolitan, has turned in another fine modern novelette. It has a different twist. A brilliant and successful young wife nearly wrecks her family and her marriage before she learns that the best way to help people is to let them help themselves.



Madeleine Carroll and sailor.

We wish we had space to tell you about an evening Edmond Witalis, our Art Director, spent recently with Madeleine Carroll at the Seamen's Canteen taking pictures for an article in next month's issue. You probably know of Miss Carroll's magnificent work with our merchant mariners. We ran into trouble taking the pictures. The sailors wouldn't pose. "No, not me," said one man who had been torpedoed three times; "get that fellow over there. He's really done something." We got some pictures and a few personal stories, but no article could do justice to the quiet heroism and modesty of these men, or their touching gratitude to the lovely Hollywood lady who "bothers" to bring them a little cheer between voyages. F.L.R.



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ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF

The Telegram

"SAY, Bud, getting pretty important, ain't you? Telegrams and everything."

Curiously Al Woods, private of Engineers, took the telegram from the runner's hand. His fingers, already clumsy from gruelling pontoon-bridge construction, quivered. He hadn't received more than two telegrams in all his life. He held his breath as he ripped open the envelope, and his breath stayed in as he read: "BAD AUTO SMASH. PA KILLED. MA HURT PRETTY MUCH. MARY BUSTED UP TOO. WANTS YOU. WHAT SHALL I DO? TOM"

"Your face looks like bad news." Dully, the voice of his top sergeant beat against Woods' consciousness. Al couldn't think of anything to say, so he shoved over the wire. The sergeant's leathery face contracted.

"A tough break, kid. Who's Tom?"

Private Al Woods managed to catch his breath, but felt the electric impulses of disaster shoot through him.

"Tom? He's my kid brother. Pretty smart, though, for twelve."

"Mary your sister?" the sergeant asked in such a gentle tone Al hardly recognized his voice.

"No, she's my wife. We was expecting a—a——" He couldn't get out the word. "Gee, sergeant, do you suppose she's hurt so bad?"

"No telling, buddy. Where do you live?"

"Denver, Colorado."

A slow whistle broke from the sergeant's lips. "Got about as far away as the law allows, didn't you?"

Absently, Private Woods wiped away beads of perspiration. "I can't believe it," he said. "Pa gone, and Ma——" His lower lip vanished between his teeth. "I—I—I got to get there!" he broke out. "Don't you see? I *got* to, even if I got to go over the hill."

The sergeant shook his head. "Desertion would get you nowhere, Bud. What would you use for money?"

"Yeah, what would I?" With a bitter laugh Woods held out his hand. In its palm lay two quarters and a nickel. "Gee, if only payday wasn't so far off, or if only I hadn't sent home the allotment . . . Say, sergeant," he demanded hesitantly, "you couldn't——?"

The sergeant shook his head. "I've already thought of that, but me, I've been broke a week now." He scratched his head a moment. "Come on, soldier, let's andar down to Battalion Headquarters."

Major Thompson listened attentively. "Can't your father—I mean, isn't there some money your father's business could send so as to get you out? Didn't he have any savings?"

Standing very straight, Woods shook his head. "No, sir, he had only a little business of his own. Tires and tubes and auto accessories."

The thought of Mom and Mary all alone out there in Colorado—the family had only moved there from California six months back—made it hard to stand the way a soldier should.

The major passed a hand over his chin, made a tiny crackling noise. "It's clear you've got to get to your people. They need you."

From the doorway came the voice of Captain McNichol. "Sir, if you don't mind my mentioning it, this looks like a case for the A.E.R."

"Yes?"

"They helped out a case like this over in D Company."

The major nodded. "Check with the Denver Red Cross, then make out the necessary application forms; I'll sign them."

Half an hour later the chaplain said, "Everything's set. Woods, you'll take the three-fourteen out of town."

In spite of all he could do, Al Woods' eyes filled. "That's mighty fine, sir, and please don't think me ungrateful, but—but—it's going to be two whole days without knowing about how Mary is, and Mom."

Briefly the chaplain consulted a telegram. "We had a report. Your mother is going to live. But Mary—Mary and the——" The chaplain placed a hand on Al's forearm. His voice was lowered.

"I am afraid, Woods, there isn't going to be any baby—this time. But your wife's coming on fine since she heard you're coming to her."

"Thank you, sir." Private Woods saluted smartly.

"Don't thank me," the chaplain corrected with a quiet smile. "It's the Army Emergency Relief that's making your trip possible, and giving your people the best possible care."

LT. COL. F. VAN WYCK MASON

OVERNIGHT HE BECAME ANOTHER MAN...

with another sweetheart...another homeland... other secrets, passions, hates, loves, desires!

"She must never know I'm another man...working for my own country! If she found out, I'd be dead in an hour! But I can't forget it... I DARE not forget it!"

"THAT Frenchman back in a London hospital . . . HE was Bertrand Corlay. Now I'M Bertrand Corlay. I resemble him—that's what gave that devil Matthews, of Military Intelligence, his whole crazy idea. To send ME back to Brittany in Corlay's place, to find out what the Nazis are about on the coast of France. (And then get back to England—if I can!)

"But why do these razor-faced Nazi sadists leave ME on my farm—but herd others off to labor camps? And why does this luscious Elise fiercely whisper, 'Tomorrow night . . . at ten . . . at the usual place!'

"Corlay told me everything—the name of every last dog and cat in town. Everything is just as I rehearsed it. But now everything seems to have a double meaning. Look at those odd things Corlay was up to . . . those scandalously passionate love poems in his diary, for instance. Strange for a village teacher. And now look at this! *Good God! He's failed to tell me the most important thing of all!*"

You'll stay up till all hours with this $2.50 best-seller, *Assignment in Brittany*—a nerve-jolting, heart-pounding thriller, where the crunch of a footstep, the slip of a tongue can mean fearful torture, instant death! The *Philadelphia Inquirer* said of it, "If *Above Suspicion* was a suspenseful spy thriller, *Assignment in Brittany* is double that, in spades!"

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Louella O. Parsons

THE COSMOPOLITE OF THE MONTH

BY HOWARD DIETZ

ONE OF those montage scenes, if made of Hollywood itself, should include a huge derby hat that is a restaurant, the footprints in the cement of time at Grauman's Chinese Theater, the big freezer on Pico Boulevard which is an ice-cream parlor, cameras, booms, megaphones, monogrammed camp chairs, studios, posters, blondes—in slacks, scanties, swimsuits, sweaters—the lights of the City of the Angels, the astrologer's neon sign, the Sunset Strip with the shops owned by movie stars, cat-and-dog hospitals also in neon, the Carthay Circle searchlights muscling into the sky, nutberger stands—and Louella Parsons.

Certainly Louella. No history of the modern cinematic gold rush is complete without a few solid paragraphs on this bus stop in the Beverly Hills Baedeker. This phenomenon of personal journalism, though far from emaciated in appearance, is nevertheless a human skeleton key to every door in every studio, every room in every nestling celestial domicile. She is a virtual eyewitness to every divorce and every marriage. She has a sense of Reno and a sense of Yuma. She knows who is holding hands in Ciro's, the Troc or the Mocambo. She practically writes notices for midwives. She knows who is considering whom for what part. She knows where every body is buried, or whether the skeleton is in the hall or the bedroom closet. And if it is love that has died, she knows if "the corpse remains in the house." Louella is a whole side of Hollywood

She has more pedal extremities than any other leg man in the newspaper business, as several hundred movie press agents work for her. She is ever in their minds when they have a printable news item and first in their minds when they have one that is unprintable. They tell her all, if only to disarm her. Often as not, she gets a story direct from the lion's mouth even before the boys who are supposed to shovel it out to her. She can give it a banner or give it a lead, but only provided it is exclusive. The press agent is not merely paid to make his boss a success—he is paid to make his boss *feel* successful. And the boss feels more successful on the morning Louella, fanning out from the Los Angeles Examiner in her widely syndicated column, gives the banner line to him, his studio or his star. Though other Hollywood columnists may cry "no fair" to the double-talk on the other end of the phone, Louella's grapevine spreads among the tender grapes. She has Hollywood news in the hollow of her column

Miss Parsons and her daughter Harriet.

If you don't know Louella well, you're not in the movie business. She has a way with her, contrived or not, of giving each one the impression of oldest and dearest friend. She enters a populated drawing room, comes toward you with a smile that never leaves. Before she has actually accepted your hand, her eyes have taken in everybody in the room excepting, perhaps, you. Possessing the vagueness that is so often associated with charm, she can be irritatingly detached at the moment of contact. But in the security of her position as amanuensis to the local society, no one ever tells her. Not even her best friends who are all the famous shadows—Connie, Hedy, Ric, Jim, Clark, Cary, Gary, Charlie, Norma, Joan—everyone in the billing. There is that beautiful smile, that rush of teeth to the front, that tender maternal look while she returns to the subject limply in her hand and asks if there's any news.

Indeed, everybody loves Louella and Louella loves everybody. Love is Louella is Louella is Louella. But she has an elephantine corner in her mind for those she forgives but never forgets; those who have put thorns in her bouquet of memories in her quest for co-operation. A dinner party for more than eight must include "Lolly" and "Doc." "Doc" is now Major Harry W. Martin of the Army Medical Corps, serving in Australia, who bothered Louella no end recently by sending a printable bit to a rival columnist. It was heedless, to be sure, but not inconsistent with the cavalier qualities of her hail-fellow husband, stocky and big-faced (*Continued on page 12*)

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Elmer Squee at Waikiki

BY LIEUT. (j.g.) RICHARD L. BROOKS,
U. S. N. R.

1 The cruiser with Squee had come over the sea
To visit a tropical shore.
With a bos'n named Grummack (six feet and a stomach)
Squee landed all out to explore.

2 The bos'n was strong for a well-filled sarong
And for action he quickly prepared;
With a gleam in his eye Grummack straightened his tie
While Elmer felt horribly scared.

3 On their course a slight change brought them well within range,
With Grummack 'way out in the van.
While Squee at the rear with his heart full of fear
Maneuvered according to plan.

4 Then Lothario Grummack bowed over his stomach
Like a gallant and chivalrous knight;
His left arm went out and delivered a clout
That knocked Elmer Squee out of sight.

5 With a jealous incentive young Squee turned inventive
And decided to try out a plan.
Thought Elmer: "I'll play 'em a tune that'll slay 'em
And they'll *quit* that baboon of a man."

6 So Elmer got busy and soon had 'em dizzy;
The girls could do nothing but stare.
When he started to play good old "Anchors Aweigh"
They gave Mr. Grummack the air.

7 Like a piper inspired, until he got tired,
Squee played every tune that he knew.
The girls found him charming, naïve and disarming,
Which is *just* what Squee hoped they would do.

8 When the last tune was ended rewards were extended
In kisses and hugs from them both.
While Grummack the lout, who was feeling left out,
Gave vent to a terrible oath.

9 The bos'n decided 'twas time that he guided
Young Elmer straight back to his ship.
For the good of the service he said he was nervous
That something or other might slip.

10 So again Elmer's working with no chance for shirking
While Grummack stands by, cold as stone;
But when through with his duties Squee's off to those cuties
And *this* time he's going alone.

"Doc" and "Lolly," or Major and Mrs. Harry W. Martin.

(*Continued from page 8*)

and outrageously human for a dignified member of the stethoscope set. "Doc's" line is airy and jocular, a sort of Lawrence Grossmith among the girls and a "prosit" clinker among men. His clichés and his joy are never killed by Louella, who dotes and adores, beaming on him with a borealis glow, picking up the enchantment like a moon and spreading it to all the dark corners of the gathering. Louella is a sweetheart—"Doc" is Sigma Chi.

Before she married "Doc" there was one other legal knot in her life—John D. Parsons, a realty sire. This takes her 'way back—back to the days when movies were all short subjects, and she started the first motion picture news column on the Chicago Record-Herald. She grew to that job by way of birth in Freeport and migration to Dixon, Illinois. She reduced her maiden name Oettinger to a mere "O." right after high school, where she had been graduated valedictorian and where she doubtless learned her own system of futuristic grammar. Louella can spell everything right but words. Although she also gets names wrong occasionally, one time referring to the English comedians, Cicely Courtneidge and Jack Hulbert, as "Cicely Courtwright and her husband Jack Buchanan."

However, this hasn't prevented her from writing the lead story on motion pictures for the Encyclopedia Britannica for the last four years.

In the last analysis, it's deeds, not words, that count, and her most cherished deed was the having of daughter Harriet before the demise of her first husband, a victim in the World War. Harriet arrived to soft violins and ever since, Louella's bodice has hammocked the soul of mother love. She determined to do right by her brood, even pawning the jeweled relics which hung over from the regime of the real estate man. Hearst bought the Chicago Record-Herald and Louella took a powder to New York where she got a job on the Morning Telegraph, a paper where everything is in the present tense—"he win—he lose"—because you read it while you run to the track. She was picture editor and assembled a staff of witty and pulchritudinous females that press agents loved to slave for—Aileen Brenon, Helen Pollock, Agnes Smith and Frances Agnew. The boys would help with the headlines and run copy whenever they were allowed.

Louella's column was the first to combine news for the film trade with news for the film public. She got to know every mogul by his first name and she was a relentless Javert in following up a clue. She brought revenue to the paper and attracted the attention of W. R., who always hated success—on other papers. He wasn't at all bothered by having to pay Louella three times as much as she had received when he allowed her to depart Chicago. Accordingly, she disposed

of her lease on the little uptown flat where she had sung lullabies to Harriet and packed off to the fountain of age among the orange groves, the avocados and the pecans. Her wide syndication, her radio programs, her charities, her legendary career, her motherliness skyrocketed or snowballed her to intense local fame and a one-dimensional national figure. Harriet was sent to Wellesley, fulfilling the promise in her lullabies. She was pushed, up to a point, and no matter with what important personality Louella was conversing, it was Harriet this and Harriet that. But Louella was determined that her daughter should make her way on her own, and though during Louella's infrequent illnesses or her trips to Hot Springs where she bathed in alien mud, Harriet played columnar spook, by and large the offspring is no echo. Today, she has her own byline and a voice on the ether.

Louella lays claim to first in everything—first to make a picture news column, first to put movie stars on the radio, first columnist to go out on personal appearances. She is also the first to have a fan club—the Louella O. Parsons Fan Club formed in Chicago. This loyal group came to her rescue once when she was maligned for having supposedly engineered the dismissal of a fellow newspaperman. The story was distorted and they registered a protest. The Burlington, Illinois, Chamber of Commerce voted to ban the publication which had printed the story.

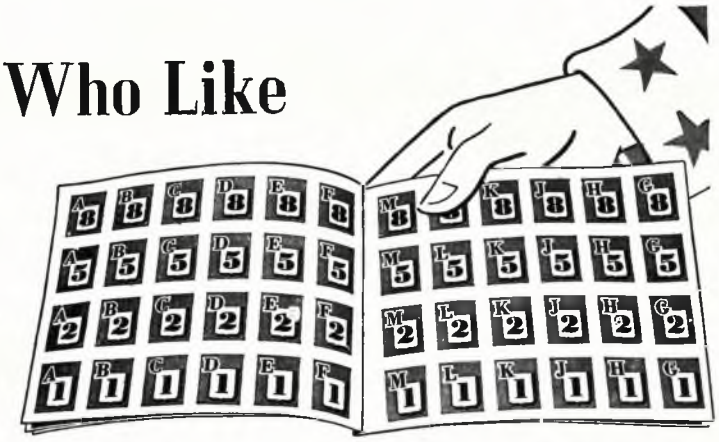
But more legendary is the yarn about her making a tour of the studios each Christmas to gather in her gifts. She is supposed to use either a truck or a station wagon and if she drops a few presents, she just goes back to the studios and gets others. Louella has her own angle on this. "Why, I never would do a thing like that," she says. "I would have made them send the presents to my house." People who know her insist that she gives more than she receives. It is a fact that she has never been able to balance her bankbook, for she can't add any better than she can spell. She hasn't a heart of gold in that sense, and she is a "carrier" of generosity. Recently in a New York night club, as guest of Charlie Chaplin, she observed that he had made a mathematical tip. She asked to see his

Celebrating Louella Parsons Day at Dixon, Illinois.

bank roll, plucked a twenty-dollar bill from it and gave it to the waiter.

No matter how late she stays up—even till five—she is always at her desk at nine. There, surrounded by her autographed love from Beverly Bayne, King Baggot, Anita Stewart, Rudolph Valentino, Gloria Swanson, Bebe Daniels, Ben Lyon, Doug, Mary and Charlie and all the moderns, she starts her day on the telephone, stopping for a staff-meeting lunch at the Brown Derby with her assistant, Dorothy Manners, and two or three secretaries. Wherever she goes, she leaves word so (*Continued on page 146*)

Memo to People Who Like to EAT



BY FRANCES RUSSELL

IF YOU like to eat—and who doesn't?—here are some pretty important facts you'd better start digesting right now, especially you, Mrs. American Housewife. Get out that budget book, draw up a new column and head it "Points." From now on, if you want to be sure of your fair share of certain foods, you're going to shop with one eye on prices, the other on War Ration Book Two, even if it makes you dizzy, cross-eyed or both. Or, come some fine Tuesday, you'll trot down to the super-market with a bag full of money and you won't be able to buy any of the foods you want because you've spent all your "points" for the month.

What is this new rationing system which is blitzing every kitchen on the home front? Why are we having it? How will it work?

WHAT—The "point rationing" system will apply to groups of similar or related commodities to be announced from time to time by the Government. For example, cereals such as oatmeal, cornmeal and corn flakes are "related commodities" which can be substituted for one another in the daily diet. Cereals are an example only. They will not be rationed. The same system will apply to various kinds of meats. Meat is one of the food groups that will be rationed by the point system, although it won't be the first. This rationing will be in addition to the present straight coupon rationing of such commodities as sugar and gasoline for which there are no widely used substitutes.

WHY—Our Government is establishing this rationing system for two reasons: one, to assure our fighting forces a sufficient quantity of everything which may be scarce, and two, to keep closer control of supply and demand so that everyone at home can be assured of his share of what remains, and of the fact that his share will be large enough to be useful.

HOW—In the point rationing system each commodity in a group will be given a "point value" and this will be regulated by supply and demand:

1. A low point value will be given the commodity plentiful in comparison with its usual supply and demand.

2. A high point value will be given the commodity that is scarcer than usual.

3. A point value somewhere between the two will be given to a commodity when the supply and demand are expected to be somewhat less than usual.

In short, the greater the demand for any commodity and the scarcer the supply, the higher will be the point given it; and the less the demand and the more plentiful the supply, the lower will be the point. Thus the Government can control shortages and swing buyers toward the more plentiful commodities.

For instance, in England, where point rationing originated, everyone wanted bacon for breakfast. No one bought the sausage sent over by Lend-Lease. Result: bacon was given a high point value, sausage a low one. The demand for bacon was braked and Englishmen were educated to like sausage.

Here, when meat is similarly rationed, different point values will be given to different kinds of cuts. When lamb is scarcer than pork it will be given a higher point value and vice versa. Too, point values will be affected by such factors as popularity of certain cuts and proportion of bone to lean meat. Thus chopped beef, all lean meat and no bone, would cost more in points than beef shank.

So far as food is concerned, we're all in the same income group now. Mrs. Rich can't buy any greater amount of rationed foodstuffs than can Mrs. Poor. But that same old rule applies: you must have the money, too.

The point system of rationing goes into effect with distribution of War Ration Book Two. To get it, you must show that you have War Ration Book One. Those who didn't bother about the first had better make a dash for the nearest rationing board. War Ration Book Two is valuable. Don't lose it!

It contains eight pages—four blue and four red. Each page contains twenty-four coupons. Each coupon has a letter and a number. The letter represents the period in which the coupon is valid; the number represents the coupon's point value. This one book may govern more than one rationing program. To illustrate: blue coupons A, B and C totaling 48 points may become one month's ration of cereals, say. The red coupons of A, B and C may be the ration for canned vegetables. However, the Government won't announce the real rationed commodities until the day before rationing begins. The best thing to do is to watch the daily papers and tune in on the radio for Government announcement of what commodities will be rationed and when and how the coupons are to be used.

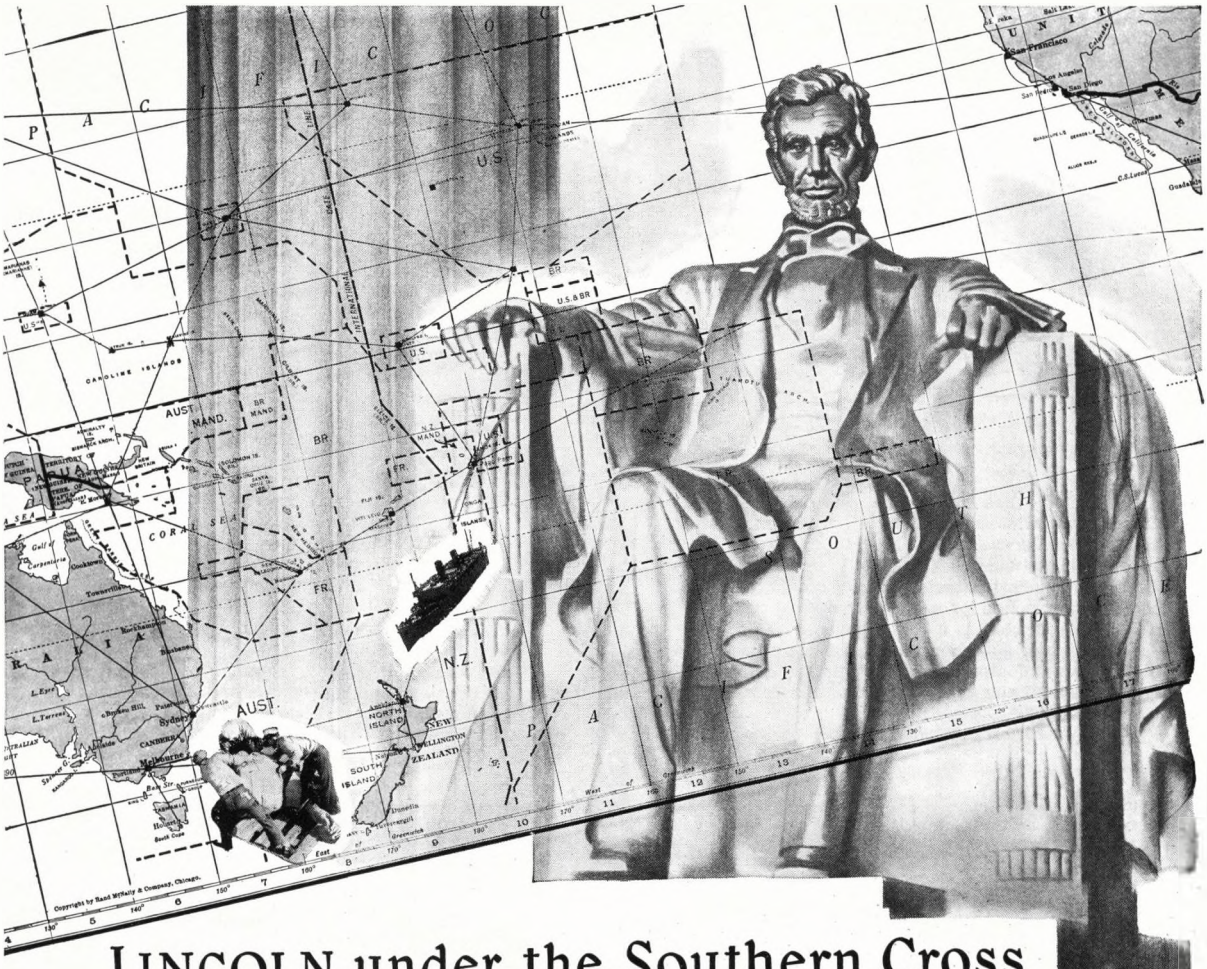
If you so wish you can spend your family's entire month's allotment of points at one time. Only remember, points, unlike money, can't be borrowed and you can't charge coupons at the grocery. If you're a smart shopper you'll budget your points as you do your dollars and look for bargains in point as well as in cash money. Point values will be governed by availability and popularity. If everybody buys beans they'll be higher. The more low-point commodities you buy, the farther your ration points will stretch.

The coupons, or stamps, are numbered 1, 2, 5 and 8. One coupon or more may be used to make the total number of points required by a purchase. If a jar of peanut butter is 6 points it's better to use a 5-point and a 1-point stamp rather than three 2-point stamps. Keep the smaller denominations for times when you will need only low points for the purchases you wish to make. If you surrender coupons that total more than the points required your grocer can, of course, make change. But he may be too busy to bother and you may lose out in the confusion.

And while you're feeling woozy over this system take a minute out to pity the poor grocer. It's a headache for him, too. You might try co-operating with him. Perhaps you could do your usual week-end shopping on a Wednesday.

It's going to mean more work for you, Mrs. Housewife. You'll have to sit down with the ration list, announced points, your pencil and paper—and plan and plan and plan. Meal planning in advance has always been the efficient way for the dollar budgeteer, but now, more than ever, it's necessary to plan ahead if you are going to get the most from your rationing points. If you squander all your meat points on a Sunday roast you can't very well invite the Browns in for steak supper Tuesday.

"All the money in the world won't buy happiness," our parents said. That's not the half of it. It won't buy rationed foodstuffs—if you haven't the points!



LINCOLN under the Southern Cross

LINCOLN never died, really. His spirit still speaks to every true American, wherever he may be. Up where arctic winds shred the fog banks, or in coral seas "under the Southern Cross," the same spirit is saying: "*This Nation, under God, shall not perish from the earth.*"

You can sense this spirit above the metallic clang of shipyards. You can hear it above the roar of our fighting men-o'-war. It sustains our fighting men on far battlefronts. Wherever common men are, Lincoln's spirit must be also, for Lincoln loved them. It was of common men that he said, "*God made so many.*"

There are many of these common men of our Merchant Marine. Our Nation needs them. Our soldiers need food for themselves, and food for their glutton guns. Common men, needing common men. Lincoln's spirit must be with them, for his is the spirit of common men.

We see this spirit of Lincoln, among those closest to us. Among the men who man our squadron of freighters and our passenger liners, the LURLINE, MARIPOSA, MONTEREY and MATSONIA. Among the men who make our ships ready for sea.

These are common men, in common jobs. *Experience* directs the *skill* of their hands. *Courage* steels their hearts to give *all of both*, regardless of known dangers. High purpose steadies all three, in their faithful performance. Some call this patriotism. *It is.* But, that is the spirit of Lincoln.

This leads us to believe, that our 63 years of experience, our loyal personnel, our knowledge of ocean regions, and our *ready* fleet of ships, are serving more importantly than ever before, because we realize that *serving our Country in this emergency is more important than anything we have ever done.*

THE COSMOPOLITAN Family Quiz

FATHER

1. Japan's gift of cherry trees to our Capital was presented in compliment to what lady?
2. In what is the Bertillon System used?
3. How can you tell whether an elephant is African or Asiatic?
4. The Gigli saw is used for cutting wood, steel, bone or rock?
5. What two baseball terms are also slang words for a spree?
6. What musical instrument of the Navy has no written notes?
7. We all know what is meant by a bottleneck, but what is a bottlenose?
8. From what language does the word "taps" come?
9. What ruler made his male subjects cut off their beards or pay a tax for wearing them?
10. In Navy slang what is a Sea Lawyer?
11. What American governor renounced his citizenship and was adopted as chief of the Cherokees?
12. Who originated the typical form of the modern detective story?

(*Answers on page 78*)

MOTHER

1. Is "Jap mink" a type of mink or a trade name for another fur?
2. "Wayside" and "Sunnyside" were homes of what authors?
3. What is Mrs. Roosevelt's first name?
4. Of what is a victim of agoraphobia afraid?
5. What two jewelry pieces are allowed women in Army uniform?
6. Which weighs more, a pint of heavy cream or a pint of light cream?
7. Who was the Father of (*a*) the Constitution, (*b*) English Poetry, (*c*) Medicine?
8. Casein is derived from sour milk or soy beans?
9. How do Mohammedans divorce their wives?
10. If you had a firkin could it be worn as a scarf, carried as a charm, or used to store butter?
11. When we say it is fast because it won't run, what are we talking about?
12. What is a small, hollow truncated cone, convex at summit, open at base and covered with small regular indentations?

(*Answers on page 112*)

BROTHER

1. If your friend in the Army writes that he has been busy "bubble dancing" what does he mean?
2. What is Jack Dempsey's full name?
3. A hogan is a type of home, a means of transportation, or an animal?
4. In what other way could one designate a brood of pheasants and a litter of pigs?
5. What tribe of Indians is still technically at war with the U. S., a peace treaty never having been signed?
6. What can be lengthened by being cut at both ends?
7. Distinguish between phalanx and phalanges.
8. A jury-rigged sailboat is rigged for what?
9. How much is a Japanese soldier paid per month?
10. How often does a man in U. S. Service overseas receive a gold overseas chevron?
11. Is a jaunting car motor-driven?
12. Where is amber obtained?

(*Answers on page 88*)

SISTER

1. How long would it take to spend a billion dollars, spending a thousand dollars a day?
2. In what sea is the Isle of Man?
3. Is dendrology the study of teeth, dental supplies or the history of trees?
4. The first college established in America was Yale? Harvard? William and Mary?
5. If three rays of light —primary red, yellow and blue—cross each other, what color results?
6. What word means both dodge and immerse?
7. Where is the Never-Never Land?
8. What bird has all the colors of our Flag?
9. What do girls in England call runs in stockings?
10. Why is Friday considered an unlucky day?
11. What famous Americans do you think of first in connection with: Coonskin Cap, Poor Richard, Old Hickory, the Little Giant, Bull Moose?
12. Cupid is the Roman god of love. Who is his (*a*) mother, (*b*) lover, (*c*) Greek equivalent?

(*Answers on page 127*)

We will pay $2 for each original question submitted which the Editors find acceptable. Please give the source or proof of your answer. All questions submitted will become the property of Cosmopolitan. Address FAMILY QUIZ, Cosmopolitan, 959 —8th Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Sorry, the Postman says "No!"

WE WISH we could mail you a Four Roses Hot Toddy—just to let you know what a downright marvelous cold-weather drink it is.

We can't. So we suggest the next best thing:

If you haven't a bottle of Four Roses on hand, get one at the nearest liquor store and follow our recipe for the world's finest hot toddy.

Then settle back in your favorite chair before the fire and slowly sip the warm and fragrant masterpiece that you and Four Roses have created!

Recipe for
the world's finest Hot Toddy

Put a piece of sugar in the bottom of a glass and dissolve it with a little hot water. Add a twist of lemon peel (bruise it firmly) . . . four cloves and, if you desire, a stick of cinnamon. Pour in a generous jigger of that matchless whiskey, Four Roses . . . and fill the glass with steaming hot water.

Frankfort Distilleries, Inc., Louisville & Baltimore.

FOUR ROSES

A blend of straight whiskies—90 proof

Now—Actual Proof of New Skin Beauty for 2 out of 3 Women in 14 Days!

BETTER COMPLEXIONS *PROVED* BY 9 DOCTORS IN 402 TESTS ON *ALL* TYPES OF SKIN

Never before have the women of America witnessed proved results so startling and sensational!

For 402 scientifically conducted tests—under the supervision of nine doctors—have proved conclusively that *in 14 days* a new method of using famous Palmolive Soap brings better complexions to 2 out of every 3 women . . . *with spectacular ease!*

Yes, these nine doctors report, "Softer, smoother skin! Less oiliness! Less dryness! Clearer skin! Complexions more radiant . . . glowing . . . sparkling! And these were just a few of the specific improvements which we found to be true."

Here is the NEW easy method:

Wash your face 3 times a day with Palmolive. Then each time take one minute more, a full 60 seconds, and massage Palmolive's remarkable beautifying lather into your skin . . . *like a cream.* It's that 60-second massage with Palmolive's rich and wondrously gentle lather that works such wonders. Now rinse—that's all.

Here is the PROOF it works!

In 402 tests on all types of skin—old, young, dry and oily—2 out of 3 women showed astonishing complexion improvement in 14 days. This is the conclusive proof of what you have been seeking, a way to beautify your complexion that really works. So start this new Palmolive way to beauty—tonight. You'll be glad you did!

NO OTHER SOAP OFFERS PROOF OF SUCH RESULTS!

HUNDREDS OF WOMEN IN HOME TESTS GET SAME STARTLING RESULTS!

Hundreds of other women—all over the country—are now using Palmolive's proved new beauty method at home. And far more than 2 out of 3 report the same kind of sensational results—*more* proof for you that Palmolive brings *new skin beauty in just 14 days!*

Thus, if *you* want a complexion the envy of every woman you know, the admiration of every man you meet, don't delay. Get Palmolive—and start right now on this great new beauty method you know may work wonders for you because it has for others.

I am the UNITED STATES

BY BENJAMIN DeCASSERES

FOR 150 years all the peoples of the earth have held me as a hope in their eyes.

Every revolution in the last 150 years that had for its aim more freedom has modeled its laws on my Constitution.

From the four corners of the earth people of all colors, religions and races have set sail to make their home under the folds of Old Glory.

In 150 years I have raised the level of wages and living to the highest point ever attained in all historic time.

I have given more persons opportunities to raise themselves, under my individualistic-capitalistic-free-enterprise system, from menial to commanding positions than any other nation in the world, past or present.

I have guaranteed to each and all, native and foreign, free speech, a free pen, freedom of religion and trial by jury.

I have abolished slavery and succored the victims of flood, famine and earthquake everywhere on earth.

I have given the world the greatest symbol for all time of revolt against oppression—George Washington.

I have given the world the greatest expounder of individualistic democracy and personal freedom in the history of mankind—Thomas Jefferson.

I have given the world the greatest symbol of a liberator of an enslaved people and the most humane ruler in time of civil war that history records—Abraham Lincoln.

I have made the words *liberty* and *America* synonymous.

I have given the world in a Congress, a Supreme Court and an Executive the best-balanced governmental setup in history.

No call from an oppressed people has ever gone unanswered by me.

When I have made mistakes—and I have made some great ones—I have admitted them finally and tried to rectify whatever injustice may have flowed from them.

My mighty rivers, my towering mountains, my prairies, my forests and my oceans have been open to travel for all my people without police permits or a spy system.

I was born in Philadelphia on July 4, 1776.

I gave the world its model Constitution on September 17, 1787.

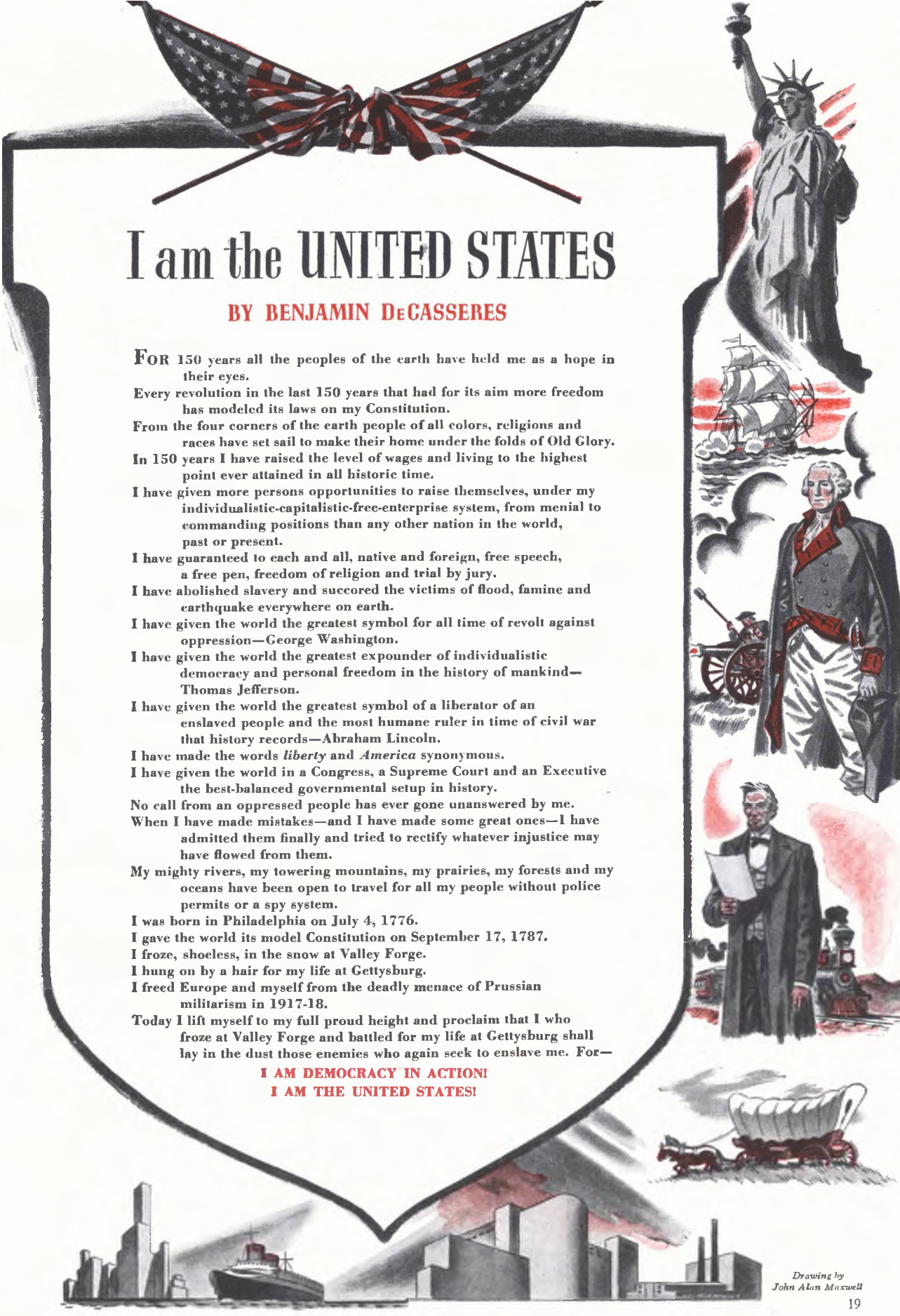
I froze, shoeless, in the snow at Valley Forge.

I hung on by a hair for my life at Gettysburg.

I freed Europe and myself from the deadly menace of Prussian militarism in 1917-18.

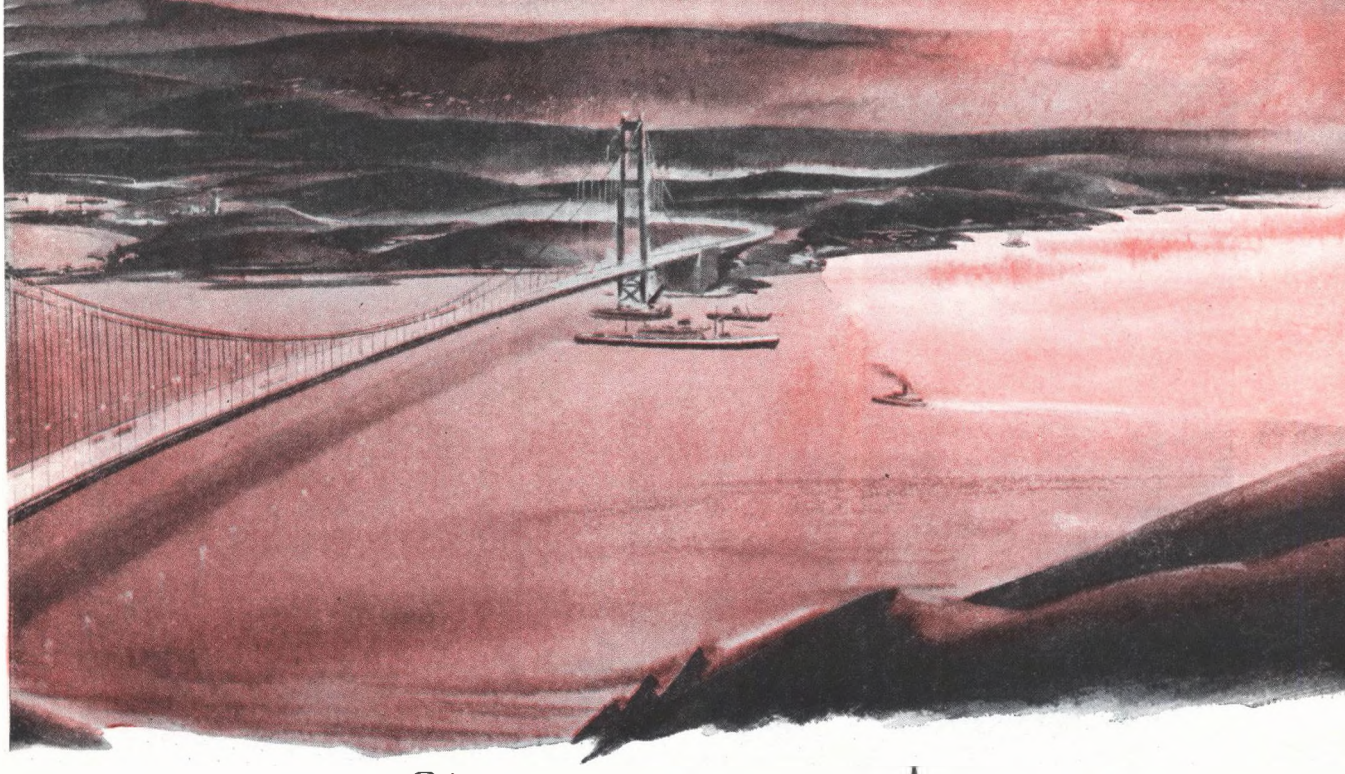
Today I lift myself to my full proud height and proclaim that I who froze at Valley Forge and battled for my life at Gettysburg shall lay in the dust those enemies who again seek to enslave me. For—

I AM DEMOCRACY IN ACTION!
I AM THE UNITED STATES!



Drawing by John Alan Maxwell

"My sweet," Tick said, "I love you so very much. And—I'm no good to you."



The Sin of the Angels

"What will you do with my life?"

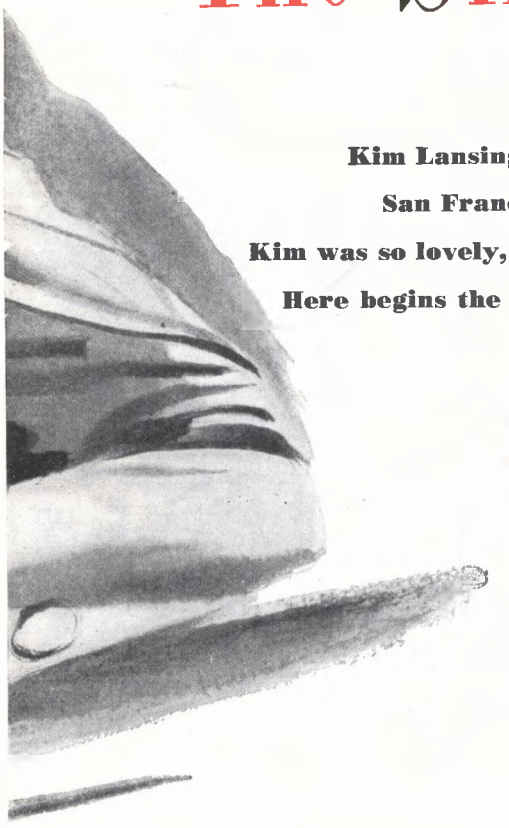
Kim Lansing asked Tick Farrell when they fell in love.

San Francisco society stood aghast, for it was all wrong.

Kim was so lovely, so fine, and Tick—well, there was that old scandal!

Here begins the dramatic modern story of an ill-starred romance

in the city by the Golden Gate



IN THE crystal air, the mile-wide channel of that strait called the Gate, running between ebon-wet rocks on the San Francisco side and the pale gold breasts of the Marin County hills on the other, was flooded with the molten gold which had given it its name. An impudent wind danced upon the surface of the bay, and then flew upward to drive the white clouds madly, leaving the water dappled sapphire and gold. The day was extravagant with beauty, spreading its glories as insolently as a peacock.

Men and women went forth through the Gate, but it was a tradition that they always came back. Kim Lansing had come back—from Paris, from Washington, from a dozen other cities—to build her redwood studio like an eagle's nest on Telegraph Hill.

Now from her windows, straight ahead, she could see Alcatraz, grim and relentless. The Golden Gate was on her left and far to her right the silvery span of the Oakland Bridge. Far below, she

BY ADELA ROGERS ST. JOHNS

ILLUSTRATED BY PERRY PETERSON

Back in her opera box Kim heard Lady Grossville say, "Everybody saw you—chasing after a man like that, a notorious man that's not received in decent society."

saw the long line of docks on the water front, where once ships from China and Japan, Alaska and South America, Australia and India had brought their treasures.

Today there were no ships.

Furiously, Kim Lansing thought that the rest of the busy, prosperous world might read headlines about dock strikes and labor wars in San Francisco, find somewhere on the dull financial page news of a rate war with Japan or the rising trade of Seattle and the Puget Sound to the north and Los Angeles' man-made growing harbor to the south—but it meant nothing to them. They never stopped to imagine what it meant to the people of the Golden Gate.

To Kim Lansing, looking down at the empty bay and the empty docks, it meant the city was dying, her city. There was no one at all to whom Kim could explain her mystic sense that San Francisco had a living soul as hungry and eager as her own. She dug her knuckles across her eyes, because if Patsy, her secretary, or James Joseph Kearney, her draftsman, found her weeping over the Golden Gate they'd think she'd gone stark mad.

Maybe they thought so anyway. She and her pipe dream about another fair—a great fair to bring people back next year to San Francisco.

Standing there at her window, she gave the impression of a fiery strength and of being taller than she was, but that was because of her slimness—except for the small swelling breasts she was slim as a Greek boy. Her eyes, with the tear mist still upon them, were fog-gray now, but sometimes they were blazing blue with excitement. The black brows above them were beautifully arched. A streak of pure silver ran through her blue-black curls.

Kim moved back from the window suddenly.

The studio was a bare room, dedicated to service, and except for the desk and a long table covered with blueprints, there was nothing in it except a small black piano. On the gray walls there were only two pictures. One was of a white building set in a grove of trees; a white building with airy spires which seemed to dance with joyousness. The other showed a warm brown building with rich red roof and deep windows—a friendly comfortable building which invited you to enter and share its books.

In the left-hand corner of both pictures, blackly lettered, were the words: "KIM LANSING, ARCHITECT."

Usually the girl gave them a wink or a smile of pride as she passed; now she went straight to the piano. Its tone filled the room. *"San Francisco, here I come!"* it shouted to her. She played the song like a Sousa march, with a drumming, syncopated bass. *"Ta-ta-ta-ta*—ta, ta, ta. *Right back where I started from."*

After seven years of sweating and working, conditioning herself like a Marine at boot camp, and now there wasn't anything to build. Unless she could get in on the fair.

The door opened, and Kim looked over her shoulder. Her secretary said, "Your aunt's coming for you, Miss Lansing. She thought that you might forget Mrs. Calhoun's reception."

"I am in a mood," said Miss Lansing. She grinned and got up, still thinking about the fair.

Even the Barbary Coast was dead today. Some people thought it was a good thing, but it had been part of San Francisco. "The miners came in '49, the gals in '51, and when they got together they produced the Native Son." Damn fine lusty sons, just the same. If she had a chance at the fair, she'd rebuild the Barbary Coast from memories that held only what was picturesque and vital and lusty.

Gray ice formed over her face at the thought that maybe there wouldn't be any fair. Fairs cost money. There wasn't any money in San Francisco nowadays. But if she kept needling, somebody would get enough to go on—the Abroughs, maybe.

Watching her, Patsy thought about what she'd told Mom last night when she got home to the Marina—that she was glad she'd been born ordinary dumb. Having brains like Miss Lansing wasn't comfortable or peaceful. But Mom said Kim Lansing wouldn't know what to do with peace, and a good thing for the world too. Of course Mom thought Miss Lansing was out of this world after she got Pop a job; with jobs, in 1937, so hard to get.

Anyway, Patsy was glad the phone rang just then. "It's Mr. Jackson," she said, pleased. That would make her lady feel better. In Patsy's opinion, Mr. Jackson was a gentleman to make any young lady feel better, and she hoped Miss Lansing would make up her mind about him pretty soon. She'd kept him dangling long enough.

Kim said, into the telephone, "I am fit company for neither man nor beast. Nothing goes right."

"Which all goes to prove," replied Clay Jackson's pleasant voice, "that you should quit working and marry me."

"Couldn't I both work and marry you?" Kim asked.

"Anything your little heart desires," Clay told her. "We'll go into the whole thing later. I can't get away to take you to the dowager's, but I'll meet you there and we'll go to dinner afterwards. Is that a date?"

"All right," said Kim.

Her voice was distant, because that vague clairvoyance to which she was often prey warned her that none of it was going to be as simple as all that. Ever since she was a little girl she'd known when things were going to happen; seen into the future when important events loomed. Like staying awake all night before her father'd arrived for a surprise visit that time in London; like the time in Paris when for three days she'd kept expecting to meet somebody important to her destiny and that good-looking young attaché had introduced her to Beauvais and he'd got her into the Beaux Arts. Things like that. She felt that way now.

She wished Clay Jackson wouldn't force the issue.

The Jackson alliance had advantages. It was silly to despise money. Generation after generation the Lansing gold, discovered and staked in '49 by the first Henry Lansing, had been petering out. And while it had been nice for Father, third Henry of the name, to be an ambassador, it had also been expensive. Clay had hung on to his shipping fortune, folding up schedules of the Jackson Lines when labor conditions threatened loss, showing a shrewd refusal to gamble that would have horrified its founders, who had sent the clippers out upon their hazardous voyages. But he had kept what he had, and his determined steadiness would make a foundation for her ambition. Foundations were important.

But for one thing she would have married him last year, when she came back for good. Now she was wondering if she would ever find pleasure in the touch of any man. Maybe she had turned the cup of her being upside down, spilling all her passion out on blueprints and steel and stone, so that she would never know that burning loveliness of which the sirens sang.

"Lady Grossville's here," Patsy said.

With the small hat of violet velvet at exactly the right angle on the boyish curls, with furs flung over the wide shoulders and gauntlets trimmed and braceleted with gold, Kim had the air of a dashing young courtier as she went to meet her aunt. But she stopped at the table for a last look at her plans. Lovely, golden buildings. Golden for San Francisco.

A dream she had to make come true.

"How well do you know the rich and influential Abroughs, Marie darling?" she asked her aunt.

In 1914, it had been said that not since the Gunning beauties came out of Ireland had London seen a complexion so exquisite as that of the new Lady Grossville. "We all have complexions like that in San Francisco; it's the fog," said the American bride, who was reputed heiress to a gold mine. In 1937, she still had the famous coloring, but it was laid over granite. Her hair, which had been red, was now turning silver, but it had never been bobbed. A twinkle concealed the fact that the forget-me-not eyes had faded.

The girl's like me, Lady Grossville was thinking, as they hustled down the new cement drive in Kim's roadster. We belong to the cat family—the cat that walks by his wild lone. If Kim's mother had lived she might have taught her daughter the sweet ways of words and kisses and accustomed her to affectionate caresses, for she'd been a warm, affectionate creature. But I'm no good, Lady Grossville thought. I'm like a cactus pear—sweet inside, but how do you get through the prickles?

Now only a man could teach Kim—a man she loved passionately. And that, Lady Grossville thought bitterly, could cost too much in pain and loneliness. She had paid it herself to the young Englishman she had married, who had died at Jutland so many years ago. Besides, what man was good enough for Kim to love?

"Men, the way they are nowadays," said Lady Grossville sharply, "you'd have to stay on your knees to look up to one of them. It's no good making yourself little to look (*Continued on page 86*)

Why should the only beautiful thing that had ever happened to her sound so ugly there in the courtroom? Would you call her bad?

Tomorrow Belongs

BY ISABEL MOORE

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM LOVELL

IN JUST a few minutes, now, they would come for her and take her over to the courthouse in Mrs. Presby's little black car. In the beginning she had dreaded this day, this hour; now she welcomed it. Get it over with! she thought. At least Ralph would be there, and the minute she looked at him her torment would be over with, one way or another. She would know, instantly, whether he still loved her, or whether he hated her for what she had done to him. She had seen him for just a minute yesterday, when the M. P. and the chaplain from the Fort had come for him. They had let him say good-by to her.

"It's funny," he had said, "how these things happen. Here I was with a swell Army record, slated for O. C. School pretty soon, and now I'm headed for the guardhouse, instead. Gosh, Janie, if you'd only told me how things were . . ."

If just once, she had told him the truth about herself, he had meant. She had dropped her eyes before the misery in his nice young face, before his gentle voice that still held no blame in it.

"I'm sorry," she had said. "Ralph, I'm so sorry!"

"Well," he had said after a minute, "never mind, kid." His eyes, so brown and gentle and steady, had smiled down at her, for she was very small in her flat-heeled saddle shoes that Mrs. Presby had brought over, to replace Janie's high-heeled black patent leather ones. "It's okay, honey. It's not your fault. Keep your chin up; I'll stick by you."

The M. P. had said, "Okay, soldier, let's get going," and the chaplain had looked sorry and they had moved off, the three of them, and she had been left here, at the Children's Society, while Mrs. Presby investigated her case before having it brought to court.

Sitting here now, on the edge of the narrow white bed, waiting for Mrs. Presby, she knew that though yesterday Ralph had said all those fine things, it was entirely possible that by now he had changed his mind. If he had—if he deserted her—what would become of her? What did they do to girls like her? Bad girls, wayward girls. Girls who stayed out all night. Whatever it was, it would probably be awful. No nice boy would ever have anything to do with her, a girl with a police record!

She began to tremble violently, and a matron passing through the room paused to ask, "Cold? Like a sweater?"

Janie looked up at the woman. A broad, hard face. A body that could deal capably with anyone who might prove troublesome. Janie shook her head mutely, and the matron left her.

The windows were open and bright April sunshine flooded through, making patches on the bare, scrubbed floor. A soft breeze blew the scent of violets and wistaria into the room from the small, neat garden outside. Violets were the first flowers she had ever had, Janie remembered. Ralph had bought her a twenty-five-cent bunch of them from the woman who sold them every Sunday afternoon along the dock near the Fort. Nobody had ever bought Janie flowers before, and when Ralph pinned them to the shoulder of her new spring coat, she had cried.

"They're beautiful," she had told him, "just beautiful." And she had buried her face against them.

"So are you beautiful, Janie," Ralph had said. He spoke quietly, in a voice different from the voices of the other soldiers who were standing near them, waiting for the ferry, and joking with the girls they had picked up. Girls like Janie, who had come out here alone to flirt with the soldiers. He had said, "You shouldn't use rouge on that lovely skin, though."

Dottie Weber, who was Janie's best friend, had been standing near by with a short, redheaded sergeant. "Not use rouge!" Dottie had screamed. She always spoke in little shrieks and screams. "Why, she'd look like a picked chicken, without rouge!" Dottie had laughed, and so had the sergeant, but Ralph hadn't laughed. Nor had Janie.

Sitting here in this sunny room, remembering, Janie's hand flew to her cheek. There was no rouge there, though. There hadn't been since that Sunday of meeting Ralph. That Sunday when one half of her life had ended, and another half had begun. A life of lies piling up, one by one, until finally they had crashed, burying her and Ralph beneath them.

But she had only done it because she loved him, she told herself. Why, if he had known the truth . . . And then she remembered how it had been when he *had* known the truth. How gray and shocked his face had looked. How his eyes had pitied her.

"I'm eighteen," she had told Ralph on that first Sunday, lying about it as Dottie had told her to do.

"You certainly don't look it," Ralph had said. "You don't look more than fifteen."

"That's just because I'm little. If I were tall, I'd look older. I'm the same age as Dottie, and she looks eighteen, doesn't she?"

Ralph had admitted that she did. Dottie's bright, bleached hair, and Dottie's knowing look, and Dottie's, "Hey, wise guy!" putting men off, bespoke at least eighteen years, though like Janie, she was barely sixteen.

"They'll think we're San Quentin quail," Dottie had said to Janie before coming out here, "jail bait, if we tell them we're just sixteen, and they'll run like rabbits."

Janie had nodded understandingly. It had been Dottie who had introduced Janie to the idea of going over to the Fort and picking up a soldier date.

"After all, why not?" Dottie had philosophized, sitting in her bedroom in the flat above the Barnabys', peering into the mirror critically as she brushed the white, pasty bleach over her hair. "Those poor guys are lonely as hell, and most of them know they're on their way overseas, and they'll spend their whole month's pay showing a girl a good time. And the best part of it is, they don't know a thing about you. They're not like the wise guys in this town who think that just because a girl's family doesn't belong to the Country club, and because she doesn't say, *'Rah-lly!'* they can make passes at her."

Janie knew how (*Continued on page* 81)

to Us

"I've never been in love before," Janie said as Ralph kissed her. "I'm glad I waited for you."

CASABLANCA

"Where are you going?" we asked this famous I. N. S. war correspondent one day last October. "I don't know," he said. "Our destination is secret but we expect action." "Write what you see," we told him. Here it is . . .

THE COOL, moonless night was quiet. The sea was miraculously calm. It was a strangely placid setting for the death and destruction of war.

Over there within shooting distance was the coral-fringed coast of Morocco. There, under the star-specked autumn sky, lay the land that would become an American fighting front—the palm trees, rivers, jungles, plains and white vistas of sand; the pink minarets, towns and villages of French West Africa.

Misty, Herculean forms of American battle craft and transport ships slipped silently in toward the shore line. The zero hour was near. The climax to the greatest amphibious operation in United States military history was at hand.

You could feel the tension. Conversation was speculative and subdued. Everybody seemed to be wondering and waiting, fidgety to find out what the dawn would bring.

"Say, mate," wisecracked a sailor from Missouri to his buddy, "there's no telling whether we'll have to fight here tomorrow or not. Remember that girl you were squiring around last time in port? Well, just in case we fight, how 'bout giving me that chickadee's address; you know—just in case we fight, and just in case one of us don't come back."

"Okay, it's a deal," his pal replied, forking over some sweet little thing's street and telephone number. Thus, in one particular instance, the tension was lifted momentarily.

Thousands of other little conversation pieces kept men in high spirits, offsetting the otherwise somber trend of thought. In this manner did American fighting men go forth to battle.

Girded for combat and supported from the sea by nearly all the striking force in the Atlantic Fleet, Army troops were ready now to launch their monumental campaign along the Mediterranean. Nothing had ever been attempted before on such a vast scale. Never in military annals had so many troop vessels and naval ships transported so many men so far on such a mission. Every lad in khaki and blue realized the sweeping significance of the task ahead.

Stern questions gripped the minds of all present.

Would the French oppose American occupation of Africa? Or would they accept our overtures of friendship?

You could sense the imminent possibility that France would fight. It was evident, moreover, that a prolonged campaign against forces of the Vichy Government would thwart a swift, surprise blow against Axis armies in Libya and along the southern coast of the Mediterranean.

Would the daring landing operation be successful?

What would the French choose to do?

Soldiers and sailors wondered as they waited at their battle stations on the night of November seventh.

Nerve-twisting time was to pass before they had their answers. It would seem

Acme

ages before the ships could creep closer to shore and disembark their soldier cargoes. Twelve gruelling hours were to tick away, converting darkness into daybreak, before the French showed their hand.

Meanwhile, soldiers and bluejackets had their orders.

The suspense of the afternoon was broken when Rear Admiral Robert C. Giffen delivered a message to his men. The commander of the Navy's force, protecting the convoy from surface opposition, asserted:

"If circumstances force us to fire on the French, let it be done with the firm conviction that we are striking not at the French people, once our victorious Allies, but at the men who prefer Hitler's slavery to freedom. If we fight, hit hard and break clean. Good luck. Go with God."

In similar words other Navy officers and Army leaders had given "pep talks" to their men. The rugged, redheaded captain of one of the fighting ships told his officers and crew:

"If we wield the sword, do so with all the strength in this mighty ship to destroy completely and quickly."

I saw officers and bluejackets react to the captain's statement. They exchanged understanding glances. Some seemed pensive. Others nodded approvingly. Their expressions were those of football players just before the kickoff, anxious to get on with the game.

After the captain's voice had faded from the ship's loud-speaker, men on deck, gunners at stations in the turrets, officers who had gathered in the wardroom and the black gang crawling around the throbbing engines essayed their own predictions regarding the events of the morrow.

"I'll lay you two to one the French won't fight," one sailor said to his pal.

"Yeah—that's easy money," came the reply, and another nautical wager was made.

Across their coffee cups in the wardroom, small groups of officers huddled. One, seated around the end of the long dining board, discussed French history. They agreed that the present situation was incredible. None would believe that America's historic friendship with France could crumble now. Some predicted the French would fight only half-heartedly and briefly, offering a token defense to satisfy their German oppressors.

"These fellows haven't got anything against us," remarked a fresh-faced young ensign barely out of Annapolis. "I don't think they want to fight us any more than we want to fight them, and I'll bet they'll be glad to see our soldiers going after the Nazis."

The suspense, the tension, all the eagerness and dry nervousness that embraced minds and bodies were the cumulative effect of more than two weeks at sea. The 3,000-mile ocean trail which led to this date with destiny had seemed endlessly long. These climactic moments on the eve of action were bringing an end to months of careful preparation and planning.

More than a day was required for the conception and birth of the African campaign.

As far back as last spring, the military minds in Washington and London were laying the groundwork and studying the theory of the Allied move along the southern Mediterranean coast. Everything was thought and said in secrecy.

Thousands of details had to be ironed out. There was the problem of procuring sufficient ships to transport the Army in one huge armada. Matériel and supplies for the troops had to be obtained, and preparations made to keep them flowing even while we maintained other life lines to our forces in the Pacific and to our Allies.

Without fanfare and public acclaim, the Army general staff and the Navy general board solved each problem connected with the maneuver. They planned to make the expedition as foolproof as humanly possible. Their paper work, however, was not enough. The operations were carried out in actual practice.

Troops were brought to the Eastern Seaboard from their training camps. Loaded aboard transport ships, they didn't know whether their next stop was to be the Solomon Islands or the rugged shore line of Norway. They were surprised to find themselves anchored "somewhere off the East Coast," and put ashore again in landing barges.

These practice (*Continued on page 71*)

Wedding Date

If she would only choose the day, poor little Wendy Hayden would become the rich Mrs. Loren Vincent. Why did she hesitate?

BY VIÑA DELMAR

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN LA GATTA

HE COULD tell that his secretary had managed to get the tickets for the opening. When she succeeded in carrying out a difficult task she always returned to the office looking completely dejected. Long ago he had seen through her little game. It was designed to give Miss Parker a peculiar pleasure. He was supposed to say to her, "Couldn't get the tickets, eh?" Then she would look hurt at his accusation. "Of course I got them. You told me to, didn't you?" It was a trait in Miss Parker that Loren detested.

This time he knew she had the tickets. Her silence and the defeated look on her thin, sharp face were eloquent testimonials to her success. He refused to play Miss Parker's little game.

"What row are they in?" he asked.

"Sixth row center, Mr. Vincent," she said sadly.

"Good work, Miss Parker. Excellent."

She smiled bleakly. "Mr. Garrett is in the outer office waiting to see you," she said.

"Oh, is he?" Loren Vincent wished he could tell Miss Parker to throw Tom Garrett out. But Miss Parker knew that Tom was his cousin. It didn't do to let employees feel that members of one's own family could be treated disrespectfully. "Send him in in about five minutes," Loren directed.

"Yes, sir."

She went out, and Loren turned to his private telephone. He wanted to speak to Wendy about the big opening. It would thrill her. She was such a darling. He liked to make her happy.

The smile which his thoughts had brought into being turned to a frown as his connection was made.

"Newton, Colfax Company. Good morning."

He always frowned at the sugary voice at the Newton, Colfax switchboard. "Good morning," he said resignedly. "I wish to speak to the book department."

"Do you wish to place an order?"

"No. I just want to browse around."

"Oh. Oh, well, just one moment, please."

Several seconds passed, and then: "Book department. Good morning."

"Good morning. I'd like to speak to Miss Hayden, please."

"Miss Hayden? Is this a personal call?"

"Yes. It's very personal. Do you mind?" He would have liked to add, "I'm going to marry the girl," but he felt there were more dignified ways of announcing his intentions toward Wendy.

He wished, however, that there was something he could say to the Newton, Colfax Company that would lose Wendy her job. It irritated him that the future Mrs. Loren Vincent received her telephone calls only if someone felt in a mood to permit her taking them.

"Hello."

"Hello, dear. This is Loren," he said.

"Why didn't you make me guess who it was?"

"What? Wouldn't you have known? Oh, I see. You're kidding me. Was I being stuffy again?"

"Not exactly. But no one else calls me 'dear,' and I do know your voice, and besides that——"

"All right. I was being stuffy. Listen, dear, there's an important musical opening tonight. Would you like to go?"

"Why, yes, Loren."

"Very well. I'll see if I can get tickets."

"Won't it be difficult if it's an important opening?"

"Of course it will be difficult, but if you want to see the show, that's enough for me. I'll get the tickets."

"When will you know whether or not you can?"

"When I meet you for dinner." Loren saw Tom Garrett entering the room. He nodded at his cousin and said into the telephone, "Well, you go ahead and dress. After all, it's an opening. You can rely on me. When I say I'll get the tickets, I'll get them."

"All right, Loren. Good-by."

"Good-by, dear." He put the phone back on its base and turned to Tom. "Hello, Tom. How are you?"

Tom was grinning in a particularly objectionable manner, showing large yellow teeth that badly needed a dentist's attention. It was not common politeness that kept Loren Vincent from asking why the devil Tom didn't have those cavities attended to. It was something else. Once he had asked Tom why the devil he didn't have his trousers pressed. Tom had replied, "You'd be surprised, Loren, at the things a man can't do on twenty-five dollars a week." This had been embarrassing, because it was Loren who furnished the twenty-five dollars a week. It was futile to protest that only the softness of Loren's heart allowed Tom to live at all. Tom had a way of putting a man on the defensive.

Loren supposed he could ask Tom what the devil he was grinning about. Obviously, grinning was something Tom could do on his restricted allowance.

"What the devil are you grinning about?"

The grin widened. "I hear you're going to be married."

"Who told you that?"

"Oh, I hear things. I hear she's a very young girl, too."

Loren fixed his eyes on the cavities in the yellow teeth. He had read somewhere that you could practically annihilate an opponent by staring at what he must know to be a displeasing point in his appearance.

"She's in her twenties," Loren said after a time. Well, she was. Wendy was twenty. Wasn't that being in her twenties?

"Late or early?"

"Late or early what?"

"Twenties. Is she twenty-one or twenty-nine? It makes a difference, you know."

"Does it really? How interesting! In exactly what way, Tom, does it make a difference to you?"

Tom explained, "Well, in this way, Loren: if she's twenty-nine, I can tell people she's really thirty-five; but if she's

twenty-one, then everybody will see that you've made a complete damn fool of yourself, and after all you are my cousin."

"Yes, and isn't that lucky for you? You'd be in the poorhouse or in jail by this time if——"

"God, Loren, you're a nasty person! The minute I criticize you in any way you throw it up to me that I'm a pensioner. Does the fact that you keep me fed and housed make me wrong when I say that a man of our age shouldn't marry a girl in her twenties?"

People stared at them and Loren was proud of his appearance and Wendy's loveliness.

"I'm not your age," Loren snapped.

"All right. I'm fifty-one. How old are you, cousin?"

"Forty-five."

"Forty-seven, you mean!"

"Look, Tom, if I don't worry about my age, and the young lady in question doesn't worry about it either, don't you think you're silly to upset yourself over it?"

Tom shook his head. "No. I think someone ought to tell you that you're making a mistake."

"And that someone, of course, is you."

"Of course." Tom grinned again. "I should do something for you, shouldn't I, in return for that weekly check?"

"Yes. I often thought you should."

The grin died on Tom's lips. "Aw, nuts!" he said angrily. "You give me that money because your mother and my

mother were twin sisters and loved each other's kids as if they were their own. You give me that money for your mother, not for me. And I take it for my mother, because she wouldn't like to see me starve."

"She might like to see you work, Tom."

"How am I going to get a job at fifty-one?"

"I remember you asking how you were going to get one at thirty-seven."

"Well, there was a depression then."

Loren laughed and felt suddenly lighthearted. Tom was only an irresponsible good-for-nothing. He couldn't say anything that really counted. Why take offense? Loren even felt moved to speak of Wendy again.

"You know, Tom, I'm not as big a fool as I seem to you. No one can get a true picture of any two people merely by mentioning their ages. For instance, I don't look, act or think like the average man in his mid-forties. I feel younger and seem younger. People are always surprised when I tell them my age."

"I was," Tom said drily.

Loren let that pass. "And Wendy is older than her years. She has a fine mind; a mature mind. In other words, to be fair about us, you have to see me as thirty-five and Wendy as thirty."

Tom nodded. "I'll try, but it's going to be hard to see her as thirty if she hasn't got her second teeth yet."

Loren stirred uneasily in the elegant chair behind his leather-covered desk. There was no use trying to treat Tom civilly. "Well," he said in crisp, business-like tones, "let's get on. I'm busy. Why did you come up here today? What do you want?"

"I want to invite you to dinner. That's all."

"Dinner!"

"Yes. Don't look so surprised. This is the fourth time I've invited you."

"Oh." Loren's perplexity vanished. That again. "Really, Tom, I don't see how I could arrange it in the near future."

Tom got to his feet. "Okay, Loren."

He looked deeply injured, and once more Loren found himself irritated beyond words. The whole thing was too ridiculous. The old couple from whom Tom rented his furnished room wanted to meet the cousin their boarder no doubt boasted about continually. And so they kept inviting him to dinner. Loren was vexed with Tom for putting him in the position where he must seem both snobbish and hard. But why did he have to eat a horrible meal just so Tom's prestige would be increased? He knew he would probably have to do it sooner or later. He had said that he would. But he wanted to put it off as long as possible.

"You know, Loren, they nursed me through pneumonia last winter when nobody else cared whether I lived or died. There's damn little I can do for them. They have a hankering to meet you. I thought maybe you'd help me give them that little thrill."

Loren boiled. It was so like Tom to try to push a person into doing something from which everybody profited except the person Tom was pushing. But Tom was near the door now. He was actually leaving. Loren determined to hold his temper until Tom had departed.

He managed to smile a tight, cold smile. "You don't mind, do you, if I choose a time that's convenient for me?"

"No, not at all. Only if I don't keep hounding you, I know you'll never do it at all because you really don't want to."

"That's right. I don't. But I said I would, and I will."

"I guess that's the nearest thing I can get to a promise. Okay. So long, Loren."

The door opened and closed. Tom was really gone.

Loren's sister, Adelaide, was sitting in the comfortable chair by the fireplace when he came home from the office. It was really Loren's chair, and she attempted to pull herself out of it as he came into the living room.

"Stay where you are, Adelaide. I'm going right in to dress."

It pained him to think that she felt it necessary to move out of his chair just because he had come home. After all, Adelaide was no longer young or spry. She was past fifty.

"What's new?" she asked him.

She had a genius for picking up trite phrases and cherishing them for years.

"Tom was in to see me today."

Adelaide's face brightened. "How is he?"

"Oh, he's fine."

"Tom's so sweet.'

Loren stared at her. It always amazed him that Adelaide had a fondness for that good-for-nothing cousin of theirs.

"Going out with Wendy?" she asked after a minute.

"Naturally."

"She's such a dear child, Loren."

"Well, she's not exactly a child, Adelaide."

It was Adelaide's turn to stare at him. He looked away from her. He had to admit to himself that Wendy had indeed seemed like a child when she had come up to the apartment to meet his sister.

"I think I'll go dress," he said abruptly.

"Bundle up warm," Adelaide advised. "It's really winter."

"Would you suggest that I wear two dinner jackets?"

"Oh, you're dressing?"

"Of course. We're going to an opening."

"It must be terrible," Adelaide said, smiling sympathetically.

"What must be terrible?"

"I don't know exactly, Loren. I was just thinking of me sitting beside the fireplace with a box of candy, a good murder mystery and the radio. And there's you out tearing around in the cold looking for taxis and sitting in drafty places and——"

He laughed heartily. Poor old Adelaide! He patted her shoulder and dashed off to his room, feeling fit and youthful. Adelaide had made the business of going to the theater sound like an adventure that only the young and strong could survive.

He sang in the shower and afterwards massaged himself vigorously with a huge bath towel. Something was wrong with the radiator. Not a bit of heat was rising, and still he felt delightfully tingly. Many a lad in his twenties, Loren reflected, would be shivering. No, indeed, years didn't give a fair picture of what a person was really like.

He studied his face in the mirror as he dressed. It was astonishing how little he had changed since college days. Of course there was more character in his face. And more charm, he thought.

He whistled as he put the finishing touches to his toilet. He was glad Wendy was tall. They were really a striking couple.

Loren thought about the first time he had seen Wendy. The Newton, Colfax Company had built their book department on the street floor, and it gave the illusion of being a shop in itself, instead of a mere section in a department store. He had strolled in to find a book for Adelaide, and he had found Wendy for himself. The tricky way she fixed her gleaming fair hair had drawn his attention first. Of course if it hadn't been that, it would have been the intelligence in her face or the smart manner in which she wore her simple frock. But it was foolish to be analyzing Wendy's charm. He just loved her. That was all there was to it. He loved her.

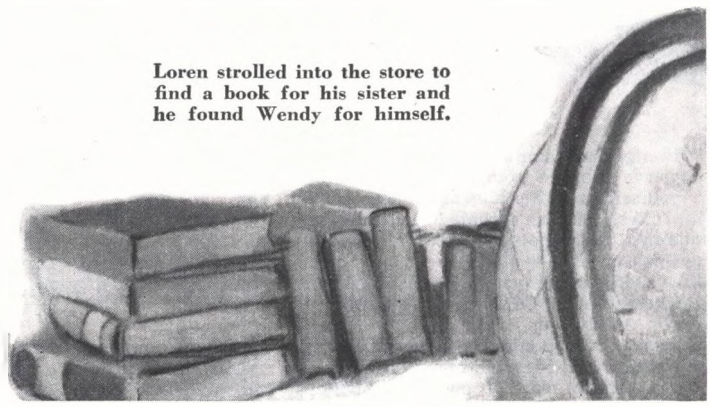
He made certain that he had his keys, his wallet, his cigarette case and then glanced once more into the mirror. Yes, he looked fine.

"Good night," he called to Adelaide as he sailed through the hall.

She glanced up from her book. "Oh, good-night, Loren. Have fun."

Just as he was shutting the door he saw her settle more deeply into the big chair. It was a good thing she had never married. She was exactly what a man wanted in a sister, but she'd be a boresome wife. He pictured himself married to a woman like Adelaide, and he smiled. No, Wendy was his type.

She was waiting for him in the quiet



Loren strolled into the store to find a book for his sister and he found Wendy for himself.

cocktail bar where they always met. She lived out in some impossible suburb, and she was intelligent enough to see that it would be foolish for him to come all that way just to pick her up. It was one of the things he liked about Wendy. Another was that she was always on time.

"Hello, dear," he greeted her. "How pretty you look."

"Thank you, Loren." She smiled her enchanting smile at him.

He was going to tell her at once that he had managed to get tickets for the opening, but it occurred to him that it would be fun to let her think he had not. She would be doubly pleased to discover the truth.

They ordered a cocktail, and he said nothing about the tickets. Instead, he attempted to look mildly disappointed. Presently she said, "Could you get the tickets, Loren?"

Now he had his reward. He was able to look hurt at her question. "Of course I got them. You said you wanted to see the show, didn't you?"

He had expected her to jump up and down with delight, meanwhile upbraiding him for his trickery. She only nodded and seemed a little resentful of his joke. He couldn't understand why. Had he been wrong in crediting Wendy with a sense of humor?

"Would you like another cocktail?"

"No, let's eat, Loren. I'm famished."

"Where would you like to go?"

She thought a moment and then made a choice. "Oh, no," he protested. "That's not nearly nice enough, dear. Let's go to the roof."

"Very well," she said.

He squeezed her arm as he helped her into a cab. She smiled at him. There was something odd about that small smile. It wasn't just a loving acknowledgment of the little squeeze. It was almost as though something had amused her. But it couldn't be quite that either, for the smile had also had a touch of sadness about it. He held her hand in the taxi. After all, what are taxis for? he thought gaily.

It was always a disappointment to him that Wendy cared so little for food. She would announce that she was ravenously hungry and then would apparently be satisfied with a few forkfuls of crabmeat and an olive. He prided himself on his ability to order perfect dinners, and it worried him that she did not appreciate this talent of his. A sandwich seemed to suit her as well as the most beautifully planned feast. Later, he would enrich her life by teaching her the importance of dining well.

"Did you have a hard day?" he asked her.

"No. Very restful. Business was unaccountably slow. How were things with you?"

"Busy but pleasant." He did not mention Tom Garrett's visit. He had never mentioned Tom Garrett to Wendy. It was one of the things she would find out about the Vincents after she was a Vincent herself. The ceiling lights sparkling on the exquisite diamond he had given her made him wonder what Tom would say about that ring. Something bitter and cynical. Not that it mattered.

"Aren't you going to have another taste of pheasant, Wendy?"

"I really couldn't."

"But you've eaten nothing. Dessert?"

"I don't think so, Loren."

"How do you live on so little food?"

"I manage. Oh, by the way, you're invited to dinner."

(*Continued on page 132*)

"I'm sorry," Mary wept wildly. "I've made a terrible mess of everything, but I loved you."

TURNING from the highway into Tennyson Road, John Russell slowed the car. He had found himself doing that lately, slowing the car on the home stretch while a kind of inertia thickened his blood.

Yet Tennyson Road, with its quaint New England homes shaded with oaks and graceful elms, was in no way to blame. The lawns right now with drifted brown and scarlet leaves resembled a line of patchwork quilts. John liked that untidy look of hurrying leaves across a lawn, or leaves that simply lay flat and wet on the still-green grass. He rounded the bend that brought his own home into view and sighed.

There wouldn't be a single leaf on the Russell lawn. Mary would have seen to that. Each day she raked them into little piles and carted them back of the garage to add to the compost heap. John would have liked to burn them. He liked the smell of leaf smoke.

But Mary was right, of course. Her garden testified to that.

Mary was *always* right. Oddly enough, it was this very thing in Mary that had first attracted him. She was logical, orderly, unlike most women. He had adored her for it. There was a paradox for you.

Turning in at his own driveway, he sat for a moment before going into the house, while a series of trite phrases that had lately become his safety valve chased through his brain: *Mountains out of molehills. Much ado about nothing. Tempest in a teapot.* Getting out of the car, he wondered how long he could continue clapping down the lid on his growing irritation.

"John?" Mary called as he knew she would the moment the hall door shut behind him. "You, dear?"

He went into the living room to kiss her smooth cool cheek.

Mary was exquisite. She wore her beautiful young womanhood and her two years of marriage to John as a queen might wear her crown. With conscious dignity. In her rose-damask chair with her needlepoint beside her, she lifted her eyes to his and smiled her quick, sweet smile.

He took his usual place on the blue-striped Empire couch and ran his eyes across the cocktail setup on the coffee

Perfect Wife

Every man dreams of a perfect wife,

but what happens when he gets her?

BY MILDRED NORTH SLATER

ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY ANDERSON

table. Right amount of ice in the tall silver shaker, extra ice in the low silver bucket. Tiny linen napkins. Gin, vermouth, frosted bottle of bitters, dish of pitless olives and the two-pronged fork beside it. All there. Nothing missing.

"What would happen," he asked, "if I came in some night with a yen for a Bacardi?"

"Why, what a silly question, John!" Mary laughed. "All you'd have to do would be to tell me in the morning. I fix the tray because it's pleasanter and easier to have things ready ahead of time instead of having to jump up for something you've forgotten."

"But how in the name of thunder would I know in the morning?" John began. Then, tossing gin and vermouth haphazardly into the shaker, he added, "Never mind. Skip it."

"But John, I don't understand." Mary's slender eyebrows puckered. "If it's an issue with you, why not settle it now?"

"No issue, Mary." His words came out in a series of jerks. "Nothing that needs settling. You're right, as usual. Preparedness is a virtue, or so I've been told." Then, with slow irrelevance, he said, "I just happened to think that shaking up a cocktail on the spur of the moment at the kitchen sink has its charms too."

"Can you picture Elsie's horror at your puttering around her sink while she's preparing dinner? And can you picture mine if I should lose her?" Mary watched him shaking the bitters bottle. "John," she asked, "why don't you measure your ingredients? No two cocktails of yours ever taste the same, do they?"

With a quick gesture he sent his bright red hair on end. It looked about to blaze, along with his dark gray eyes.

"Maybe I like to be surprised once in a while, even by a lowly cocktail." His voice held an audible edge.

Mary took up her needlepoint. Her blue eyes laughed at John indulgently as she threaded her needle with scarlet wool.

"Now, darling, you're like a stubborn little boy. After all, there's only one way to mix a dry Martini and that's the right way. Remember saying that to me about my golf grip?"

Had he ever actually said a damned thing like that? He stared at her. "Probably I was trying to impress you. That was before we were married, wasn't it?"

"Oh, no, you weren't trying to impress me. You meant it, and you were right. You can't deny that I shot a better game of golf after that, can you?"

He couldn't, of course. So he shook the cocktails grimly and changed the subject. "Look here, I've invited the Howells for dinner and bridge for tomorrow night if that's all right with you."

"The *Howells,* John!" Mary's face lighted with pleasure. She took the glass John handed her and put away the needlepoint. "John, I'm so *glad.* That means you'll get his business, and we're certainly going to need it to meet our expenses this year."

"Why does it mean I'll get his business?" John demanded perversely.

"Well, they'd hardly accept, would they——?"

"Certainly they would." John swallowed his drink in one exasperated gulp. (Mountains out of molehills; lot of little things accumulating into one big thing; hold your temper. Hold your tongue.) But he couldn't hold his tongue. "I can't see," he blurted, "why you're always so damned certain of everything. Every insurance broker in town has wined and dined the Howells. Even poor old Sanderson, with his wife in the hospital and that kid of his looking for a job."

"Suppose they have? Outside entertainment is different. You connect it with expense accounts. You're bound to. But there's an intimacy, an obligation, in accepting the hospitality of a man's home. It's not so easy then to turn him down."

"Of course," John observed, "running one of the largest insurance agencies in town, I wouldn't be expected to know much about customer reaction."

"Stop being silly," Mary said. "What is wrong with you lately, John?" She sipped her drink. "And anyway, you needn't give yourself airs, my love. You didn't build the business from a shoestring or something; you inherited it." She set down her glass and frowned. "Let's see. It doesn't give me much time, but that doesn't matter. That's the beauty of system in a home. You're always in order."

John regarded her quizzically. He hated to admit it, but maybe she had something there about home entertainment.

"You'll take care of the cocktails; two kinds, I think, would be best. And tiny sausages, broiled, and celery stuffed with shrimp, radishes stuffed with caviar . . ."

John's left eyebrow twitched. "Mary, I'm not out to overwhelm these people. Sam Howell made his pile in the sand-and-gravel business, if that means anything to you, and his wife, I understand, worked in his office before he married her. Crackers and cheese are plenty to serve with cocktails, and just a plain home dinner will be perfect for them."

"All right," Mary said. "I've listened to you, now you listen to me. If that's the case, it's especially important not to entertain *down* to them. Don't for one moment imagine they wouldn't get it, or that they wouldn't resent it." She glanced at him anxiously. "You *do* understand that, don't you, John?"

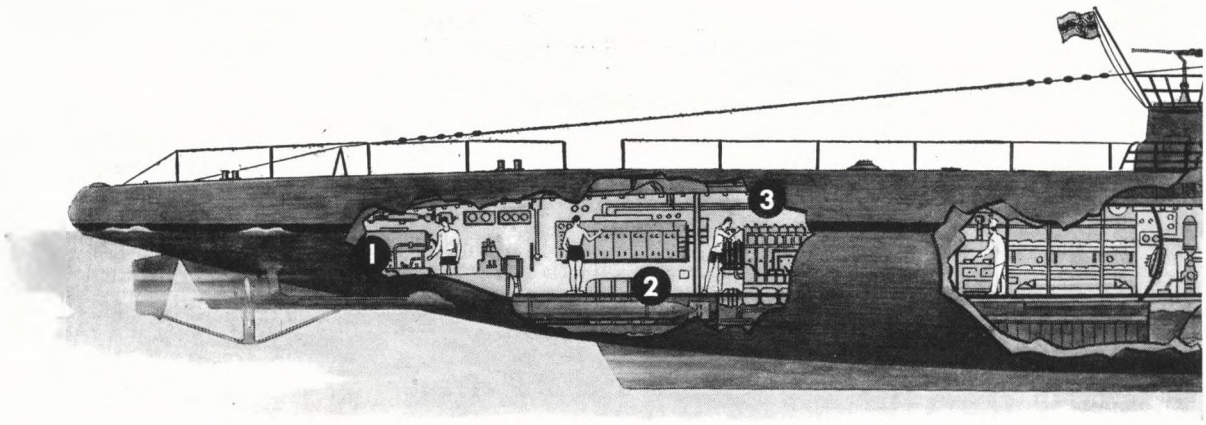
"Well, if I don't," John muttered, "you'll explain, I'm sure."

Once again, she might be right. There was sound logic in her reasoning.

"Of course," Mary said, "if you'd *rather* I stuck to a plain home dinner, I shall. After all, there is a bare possibility you might be right. You know the people. I don't."

An angry, obstinate perversity stirred in him. A bare possibility, eh? And what if his father had left him the agency; he was running it successfully, wasn't he? He had bought this home and everything in it on the proceeds of the business since he took over. He had provided Mary (*Continued on page 114*)

I was a prisoner



A torpedoed American seaman, captured for questioning, here discloses what the Nazis found out about us and what he learned about them during four incredible days in the Caribbean

I WAS SWIMMING like mad through a muck of oil and wreckage. The black night was pierced only by the screams of my drowning shipmates, and I was trying to get away from the German submarine that sank our merchantman.

Then suddenly something solid rose under my flailing feet and I was lifted high and dry as though an earthquake had created a new islet under me. It was the U-boat, and I was a prisoner of the Nazis!

Two boats had been torpedoed out from under me in two days; now I was to spend four days in a German undersea marauder as it ranged the Caribbean.

In cramped, stifling quarters I lived with a cross section of the foe we fight and learned more about the German strength and weakness than I might have in a year in the Reich itself.

I can tell you this: the average member of a U-boat crew believes in the justice of the German cause but detests his officers, derides the Nazi Party leaders and fears the power of the United States.

He is ill-fed, miserable on months-long, dangerous voyages, the object of contempt and abuse from sneering officers.

I saw abundant proof of disunity on that sub—disaffection which I thought surely must point to similar disintegration in Germany itself. Yet there was no real crack-up in sight.

During my own hazardous journey on the merchantman from New York I saw signs of, or actually witnessed, the sinking of six freighters. Three were torpedoed and shelled by the U-boat which later imprisoned me.

I saw also evidence of the growing proficiency of Allied air and sea patrols. Once a patrol plane nearly sank my prison sub, and the U-boat was forced into such a frantic crash dive that she ripped off some steel surface plates. That didn't buck up the crew any!

Adventure, attack and counterattack, began a few days after I signed up on an old Lykes Brothers freighter sailing from New York and we joined a southbound convoy. U-boats were quick to pick up our wakes and, hunting in packs, kept after the convoy all the way.

INSIDE THE SUB

1 While a prisoner, Gibbs, guarded by sailors, saw most of the ship's interior, including the torpedo rooms.
2 When torpedoes were taken aboard at a land base, Gibbs was led through living quarters and engine room to a spot aft.
3 On that trip through the ship, Gibbs had a chance to observe operations in the motor room.
4 "American prisoner coming down," Nazi seamen shouted as Gibbs lowered himself into the control room.
5 After being questioned the adventurer was taken to the forward torpedo room where he slept on the steel floor.
6 "What is butter?" a young Nazi asked when he overheard other sailors asking about American food, while in the living quarters.

The first blow came from our side. A sudden jar thudded through the ship. Three more thuds came close together. A destroyer had sighted a sub, pelted her with "ash cans" and possibly sunk her.

Our own turn came on a Southern sea so still and blue that it seemed incapable of concealing evil. At three P.M. an American flying boat soared above. "We're in safe waters now," we congratulated ourselves. "We're too near Trinidad for the Germans to attack." Then: Boom! Crash! The ship took a port list. Water cascaded across the decks, men stumbled through the foam, looking for lifeboats—half of which already had been washed overboard. I jumped into the sea and swallowed a lot of oil and water before I was pulled into a lifeboat.

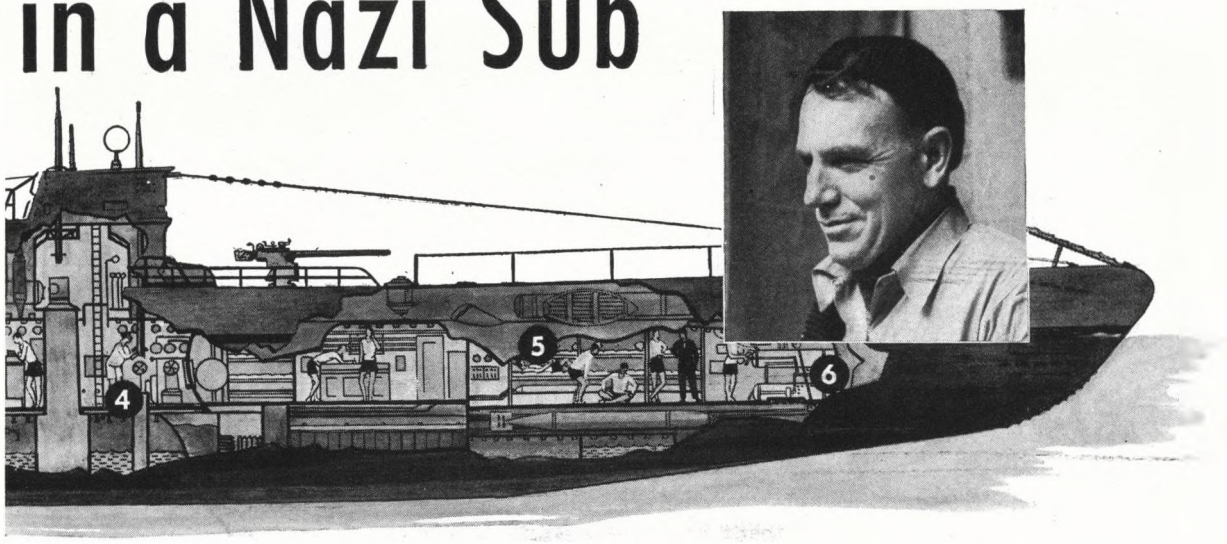
There were thirteen of us and a black cat in the boat. The chief mate was weeping as he said, "The old captain was in a daze. He reached three times for a rope to slide down to the boat, but he was too old to make it. Finally he asked, 'Is everybody okay?' and walked away."

In the morning we were picked up by an American naval freighter. Land was only twenty-five miles away. Close as we were to haven, we got an S O S revealing that another ship had been sunk just over the horizon.

It was tough knowing that the Caribbean was studded with U-boats, trying to pick off ships as fast as they could. Just after dark, on the horizon eight miles away, we saw the flashes of another ship getting hit.

And our number was up again. There was the same tremendous blast, the same pandemonium aboard the ship. Again many of the lifeboats were lost, and once

in a Nazi Sub



BY ARCHIE GIBBS

DRAWING BY MAXIMUS

more I was in a sickening oil-covered sea.

It was pretty black, but soon I could see a tall shadow looming toward me. It was the sub's tower. I had on a life belt and I churned that oil into a tar shampoo as I lashed off into the night.

However, that U-boat's skipper wanted a prisoner for questioning. The undersea pack had been doing a lot of damage, but its officers didn't know what they had sunk or anything about cargoes or destinations.

The way "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair" (as I christened the sub because her only outward identification was the profile of a woman with flowing brown hair painted on the bows) trapped me was so simple I'm still abashed. She literally scooped me out of the water, as a boy catches a polliwog in his cupped hand.

When the conning tower was almost upon me, the sub's deck broke the surface with such incredible speed that it seemed like a cork bobbing up. It was so fast that I was still beating the deck with my feet and swinging my arms in the air when a big hand grabbed me by the neck.

"Kamerad?" demanded a rough voice.

"Hell, no—American."

"Marsch, American!" said the big German, his fist still on my neck. I was pushed up to the conning tower. There I made the acquaintance of the Baron; he really was one. Second in command of the U-boat, he was what one might expect of an arrogant Junker. He was my inquisitor most of the time during the next four days.

With a sailor on each side, I stood before the husky, six-foot Baron. That personification of Prussianism pulled out an automatic pistol and stuck its long barrel in my oil-smudged face.

Then he spoke—in a perfect Oxford accent! "You know what you'll get, if you don't tell the truth?"

"Yep, I know my Germans."

"Good. What is the name of the ship we just hit?" I told him the first phony name I could think of and the quiz went on. "Where's she from?"

His Oxonian English became slightly Germanic when I defied: "I don't know and I don't give a damn."

"Ja," the Baron said. "Why don't you—you came off her, didn't you?"

The officer was placated somewhat when I explained that my own ship had been torpedoed the night before, but he flared up again when I dodged giving any information about her.

"The Navy doesn't tell us where ships are going," I said, still scared but mad enough to be curt. "We just man them."

That "Jeanie" had blasted two boats in rapid succession that night and another the night before was revealed when the Baron inquired, "What was the ship I sank twenty minutes before I sank yours?" and "What ship did I sink at ten o'clock last night?"

Meanwhile, the sub circled around the Navy ship it had just torpedoed, and the interrogation was suspended when the officer saw that the boat wasn't going down. The sub's four-inch deck guns opened fire and the Baron called down to the control room and ordered two more torpedoes fired.

Flames leaped sixty feet into the air; the ship listed and sank in a hissing cloud of steam and smoke. The Baron didn't grunt a single *"Heil!"* A man to whom ruthlessness was routine, he simply resumed his questioning.

"Warship?"

"Merchantman."

"Either you stay aboard, or it's back into the water for you," he said.

"How about a life raft?"

"No. I won't give you one. You stay aboard."

Seamen dropped my life belt and safety bag down into the control room and shouted, "American prisoner coming down!" So began four days in a U-boat.

My hatred of the Nazis grew to such a pitch, and my chances of survival in that hell-diver seemed so slight, that once when we were submerged, hiding from Allied patrol planes, I tried to signal aloft by releasing compressed air. I'll tell you about that later.

The officers and some of the men spoke English; I picked up a few words of German, and we used sign language.

Thus, with what I saw, I became well acquainted with the men with whom I lived beneath the sea, men whose ravaging cruises sometimes lasted for six months, and whose chief yearning was to get home.

Most of them were between twenty-five and thirty-five; many were former merchant seamen. They were all well tanned, since they took advantage of the tropical sun every time the sub surfaced. A few were festooned with tattoos. While under the surface, all wore black swimming trunks. On deck they changed to long trousers of olive color. Some wore sweat shirts, with the Imperial Eagle across the chest and a swastika underneath.

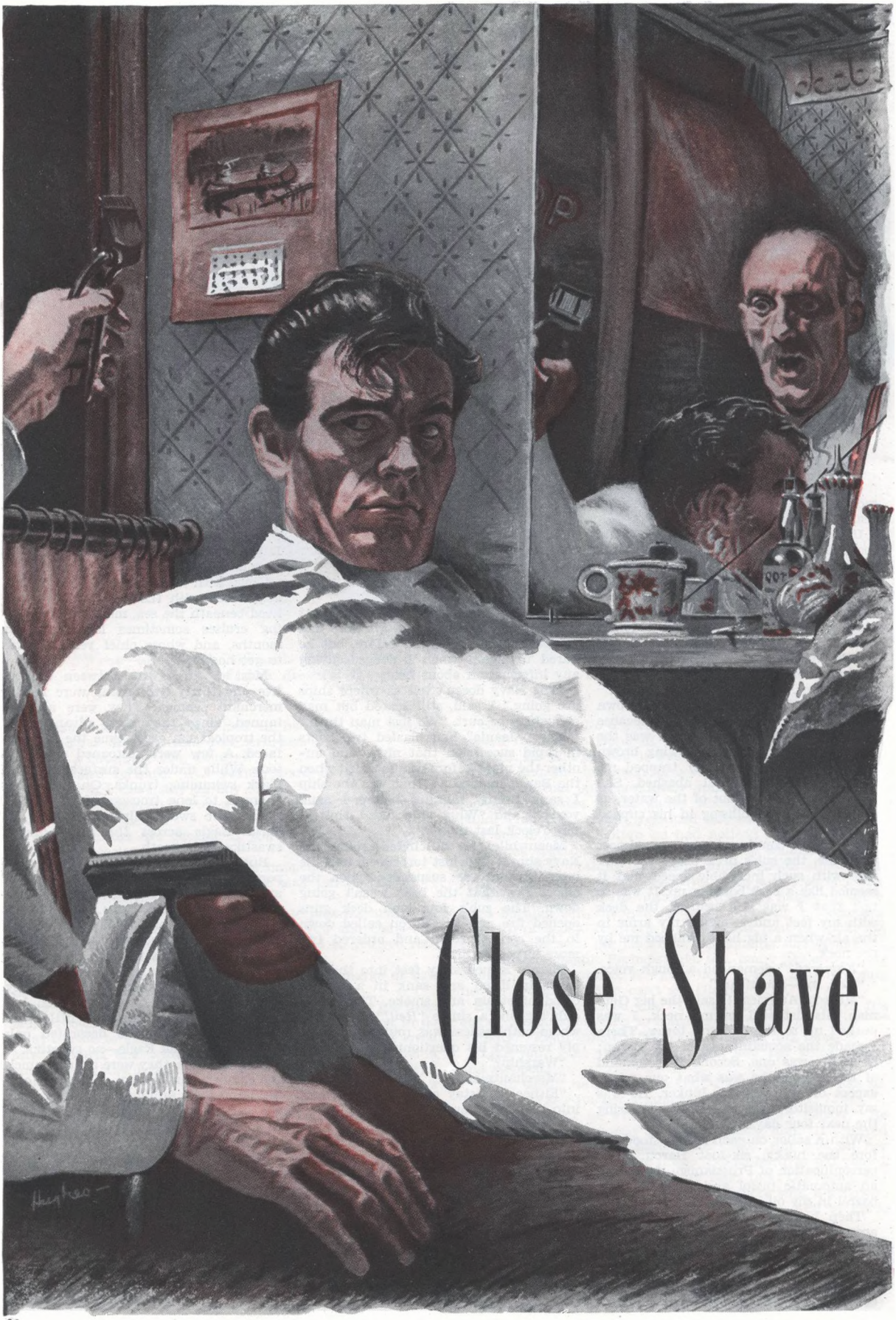
But these shirts were obviously unpopular. The first surprising hint of anti-Nazi feeling in this little piece of the German world came when I first saw a sailor don one. A shipmate pointed at him and laughed. Another pulled his shirttail out of his trousers. The wearer grinned sheepishly and took the swastika-decorated garment off in a hurry.

It was noticeable that the men had no objection to wearing their little overseas caps, which were decorated only with the Imperial Eagle—*no* swastika.

On the whole, they were a surly bunch, their only warm feelings apparently centering on their families. Again and again the sailors would show me pictures of their families—patently they were sick of this life.

The captain was a short and stocky man, florid and pug-nosed, with little pig eyes and close-cropped hair. The oldest man in the sub, he was about forty-five. He was the only one in the craft who did not wear a uniform; he wore white shorts and a white sweater.

One officer was even more unpleasant. He was more a Nazi political commissar than a (*Continued on page 78*)


Close Shave

Like most barbers, Joe talked too much, but he knew the right answer when the time came

BY CZENZI ORMONDE

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE HUGHES

JOE PHIPPS blew his top when the women in town campaigned for a new barbershop, but there it was across the street, glittering like a fancy saloon. Busy too. Joe only got the overflow. When the whistles blew and the aircraft plant and the shell factory belched forth their swarms of workers, Joe would rise from the kitchen chair he always canted against his shop window, pop a peppermint in his mouth to camouflage his whisky breath, and get ready for the boys who needed a quick haircut and couldn't wait so long across the street.

Joe's indolence, his sharp tongue and wonderful thirst supported the disrepute in which he was held. The local women only came near his dirty little shop to ask for contributions for war charity.

"Can't let a fellow alone," Joe would protest to anyone who would listen. "I ain't good enough to shave half the men in this town, but everybody's comin' around askin' for my money. Huh! This war's being run like a darned loony bin."

Calhoun, the cop, made a formal call on Joe one Saturday night. "Look here, Joe. You been kinda shooting off your mouth. Us town folks know you're sour on everybody and everything—always have been. But these new defense workers might think you're one of them fifth columns and push that straw mustache of yours right down your throat."

Joe squinted at the red-faced cop he'd watched grow up on Main Street. "Shut up, Mike. This is a free country. If I don't like the way things are run I can say so. I got eyes and I can see. I got a nose, too. Can smell anything, from Lafe Mahoney's pipe a block away to all the graft that's goin' on in Washington."

Calhoun sighed. "The chief says if you don't shut your trap I gotta run you in. For Pete's sake, co-operate, will you? Guys with your attitude might as well run out in the street and yell *'Heil Hitler!'*"

"Oh, so now we got a Gestapo in this town! A man can't say what he thinks."

Calhoun slammed the door behind him.

Joe spun the old barber chair around with an angry swing. "Meddling fools! May as well be living in Europe. All a fellow asks is to be let alone."

"Okay, senator, stop making with the speeches. Gimme a haircut."

Joe looked sourly at the big man with the hard gray eyes. He'd been in occasionally during the past six months, but he wasn't one of the town boys.

"Hello, Bozo," said Joe. He whipped the soiled cloth around his customer, and extracted a comb from what he liked to call his sterilizer. As he ran the comb through Bozo's thick black hair Joe's red nose twitched. "Your hair smells, Bozo," he said frankly. "Shampoo?"

"You're crazy. I washed it yesterday. Hurry up. I'm leaving town."

Joe began snipping. "Where you goin'?"

"What's it to you? Why don't you clean this joint up so a guy can see himself in these filthy mirrors?"

"You ain't so pretty," Joe snapped.

Bozo started to laugh, but his face was suddenly contorted with pain.

"Got that headache again, I see," Joe said. "Why don't you see a doctor?"

"I won't have 'em after a couple of weeks."

"How's that?"

"Wouldn't you like to know?"

"Don't get cocky with me, young fellow. I don't get much business in this town but I'm not one to push around."

"Nobody's gonna push me around either," muttered Bozo. "Another two or three weeks and I'm through takin' orders—from anybody."

"Sounds like you ain't satisfied with your job at the shell factory."

"I quit an hour ago. Got a job in a California shipyard."

"You don't stay on a job long."

"Nope. Go where the money's best."

"But you were making the same money at the shell factory as you were before." Joe looked puzzled and suddenly his old heart began pumping with excitement. "Let's see, you worked at the airplane factory first, didn't you?"

"Yeah."

"And before that, you worked on the new stretch of railroad between here and the dam—that stretch that was blown up one night. Guess they never caught the fellow that did that." Joe could feel Bozo's shoulders tense. The old barber's fingers trembled but not from his regular Saturday night imbibing.

"You remember kinda well, don't you?" Bozo asked slowly.

Joe clucked his tongue and snipped busily. "Nothin' else to do, my friend," he said with elaborate ease. "People in this town don't like me special well. They say my fingers ain't steady enough for a safe shave. So I got lots o' time to watch people and do a little speculatin'."

"What kind of speculating?" Bozo asked carefully.

"Oh, nothin' much. Sometimes I've wondered why you always come in here for a haircut when there's an empty chair at the Busy Bee. I kinda figured maybe you thought I didn't do so much flag wavin' as that barber. I got to thinkin' maybe you weren't so keen for all this patriotic stuff. Then somehow I got thinkin' you had your own ways of showin' your grievances. Me, I talk. I shoot off my mouth about anything . . . Say, your hair's pretty thick back here. I've gotta use the clippers."

"Take it easy! Don't scalp me."

"Sorry. Fingers sort o' slipped. Well, I got thinkin' too, when that wing in the airplane factory was blown up, it was kinda strange everywhere Bozo Clark works—that place has an accident—with dynamite."

Joe felt something press against his stomach. Bozo had swung around in the chair, and beneath the cloth enveloping him, Joe saw the shape of a gun barrel.

"Too bad you talk so much, Joe," Bozo said. He flung off the cloth and backed toward the doorway.

Joe looked over Bozo's shoulder. The street was deserted. For a crazy moment Joe thought of running out and shouting *"Heil Hitler!"* so Calhoun could hear him. But he knew he'd be plugged if he made a move.

"You—you got me wrong, Bozo. I ain't accusin' you. I just said it was funny——"

Bozo's eyes narrowed. "How did you know? Come on, you're a dead pigeon anyway."

"You—goin' to shoot me?" Joe's slack old cheeks shook with fear. Why couldn't somebody—anybody—come in? Several people passed—Mrs. Jeffrey in her volunteer's uniform, a couple of the men from the shops—but nobody looked in.

Bozo jerked the gun impatiently.

"Well," said Joe, "I remembered the headaches my brother-in-law used to get when he was clearin' his property of stumps. The doc said the headaches came from handling the dynamite. I remembered when the railroad was blasted, and the aircraft plant was blown up—you had headaches then too, Bozo. Besides, the smell of the stuff gets in your hair. I wasn't sure until you said you was leavin' town. You may as well tell a dead pigeon, Bozo. Is the shell factory next?"

"You fathead! You're askin' for it."

"What about the boys workin' on that shift?" Joe insisted. "Mike Calhoun's boy works one of them machines. I seen you jokin' with him lots of times."

"Don't try any tricks," Bozo warned Joe. He opened the door, looked furtively up and down the street, then turned and fired. Joe dropped to the floor and the second bullet cracked the dirty mirror. Bozo aimed again. But the sound of running feet was coming too close. He darted across the street and up a dark alley.

Calhoun got it straight from Joe, who was sitting up on the barbershop floor shouting to the crowd that had collected.

"For Pete's sake," Joe yelled. "I ain't hurt. Just a scratch. Get word to the shell factory, Mike. Dynamite—may be planted by the new machines. Hurry . . ."

He kept on talking until everything suddenly went black . . .

When he came to the hospital room was filled with flowers. Mike Calhoun read the cards that came with them.

"Women's Volunteer Corps," repeated Joe. "American Shell Works, The Busy Bee Barbershop—hell's fire! The way this town carries on over every little thing makes me sick. All a fellow wants——"

"Yeah, I know," grinned Calhoun. "You just want to be left alone. Brother, this town says you're a hero, and you're going to like it. They caught Bozo hopping a train for California. One of the men in the railroad yard recognized him from the police-call description. Pretty smart of you, Joe, cutting a big *V* on the back of Bozo's head with your clippers."

I DID NOT want to go to the theater that night but I'm glad I did. The play was a Los Angeles production of "The Last Mile." When the curtain rose I saw a young actor leaning forward on the bars of his cell. I saw no other actor on the stage although the set was peopled with them.

This one lad—a big fellow—held my entire attention.

After the performance I fought my way through his six agents backstage. During our brief conversation I watched his eyes. There was heart in the eyes, and warmth. The next day I made a test at Warners, where I was under contract at the time. I wanted the big fellow to play a rôle in "Little Caesar," but when the studio executives saw the test they shook their heads. "His ears are too big," they all agreed.

Today the brothers Warner would be delighted to release just Clark Gable's ears.

What the many producers who refused the services of Gable did not realize is that looks do not matter. When an actor becomes important, appearance takes care of itself. Handsomeness comes with self-confidence. What matters is what I felt when I first saw Gable. It is heart and whatever you want to call that arresting thing which made me feel interest in the guy.

Heart and interest are what it takes. And if a director or producer has a feeling for that sort of thing he sees it under any circumstances.

When Lana Turner walked into my office she was scared to death. Her voice was pitched high with fright. Her hands trembled. She was definitely not "making a good impression." But exteriors like poise and assurance mattered not at all. Those qualities can be so easily acquired.

I had tested fifty girls for the tiny but extremely important rôle of the girl who is murdered in "They Won't Forget." None was satisfactory. A tennis player named Solly Biano told me about a kid he had met at a tennis club. I agreed to see her and the frightened child came to the studio. We changed her name from Judy to Lana that day. She signed a contract for fifty dollars a week. Lana Turner had everything it takes.

I've said looks do not matter. They don't, but it doesn't hurt to have them. Sex appeal is not essential to a film star, either, but it has never been considered a stumbling block in any career. Lana Turner had both beauty and sex appeal, but so had all of the fifty girls I had tested. What I saw in Lana was not sex appeal but heart appeal, and it is quite possible to have one without the other. I saw sympathy and warmth and the arresting personality that has made her one of the top box-office stars of the film industry.

What I saw in Lana is what hundreds of thousands of movie-goers saw. I figure I'm a pretty average guy. I believe that what appeals to me will appeal to men and women like me. This is one of the reasons I have tried to put heart in all my films.

Incidentally, Lana Turner's being known as "the sweater girl" was sheer accident. We had her wear a sweater in "They Won't Forget" simply because we felt it was what the character would wear. It might have been a blouse or a jacket. The accident of the sweater gave Lana much publicity. However, Lana would have had the publicity if she had worn a gunny sack. Publicity springs from public interest. Lana had what it takes to interest the public.

I had never seen Susan Peters when Sidney Franklin and I cast her for the unforgettable rôle of Kitty in "Random Harvest." Franklin and I merely saw her on the screen in three tests, made for *rôles she did not get*. We turned to each other and said, "That's it!"

When I talked to her and told her she was to play in a film with Greer Garson and Ronald Colman quick tears came into her eyes. She thanked me, and then she said, "Oh, but I feel sorry for those other kids who tested and didn't get the part." And there's Susan's heart—there's the ability to put herself in another girl's mind which is all that creating a characterization means. Acting is just as easy as that.

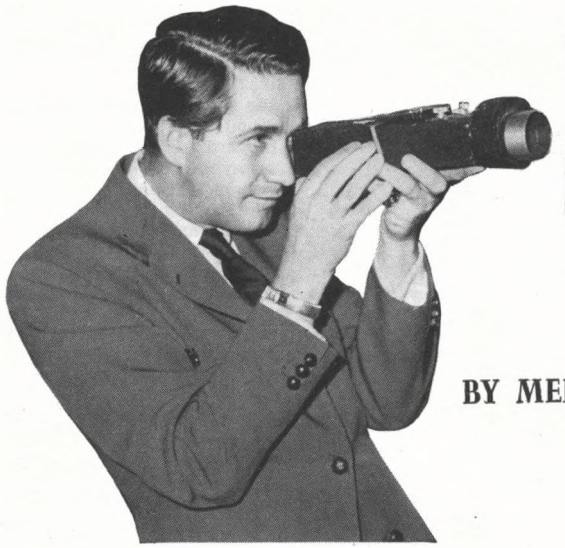
One day Olivia de Havilland, an established star, was walking across the lot with her sister. There it was again. Obviously the girl was shy. She had not made the most of her beauty. But it was there—the arresting thing, the thing that made me look twice. I told Olivia the next day that I wanted to meet her sister who became Joan Fontaine, an Academy Award winner.

Polly Ann Young had been cast for a bit in a Colleen Moore film called "Okeh." She was ill the day we were to shoot it, so she sent her sister instead. Gretchen Young was only thirteen. She, too, was scared of the big director. She had rushed to the studio and her hair was wind-blown, her dress rumpled. But the personality came through. The sparkle was there. Loretta Young is a chic and assured actress today, but more important than her acknowledged talent, her assurance, her chic is that she still has in her eyes the thing I saw in the eyes of the thirteen-year-old frightened kid.

As final proof that externals do not matter I offer you Kay Medford, of whom you have probably never heard. I dare to predict that you will.

When I was in New York recently Irving Hoffman told me about a girl who had been hanging around Walgreen's, Broadway's famous drugstore rendezvous for theatrical-minded kids, taking what jobs she could get, such as holding ice for magicians.

We found her living in a Greenwich Village attic which she shared with a girl artist. Kay's hair was uncombed, her cotton dress was untidy. She was making coffee over an electric plate. You would not even have thought of the word "glamour" in the place.



Stars

BY MERVYN LEROY

Mervyn LeRoy stargazes at some of his "discoveries."

Hoffman introduced us and said, "Mr. LeRoy would like to see you act."

Without embarrassment she set the coffeepot on the sink and began to act, reciting a sketch she had written herself about an actress and an agent.

When she had finished I said, "Would you like to act in films?"

"Sure," she said, "but how do I get to Hollywood?"

"Do you know who Mr. LeRoy is?" Hoffman asked her.

Kay shrugged her shoulders. "Oh, he's some reporter or agent friend of yours, I guess."

We made a test of her at M-G-M. I know that, given the right roles, the girl will be a great star. She is unusual. She is not in the accepted Hollywood mold, but a girl like that will find her niche. You can't *make* an actor or an actress. They are born that way and when they also have sympathy in the eyes and in the heart, plus the vitality that makes you want to look at them twice, then you couldn't keep them off the screen if they were bucktoothed, bowlegged and cross-eyed!

in my eyes

With uncanny accuracy this famous producer transforms unknowns into movie stars and here he tells exactly how he works his magic

Bryn was so completely in love with her soldier-husband that she seemed to see him in every man she met. Only this desperate yearning for Joshua could possibly explain her mad adventure with the sergeant at the Stage Door Canteen

Wherever you are

BY

LIBBIE BLOCK

ILLUSTRATED BY R. G. HARRIS

AT FIVE O'CLOCK that autumn evening there were two girls working in the tidy pantry of the canteen. But the message came only to one of them. In a voice like trumpets Bryn heard it. She lifted her head to listen, though the voice came from the floor, the shelved walls, the everywhere. "Joshua has come back! Joshua is here in this place!" Now wait . . . wait . . . She reined herself. He cannot be here.

The only letter Bryn had ever received which addressed her by her married name, "Mrs. Joshua Hagen," had come three months ago from the War Department. "Corporal Joshua Hagen," its message had read, "missing in action . . ."

For the marriage of Joshua Hagen to Bryn Melaney had been a secret ceremony, performed a few days before his induction into the Army, ten months ago. They had loved each other for four years, two young hopefuls from the Midwest who had met in New York. She would be a famous actress; he would be the literary light of the Western world; they would marry and be happier than anyone. So their silly dream ran, and part of the dream came true. The wrong part.

Bryn would be a famous actress within a year or two—"well-known" was the word for her now. But Joshua was still unknown. Oh, yes, his novel had been called "exciting, promising," but it had not been published. And he did not want to marry her until he had made his mark. Call it pride or stubbornness, Bryn had understood; had been willing to wait. But the war had not waited . . .

Now, in the pantry of the Stage Door Canteen, the voice said again, "Joshua has come back!"

Bryn looked at Boots Freeham, working with her in the pantry. But Boots had heard no voice. Absorbed, she went on checking and shelving the donations: so many cans of coffee; so many jars of sandwich spread.

It was very quiet there among the stacked, bright-labeled cans and jars. But from below came the muffled hum of voices, picked out with dance music. Bryn put down the pencil with which she had been listing supplies. "It's stifling here," she said to Boots. "I've got to get a breath."

Boots was a tap dancer, with emotions as quick as her feet. "Why, sure, honey," she said. "I don't mind finishing alone."

She was Bryn's confidante, the only person who knew that Bryn Melaney, the rising young actress, was the wife of Joshua Hagen, the—the nobody. In a hundred little services every day Boots told Bryn how sorry she was that there had been no happy ending.

She came only to Bryn's shoulder but she was almost motherly now, patting her shoulder. "Why don't you run along, dear? You look pale. Scram out of here." She opened the pantry door, and Bryn walked through it.

The pantry was on a balcony which overlooked the dance floor of the canteen. Her heart thumping, Bryn leaned over the railing; down there the junior hostesses in their ruffled aprons mingled with soldiers and sailors, packed into a living carpet. But Joshua could not be here. Joshua was missing. Bryn thought: Must be I'm going crackers.

She looked very sane, leaning there; poised and graceful. From shoulder to ankle she was one lovely, unangled line; the slight rise of the hip below the long slender waist was perfect; the legs were economical and true as poetry.

What would happen, she wondered, if she were to make a megaphone of her hands and shout, "Calling Corporal Hagen . . . Calling Joshua Hagen!" The absorbed heads below would turn up like sunflowers, and her eyes could seek among them for the face of her husband. Oh, it was silly. If he were here she would have marked him already. He was so tall, six-foot-three, that he stood out in any landscape.

Still she leaned, brooding over the dancers. What would happen if I were to call out, "You know who I am? I am the wife of Joshua Hagen. Or perhaps his widow. The War Department has been hinting"? Under her silk blouse she could feel the warm weight of her wedding ring hung on a delicate chain. Joshua had begged her to wear it so; never to let it be seen. "When I've had one thing published, when even three men and a dog know that Joshua Hagen is a writer—when you can be proud of me, Bryn—then wear your wedding ring."

"I want to wear it now," she had said. "I'm as proud of you as if you were Shakespeare."

"I couldn't stand it, darling. You're a famous young party, and people would say, 'Who in the world did she marry?' and 'Why did she marry him?' Promise me, Bryn. It's good for you to marry me," he added. "I know it with my heart. But it's bad for you to marry a nobody."

So after an unblemished honeymoon, after Joshua had been absorbed by the Army, Bryn had returned to New York, her wedding ring about her neck. They never met again. All that they had had in the past, all that they wanted of the future, they poured out on paper for each other. The letters from Joshua made a dotted line across the continent, out into the Pacific, till the silence came. And after that like a period, an end to everything, the War Department's "missing."

Beginning and end. Without the chance to make even that little reputation which had mattered so much to him. So that now if Bryn were to call his name to that dancing throng no head would lift. Who had ever heard of Joshua Hagen? Who ever would?

So anonymous are the tops of heads that the face of a man, suddenly upturned, was to Bryn like the revelation of a secret. The man was looking at her; he was waving, signaling. "Me?" Bryn pointed to herself and the man nodded, motioned. "Come down."

He was a short, bulky man with light hair, more male even than most uniformed men. Bryn thought: *Why, it's Joshua!* Then she clenched the rail with frightened hands. I must be ill. That man looks nothing at all like Joshua. I have never seen that man in my life.

She stared. The bold man at the edge of the canteen dance floor was heavy and blond; Joshua was tall, slender and dark. But the strange loud voice said, "That man is Joshua Hagen," and as though she worked on strings, Bryn made her way down the steps.

He was waiting for her below in a little hall. "I choose you, lovely," he said.

His eyes were less than level with her own. To look into Joshua's eyes, she had had to turn her head far back. "What is your name?" she asked.

She perceived that he did not share the trance which enveloped her. He was normal, abashed by her abruptness. "T. W. Tucker," he said, and she saw by his arm insignia that he was a technical sergeant. "Care to dance?"

"Weren't you signaling me to come down here?"

"Check. Did I do wrong?" Under the blouse, his arms and shoulders were solid as tree structure. Joshua had been a sapling, slender and supple.

"What did you want with me?"

"I wanted to ask you what made your hair so cute."

As though there might be a clue in this, she said without coquetry, "What about my hair?"

He studied the smooth brown fall. "Well, up there where you were standing it had gold in it. Dots and dashes like. I wanted to ask you what your hair was saying in international code."

"You could really do that stuff justice," Sergeant Tucker told Bryn. "I'm lucky I found you."

The passage of several sailors through the hall crowded them closer together, so that T. W. Tucker's shoulder touched Bryn's. They looked at each other, surprised that the contact had been so meaningful.

"Listen," he said, "can you get away from here? How about going out with me?"

She computed rapidly. She had time for an early supper before she went to the theater. This would not, somehow, be making a date with a strange soldier; this would be keeping a rendezvous with Joshua. She nodded. "Don't you want to know what my name is?"

"I'll take you under any name."

"I'm Bryn Melaney. Short for Brynhild."

Obviously he did not recognize it as the name of a rising young actress. "The tags some folks give their kids!" he said. "Never mind, honey. What's in a name and that stuff."

"I've got to eat early," she said without explaining why. "I'll get my coat." On the second stair she turned back to discover him directing a typical diagonal eyeline at her legs. An actress is accustomed to having her legs challenged, but this was different, personal, so that she was both pleased and shamed. "Sergeant Tucker, where did you come from?"

"Here and there."

He had told her his name. How could she, then, ask him if he were Joshua Hagen? "Meet me near the cigar store on the corner," she said.

"Hurry up, sweetheart," he said.

At the head of the stairs, out of his sight, Bryn paused. I'd be crazy to go out with a man like that, she thought. He's a soldier looking for a girl. I have nothing to give him; he has nothing for me. I won't go. He'll wait for me awhile on the corner; then he'll understand that I'm not coming and go away. Assured and controlled, she opened the pantry door and heard the voice again: "The man is Joshua."

Boots looked down from the third step of a ladder. She held a mustard jar, "Feeling better?"

I am going on a long trip, Bryn thought. Terrified, she felt the necessity to leave a forwarding address. "Boots, I've made a date with a soldier for supper before the show."

"Well, that's good, dear," Boots said, coming down. "Just what the doctor ordered. You've had some fun coming to you." For weeks she had been urging Bryn to have some fun, arguing that Joshua would approve; that no disloyalty was implied. "Have a good time."

"His name is T. W. Tucker. He's a sergeant." There was a plea in Bryn's words: If I don't get back, trace me; find out what happened to me.

Something of her anxiety touched Boots. "Take it easy, Bryn, just at first. You know, make nice talk with the man and let it go at that."

Between them passed the age-old feminine look which means that men are necessary but dangerous.

Bryn had not had a date with a man in months. If she could not be with Joshua, she was content to go home alone after the theater each night; to visit with women, with married friends.

But now, in the ice-blue twilight, she was hurrying to meet a strange soldier. She almost ran. She was beautifully dressed. Over her custom-made gray suit she wore a mink jacket; there was fur on her little hat. Joshua had loved the way she dressed. "Prose-poetry," he had called the quiet look-twice richness of her taste.

Sergeant Tucker looked first at her legs as though she had been planning to deceive him by wearing an inferior pair. Then he looked at her face. "Well, sweetheart, you really got here, didn't you?" he said. Solemnly he removed a five-dollar bill from one trouser pocket to another. "Lost a bet to myself. I bet me five bucks you weren't coming."

He put his heavy hand under her arm. "I know a dandy place for us to eat," he said.

The dandy place was a glass-walled restaurant created especially to capture the tourist trade.

"I found this place myself," he said as gleefully as though it had not been placed on Broadway's busiest corner and advertised to the four winds. "Ever been here before?"

"No," she said truthfully.

"Well, stick with me, honey, and I'll show you the town." He suggested roast beef for the main course, and she knew before she saw it that it would be served with brown gravy, walled by mashed potatoes. Tranced by his superb appetite, she ate everything.

"You play a pretty tune with your knife and fork," he said admiringly. "That's okay. I like a woman to eat."

I cannot ask him what is this hold he has upon me. I cannot ask him, she thought, why he is Joshua to me. What can we two talk about? But as they lingered over their cups of precious coffee she learned. They would talk about T. W. Tucker.

"Call me Ted," he invited. "That's my name, Theodore William Tucker. Or Teddy—that's a name the girls seem to like."

There had been a great many girls in his life. He spoke of them affectionately, calling them "certain parties."

"There was a certain party in Houston used to call me Teddy-bear," he said. "Well, this certain party used to write me all the time and every letter just alike. Do you write nice letters, honey?"

Bryn thought of the letters she had written Joshua when there had been an address to which to send them—long outpourings of herself in ink. "I don't know," she said.

"Well, you can always call me long-distance if you don't like to write letters. A certain party always did that. This certain party couldn't spell, so telephoning was better. Do you think you'll get to like me well enough to call me?"

"I don't know."

"You aren't very sure of anything, are you, honey? Well, I'm sure I like you. I think you're about as pretty a thing as I ever saw." The look he gave her was almost pathetic in its obviousness; he was a man on the make, and the quicker they got past the polite talk which seemed necessary to women, the happier he would be.

The strange thing was that Bryn was not revolted. She, the courted and fastidious, was not even annoyed. This man, like Joshua, cast a spell upon her.

Just then a passing waitress dropped a plate and the small crash shook Bryn awake. What am I doing here with this man who thinks he has made a nice pickup? He is simple and a little vulgar, and the fantasy that he is Joshua . . . It's over now with no more consequence than boredom and a bad dinner.

She lifted her gloves and said, "I must go."

"Go where? You got another date?" He rose with her.

She smiled and did not tell him that she was an actress, due upon a stage. She moved ahead of him to the door, not answering when he said, "Well, wherever you're going I'm right with you."

While he paid the cashier she stood on the sidewalk. This tangle of streets was Times Square. Joshua and I have crossed and recrossed these sidewalks. Where I stand this minute, Joshua must once have stood. Oh, love, I miss you so.

"Well, where are we going?" Sergeant Tucker rejoined her. He was shorter than Bryn, but so broad and squared that he gave the impression of more than standard size. It struck her that he was not going to be easy to get rid of.

"Thank you so much for a pleasant dinner." She held out her hand.

"That's only the beginning," he said. Disregarding the farewell, he steered her through the crowds. They were headed in the general direction of the theater, and she made no move to escape.

The sergeant was pleased with the town, himself and life. He pointed out interesting places to Bryn as though she had just arrived in New York. She became aware that he was not wandering aimlessly up the street; he had a destination. After a few minutes' walk he edged her toward the shop windows; presently halted her.

It was a gaudy lingerie shop before which they stood, its windows plastered with yellow cellophane, a concession to the dim-out. On display in the jaundiced light was a set of sheer black lingerie, machine-made, rough with lace. "That's the kind of stuff I like," said T. W. Tucker. "I passed by here today and I was just wishing I knew a sweet girl to give a set to; the works, top to bottom." His admiration was sincere; he said, "That's the most beautiful stuff I've ever seen."

Bryn shuddered; said politely, "Very nice."

"You could really do it justice," he said. "I'm lucky I found you. Come on. Let's go in."

"You go. I—wouldn't like to go inside the shop."

"Want me to surprise you, huh?" he said, not displeased. He patted her arm and stepped briskly into the shop.

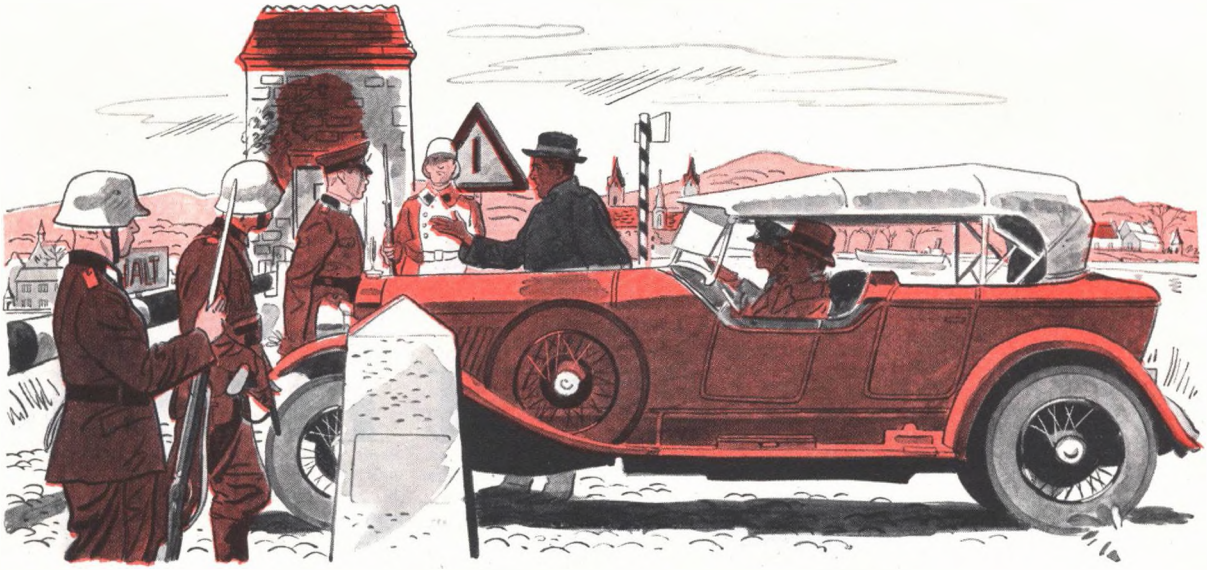
Taut as a drawn bow, Bryn stood for a second. Then she turned, ran through the crowd to the corner, down a side street. She was laughing, though her fists were clenched.

The street was dark; the little stage alley at the side of her theater lightless. Bryn leaned against the familiar brick wall, gasping and laughing. Her head was bent so (*Continued on page 66*)

I Was Hitler's Closest Friend

BY
ERNST "PUTZI"
HANFSTAENGL

For fourteen years the author of this devastating exposé was Hitler's most intimate friend and an ardent supporter of the Nazi movement. Falling from Hitler's favor, he escaped the Gestapo, only to be interned by the British as an enemy alien. In a Canadian internment camp he set down his story. Cosmopolitan presents it here for the first time for its dramatic interest and because it throws new light on the twisted character of the madman of Berlin



"This"—I jerked my thumb at Hitler—"is my man, Johann." The guards believed me and thus I saved his life.

IT IS SIX years since I escaped from Germany. But I can still see the green-clad field police on the platform outside the train. Just ahead lay the Swiss frontier. Behind, at Uffing, a frantic Gestapo was trying to pick up my trail. For the man who had ordered my death was—*Adolf Hitler!*

I had doubled back at Munich, but at any moment the ruse might be discovered and word flashed to the border. After an eternity the train began to move. A minute more, and I was across the frontier, with only my bitter memories.

Fourteen years with Hitler. An almost forgotten day, on another border, came back to me . . .

It was late April in 1923. Our motorcar was nearing Wittenberg, Hitler in front with Maurice, the party chauffeur, and I in the tonneau. Saxony was a Communist stronghold, with a price on Hitler's head. But the Nazi movement was almost bankrupt; in Berlin we could get secret funds.

Around a curve we came suddenly on a border sentry box. An armed guard blocked the road; beyond him were three more with rifles.

"Communist police!" Hitler dropped his dog whip, reached for his revolver.

"Wait! They'll shoot you down," I said in an undertone. I climbed out to screen Hitler—an easy matter for a man six feet three. The senior guard approached, dismissing Maurice with a brief glance. I brought out my American passport, secured in New York the year before. The policeman eyed my visa.

"Hanfstaengl . . . So, *Deutsch-Amerikaner?*"

"*Ja,* my friend." Affecting an atrocious accent, I added with smug tourist complacency, "I'm a paper manufacturer from Milwaukee. This"—I jerked my thumb at Hitler—"is my man, Johann. I hired him and the chauffeur in Hamburg."

The guard glanced at Hitler, who was staring woodenly ahead. I held my breath. Hitler avoided the camera in those early days, but his description had been circulated throughout Saxony. To cut short that fateful moment I offered the policeman a cigar. He took it, waved us on.

Hitler was grimly silent, twisting the whip in his hands—thinking of the Communists, I supposed then. It was twelve years before I learned how deeply "my man" had rankled, although I had saved his life.

Not until after he was Chancellor did I see fully behind the mask of Adolf Hitler. By then, his murderous hatreds had poisoned Germany. The sadistic mania of his private life had killed the only woman he ever loved. About him he

I acted as interpreter while Hitler told the Jap, Momo, that he would not interfere with their plans for the Pacific.

DRAWINGS BY BEN PRINS

At dinner I saw Geli's eyes follow Hitler's whip with a curious uneasy expression. Was it fear?

had created a camarilla as foul as he himself.

But at first I saw only Hitler, the man of destiny . . .

After the World War, I had returned from the United States with my American wife and our infant son, Egon. Though my mother was American, I considered Germany my homeland. Educated at Harvard, Munich and Vienna, I had studied piano and later had established a Fifth Avenue branch of our Munich art-publishing house. The war liquidated my business, and I went back to become my brother's partner in Munich.

In Germany I found chaos. Folkish parties, especially the Nazis, were fighting Jews, Communists and Conservatives. Political assassinations were commonplace. In the summer of 1922, I began to notice red, white or black swastikas and anti-Jew signs scribbled on Munich walls. Then, one day in November, Captain Truman Smith of the American Embassy dropped in to see me.

"Hanfstaengl, I've just met the strangest man. His name's Adolf Hitler. Mark my words, someday he'll be a power in Germany."

That night I heard Hitler. The Kindlkeller was crowded with middle- and lower-class Germans. Through a haze of tobacco smoke I saw a curious man in old army boots, leather jacket and soft collar, and a pathetic mustache. Then he spoke. In his hypnotic hold on the mob I saw a militant Fatherland reborn.

"I agree with ninety-five percent of what you say," I told Hitler afterward.

His eyes, cold blue, rested on me; they had a silent, suffering expression. "We will not quarrel over the other five percent," he answered—but he never forgot.

A week later I joined the Nazi Party —anonymously. At headquarters, the dingy office of the Voelkischer Beobachter, I encountered a desperado atmosphere. Hitler's armed bodyguard, Ulrich Graf, kept watch in the anteroom with a huge police dog. Inside, I found Hitler at a desk littered with hand grenades, a revolver within easy reach. As we discussed the Nazi program, the phone rang.

"Tell them Wolf will be there at five," said Hitler. He hung up, explained, "I have to use an alias. My enemies constantly try to ambush me."

In 1923, I introduced Hitler to Munich society and helped secure influential party members. The first time I invited Hitler to my home, his awkward use of knife and fork betrayed his background. I brought out a rare Johannisberger, 1921. Hitler tasted it. I was called to the telephone, and when I returned I found him putting sugar into this vintage wine. He could have peppered it, for each naïve act increased my belief in his homespun sincerity.

One noon I dropped in at his apartment. Its furnishings included a piano, and I idly began to play a prelude of Bach. He listened abstractedly. He said nothing except, "Do you play Wagner?" —which proved to me he had no appreciation of Bach.

So I gave him the crashing chords of "Die Meistersinger." Keeping time with sensitive hands, he swung up and down the room. Incapable of calm relaxation, Hitler is exalted by Wagner's voluptuous crescendoes. Perhaps they bring some vicarious relief to the thwarted urge within him.

When I finished, he stood transfixed, eyes staring into space. Then he turned to me. "You must play for me often. There is nothing like that to get me into tune before I have to face the public."

My new rôle of mood-maker brought me enemies. Every man in the entourage was fighting to be closest to Hitler. A few I discounted as merely grafters out for loot if the Nazis came to power: jovial but tough Max Amann, Hitler's former top sergeant; Weber, the fat horse dealer and tricky bouncer; and the third-rate ubiquitous photographer, Heinrich Hoffmann.

Goering seemed destined for a minor rôle. Party members frequently expressed disgust at his polished nails and luxurious tastes.

Alfred Rosenberg, editor of the Voelkischer Beobachter, was a dangerous influence on Hitler. Rosenberg, a Balt, had been ill-treated by Russians at the end of World War I. His chief obsession was a war of revenge against the Bolshevists. I waited for a chance to warn Hitler.

One afternoon we went to see a film, "The Life of Frederick the Great." On the way to the theater, I seized my opportunity.

"Be careful of Rosenberg," I told him. "He is an émigré. He'll get you into war with Russia. France will jump in, others too, and Germany might be crushed again."

"Who says it will be a repetition of 1918?" he said. "Japan for one will have no motive for a second war with Germany."

Now I was really alarmed. I knew Rudolf Hess had been collaborating with Professor Karl Haushofer, who was then lecturing on Japan in the University of Munich. Haushofer had spent two years in Japan; he was an ardent admirer of Nipponese military traditions and police methods, but had never been in the United States.

Wagner is Hitler's opium. As I played he stood transfixed.

"A Japanese alliance would arouse the United States," I protested. "Surely you don't want to repeat 1917."

"No danger," replied Hitler. "You're thinking of the old regime. Next time we'll be ready. And the Japanese will keep them from interfering."

I shook my head. "They're treacherous; they hate the *whole white race*, Germans included. Once they gained all they could, they'd turn on us without warning."

"Two can play at that," Hitler said significantly. Just then we reached the theater; the argument was broken off.

The film showed the conflict between the stern soldier-king, Frederick William I, and young Prince Frederick. In one scene, the brutal father ordered his son's books and music burned. When the Prince protested, his father struck him in the face. When the Prince was brought back after trying to escape a military life the King ordered a trial, with the words, "Better that he die than that justice fail."

The young Prince was imprisoned, molded in his father's pattern.

As we left the theater Hitler, who had been enthralled, explained, "Ah, that father! He would have killed his own son to enforce discipline. Hanfstaengl, that is how all German youth will have to be brought up."

"Not all German mothers will agree to that," I answered. Hitler made a contemptuous gesture.

That night he spoke at the Zirkus Krone. Near the end, he shouted, "German youth, victory depends on you! You must be hard. You must accept stern discipline to become supreme."

The crowd cheered him in a frenzy.

The November putsch, badly planned, was an inevitable failure. Hitler fled to my Uffing home. Still clinging to a last shred of his "leader's" dignity, he refused to be smuggled away on a motorcycle. Before a car could be secured, the police surrounded house and garden.

Hitler took out his revolver. "Everything is ruined," he groaned. "I'm going to end it all."

My wife Helen jerked the gun from his hand. He did not resist much.

Just before the police broke in, Hitler wrote a brief order: Rosenberg was to be temporary party head; I was named financier.

With Hitler a prisoner, the party went underground. To escape arrest, I went to Austria. In Vienna I met Hitler's half sister, Angela Raubal, and her daughter "Geli," who was in her teens, pretty, blond, vivacious. These two were living in poverty.

Hitler was released the day before Christmas, in 1924, and came to my house.

Weeks later, upon receiving Rosenberg, he denounced him. "You fool!" he shouted. "You've made a mess of the party."

The cringing Balt took twenty minutes' tongue-lashing, pale and silent. Then, like a whipped dog, he came fawning back, and soon Hitler was again listening to his mad schemes for expansion toward the East.

To get Hitler cured of Rosenberg, my wife and I tried vainly to humanize him with harmless diversions.

"If you would learn to dance . . ." I once suggested.

He cut me off. "Never! Dancing, games, sports, these are undignified for a man who has a historic mission. I have always lived a Spartan life."

Frau Elsa (*Continued on page 110*)

She wanted him to say

"Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree" but—

He told Her to have Fun

BY NANCY MOORE

ILLUSTRATED BY AL MOORE

Chuck shouted through the rain, "I love you, Daisy Bell," and it was too wonderful for words or music.

IT WAS an Edgar Allan Poe day, all dank and sere and bleak. And Carol thought it was the loveliest afternoon she'd ever ridden through on a bicycle.

She pedaled along towards the railroad station, relishing the rain as it spat in her face, and singing to herself in a slap-happy way, "Chuck-has-a-furlough-Chuck-has-a-leave; Chuck-has-a-furlough-Chuck-has-a-leave." It made a beautiful song.

The second verse was even better. "He's - coming - in - on - Number - Three; he's-coming-in-on-Number-Three." Oh, charming aria!

Two blocks from the station a senseless thing began to bother Carol. The bicycle tires seemed to be making a reproachful sound. "Tch-tch," they chanted.

They were insinuating that all might not be well with her and Chuck. They were reminding her that all hadn't been well when he went away, and suggesting that she was perhaps a little previous in being happy over Chuck's leave.

"Tch-tch," they said.

"Oh, shut up!" said Carol.

Maybe things hadn't been perfect when Chuck left. Maybe he *had* hurt her feelings. Maybe he *had* made her think he didn't love her as much as she loved him. Maybe . . .

Darn it, she didn't *want* to think about his last night in town three months ago. She wanted to think about this afternoon. But her mind paid no attention to what her heart preferred.

They had been sitting in their own special booth at Petersen's that night having a beer. They always sat in that booth, because it was there they had come on their first date. It was there Carol had decided that she liked the way Chuck looked and talked and smiled, and Chuck had decided the same things about Carol. But neither of them said so then. It took them exactly one week to get it said. A waste of time, they agreed, to have waited so long.

They loved that booth at Petersen's, cracked marble tabletop and all. Naturally they made a final pilgrimage there the night before Chuck left for camp.

They weren't very gay, and they didn't pretend to be. They just looked at each other, wanting to fill their eyes and memories and hearts with this last long look which would have to comfort them separately for so long a time.

And then right at the end Chuck had said the thing that hurt. "Sweet," he said, "I want you to have other dates while I'm gone. You're not to sit at home night after night because I'm not here to squire you around."

It was strange he didn't notice the shocked expression in her eyes. "But, Chuck, I don't want other dates. If I can't be with you, I don't want to go out with anyone."

"That's what you think now. But when the days stretch thin and empty, you'll feel differently. I know you will."

"You—you want me to?"

"I want you to. I don't own you, Carol."

But he *did!* Didn't he know that? And didn't he know she liked it that way?

"I trust you, darling," Chuck said.

What did trust have to do with it? She was his girl. If he felt that, as she felt it, he would hate the thought of sharing her. Why, he's not possessive at all, Carol had thought wildly, and I want my man to be possessive.

But she couldn't tell him. He ought to know without being told. It came to her with aching reluctance that maybe they didn't know each other after all.

"It's Victorian," Chuck explained, "for a man to demand that the girl he's engaged to stay at home and knit. You're not the stay-at-home type, honey."

No, she wasn't, but she could learn to be—for Chuck. For him she could learn to fill her life with books and war work and letter writing, waiting for him to come back and claim his own. But that wasn't what Chuck wanted.

"Have fun," he said. "Have dates. It'll pass the time quicker until I get back. It'll pass it quicker for me, too, knowing that I'm not preventing you from living a normal life."

The beer tasted like brine in her mouth, and so did her words. "All right, Chuck. If that's the way you want it."

He left her that night, not suspecting that he had made her doubt his love for her. Nor had she let him suspect it from her letters. But the doubt was there, nagging, gnawing; she hated herself for it, and hated him a little, too, but the worry never quite let her alone.

It seemed odd that he never mentioned the date question in his letters. Her dates meant as little to him as that. So she didn't speak of them either.

And now he was coming home.

WE'LL have to talk it out, Carol decided dully. He's got to know what he's done to us. I won't bear it alone any longer!

She was almost at the battered little station. Number Three whistled around the bend. That throaty sound made her forget everything but the fact that in two minutes Chuck would swing from the train with his free-moving grace, and hold her in his arms.

She even forgot to replace the powder that the rain had washed off her nose. She stood like a little girl, wide-eyed and eager. She saw him on the car platform as the train groaned to a stop, saw him leap to the ground exactly as she had imagined, and then she couldn't see anything except a sunburst of stars.

She tried to say something, but there weren't any words around. There were kisses around, however, and they had some of those.

Finally Carol managed in a voice she scarcely recognized as her own, "Our car's put up for the duration. I came on my bike. We'll leave it here, and catch a taxi."

He grinned. "Isn't it a bicycle built for two?"

"Well, it's got handle bars."

"Come on," he said.

Tagging along behind him, she thought: How could I have forgotten how tall he is, and how he has to lean down, to kiss me? But she hadn't really forgotten.

It was hard to get balanced double on the bicycle; the tires skidded crazily, and Chuck shouted through the rain, "I love you, Daisy Bell," and it was too wonderful for words or music.

And then the nasty little doubt had to pick this heavenly time to mutter, "Oh, why couldn't Chuck be one of those 'Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree with Anyone Else but Me' boys?"

They pulled up in front of Petersen's. "Okay?" asked Chuck.

"Of course," said Carol. But was it?

The instant they got inside the door, she saw someone else had their table. It was an ill omen. "Let's not stay," she whispered.

"Why not?" said Chuck.

How *could* he? And she'd believed he was sentimental, too. If things began this badly, where would they end?

But Chuck was marching straight to their booth. He was speaking to a couple of high-school kids who sat there. "I beg your pardon," he said, "but do you think my girl and I could have this booth? You see, I—we—well, I've got leave, and this is where we have to sit."

It was a little incoherent, but it worked. The boy and girl stood up. They smiled. They picked up their sodas. The boy said, "Sure. Wait'll I get in the Army. People will want to get up for me too."

Sitting again on the hard familiar bench was like coming home after being long away. Carol sat across from Chuck, and knew they were both remembering other times, so many other times.

But the last time had to be remembered too.

Get it over with, Carol thought. Get it out in the open. "Chuck," she said, "I—I did what you wanted. I had dates while you were gone."

"Did you have fun?"

"Yes," she said. "I did."

"I was right then."

"We came here a lot."

"Here?" he repeated. "Not to this table, though."

"Why, yes. I was used to this table."

"But——" He stopped. "Did you and your date also go out to Indian Ridge and watch the moon rise?"

"Well, yes, as a matter of fact we did."

"Did you go——?" He stopped again. He stood up. "Let's get out of here."

"But I haven't finished my beer."

Without a word, he strode across to the cashier and paid the check, and waited by the door for her to come.

Out on the street, unaware of the rain, she faced him. "You're angry with me, Chuck. You've no right to be. You told me to have dates."

"Sure, I told you to," he said, but his voice was no longer angry. It was harsh with misery. "I told you to, but I hoped you wouldn't. It seemed only decent to try to be broad-minded, even if I hated it. I could have kept on pretending, too, if you hadn't talked about going to our places with someone else. I never thought you'd do that, Carol. I thought—oh, hell, I'm a sentimental fool, but that's the way it is, and now you know."

Now she knew. She stood there in the rain, freed at last of all her nonsensical doubts and fears. But the misery and pain had gone over to Chuck.

She reached out and took his hand. "Oh, darling, yes, I came to our booth with my date. I went to the Ridge with my date. And down by the river. But the date was always you. I went to our places alone, but you were with me. By your leave, I could have dates. I had them. With you."

Right then, without a by-your-leave, Carol was being kissed.

One Man's Secret

What was the terrible truth that plunged Dean Steward's life into a nightmare the day his son confessed hatred for his father's new wife?

BY RITA WEIMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY WALTER M. BAUMHOFER

A COSMOPOLITAN NOVELETTE

IT WOULD NOT have occurred to Dean Steward that six months after his wife's death, he could ask another woman to marry him.

He was standing at his study window when the knock came that proved to be destiny. At first it was lost in the splash of waves against the rocks, a rhythmic sound at once soothing and stirring. Or it may have been his absorption in the view, the swordlike streak of gold that followed sunset, the waters foaming where they hit below the window, the islands that dotted Long Island Sound glistening like amethysts in the afterglow. Today high tide was at twilight, the hour he loved best. He did not hear the knock at the door.

When he bought Rockland years ago as a summer home, he had had part of the wall in this room torn out and the huge stationary pane of glass installed as the frame for a changing picture he never tired of. And always he marveled that this scene of sweeping beauty, these cliffs, the fishing boats, the crescent of white beach curving off to one side of the sprawling comfortable house should be in Westchester within such short distance of New York.

From the time they were little children, Cara and Wyndham loved it. And Pauline, too, when the days were warm and the nights brief. Yet never had he been able to keep her here the year round. She was afraid of winter cold, the early darkness. At this season they would have been moving back to their New York apartment in the beating heart of the city. Pauline always longed for her sixteenth-floor bedroom balcony from which she could gaze down, fascinated, on cars and trucks reduced to miniature; as if from the illusion of their dwarfed size she could draw consolation for her own ineffectuality.

During those long years, those very long years of her intermittent illness, this place had been to Dean a haven where problems seemed less insurmountable. All the staccato events of his life, its tragedies, were centered in New York. In a New York hospital their third child had been born, the little girl who lived only a few hours and took with her into the unknown her mother's health and peace of mind. And it was from New York that Pauline had been sent to various private sanitariums in the hope that change of scene would conquer the attacks of melancholia,

"Has your visitor gone?" Dean asked his wife. "Don't lie to me any more. I heard you talking to him."

only to write frantic letters pleading to be allowed to come home.

As he gazed into the soft twilight, Dean was thinking that it was here Pauline had found peace, although she never realized the fact. Here she had regained something of the laughter and the sparkle of their early years together. Here she had looked like her daughter's older sister, with the same aura of red-gold hair as Cara, and Cara's gentian-blue eyes. Last year this time, just before they returned to town, he had fancied improvement in her condition. He had watched for every little sign—her more frequent smiles; her reviving interest in Cara's boy friends and Wynn's ambition to study law. The twins, sixteen then, seemed to bring back their mother's youth. Last year this time he had dared to hope.

For a moment his thoughts stumbled and he could not lift them to consciousness of the beauty the window framed. In spite of him, they struggled back to the night last May when he had sleepily lifted the receiver and heard the doorman's panicked, "Mr. Steward, come quick!" After that night he had been unable to look from any of the sixteenth-floor windows of the apartment without having imagination summon the picture of Pauline's frail body hurtling downward through the darkness. Pauline's suicide . . .

The knock came again, louder this time, more imperative. Clouds closed over the streak of gold in the sky. The last bar of daylight sank quickly, coldly, as it does in late autumn.

Dean answered, "Come in."

The woman who opened the door hesitated. "Do I disturb you?"

"Not at all. I was just mooning over the view. It hits me particularly at this hour this time of year. The sky and water coming together like steel doors closing. Suddenly they're one. Come over here and take a look."

But she did not look at the view. She studied Dean's profile against the luminous background, dark, gaunt, fine, as if etched on the glass; a distinguished profile, gray-streaked black hair sweeping from the high forehead; a nose clean-cut, eyes with the tired, kind expression of a man who has been hurt but not embittered. They were singularly handsome deep-set eyes. A trim mustache touched with gray failed to conceal the sensitiveness of his mouth. It was the face of a scholar with the smile of a friend.

He turned to her, and she glanced quickly out of the window. "Yes, beautiful. But it's frightening too. There seems to be no beginning and no end."

"Probably that's right. We see a beginning and an end because our view is limited. Well, actually, there is no horizon. None ever existed. Our eyes place it there, Gladys, because we can't see beyond."

They stood watching the sky darken until all the luminous quality was gone. The splash of the waves sounded heavier, as if giant arms were pounding on the rocks.

She moved away. He followed and switched on a lamp that gently flooded the room. "What time is it?"

"Long after six."

Dean kept no clock in the study. In these war times he spent all day, every day, at the plant of the Steward Chemical Company located near by. Being a chemist as well as president of the company made his work intensive and exacting. When he came home to this room, he wanted no sense of time passing. "Is Cara home?" he asked.

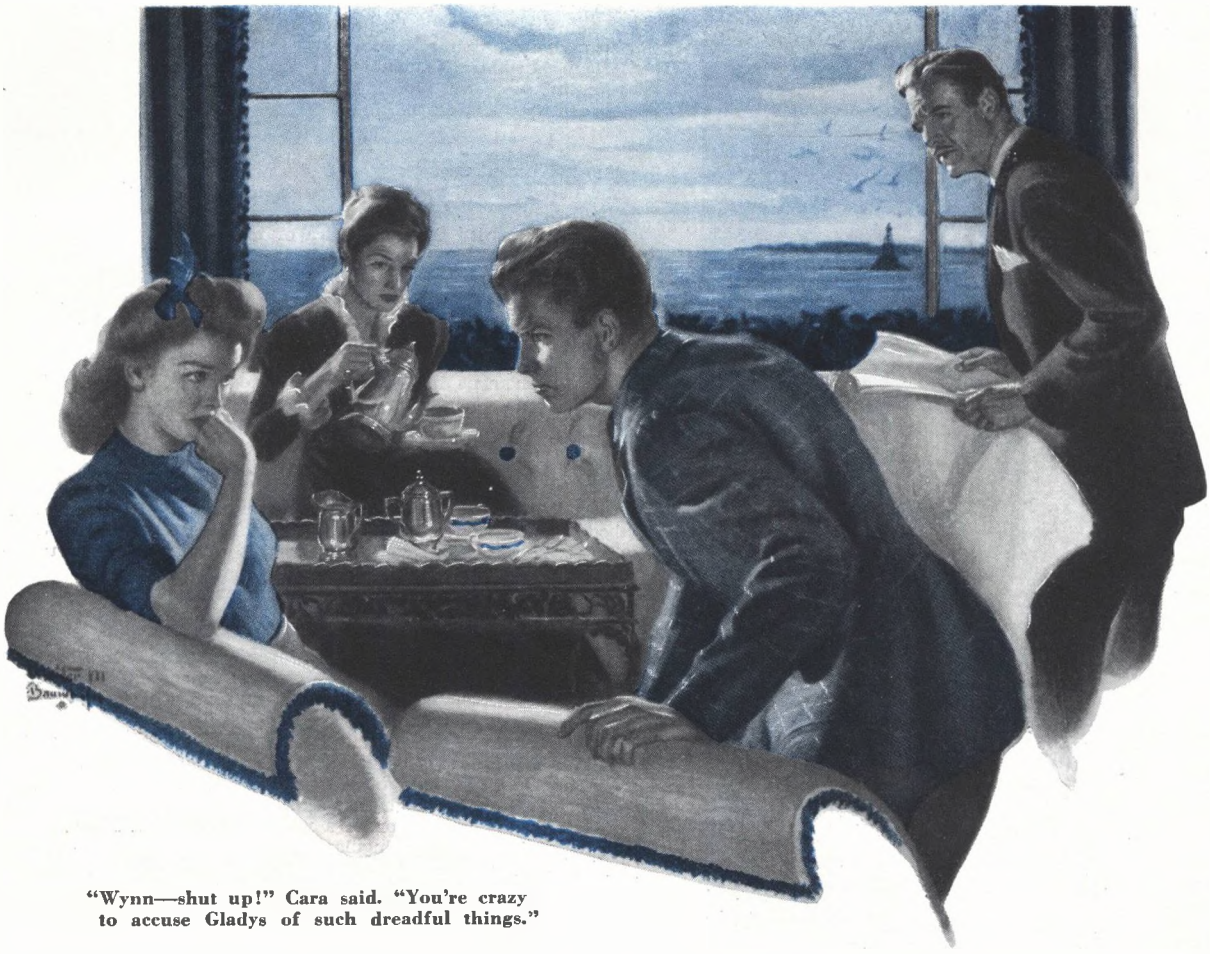
"Not yet. She went into town for a matinee. I had to see you before she gets back."

He noticed then for the first time that Gladys' hands, strong and reposeful—hands always suggestive of sculpture to Dean—were clasped tightly. Any sign of nervousness in this woman who for three years had been his wife's devoted companion was so unusual that Dean knew there must be something radically wrong.

He motioned to the lounge chair and knelt to light the fire. The flame reflection leaped up to her eyes. They were cool gray eyes ordinarily, with something of the transparency of that twilight water slapping against the rocks. Tonight they had a warmer glow. Yet their expression was troubled.

Dean had never learned her age, but he judged Gladys Mayden to be in her early thirties. She had an untouched virginal quality. There was petal smoothness on her olive skin and in the gloss of brown hair brushed back from her ears in soft wide waves. Her mouth, without a sign of rouge, was nevertheless crimson and firm, chiseled like her hands.

Sitting there by the fire, in a round-necked brown sweater that hugged her breasts, a tan tweed jacket swung around her



"Wynn—shut up!" Cara said. "You're crazy to accuse Gladys of such dreadful things."

shoulders, and that anxious look in her eyes, she seemed more human than he had ever seen her.

"What's bothering you, Gladys?"

She leaned forward. "It's awfully hard to say this, Mr. Steward, but I can't stay on any longer."

"You can't stay on?" For a second it was impossible to grasp what she meant.

"No. My things are packed. If you can let me go tomorrow, I'd appreciate it."

"But Gladys, why? Why? What's happened?"

"Nothing. You didn't expect me to stay indefinitely?"

"I never thought about it."

"I did. I've thought about it a lot these past six months. I came out here because I wanted to help you and Cara——" she broke off, fumbling for words. "I wanted to get you settled. But you don't need me any more."

"Of course we need you. Why, you've taken charge of this household for three years. You're part of it."

Her eyes filled, and now he understood the reason for their blurred look. Tears had been near the surface. "I tried to do what I could to make things a little easier for you. I—I loved Mrs. Steward, and I love Cara. But—forgive me—I'm not a housekeeper, and I can't go on living here in that capacity."

"Certainly not. I never expected you to. But you're Cara's companion now. She depends on you." In his confusion, he was on the point of adding, "So do I." The panicked realization hit him that life had just begun to move smoothly with a woman's presence filling it. Through the years of Pauline's illness there had been no other woman. Pauline loved him, and loyalty to her love had barred such a possibility. Work had been the substitute for passion. Work had been his release. He had devoted himself to laboratory experiments which resulted in his great success at forty. He had cut himself off from social contacts; from the temptation of women.

"Cara is seventeen and very independent," Gladys was saying. "She has a lot of friends. She has her art studies. When Wynn is home from college, she has him. She doesn't need anyone else."

"She loves you. No one else can take your place. It's utterly absurd for you to think of going." His mind, his lips held to Cara. He told himself it was for her sake. Cara had been through enough—too much for a young girl. In these past few months he had seen her lovely young face change from a too-old expression to the gaiety which had been hers as a child. That elfin charm, regained last summer, he felt sure was due to Gladys. Often he had noticed the two of them, swimming together, streaking through the waters, glistening like mermaids, dashing out, their tanned bodies almost bare to the sun. Gladys had a beautiful figure whose perfect proportions were lost in the austere clothes she habitually wore. In a bathing suit she had the supple flowing muscles and strength of a boy. It struck him suddenly that he could not recall having seen her before in the clinging sort of sweater she had on tonight. Perhaps this, too, made her seem more human, more feminine. His gaze held to her, frankly seeing her as a woman. "You can't go, Gladys."

But her eyes avoided his. "I must go, Mr. Steward. It's out of the question even to consider staying."

"Why?" Dean insisted. "Don't you like us any more?"

"Like you? Like you——" she said, and her voice caught and stopped.

"Well, then," he put in quickly, "I take it you do like us. That settles any further argument."

"What I want or what Cara wants doesn't matter." He wondered if she purposely avoided including him. "If I stayed it would do Cara more harm than good." She was on her feet now, slowly pacing the floor. "It's so hard to tell you—I wish I didn't have to. But there's been talk. Oh, won't you see? I'm a woman alone, and I'm living here with a widower. It's gossip, unfair to us both—to you, to me. And to Cara, too."

He leaned an elbow on the mantel, staring down into the fire. Of course, it would be like him not to think of that; to get no inkling of what the populace of a small community would say. The neighbors—naturally! A handsome young woman and an unattached man! (*Continued on page 119*)

What Are YOU Worrying About?

Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker's mother knows all about worry! Read here how she conquered it

BY BOGART ROGERS

THE WOMAN next door was saying, "If *you* had a son in the armed forces and in danger, you'd worry too! You couldn't help it."

Her tone implied that worrying about a warrior son is not only every woman's privilege but her patriotic duty. I suggested that perhaps she and a few million other American mothers with boys in uniform might be fretting and stewing a great deal more about their safety than the hazards justify. She came back with that old one, "But you aren't a mother!" which slows a man down to a walk.

Floundering around for a snappy comeback, I came up with the Great Idea. "Then how," I asked, "would you like to be the mother of Eddie Rickenbacker?"

She gave me one of those looks. "Don't try to tell me *she* doesn't worry about her son."

"I won't try, I'll *tell* you," I said flatly. "Mrs. Elizabeth Rickenbacker does not worry about Eddie. If there is a woman in this world who is qualified to speak about worry, it's Mrs. Rickenbacker. I'm going to tell you——"

And then it occurred to me it might be a sound procedure to tell all other mothers about this woman whose son has been rolling dice with disaster almost since the day he was born. The first step would be to stroll down the street and ask her a few simple questions. Had she cared to indulge herself, Mrs. Rickenbacker might have become America's undisputed champion maternal worrier, for she is the mother of four sons and two daughters besides the famous Eddie.

Today she lives in the pleasant Beverly Hills home of her son Dewey, with his wife and youngster, Eddie Rickenbacker II, and is remarkably sharp and snappy for a woman who has had every provocation to jitter herself completely apart.

"The reason I haven't, I guess," she explained, "is that I've always had complete confidence in Eddie. He was daring—but not careless, and a quick thinker in a tight spot. And he had confidence in himself."

Mrs. Rickenbacker looks like a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She is all of these. At seventy-nine you'd expect her to have a few wrinkles, and so she has. Her hair, not so white as it seems at first glance because it is still streaked with gold, winds up in a little knot in the back. Her features are firmly chiseled and strong, like Eddie's, and her eyes are bright and alert. When she laughs, it starts somewhere deep inside, breaks loose and really goes to town. She carries her head high, as befits a woman who has successfully reared seven children.

Mrs. Rickenbacker loves Eddie as much as any mother can love a son, but she doesn't believe that lying awake nights and suffering pangs of fear is proof of that love. She believes that the way to prove her love is to stand up to worry and lick it.

Necessity, she says, taught her the trick of getting the best of her worries before they got the best of her.

She believes in Eddie's philosophy, too.

"Right at first I got awfully nervous about his race driving, until he told me that he'd have to go when his time came and not before, so there was no sense in my getting upset every time he drove a race. He believed that, too."

She admits there have been occasions when she thought Eddie's time had finally arrived and had to take herself severely in hand.

She thinks too many mothers have too little confidence in their sons in the armed forces. Mothers forget their sons are no longer boys but full-grown men in excellent health, splendidly trained, magnificently equipped, quite able to take care of themselves and protected by the righteousness of their cause.

"In times like these," I asked her, "with plenty of boys in real peril for the first time in their lives, what advice that you've worked out through the years would you give to mothers and fathers?"

Mrs. Rickenbacker didn't hesitate. "By all means pray—pray, and believe, and know your prayers will be answered," she said.

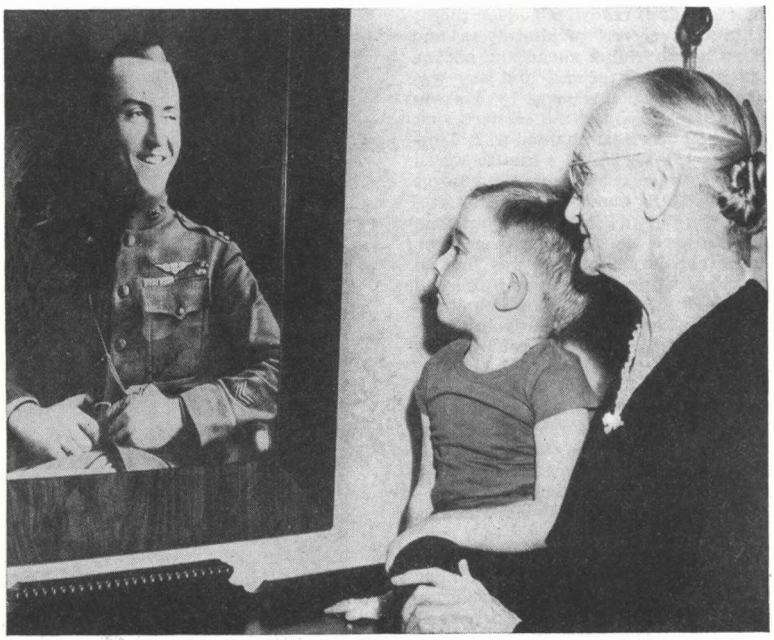
That is what she said and that is what she means. When her boy is in danger, she prays. Humble and devout faith in the power of God's protection is and always has been her shield.

"That's the first thing to do," she advises. "The second is to keep terribly busy—keep your mind and hands constantly and usefully occupied."

She says worry is a nagging and tenacious emotion that thrives best in an empty mind. It has to be driven out by force, and the way to do that is to crowd the mind full of so many useful and important things that they squeeze worry out. Mrs. Rickenbacker hasn't much patience with mothers who can't find enough interesting work to keep their minds and hands active.

When Eddie had been missing twenty-one days in the Pacific, Mrs. Rickenbacker grew rather quiet. But she told her family she (*Continued on page 81*)

Mrs. Elizabeth Rickenbacker and Eddie Rickenbacker II, mother and nephew of the famous flier, gaze at his portrait.



"Praise the Lord..."

When the Devil is a grinning Jap

it takes a fighting parson to give him hell

BY PAUL DERESCO AUGSBURG

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN PIKE

LIEUTENANT RANDOLPH BOGGS, Ch.C., squared narrow shoulders and hoisted his chin as he sensed that Madder was grinning at him. He had gone topside, as was his custom, to inflate his soul with the sea and the sky. A fresh breeze skittering sou'-sou'east was barely making the carrier teeter. From her streamlined stack rolled light gray smoke which rollicked to leeward till it lost itself in the blue out yonder. A peaceful Sabbath on an ocean at war—peaceful despite a fighter squadron ready for sudden flight; despite that screen of destroyers and cruisers alertly riding ahead and abeam.

But the beauty of sea and sky was marred for Chaplain Boggs by Jackson Madder. Jack Madder, the carrier's first lieutenant and officer charged with damage control, served as the kite to which Boggs was tailed. Meaning that Boggs shared Madder's number.

All officers of the line have a number. In peace times it determines promotion. Your Annapolis chum who was first in your class, while you yourself finished ninety-seventh, will become a lieutenant ahead of you, and throughout your entire naval career he will outrank you by many numbers.

But chaplains belong to a different breed. They enter the Navy as junior lieutenants, after some years of preaching on shore, and if they are Christians they wear a gilt cross where the fighting officer's sleeve shows a star. For promotion, each is assigned a number which in fact belongs to somebody else—to a gentleman already set in the line, patiently waiting his turn to ascend still another rung toward important command.

So it was that when, in the normal course, Jack Madder was given two full

gold stripes, Boggs got them too. It was automatic. The kite had gone higher, and hence its tail!

The chaplain swallowed as he remembered his first encounter with Jackson Madder. Three weeks ago, outside Pearl Harbor. The carrier's screws were churning up knots, leaving in a hospital bed on land the padre whose place young Boggs was taking—a mellowed commander nicknamed "Bing," esteemed by men and gold braid alike. So abrupt had been the transfer order that Boggs came aboard in a pierhead jump from the heavy cruiser Chattanooga.

And now, in the wardroom, there was his kite! He liked Jack Madder the instant he saw him. Madder was everything Boggs was not, a debonair youth with rakehell eyes and the sort of laugh that captivates men as well as all ladies from eight to eighty. He carried himself with the air of a fellow who had long ago mastered the Biblical sequence of asking and getting, seeking and finding, of knocking and having shut portals opened.

"Er—you are Mr. Madder?" said Boggs.

"That's me, padre"—extending his hand.

"My name's Boggs. I—I'm happy to meet you at last. Wondered about you a long, long time. You see, lieutenant, I'm tagged to your number."

"No!" Madder's eyes, a tawny hazel, opened wider, his grin expanding. His strong even teeth seemed almost to flash, so white they appeared in the tan of his face. Sheer magnetism, animal spirits —never had Chaplain Boggs met a man who radiated more pagan charm. "You mean to tell me," Madder exclaimed, "that *I'm* the guy who got you two stripes! Easy, padre. You better start praying. That extra dough will burn your pants."

Boggs could see other officers grinning. He always felt shy when faced with fellows like these who were active doers, not talkers ordained to preach the Word.

The chaplain made the mistake at this point of hoping out loud he would see Jack Madder among his congregation at church. It seemed only natural for him to say so, for a tail to invite its own kite to attend the service which it, the kite's tail, would conduct.

There were muffled snickers while Madder, grimacing, came back with, "Past redemption, padre. In fact, a redhead in Honolulu told me last night—I'll quote her direct: You're made to order for Hades. Unquote. A wise little number who's been around; if *she* says I'm lost, then I reckon I am."

Suddenly Boggs felt very lonely, standing on deck this peaceful Sabbath recalling that meeting with Jackson Madder. He watched some porpoises swim in formation beside the creaming bow of a cruiser. A flight of VS's, scouting for Japs, winged out of the east. From the signal bridge rose a hoist of flags.

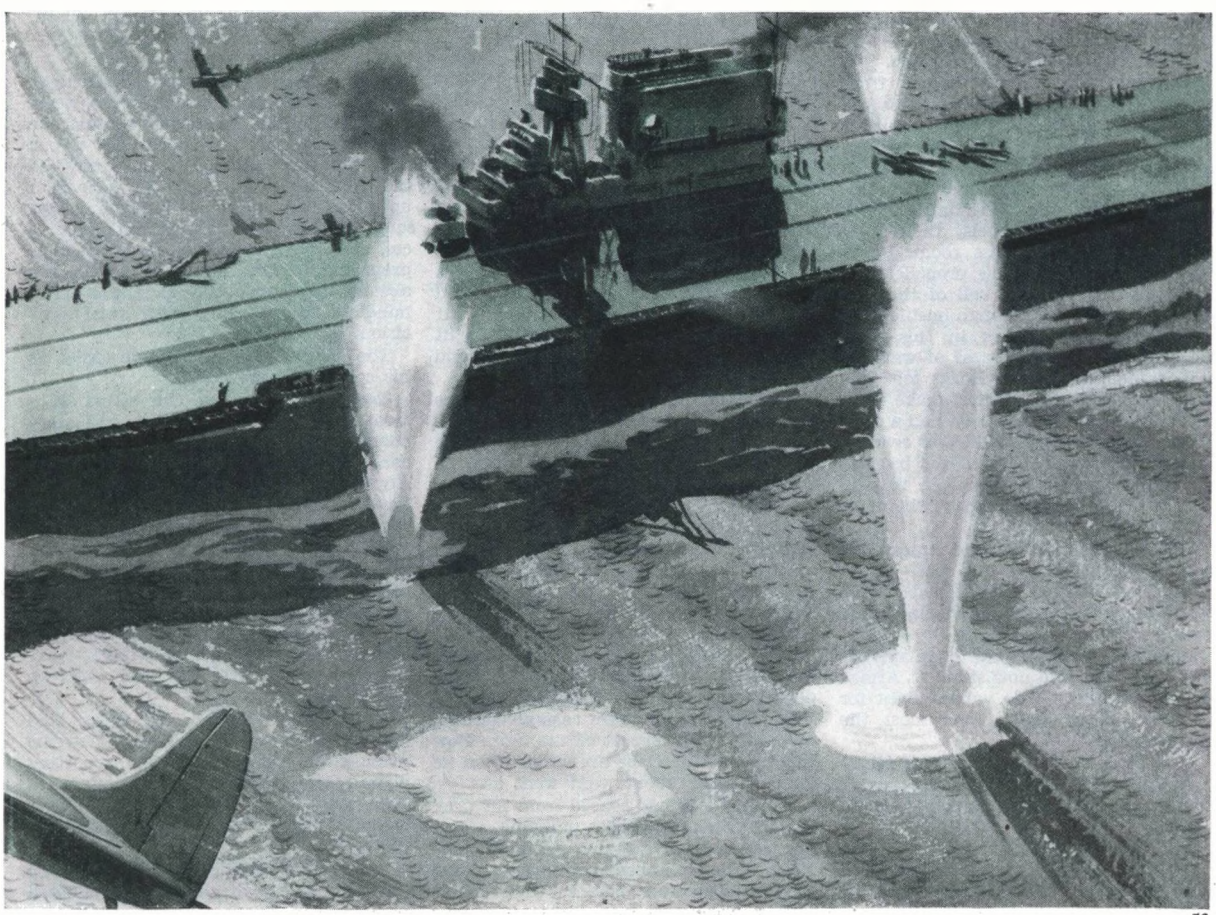
A chaplain *is* lonely on board a ship, unless he has made himself accepted. His duties range from entertainments officer, chief librarian and chaperon of the weekly paper, up through administrator of the welfare fund, psychological consultant, smoother-outer of marital and other problems, to the matter of preaching a sermon on Sunday. But in all these chores he moves apart, a person unique in a vessel of war where team play for battle makes comrades-in-arms and everyone else shares his work with others.

Trouble was, Boggs reflected, he'd started off wrong, and all because of Lieutenant Madder. It was bad enough having to take "Bing's" place, a popular chaplain well-known to the men. But that Madder, his kite, should be the one officer above all others on board this ship whose conduct was celebrated ashore for purple patches was just too much! It was a joke and, what was worse, it had made Chaplain Boggs ridiculous too.

Before his mind stretched a lurid vista of heartsick damsels and empty bottles, with Madder striding so devil-may-care across the havoc his beach nights wreaked. Truth was that the padre *liked* the fellow, and he wanted to be liked in turn by Jackson Madder.

Boggs started, hearing the notes of a

"He's going! He's going! He's burning!" The chaplain dramatically relayed a blow-by-blow account of the Jap attack to the men below decks.



bugle—solemn at first, then almost sprightly, eight musical bars which scores of speakers carried through the ship. *His* call, the Sunday summons to worship; it had never failed to quicken his pulse.

The voice of a bos'n's mate followed the bugle, and up on the bridge of the birdboat's "island," the spruce young officer of the deck ordered the church pennant hauled to the gaff. Boggs turned briskly and started below. As he did so, Lieutenant Madder chirruped:

"Give 'em hell, padre!"

The chaplain forced an acknowledging grin, which vanished the instant he passed out of sight through the battle hatch. He was merely a joke! Everyone else on board this ship had a he-man's part to fill in action—while he, in Jack Madder's eyes at least, was a mouther of hymns and prayers and sermons!

And no great shakes in this field, either. In the vast covered hall of the hangar deck his little congregation was all but lost. Boggs' heart sank lower. He mounted the pulpit as the portable organ, last-gasping, went dead.

Then there was a stir. As though at a signal, everyone rose. The skipper was coming. The master-at-arms, a bristling marine, strode front and center, preparing the way, and the captain followed to take his seat directly below where Boggs was standing.

The padre, recalling his predecessor, felt perspiration break on his face. "Bing" had once set an all-time record by preaching to ten hundred and eighty men. And today, the worst Sunday since coming aboard, was the time when the skipper must choose to attend his first church service conducted by Boggs!

As a hymn rebounded faintly from the bulkheads, the padre glanced at the Old Man's face. He admired the skipper immensely, as he did Madder, for his competent courage and calm awareness—qualities of men trained to lead. Beyond and aft, on either side, battle planes rested like modern angels, their gray wings folded to take less room. Boggs was conscious of surging propellers, of the slight yet rhythmic roll of the hull powerfully thrusting through hostile seas.

Everything, every man in this ship, was attuned to the business of war but him. Suddenly Chaplain Boggs felt desperate. He *must* belong; must make them see that he, no less than they, had a part.

From First Peter, now, he was reading his text: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

Boggs shut the Bible and braced his shoulders. He was on the spot—like a fighter, some fellow outmatched by his foe, hearing the gong which starts the bout.

"Be sober, vigilant," the chaplain began. "You men who now stand at Armageddon, prepared to do valiant fight for the Lord, know better than most the pressing need——"

He froze as the bugle blasted his words. Then the mewling skirl of the bos'n's pipe, the rolling order which followed its notes:

"All-l-l hands to battle stations!"

Chaplain Boggs gulped while his congregation melted before him. He saw the skipper stride toward the starboard companionway. From the "island," topside, the giant bullhorn covered the ship with its voice of command: "Stand by to warm up engines! . . . Clear of propellers. Start the engines." As though roweled with spurs, two flights of motors awoke with a snarl on the broad deck above.

Swift action! Purpose! Each had a duty—yes, even the chaplain, Boggs remembered. His duty now, his place in battle, was in the main dressing station below, mouthing assurance to sailors in pain.

In that moment the tail took thought of its kite, coolly going about its assignment somewhere up there where the action would break. Boggs darted down from the portable pulpit. Already the handlers were hustling a plane, a Grumman F4F, to the elevator. Dodging full sprint, as if the chaplain fancied himself a single-seater dogfighting Japs amid fleecy white clouds, he pursued the captain and got on his stern when the latter was nearing the signal deck.

"*If* you please, sir!"

The skipper frowned at the flushed hot face and answered quietly, "Lively, chaplain."

"Remember, sir, that British carrier? Her chaplain helped the morale below by describing the action for the engine-room crew and all the rest. I'd like to do that, captain. May I?"

The ghost of a smile flicked the skipper's mouth as he scanned Boggs' eager blue eyes. "Permission granted," he snapped and went on, while the bullhorn blared the order for pilots to man their planes.

Boggs could feel the birdboat turning, gathering speed as she swung to the wind. She was dead in the groove when he reached the bridge and looked rather wildly at the sky. There was nothing up there—just a brazening sun. Not a bird nor a cloud; not even a plane.

The padre glanced over the portside rail as the squadron leader, getting his signal, gunned the engine and thundered forward to rise from the deck on the lift of the breeze. He banked sharply right in a fast-climbing turn, and the second ship followed, then the others.

But *why?* Again Boggs searched the heavens till at last he saw them, specks to westward—small black specks which seemed not to move and yet, while he watched, grew gradually larger.

"Ours," spoke a voice. The padre peered at the fellow, an ensign. A kid, but he carried himself with the cool assurance of a seasoned warrior. "VS's returning *fast*," he added, glasses still leveled. "Here come the Japs!"

"How many?"

"Two squadrons, sir. One high. Fighters escorting bombers, I think. Still too distant to tell what types."

Bewildered, the padre cast about him, at sea in every respect of the term. How could a man describe an action when he knew so little about what went on?

The last F4F had roared from the deck like a maddened hornet pursuing a dog. The squadron was taking formation upstairs while it climbed ever higher against the sun. Directors, clad in their yellow jerseys, were joining the reds and greens on the side—the appropriate red of the fire-fighting crew, the green of the arresting-gear detail; and the handlers in blue had the field to themselves as they bustled about to spot fresh fighters, each heavy lift pushing up with its planes, then down to the hangar deck to get more.

The scouts sped nearer, the boys in green now taking their places to stop them aboard. The Japs were also winging closer.

The chaplain plucked at the youthful ensign's sleeve. "Would you kindly tell me what this is about? I m-mean," Boggs stammered, catching the other's expression, "how did we know they meant to attack?"

The ensign answered briefly.

"Thank you, ensign. I'm here—permission of the skipper—to describe the action for those below."

Boggs swallowed. The youngster had raised his glasses and turned away. *Dismissed* him, as though the padre were no longer there!

But being ignored had its merits too. No one up here had ears to listen while he, a tyro, tried to explain what was going on. He cut in the circuit and, his voice uncertain, started to talk at the microphone.

"Attention, men. This is Chaplain Boggs. I'm standing upon the bridge of our ship, ready to tell you about the action—a blow-by-blow account, as it were. You see, I was just beginning my sermon when the call to battle stations sounded, and I'm not to be cheated of making a speech!" Smiling, Boggs paused, as though he expected to hear his invisible audience titter.

"The present situation is this. A flight of nine scouts on their sweep to westward discovered the enemy headed our way. A warning was radioed back to our ship, and our first fighter squadron has taken off and is now in battle formation upstairs. The enemy's approaching two squadrons strong—one squadron of bombers, one of fighters. Our scout patrol is preparing to land. Here it comes! It's aboard. Arrester-gear's caught it. The handlers are working with swift precision."

The chaplain's voice became easier as his confidence grew.

"Now, then, let's see. Our escort ships have taken position to port and starboard. Three destroyers—er—three tin cans are out ahead running interference. Any sneak attack by submarines won't have a chance, you may bet on that. I can see the marines standing by their guns. They're loaded and waiting, muzzles lifted, just waiting for Japs to come into range. There's Sergeant Red Kerkle—you all know *him*, our undefeated middleweight champ. He's holding a lanyard ready to jerk it, and a lot happier-looking now than I ever saw him when he was in church!"

Again Boggs smiled. He knew Red Kerkle. He had good reason to know the marine. His first case problem, reporting aboard, had been the tangled affairs of Red, with three girls claiming a prior right to Kerkle's name and a cut of his pay.

The padre gripped the microphone hard as, losing all shyness, he shouted at it, "Here (*Continued on page 128*)

I Pick Winners— But You Can't Win

Here a professional horse-race handicapper reveals all his secrets

ANONYMOUS

LET'S BE honest about this. My work is about the most useless on God's footstool—judged by Puritan standards. Yet thousands of you daily dig in your pockets and put your coin on the barrelhead, just as I advise; for I give you a dream of winning money. Because it is so pleasant a dream many *yous* follow me year after year, as I journey South and West in winter, North and East in summer—with most expenses thrown in, and a salary of $7,500 for the twelvemonth.

You guessed it? I'm a leader in that highly specialized field of daily journalism, handicapping. I'm a picker of likely winners at the races for you to bet on. My "selections" are printed in one of the nation's great newspapers. Frequently, as on Preakness or Derby Day, the wire services quote me all over the land. "Colin picks So-and-So to win"—only I use as pseudonym the name of another famed horse of yesteryear.

Thousands who don't know a thoroughbred from a spavined jackass bet daily on my choices. They wager at tracks; with handbooks—that is, small-fry gamblers hanging around the nearest bar; and in poolrooms—gamblers' quarters connected by phone with the tracks, where wagers are received and winners paid off immediately after each race.

Though war put a crimp in racing in England, it stimulated the so-called sport here, furnishing an emotional outlet for countless defense workers and others with cash money and little to spend it on. True, the turf boom had been on the way since Repeal. Says Charles Parmer in his authoritative book on thoroughbred racing, "For Gold and Glory":

> Overnight thoroughbred horse racing has mushroomed into America's new gold strike; a bonanza for promoters, entrepreneurs, breeders, horsemen, gamblers—even for the sovereign states which welcome it. More than 600 breeding farms yearly send more than 1,000 highly bred yearlings into the great sales rings, whence they pass into the hands of trainers, later to be released as racers on American tracks, ranging from the cheapest "merry-go-round" to the $7,000,000 Belmont Park; courses where more than 12,000 horses yearly compete for approximately $15,000,000 in prizes; tracks where a half-billion dollars is wagered legally from one year's end to the other.

There's racing in about half the states, with some fourscore tracks operating during the year. There's always a lot of sanctimonious hooey spilled about its necessity. In 1665 Richard Nicolls, first English Governor of New York, ordered racing on Salisbury Plains, Long Island (now Garden City), "not so much for the divertisement of youth as for the encouraging the bettering of the breed of horses." Today the Saratoga Association proclaims it operates "for the improvement of the breed of horses." Improvement, necessity—my eye! Racing is no more a necessity to our national welfare than is a game of craps in the back alley. Yet it has caught on with a money-mad war public, as these facts show:

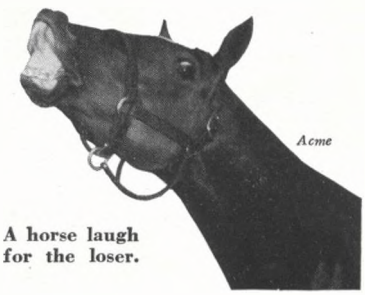
Last Labor Day some 30,000 persons saw the Yanks cinch the league pennant. But more than 40,000 persons gambled at Aqueduct—one of New York's tracks: a high in attendance for that ancient course. And on October third, when Warren Wright's Whirlaway—world's largest money-winning horse—beat Alsab in the $27,100 Jockey Club Gold Cup, 31,805 people went to Belmont Park and bet $1,790,807 on the eight races. No one has ever been able to estimate the millions wagered daily in handbooks and poolrooms in Washington, New York, Los Angeles and way stations.

Since the average bettor hasn't time to learn firsthand about horses, I make a place for myself in this crazy gambling scheme. Turf officials encourage me to such an extent that—well, the last race meet I "covered" the association paid my salary. Why?

That association—like all others—makes its money by the percentage it extracts from each dollar wagered through its mutuel machines. (The boodle is four to five percent for the track, five to six percent for the state.) The more interest in racing the more money is bet—and the more the track owners get as their cut. As I've a following, it pays to have me operate from their track, instead of at a competing plant.

Another point that seems strange till you understand it: track owners love to see people betting away from tracks, though they don't get a penny of the swag. Why? Because the regulars are only a few thousand—not enough to pay racing expenses. But if a novice is shown where he can bet two dollars around the corner on Count Fleet—and maybe win!—don't you suppose his appetite is whetted? He wants to see Count Fleet—and other horses—in action. So, on his day off, he goes to the races instead of the ball game. These occasional bettors swell attendance figures into the thousands, run up the race tracks' astounding profits. And we handicappers give a shot in the arm to these occasionals by our bold predictions, "Blue Swords should win the fourth race." The turf magnates gladly assign us press quarters, treat us as honored guests. We are assets to our own papers, also, for a first-class handicapper is both a circulation getter and a circulation holder. They even boast of us as they do of their drama critics.

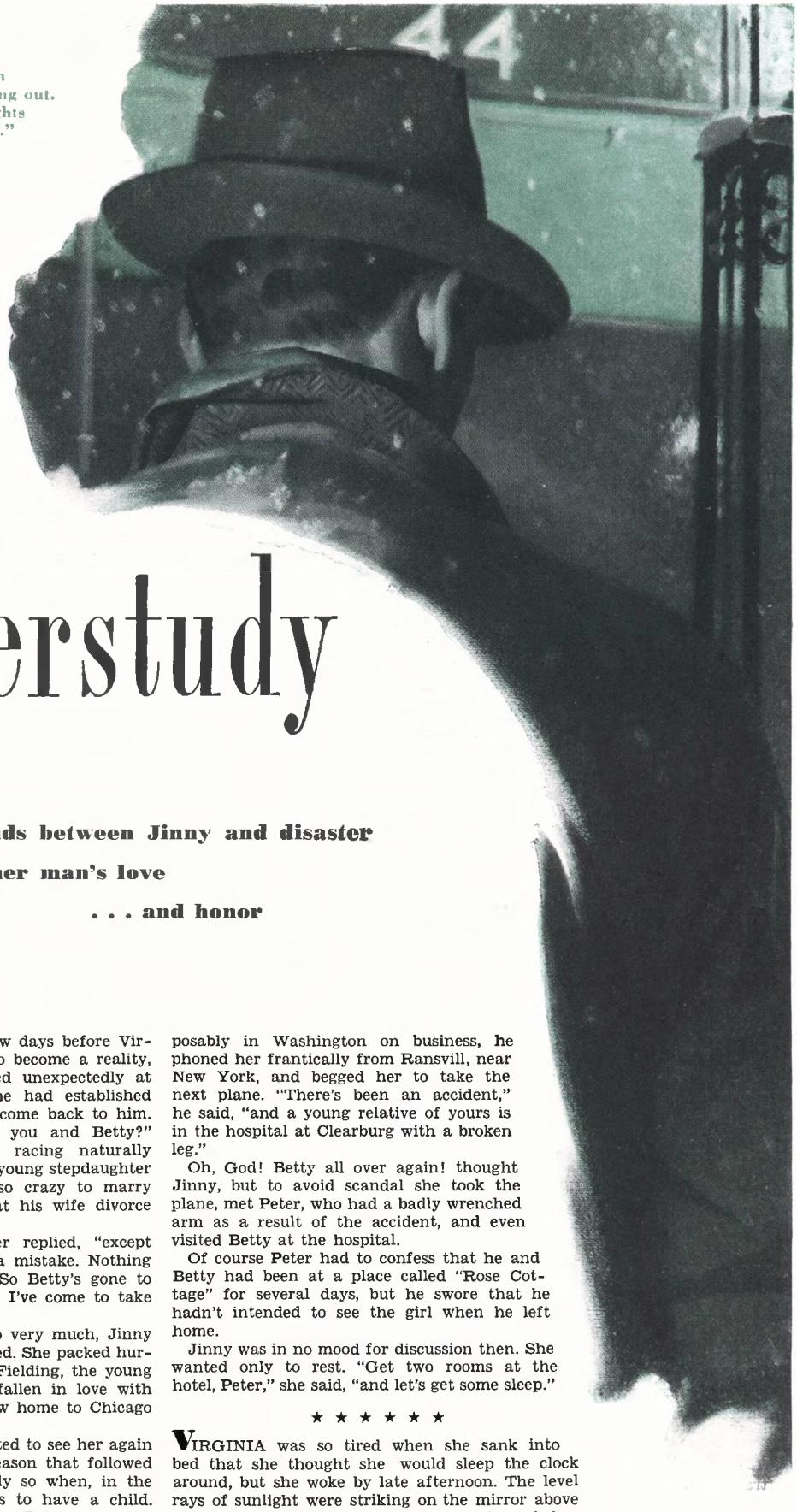
How do we work? Late each morning the racing secretary issues the list of next day's entries, with weights, jockeys, post positions. (*Continued on page 135*)



Acme

A horse laugh for the loser.

"I've seen them going in and I've seen them coming out. And there have been nights when he hasn't come out."



Understudy

All that stands between Jinny and disaster is another man's love . . . and honor

THE STORY SO FAR: A few days before Virginia Thorpe's divorce was to become a reality, Peter, her husband, appeared unexpectedly at the Florida resort where she had established residence, and asked her to come back to him.

"What happened between you and Betty?" Jinny asked, her thoughts racing naturally enough to her cousin Anne's young stepdaughter —the girl Peter had been so crazy to marry when he had demanded that his wife divorce him.

"Nothing happened," Peter replied, "except that I found out I'd made a mistake. Nothing was any good without you. So Betty's gone to New York to study art—and I've come to take you home."

Because she loved Peter so very much, Jinny allowed herself to be persuaded. She packed hurriedly, said good-by to Don Fielding, the young New York doctor who had fallen in love with her there in Florida, and flew home to Chicago with Peter.

Jinny's friends were delighted to see her again and during the gay social season that followed she was really happy; doubly so when, in the spring, she believed she was to have a child.

And then one night, when Peter was supposably in Washington on business, he phoned her frantically from Ransvill, near New York, and begged her to take the next plane. "There's been an accident," he said, "and a young relative of yours is in the hospital at Clearburg with a broken leg."

Oh, God! Betty all over again! thought Jinny, but to avoid scandal she took the plane, met Peter, who had a badly wrenched arm as a result of the accident, and even visited Betty at the hospital.

Of course Peter had to confess that he and Betty had been at a place called "Rose Cottage" for several days, but he swore that he hadn't intended to see the girl when he left home.

Jinny was in no mood for discussion then. She wanted only to rest. "Get two rooms at the hotel, Peter," she said, "and let's get some sleep."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

VIRGINIA was so tired when she sank into bed that she thought she would sleep the clock around, but she woke by late afternoon. The level rays of sunlight were striking on the mirror above the hotel dresser. Loud voices came from below

BY MARY HASTINGS BRADLEY

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM LOVELL

her windows; some returning golfers were being hearty over their scores.

Sleep might have been easier in the cottage, she thought ironically, once she got over the sight of Betty's belongings strewn about the place with Peter's. It might be no worse to see them than to imagine them. Peter would have to go out there and pack up. She would have to be very matter-of-fact about these next days.

She lifted the telephone and was about to ask the clerk to have tea sent to her room when the clerk said, "There's a young man waiting to see you, Mrs. Thorpe. I told him you'd given orders not to be disturbed, and he said he'd wait."

Virginia thought instantly of reporters. "Did he give his name?"

"No'm. Just said he'd come from New York."

It wasn't possible that a New York paper had sent a man out—or was it? Had they discovered her name from the air line? "Mrs. Thorpe Flies to Chaperon Husband."

She said, "I'll be right down."

She dressed quietly in order not to awaken Peter in the room beyond the connecting bath; if she had to put on an act for a reporter it would be easier to do it alone. She thought of the time she had been so defensively blithe to the reporters after the sailboat had capsized. Was that only last June?

She had brought a fresh dress, a beige wool, and she put that on, and her brown hat, and after a moment's hesitation she slipped on her fur coat and brightened her lips. She didn't look too badly, she thought, turning away from the glass, catching up her gloves and bag; she looked quite smart and carefree.

The clerk looked interestedly at her as she came to the desk; she asked where the young man was, and the clerk said that he was in the writing room. It was a small room, and there were only two people in it—a stout lady at a desk and a young man

on a sofa who rose as Virginia went up to him.

"You asked to see me? I'm Mrs. Thorpe."

He murmured, "I'm sorry to trouble you."

"Not at all," she said, with a sinking heart.

He was a nice-looking young man, with a frank, ingenuous face, and he looked troubled about something—probably about the questions he was going to ask her.

She sat down on the sofa, and he sat beside her. She asked, "What was it you wanted to know?"

He hesitated. He said, "My name is Durand. Bob Durand," and looked at her as if that name would mean something, and after a moment it did.

Those letters from Cleveland for Betty! The young man Anne Cummings had thought wasn't good enough.

"Oh, yes," said Jinny in a changed voice. She added cautiously, "You knew my cousin, didn't you?"

The lady at the desk rose and went out, her letter in her hand. Their eyes followed her, then turned to each other.

"Yes," said Durand. "Yes. I used to go with Betty when we were in Michigan. Then I went to Cleveland, and she went to live with you." He stopped; he stared down at his hands. He had trouble finding what he wanted to say; then he brought out jerkily, "I guess you know how I feel about Betty, don't you?"

Virginia said, "I used to have some idea from something Anne Cummings said."

"I was crazy about her, and she liked me pretty well, only I didn't have much to offer. I told her I'd do better, and I did. I got moved to New York. That was a promotion."

He had on a blue serge, a ready-made. His shirt was a light blue, and the cuffs were neat. Everything about him was neat and pressed; you could see he was anxious to make a good appearance. A too-ordinary young man for Betty, thought Virginia. And then she thought: But he has charm, for he looked up with a flash of blue eyes between black lashes, and they were the most startlingly blue eyes she had ever seen, and there was something stubborn and passionate and masculine in his face.

"So I've got a right to fight for her, haven't I?" he said defiantly.

"Of course you have." Jinny spoke soothingly, wondering what was coming next.

"And I'm going to fight! It's time somebody looked after her. I saw the news in the paper this noon—about her accident. And I came right up."

"Oh! Have you seen her, then?"

"No, I haven't. I phoned the hospital, but I didn't give my name. I didn't want her to know I was here yet. They said she was getting along all right."

This was all very queer, Virginia thought. She waited, her eyes on his.

"You see, I—I wanted to see—to see your husband first. I asked for him, and they said you were both here. So I thought I'd see you."

"Of course you're anxious," Virginia said gently. "But she really is doing well—it's a slight break, they tell me. I'm sure they'd let you see her."

"It isn't that. It isn't just to see her." He looked up with another flash of his blue eyes. "This isn't easy to say. To you, I mean. I don't want to hurt your feelings."

Virginia's heart was beating fast now. "Suppose you don't bother about my feelings, but just tell me."

"You see, I know all about Betty, and I think she's a wonderful girl." He spoke as if Virginia had challenged that. "That's the way I feel about her. I'm not blaming her. I've been afraid something like this would happen. Your husband is too important to play around with. I've told Betty——"

"You've been seeing Betty?"

He stared. "Of course. When she hasn't anything better to do." He gave a short laugh. "Betty likes me—a little. I'd have got somewhere with her if I hadn't been up against competition like your husband. He spoiled her. A big shot. An ordinary fellow can't compete with that."

"I don't think I know what you're saying."

His look was edged with impatience. "Oh, yes, you do, Mrs. Thorpe. When I heard you were here I figured you were just on to cover up. I knew you weren't in on the first of it, or any of the other times. Maybe you think it's none of my business, but I care for Betty—I care what happens to her. I know she likes your husband, but he's ruining her life. You're her cousin, and you ought not to let it happen to her."

Or any of the other times!

JINNY SAID sharply, "Will you please tell me what you are trying to say? What do you mean by 'other times'? I don't know anything about them."

"You don't? Why, I had it figured out you didn't care—since you were just acting as a front, anyway, to keep him in society." He gave a bitter laugh.

"I? To keep—— Where did you get that idea?"

"It's the truth, isn't it? Oh, I know all about that divorce that didn't come off, and I think Betty got a raw deal. I didn't want her to marry him, but it was a raw deal, just the same. She told me about it when she got to New York. She said he couldn't stand being dropped from some clubs his wife's friends were going to see he got dropped from—— I beg your pardon, Mrs. Thorpe." He reddened. "I'd forgotten——"

"It doesn't matter. You mean, that's what she told you?"

"That's what he told her. He said if he didn't want to get thrown out of everything he'd have to get you to come back. I thought it was a deal between you."

"No. Not quite that kind."

"He said he couldn't afford a scandal, and your friends were making it a scandal. They'd told him they wouldn't receive Betty. Betty wouldn't have cared, but he couldn't take it. Of course he had his business and reputation to consider. Betty understood. But she ought to have quit him then. She ought never to have let him keep coming on."

"But he didn't! Not till now."

"Oh, no? Why, he's come on all winter for just a few hours—a plane here, and a plane back. I had a date with her back in November, and when she broke it I watched. Maybe you think that wasn't very decent, but I had to know. There's a hotel with a drugstore in front of her place where I can see her door. I've seen them going in and I've seen them coming out. And there have been nights this year when he hasn't come out."

He added fiercely, "I don't blame her, I'm telling you! I know how she feels about him. But it isn't good enough for her. I've told her, and she just laughs at me. But she's laughing to keep her courage up. I tell her so. And then, when this happened—when I saw her name in the papers——" Anger and helplessness were in the eyes he lifted. "Someone ought to talk to your husband. If he's so afraid of a scandal—well, I'll *make* a scandal if he doesn't let her alone. I'm not going to see this thing go on!"

"I'm afraid there isn't anything you can do. Because a scandal would involve Betty too."

"Then *you* do something. You can. You can do all the society things."

Virginia stood up suddenly. She said, "I want you to come back with me to New York. You can talk on the way."

He rose mechanically. He said, surprised out of his vehemence, "You're going to New York?"

"Yes. At once. Will you come with me?"

"Why, no. I'm going to catch a bus back at ten-thirty. I haven't seen Betty yet."

"I think if I were you I'd see her later." Virginia spoke almost absently, moving toward the writing desk. She took a sheet, wrote rapidly: "Called to New York. Will write." She added her initials, sealed the envelope, wrote Peter's name on it and took it to the desk. "Will you give that to Mr. Thorpe when he comes down? I am called to New York. I must leave immediately, and I don't want to waken him—his arm is painful. Can you get me a car to drive me to New York?"

She walked up and down with quick steps while she waited. Durand walked uneasily beside her. He said in a worried voice, "Why are you going away like this? Were you going before, or is it something I said? Did I say too much?"

"No—not too much."

"You see, I thought you—I figured——"

"You might tell Betty," she interrupted, "that Peter told me quite another story; told me that I was all he wanted; that he would never see her again. That's why I came back. That might open her eyes—as you've opened mine."

"I?" He was staggered. He looked at Virginia as if seeing her for the first time as a woman of flesh and blood and feeling. He asked unhappily, "What are you going to do?"

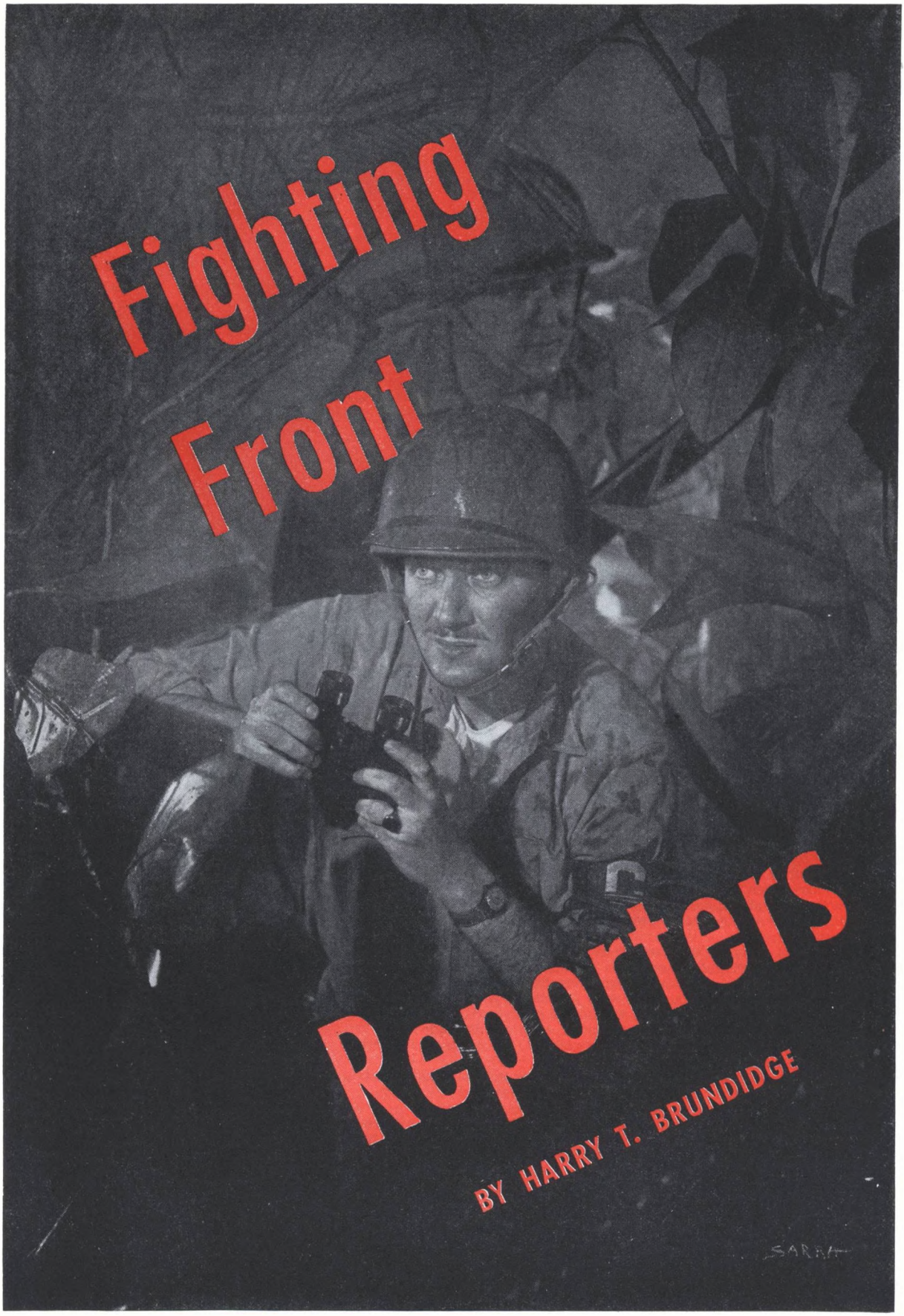
"I don't know. I'm not a free agent."

"You—you aren't leaving him, are you?"

"I think people are listening to us. Is that the car?"

It was the car. She told him goodby and got in. She said, "New York."

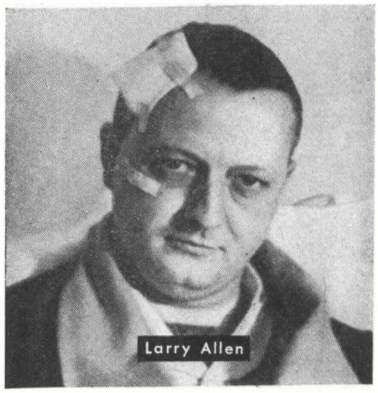
This flight of hers, she knew, was giving way to instinct. It settled nothing; it merely put distance between her and her husband until this dreadful tumult in her stilled and she was a reasoning being again. (*Continued on page 140*)

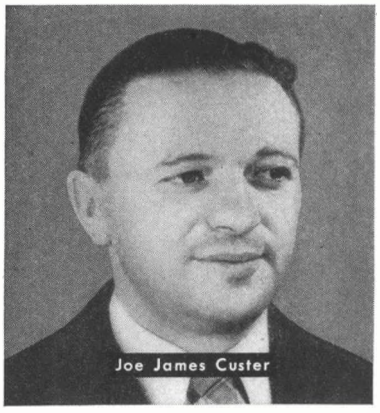

Fighting
Front
Reporters
BY HARRY T. BRUNDIDGE


Edward Kennedy


Charles H. McMurtry


Clark Lee


Larry Allen


Joe James Custer


Vern Haugland

Here they are, the men behind the by-lines, whose eyewitness accounts of history on the spot have brought the war home to you. On all the world's battle fronts the exploits of these soldiers without guns are matching those of our fighter troops in bravery and endurance

BIG GUNS roared and little guns chattered in the African night. Under a canopy of darkness a British destroyer had sneaked into the harbor and was bombarding Tobruk, softening up the defenses preparatory to a Commando raid. Now the sky was lurid with the red of tracer bullets, the silver of star shells and the multi-colors of bursting high explosives. Larry Allen, intrepid war correspondent—"Larry the Unsinkable"—stood on the deck of the destroyer, watching the show, making notes. Armed only with pencils and paper, he was all set and eager to accompany the raiders ashore.

Then, without warning, a tremendous explosion overwhelmed all other noises of the night. The destroyer, with blazing guns, seemed to have been lifted above the phosphorescent sea; then, mortally wounded, it plunged back, to flounder, turn over and sink. Allen, with a pencil in his teeth, found himself in the Mediterranean, swimming toward the shore.

An hour later, unafraid, impudent, cocksure, Allen stood before his Italian captors, who eyed him with unconcealed admiration. His predicament neither upset him nor impaired his reportorial sensibilities.

With characteristic coolness Allen looked at his captors and said, "Listen, you grinning guys! While I'm here can I interview Rommel?"

The Italians were fit to be tied!

A little later Axis radios blared to the world the "audacity" of the Yankee!

Larry Allen has plenty of company as audacious as himself. Some two hundred and fifty American correspondents are risking their lives to report eyewitness accounts of battle-front news on six continents and seven seas. On land, the correspondents, unarmed, are at the fronts afoot, in jeeps and tanks; in the air they are in Flying Fortresses, bombers, dive bombers and torpedo planes; at sea, in submarines, on battleships, cruisers, carriers, destroyers, corvettes, mine sweepers, and merchantmen in convoy.

Ten have met heroic deaths; more than a score have been wounded; twenty-five have been captured in action and approximately fifty are interned in enemy countries. Many have been officially decorated by our armed forces, and their heroic deeds led Joseph V. Connolly, president of the International News Service, to create a Medal of Honor for correspondents in recognition

of their devotion to duty. In having the medal struck, Connolly said, "Today newspapermen are fighting side by side with our Army, Navy and Marines, in the front lines. The International News Medal is presented to those correspondents who go beyond the call of duty on the battlefields to get the news, first and right. We like to think of this medal as the newspapermen's Distinguished Service Cross."

When the final box score of this war is written, the casualty lists of the accredited correspondents probably will show as high a proportion of dead, wounded and captured as any of the forces that have seen action at the fronts, on land, at sea and in the air.

With more than two hundred and fifty names from which to pick and choose, exclusive of dead heroes like Jack Singer, Byron Darnton, Don Bell, Melville Jacoby, Ralph Barnes and Harry Percy, I begin my record with the exploits of Larry Allen because Allen is undoubtedly the "correspondents' correspondent."

To millions of readers Allen is the most glamorized reporter of World War II. Today, at the ripe old age of thirty-six, as he contemplates the barbed wire and wormy spaghetti of his prison camp, he can reflect on a sequence of journalistic feats unparalleled by any other correspondent in this war.

In his youth Allen barely escaped the fate of his father—grubbing in a coal mine. He sold papers to obtain a grade-school education, cherished a desire to write and in 1926 became a reporter on the Baltimore News. Seven years later he became a foreign correspondent. At the outbreak of this war the incredible Allen became the first newspaperman in history to break down the British Admiralty tradition against carrying reporters on warships going out to battle. He designed for himself a uniform with a single gold stripe on the left sleeve. His first important action was aboard the British aircraft carrier Illustrious, when fifty Nazi dive bombers, "droning like madmen," attacked her in the Mediterranean. "Big bombs were dropping like hailstones," he wrote, "and every gun on the Illustrious was firing everything it had at them. After four hours of this I said my prayers."

Though battered and set afire, the Illustrious lived to fight another day and Allen went back to Alexandria to write the story that won him the Pulitzer Prize for 1941. After the battle, Admiral Sir A. B. Cunningham explained to Allen that the one stripe on his sleeve was reserved for sub-lieutenants. "Add two more," said the Admiral. "You won them on the Illustrious." Three full gold stripes—the insignia of a commander in the British Royal Navy!

Later Allen was aboard the cruiser H.M.S. Galatea when she was torpedoed and nearly lost his life because he could not swim. "When I went over the side and came up for the first time, I thanked God for the little air I had blown into my life belt," he wrote. "Later, when my head was being banged between a raft and the side of a rescue destroyer, I thought I was a goner. I swallowed enough oil while floating around to heat a New York apartment."

Just before Allen sailed aboard the ill-fated destroyer to his capture, his thoughts were of a promised chicken dinner with friends in Miami—in 1945. "I'll do my best to come back and collect that dinner," he wrote, "although I sometimes wonder whether I shall. Anyway, here's hoping."

There's Leland Stowe, Arch Steele, H. R. Knickerbocker, Red Mueller, Allan Raymond and a lot of other chaps I'm thinking about—and then there's thirty-six-year-old Clark Lee, who once upon a time probably saved me from being bayoneted by a Jap sentry in North China. Lee was born into the newspaper business. His father, Clayton D. Lee, was the first president of the United Press; his mother, Etta Gould Lee, was an editor. "Tick," as he is known to his intimates, studied journalism at Rutgers University—the hard way. He washed dishes, fired furnaces, tutored and tended bar. Deciding that travel was broadening, he spent his sophomore year hopping bells on an old Munson liner, the Southern Cross, in the South American service. After graduation in 1929, Lee spent two weeks driving a truck and distributing free soap samples to New Jersey housewives, and then went to work for the Associated Press. After two years in Newark, another two in New York, he was sent to Mexico City as bureau chief, and then to Honolulu. In 1938 he went to the Far East.

In the first year of our war against Japan Lee saw action in more different theaters of war than any other man, not excluding Army and Navy officers. He was the only reporter to ride the "expendable" MTB boats in action off Bataan; he crawled through the jungles on the peninsula, ducking Jap snipers, to get stories at the front lines. On Bataan and Corregidor and in the Solomons he narrowly escaped death a score of times from Japanese bombs and shells. Lee spent nearly a year in the Pacific battle zones and came out of it with a bad right ear, a broken left hand, an assortment of minor injuries and a desire to go back for more.

After almost seven years' absence, Lee was anxious to return to the homeland to take stock of himself. He was in Manila in November, 1941, ready to sail on the President Coolidge for San Francisco, when he was ordered to "stay put." He was there when war broke out, covered the bombing of the capital, and when the Japs landed in force on the Lingayen Gulf for their major drive he rushed north to the front to find out what was going on. The swift advance of the Japanese trapped him behind their lines; he was cut off

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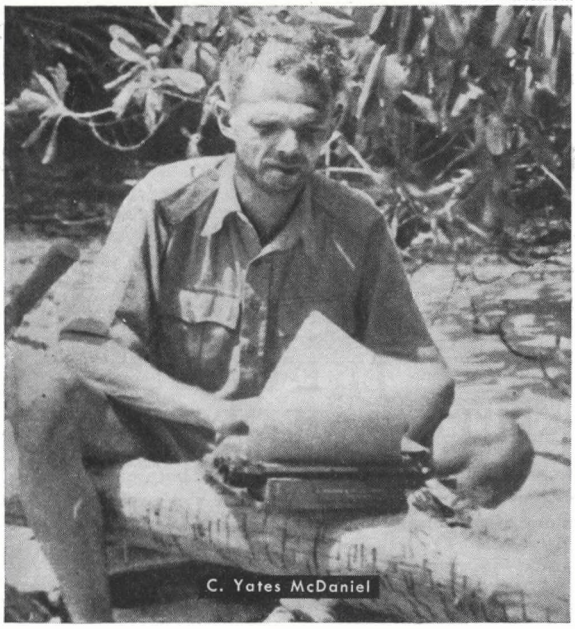

C. Yates McDaniel

International

Larry Meier

in the mountains with a small American unit which tried to fight its way out, but was forced to withdraw. For two days he walked over dangerous mountain trails. En route, he twice escaped death by narrow margins: once when he nearly stepped on a hidden land mine, again when Jap planes bombed and strafed a station where he boarded a train.

Manila was in flames behind him when he got away on New Year's Eve. Demolition explosions set by American engineers had fired gasoline tanks and storage warehouses. Lee survived the heavy bombing of Corregidor during January and then, as soon as communications were opened, sent out the first stories on the fighting on Bataan. At the end of February, with Melville Jacoby and the latter's wife (one of the few women correspondents who have seen the war close up), Lee left Corregidor by small boat, slipped through the Japanese blockade and reached Cebu. Boarding a Filipino freighter, they sailed eastward through the Japanese-mandated islands, and reached Australia in twenty-two days.

After a month in Australia and weeks in New Zealand, Fiji and New Caledonia, Lee hitch-hiked to Honolulu. Already packed to return home, he elected to cover the Battle of Midway, "to see us hand it out for a change." Again, ready for home, he boarded the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Saratoga and covered the Battle of the Solomon Islands. He and the late Jack Singer were the first and only reporters to go along on an actual attack in carrier-based torpedo planes.

"My greatest thrill," says Lee, "was on that trip. I spotted a Japanese anti-aircraft gun on Guadalcanal and told the pilot of my plane. Later, the box score showed that as a result of my find we disabled the gun and killed sixty-seven Japs with our bombs."

The parade of correspondents continues as I hold a mental roll call, Lee Van Atta, W. P. Saphire, Richard Tregaskis, John Henry and Edward W. Beattie, Jr., who probably owns the "longest" passport in the world. And there's black-haired Edward Kennedy, another globe-trotter, who has personally witnessed more hard fighting and

COMPLETE
SHORT NOVEL
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COMPLETE
BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL
Page 147

endured more harrowing escapes than most professional soldiers in a lifetime of campaigning. The bombs have followed Kennedy from blackened Spanish cathedral towns through Greek olive groves and past battered Cretan evacuation ports to the red-sanded desert of Egypt. It was Kennedy, when Nazi Panzer divisions were ripping the Balkans apart, who reported the flight of King George II of Greece to Crete while exhausted and outnumbered Greek and British troops fought desperate delaying actions at Thermopylae; and it was Kennedy who covered the British conquest of Syria and got machine-gunned for his trouble while observing the advance of British and Free French tanks from a desert hilltop.

Kennedy was one of seven American correspondents who accompanied United States B-24 bombers on a daylight raid on Axis shipping in Navarino Bay on the Greek coast. "I am in the very last of the many planes going over the target," he recorded in his notebook. "Below I can see the bombs splashing into the water all around the ships. In the middle of one ship is a great black blotch that may be smoke or a gaping hole . . . Then I see a red tongue that may be fire . . . I see black bursts of ack-ack shells. I am just thinking how glad I am the ack-ack is not near us when a jolt almost knocks me off my feet . . . then another succeeds in doing so . . . I see two bursts of shells explode just below us."

But Kennedy finished his story, ack-ack or no ack-ack!

Then there is Joe James Custer, thirty-three-year-old "veteran" of West Coast and Hawaiian newspapers, who has been in the thick of the fight ever since the Japs staged their sneak raid on Pearl Harbor. Custer was assigned to accompany a naval task force on a secret mission in the Pacific and quickly learned (and soon forgot) that there are two kinds of men on a warship—the quick and the dead. The mission proved to be the attacks on Marcus and Wake islands. From the "sky tower" of a carrier Custer witnessed those initial thrusts at the Japs, and continued with the fleet. While watching, from the deck of a warship, the Marine landing operations in the Solomons, Custer was struck behind the ear by a shell fragment.

"I had been edging forward," he wrote. "While I was watching a sailor spraying water on a deck gun there was a gigantic explosion and a piece of shell hit me behind my left ear. I spun around. There was a sharp pain. Blood streamed down my face. I could not see anything. 'Lean on me,' a sailor said. We stood there for ten or fifteen minutes. I felt giddy. Later I was moved to a dressing station in the forecastle, where I sat on an anchor chain while my face was washed and my head bandaged."

Eventually, Custer was moved with other wounded to a relief ship and later to a Honolulu hospital where he has undergone a series of operations. There is some doubt whether he will regain the sight of his left eye. But despite his injury, Custer wrote and dispatched his firsthand accounts of the battle

One of Custer's pals, Charles McMurtry, later was seriously injured in a continuation of the Battle of the Solomons, when a flaming Jap plane crashed through the deck of a carrier a few feet from where he stood. He was badly burned. The ship took everything the Jap bombers had and was finally put to death by United States warships. McMurtry wrote in his notebook:

> The Japanese smashed down upon our carrier force in an all-out, victory-at-any-cost bombing attack that morning . . . In six minutes of concentrated, vicious assault by torpedo planes and bombers, they left the ship dead in the water, with six fires raging and power, lights and radio gone . . . On the flight deck fire was raging where a flaming Japanese plane had smashed through the

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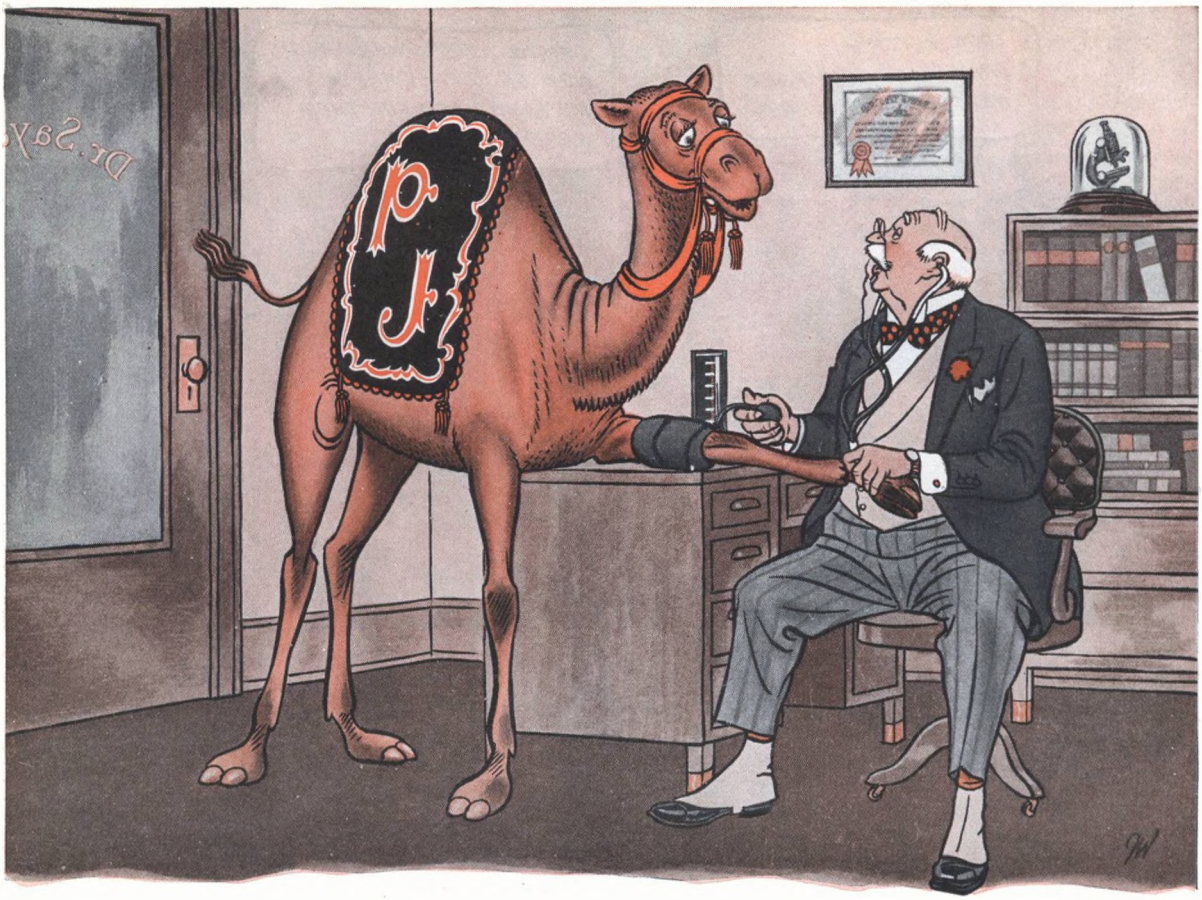


"Blood pressure 105... about normal for a camel"

DOCTOR: You look in pretty good shape to me, Camel. Lungs . . . heart . . . reflexes good. Been working hard, lately?

CAMEL: No, O Master of the Stethoscope. Just the usual thing, telling people about the magnificent flavor of Paul Jones Whiskey. Really, Doctor, I feel fine!

DOCTOR: You feel fine, do you! Then what are you doing here, my fuzzy-faced time-waster?

CAMEL: I came about that party you're giving tonight, Noble Taker of Pulses. Your secretary told me about it.

DOCTOR: Party? Yes, I'm giving a party. I asked her to find out about whiskies. But what's that got to do with your state of health?

CAMEL: You misunderstand, Sahib. I came not as a patient, but as a specialist, myself. I came to prescribe Paul Jones, the superlative whiskey so prized for its *dryness*. This dryness, which laymen call lack of sweetness, is what brings out the peerless flavor to the full.

DOCTOR: Say, Camel, that Paul Jones sounds like a great whiskey, one I'd be really proud to serve. Only . . . well, I charge small fees, you know. I couldn't afford such luxury.

CAMEL: But, Gracious Doctor, Paul Jones puts no strain on your wallet. It is yours for a truly modest price.

DOCTOR: That settles it! Get your blanket pressed and comb out your whiskers, Camel —*you're* going to be guest of honor at my party tonight!

The very best buy
is the whiskey that's dry

Paul Jones

A blend of straight whiskies—90 proof. Frankfort Distilleries, Inc., Louisville & Baltimore

deck. There was smoke from other bomb hits. Officers toiled and sweated side by side with enlisted men to form bucket brigades . . . A cruiser came alongside and took us in tow. Overhead was our battle flag—proudly waving its tatters in the breeze. About one-third of the flag had been burned away. Yet it flew there straight out from the mast with its field of forty-eight stars untouched by fire.

Terribly burned, McMurtry wrote and dispatched his story before being forced to bed. He is recovering in Honolulu.

Two hundred and fifty correspondents from which to pick and choose for these few words! I think of Drew Middleton, Stanley Johnston, Foster Hailey, Bill Courtney, Quentin Reynolds—and Larry Meier! Meier began his newspaper career in Stockton, California, a shoeless kid in patched pants shouting the merits of the local evening paper. Like Larry Allen, he struggled for a grade-school education. He worked his way through high and had a brief career at the University of California. This was followed by some very hard knocks as a lumberjack; as a pearl diver (dishwasher to you) and as a factory hand.

Yet from the time he first got his hands stained as a newsboy the lure of newspaper work had haunted him. Meier worked on country newspapers, crashed San Francisco, then New York, and eventually landed in England with eight dollars in his pockets. He was promptly kicked out of that country by the Labor Ministry. After transferring his starving activities to Paris and Berlin, he finally went to work for the INS in London. There followed three exciting years as a foreign correspondent and eight more as cable editor of the INS in New York, and on that historic December 7, 1941, he flew from New York to Scotland in fourteen hours—in a Liberator which caught fire before it landed.

Meier watched the A.E.F. grow in men and machines; he trained with the British Commandos; messed with youngsters of the Eagle Squadron, saw the wounded and dead taken from flak-blasted bombers as they landed by night on secret airfields; breakfasted with the men who staged the first thousand-bomber raids on Cologne and Essen; watched the American Rangers in training; flew in Flying Fortresses and with American paratroopers. And it was Meier's bull voice the invasion fleet heard last August as he yelled blistering blasphemies at the Germans who trapped the landing fleet off Dieppe. Meier's was the outraged bellow of a man facing the fire of four German ships, with no weapon with which to shoot back except a fountain pen. The raid was the high spot of Larry's career and he returned to the United States to receive the INS Medal of Honor. He is now in New York recuperating from his wounds.

Names and deeds of these incredibles flash to mind. Robert Nixon and his death-defying escape from the hell of Dunkirk . . . The gallant Frank Hewlett who with his pretty wife a captive of the Japs in Manila, did such a grand job on Bataan and Corregidor he won the National Headliners' award for the outstanding journalistic accomplishment in 1942 . . . Dean Schedler, the last white man out of Corregidor . . . Harold Denny, in the hands of the Gestapo after his capture in the desert . . . George Lait, riding tanks over the Libyan sands . . . Henry Gorrell, under the sea, on land and in the air in the Middle East . . . W. W. (Bill) Chaplin, the globe-trotter, being stoned by Indian mobs . . . Pierre J. Huss, now a private in the Army after a great correspondent's record . . . Harold Guard, Max Hill, Robert St. John, Eleanor and Reynolds Packard, John Goette, Fred Oeschner, Wallace Carroll, Louis Lochner and scores of others.

There comes, too, a picture of the slim, grave, prematurely gray C. Yates McDaniel, one of the truly great incredibles. Born in China of missionary parents, McDaniel was educated at the University of Richmond, Virginia, and after brief newspaper work in America returned to the Orient, where he has spent most of his life. Japanese bombers seem to follow him wherever he goes in search of the news. He was in Tientsin when the Jap bombers came at the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese conflict and rode an ambulance to Nanking. He witnessed the fall of Nanking and was bombed again and again at Canton and Hangkow. Then came Singapore. On the morning of February 11, 1942, McDaniel sat down to a battered portable typewriter in Singapore and wrote the last graphic, eyewitness dispatch ever filed to American newspapers from that outpost of the British Empire.

"The sky over Singapore is black with the smoke of a dozen huge fires this morning as I write my last message from this once beautiful, prosperous and peaceful city," he wrote. "The roar and crash of the cannonade and bursting bombs which are shaking my hands, which are wet with nervous perspiration, tell me without need of an official communiqué that the war which started nine weeks and four thousand miles away is in the outskirts of this shaken bastion of empire today."

OUTSIDE, wave after wave of Japanese bombers rolled over the city, dumping tons of explosive into installations and buildings and machine-gunning everything alive in the streets, including women and children. The Japs were opposed by only two obsolete biplanes which the British somehow got into the air. "It makes me rather ashamed of myself," McDaniel wrote, "sitting here with my heart beating faster than their old motors when I think of what chance those lads have of getting back in their antiquated machines. If ever brave men earned undying glory, those R.A.F. pilots have on this tragic morning."

McDaniel's final paragraph was salted with a grain of that grim humor so often crystallized in men by war. "I am leaving now in a car which I swear I will put into forward gear and head straight into the Strait of Malacca. I left one car for the Japanese in Nanking. But never again. Don't expect to hear from me for many days." Thereupon he began his grudging retreat. But the Jap bombs followed McDaniel. The tramp steamer he boarded in the harbor, after scuttling his automobile, was bombed and sunk a short distance out of Singapore. McDaniel and others took to a lifeboat, reached a small island, bought a native junk and sailed it to the coast of Sumatra, and eventually arrived in Australia, where McDaniel is now chief of bureau for the Associated Press.

The tale of McDaniel brings us to the thirty-four-year-old Vern Haugland, whom McDaniel assigned to the New Guinea battle front. Of all the unforgettable stories that have sung over cables and by wireless since the war began, none has thrilled us more than the diary of Haugland's forty-three-day trek through the jungles of New Guinea.

The Haugland epic began on the evening of August seventh. An American bomber was in distress high above the dense jungles of New Guinea. The order to bail out was given. Haugland, who had won a seat in the plane by a toss of a coin, was embarrassed. Parachute jumping had not been included in the curriculum of the University of Washington, nor of Montana State University. Lieutenant James A. Michael, copilot, laughingly explained to the reporter what he should do—and quickly—and Haugland jumped. (All of the crew, save Michael, eventually reached Port Moresby. Michael, whose home town is Temple, Oklahoma, is missing.) Haugland had never before seen a jungle.

Landing, he began seven weeks of living hell during which he groped blindly for hidden trails and subsisted solely on berries and the juices of grass and weeds. The tropic rains fell with relentless persistence and Haugland often went for days without his clothes drying out. While it is not mentioned in the diary, it came out later that Haugland gave his socks to Lieutenant Michael, whose flying boots had been torn off when he parachuted, "to put over his own socks as a little extra protection."

The sodden, often illegible, though always incredible diary that traces Haugland's forty-three-day struggle for survival is the nearest thing to an Odyssey this war has produced. It has since become celebrated as the "Diary from the Land of the Dead." Extracts from it best tell the story:

AUG. 7—Bailed out about 6:30 at about 13,000. Nite in chute in rain. Uninjured.

AUG. 11—Copilot Michael and I may get separated. I have a life preserver; he hasn't. If you find me and not him send help quickly as he is starving. With food he can make it.

AUG. 12—Thru God's grace Mike and I are still together . . .

AUG. 13—Still no food, no sign of people. Over Mt. Down river. At 3 P.M. drenched by heavy rain, spent nite in small cave with rocks falling.

AUG. 16—Mike went up over the hill. I started down the river, saw I couldn't make it and came back to dry my clothes. Will try and follow him tomorrow. Made bed between rock and log. Hope no rain. Maybe Mike can go faster alone. I hope so. He's a wonderful boy and deserves to live.

AUG. 17—Fairly good night. Can see now must take to river. Dear God help me make it . . . Very weak.

Evening—got into river—saw couldn't make it. Awful climb up mountain. There I saw it (the river) straight down. Absolutely no hope. Climbing further—terrible mountains ahead. River also impassable—winds endlessly. View on top convinces me only a miracle of God can help now. All I can do is lie and wait, wish for a miracle or death. Made it back to camp—about ready to go to sleep.

AUG. 20—Worst rainy night since Mike and I spent two terrible ones. I was just lying in the mud, soaked and stinking, all night. Somehow, stronger today. Foot healing, too. If I could get real food think could hike around mountain. Seems too bad to die when maybe could struggle to a village. If only the mountains didn't stretch on, sharper and sharper. If only knew shortest way to go to sea.

AUG. 21—Last night rainiest of all. Raining today, too. Life vest washed away.

AUG. 28—This may be wrong date. Either last night was very long and full of bad dreams or I have been semi-delirious two or three days . . . If I can summon strength may hike through woods . . . Found some delicious berries today.

AUG. 29—. . . climbed all day. Nearly at top and looks impossible get clear over. Exhausted.

Evening, Aug. 29—On top . . . drenched and cold . . . May not survive . . . Whatever happens God has been good to me.

AUG. 31—Last nite wettest of all. Very cold under only slight cover of palm . . . today found . . . fruit looking and tasting like sour plums. Helped a lot but too sour to eat many at once.

SEPT. 1—Crossed another creek last night, found good palm cover from heavy rain . . . Mid P. M. Reached top (of mountain), for first time see great valley—far away—and not impossible to reach. Dear God, help me to keep my strength—this may be into settled area. Reached bottom before rain started.

SEPT. 3—Reached river bottom below extreme peaks, bathed, washed out bandages, dried feet. One toe very badly swollen. Example of how Lord shepherded me—led me to rock crevice right by river where avoided heavy storm, then brot out sun, made good bed but lost in dark, sat . . . rain. Steady hike up creek today. Late start.

SEPT. 6—Reached river's end valley . . . Now surrounded by rivers which can't ford. Guess have to go back . . . Only chance now native come, I guess. Almost nothing edible several days—very weak. Later—answer to prayers, dozens and dozens of bramble berries. Sleep under great log . . .

SEPT. 7—Berry breakfast—forded river—berries galore. Mosquitoes unbearable . . . Unable ford another river, slept most day long . . .

SEPT. 8—Today tried ford river, couldn't . . . Many good berries still . . . Crossed big river on log jam . . . crossed another on log . . . wandered . . . lost . . . found three native huts, one with floor . . .Sick in nite, first time . . .

SEPT. 9—Spent rainy A.M. in hut drying shoes. Where from here? Impossible stick close to river because impassable tall reeds. Will stay (close) as can otherwise get lost cause can't see where going. P.M. Thank God I keeping near reeds, got on to faint animal track. Crossed stream on log at berry place, trail grew plainer, definitely track thru forest. Made more distance so far than for weeks —sun still high. All creeks logged over, no vines, all cleared.

This was Haugland's last entry. Eleven days later missionaries found him delirious in a native village. Native bearers were engaged and, accompanied by the missionaries, made a five-day trek through the jungle, taking Haugland to the coast. His companion was never found.

There's a final curtain in the epic.

Only recently General Douglas MacArthur strode into the New Guinea hospital tent where Haugland is recovering.

"Hello, young man," grinned the hero of Bataan. "How are you feeling?"

"Fine, sir," answered Haugland.

The General then took a small blue box from his pocket and opened it. On the reporter's pajama jacket he pinned the coveted United States Army's Silver Star. It was an unprecedented action, since Army regulations do not provide for the award of the Silver Star to civilians. Said the General:

"I am awarding you the Silver Star as an outward symbol of the devotion and fortitude with which you have done your duty. I cannot tell you how much we have been inspired by your getting back after such trials and hardships!"

The Old Incredibles—the Fighting Front Reporters!

Wherever You Are *(Continued from page 42)*

that her long hair wept. Black underwear! Joshua, wherever you are, don't hate me.

The surge of grief and laughter grew less, and after a minute she went through the stage door and to her dressing room. Her performance that night was free, lucid. She did not cringe to think of Sergeant Teddy Tucker; she did not think of him at all.

When the last curtain came down, she borrowed a new mystery novel from the company's juvenile and walked to her midtown apartment according to the routine of months. Now she would eat a large bowl of breakfast food with cream and sugar, read for an hour and go to bed. She considered Sergeant Tucker objectively as she walked. Poor fellow, it was not his fault. She hoped he had found another girl; a girl to appreciate his generosity. And as for herself, Bryn Melaney, the secret wife of Joshua Hagen, she had been touched for a moment with the hot finger of insanity.

She reviewed the evening's sequence: the loud voice while she was working in the canteen pantry; the compulsion which had driven her to a man named Tucker. She remembered every step of the phenomena in its exact order yet without reality, as though someone had told her a curious story.

In the normal way she said good evening to the doorman; listened to the latest communiqué from the elevator man's draft board. As she had done a thousand times, she shook her key ring around to the proper key, pushed open the door and sent the lights flaring.

Here, in this quiet apartment all gray and white and emerald-green, Joshua had been. Day and evening in the months before their marriage, he had been in these rooms. They held him as a vial holds perfume. If he were no more in this mortal world, he was still here.

And the voice said loudly, "The man Teddy Tucker is Joshua. Don't let him get away." She put her hands over her ears, and still she heard it: "Don't let the man Teddy Tucker get away."

"Move, move quickly," she told herself. She burst into a panic of action, dropping the mystery book, opening windows, flying into her bedroom as though she had forgotten something and returning empty-handed to the living room. "You can't fool me again," she told the voice silently. "I know you're a liar." But her hands trembled. Frightened, she set herself to meticulous preparation for bed.

She did not wish to undress, but the theater had taught her self-discipline. She sat stony, creaming her face, burnishing her hair, and all the time she seemed to see herself as through a convex glass—a tiny thing running through toy streets, calling, "Has anybody here seen T. W. Tucker?"

With actual muscular effort she put herself to bed and reached under the pillow for Joshua's picture. It was a glossy proof taken by the same photographer who did her professional pictures. "Make me look like a success," Joshua had asked the photographer, and his face had that expression—humorous and sad and hopeful. The face of an honest writer whose words no printer had set in type.

Bryn kissed the picture. "Sweetheart," she said aloud, "the man has a broad face, light hair and only the most everyday things in his head. You don't want me to believe that he is like you, do you?" She touched the pictured face, her fingers tingling with the remembered texture of his skin, his hair. After a moment she turned off the light and surrendered to the unquiet dark.

The telephone bell at night is more than a summons; it is an alarm, a witch's cry. The first long peal had ended before Bryn found the night lamp; the second cut the air as she lifted the receiver hammocked on her bedside table.

It was Boots. "I wanted to be sure you were all right. You seemed so jittery."

"I'm fine, thanks. What goes?" Oh, stay on the phone, Boots, and drive away the goblins!

"I came back to the canteen after dinner. I'm still here. We're shorthanded." There was a pause. "Someone else is here too. Your sergeant. He's been looking for you."

"Boots! When did you see him?"

"Oh, a few minutes ago. He didn't give his name when he asked for you. But I saw he was a technical sergeant, and when I said, 'Are you Sergeant Tucker?' he allowed as he was. What did you do to him?"

"Is he still there? I've got to speak to him." Bryn had not expected to say this, but the words, when they came, seemed inevitable.

"Wait a minute," Boots said. "I don't know what this is about, but I think he's too much man for you to handle."

"If you love me, find him for me, Boots."

"Hold the phone," Boots said.

The second hand of the electric clock swept on. Bryn's pumping heart was too large for its cave. Then there was a voice, familiar yet odd, as are all voices the first time they are heard over the phone!

"This is T. W. Tucker speaking," he said. "Well?"

"Sergeant Tucker—that is, Ted, this is Bryn Melaney."

"Yes?" This was the tone of a man who didn't take any kicking around from women, so controlled in its anger as to sound almost bored.

"I'd like to see you. It's important."

"Should have thought of that earlier."

I must remember, Bryn thought, that no mysterious voice has been speaking in his ear, whipping him back and forth like a flag in the wind. He's just a man whose date ran out on him; left him alone and ashamed on Broadway.

"I'm sorry. That's one of the things I'd like to explain if you'll see me."

"You don't have to see me to explain. Whatever you've got to say I can hear over the phone." He had been asking for her at the canteen, but now that he had found her, he would salve his feelings with indifference.

"Will you come up to my apartment?" Bryn asked.

"What's to prove you'll give me the right address, or be there when I get there? Listen, lady, I've never done anything to you. But even if I was a heel, you could have stopped to say good-by." There was true masculine grief in this.

"My word of honor," she said, "I'll be here. Will you come?"

"Give me the address. If I feel like coming, I'll be there. And if you don't feel like being sweet to me, say so now and save us both some trouble."

Her answer was to spell out the address for him painstakingly.

On the wings of her obsession she rose and dressed. A long-sleeved blue house

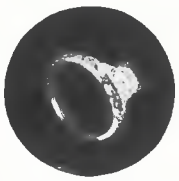
BARBARA IS ROMANTICALLY LOVELY with her wide-apart eyes, serenely parted hair and white, flower-like skin—but she's also *today's* American girl, energetically at work 6 days a week in a big war plant!

LUNCH-BOX INSPECTION at gate of the plant where Barbara works as a calibrator on sensitive instruments. She is wearing the blue coverall and safety snood designed for the employees. "We love the outfit," she says. The saucy blue snood is mighty becoming to her bright, soft-smooth face.

"*MY SKIN* needs special care these days. Snowy-soft Pond's is my *favorite* cleansing Cream," says Barbara.

SHE'S ENGAGED!

She's Lovely! She uses Ponds!



BARBARA'S RING—is charmingly feminine, a sparkling solitaire set with a small diamond either side, in a delicately engraved platinum band.

BARBARA SHEETS, captivating young daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Sheets, is engaged to Joseph V. Mellor—uniting two well-known Long Island families.

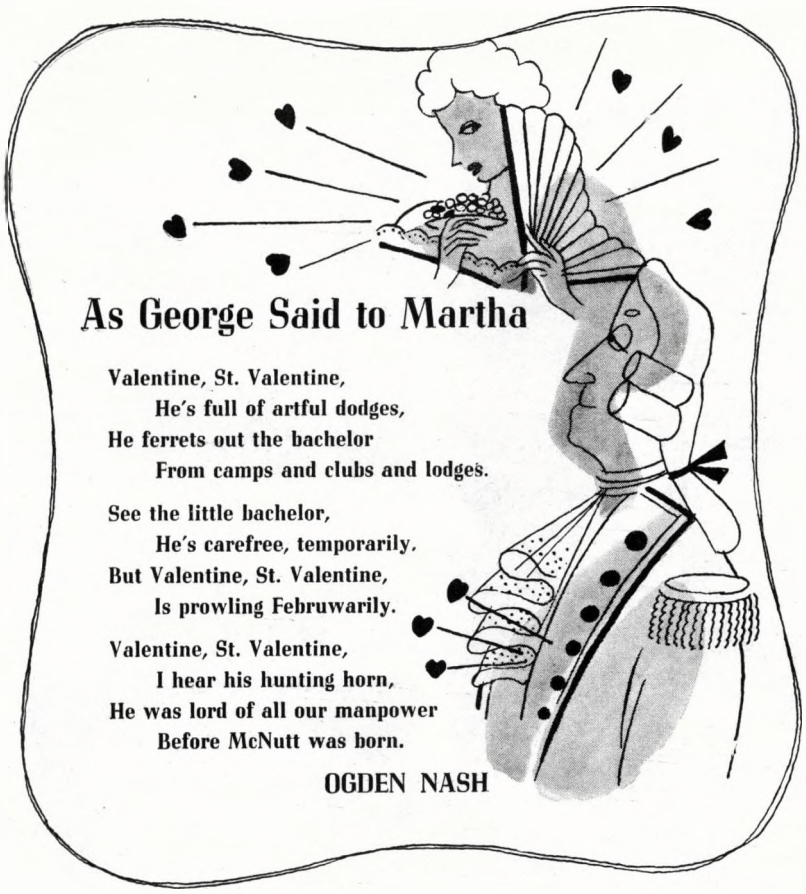
"Joe expects to be in the Army very soon," Barbara says, "so I'm more than ever glad I have a war-production job to do."

Even though she works hard for long hours—she finds time to keep pretty. As Barbara says, "When you get up at 6 a.m. and work all day with only ½ hour for lunch—your face deserves a little pampering. And—it's *lovely* how a Pond's Cold Creaming makes tired skin feel."

She slips Pond's over her face and throat and gently pats to soften and release dirt and make-up. Then tissues off well. "Rinses" with a second Pond's creaming. Tissues it off again. This *every* night without fail—and "for daytime slick-me-ups, too," she says.

Use this lovely *soft-smooth* cream yourself. You'll see why war-busy society leaders like Mrs. John Jacob Astor and Mrs. William F. Dick use it—why more women and girls use Pond's than any other face cream. All sizes are popular in price . . . at beauty counters everywhere. Ask for the larger sizes—you get even more for your money.

Yes—it's no accident so many lovely engaged girls use Pond's!



As George Said to Martha

Valentine, St. Valentine,
He's full of artful dodges,
He ferrets out the bachelor
From camps and clubs and lodges.

See the little bachelor,
He's carefree, temporarily.
But Valentine, St. Valentine,
Is prowling Februwarily.

Valentine, St. Valentine,
I hear his hunting horn,
He was lord of all our manpower
Before McNutt was born.

OGDEN NASH

gown with a thick cord at the waist; brown hair brushed out. He had made no promise, but Ted Tucker would come to her willing or not. They were being brought together by something which might as well be called fate.

She had scarcely finished dressing when the doorman called her on the house phone. "Miss Melaney, there's a soldier here."

"Yes, I know."

The doorman had guarded her for years. "I told him it was pretty late. He says you want to see him. Should I tell him to come back in the morning?"

"Send him up, please."

There was a pause. "Well, anyway, Miss Melaney, if you need anything the house phone's working and I'll be on till two."

"Nice little spot you've got here," the sergeant said when she opened the door. His visored soldier's hat lay on his arm as he walked through the foyer to the luxurious living room. "Anybody room with you?" She shook her head, and he said, "Live alone and like it, eh?"

He chose the green chair which had been Joshua's favorite. Surely the chair would shake off this interloper!

"Will you have a drink?"

"I'll have nothing," he said, "till I know why a certain party was so mean to me. Come over here." When she stood awkwardly near his chair, he said, "No. Come closer," patting the cushioned arm.

She sat. He put his arm about her waist.

"Such doggone pretty hair," he said; "so bright it keeps winking at me. I keep forgetting I'm supposed to be sore at you. Let's make up." He pulled her down to him, kissed her with hard clean lips.

Her reaction was spontaneous. She broke away.

"You asked me to come up, didn't you?" he said irritably. "Now you're standing there like I was a villain or something. Would you mind telling me what's eating you?"

Eating her! That was exactly it. It was impossible to pair these men, Joshua and Sergeant Tucker; they were the king and jack of different decks, yet she was consumed with the feeling that they were one.

"I can't explain," she said truly. In this one thing, anyway, the two men were alike. She could tell neither of them what possessed her. Perhaps Joshua would have understood—about some other woman. But Sergeant Tucker, the matter-of-fact, would depart immediately, explaining later to his friends, "She was pretty, all right, but she was a nut. Thought I was her husband. So I scrammed."

And whose lips were those I kissed? she thought. Not Joshua's. Dear Lord, do not let me become so pitiful and confused that I mistake this man's kisses for Joshua's. Yet she felt no sense of guilt, she who was uneasy at accepting the most trifling masculine compliment when Joshua was too far away to hear.

"You know what I think, honey?" the sergeant said. "I think you're bashful."

"Sensitive," the critics called her work; "elusive." These words are partners to bashful. "Maybe I am," she said.

"You don't like a fellow to make a grab for you the first time he meets you. Well, I go for a girl like you." He suited the action to the word, moving toward her.

She backed away. "I was rude to you, and I'm sorry. That's all I wanted to see you about."

"On the other hand, I don't like a girl who stands off too long, either."

How childish it was of him to explain to her just the sort of woman he liked as though she were a mail-order slip with a line for every specification. It made Bryn smile.

"Just how long should a girl be 'bashful'? When should she stop 'standing off'?"

"About now," he said and caught her in his arms. He was shorter than she and strong, so her knees bent; she came down to his height and her lips were a match for his.

The battle was within herself so she had nothing with which to battle him. If he is Joshua, I am safe and happy. If he is not, I must scream so he will go."

"Oh, you little darling," he was saying softly against her cheek, his hard arms holding her. "Oh, baby."

To him, obviously, it was simple now. The pickup was going to turn out okay. A honey of a girl and friendly as hell.

Bryn heard her bedroom phone ringing, ringing. Sergeant Tucker heard it too; his arms tightened, then relaxed. Without a word she went to answer. She was conscious that he followed her; that he removed his blouse and placed it on her chaise longue.

It was Boots again. "I feel like a fool bringing this up, Bryn, but is that soldier in your apartment? I hear he told a pal of his that a certain party was begging him to come over and make love to her. Did that mean you?"

"Yes," Bryn said.

"Are you nuts?"

"Yes," Bryn said.

"I'm coming right over."

"No.

"Then I'm going home and pray for you, because you've picked yourself a tiger if ever I saw one."

Bryn hung up. Now, she thought, the last bridge has been burned behind me. Now I'll find out what this man means to me. She turned slowly.

The sergeant, in his shirt sleeves, was standing with his back to her staring into her closet. Bryn moved near him to see what held his attention.

He lighted a cigarette, scowling. "Say, does a man live here?" he asked.

Joshua's clothes. That was what he had seen. Joshua's civilian clothes which she had not packed away, because seeing them each day made her a little less and a little more lonely.

"No man lives here," Bryn said, closing the closet door. "My husband is—away."

"Where?"

"In the Army. Infantry."

"A soldier. By God, I'd no more fool around with a soldier's wife! What the hell's the matter with you, anyway? You've got a guy, he sets you up in a palace like this, and just because he's not around to look after his interests, you——" He almost spat. "Women make me sick."

Bryn said, "It's not quite like that."

"Go on!" he roared, "Make up a lot of excuses. Tell me you're lonesome; that you know he'd want you to be nice to some other soldier just like you're hoping some girl's nice to him. Tell me you never loved him anyway; you and he was as good as separated when the draft got him. Go on. Then I'll tell you what I think of you."

Her tongue lay wooden. She lifted her hands, and the long blue sleeves fell away from her wrists.

"Let me out of here," Sergeant Tucker said, taking his blouse, walking from the bedroom. "And good-by to you, Mrs. Melaney!"

He reached the living room, but Bryn

Quiet INTERVAL

It isn't easy nowadays
Since war has set the pace,
To slip away a moment,
For a vital breathing space.
But now and then I close my desk
On figures and on facts,
And find a quiet interval—
An hour to relax.

Perhaps it's just a billiard game
Along toward evening's end,
A glass of Seagram's savory 7,
A meeting with a friend—
Yet when the going's heavy
On the job I have to do,
It's simple, peaceful times like that
Which help to see me through.

SAVORY and rich tasting—with a luxurious bouquet—yet without a hint of heaviness... A master-blend of Seagram's treasured reserves—grand, old whiskies—smoothed and toned with mellow, pedigreed neutral spirits. Seagram's savory Seven is the "patrician" of American whiskies.

MOST PLEASING
to the Palate
LEAST TAXING
to the Taste

Seagram's 7 Crown

Seagram's 7 Crown Blended Whiskey. 65% grain neutral spirits. 90 Proof. Seagram-Distillers Corporation, New York.

Buy U. S. War Bonds—$52.00 will buy 1 bombardier kit

How American it is... to want something better!

SURE this war-plant worker looks forward to "something better"—resuming study for her chosen career, that long-planned trip or to marriage.

That's why she's putting a healthy part of her earnings into war bonds and stamps—to speed the return of peace and all the other things which help make this "the land of something better."

Some of us can help most in the front lines, others on production lines —*all* of us can buy war bonds and stamps!

PURITY BODY FLAVOR

EVEN IN WARTIME, free America still enjoys many "better things" which are not available to less fortunate peoples. P. Ballantine & Sons, makers of "something better" in moderate beverages—Ballantine—America's largest selling ale.

P. Ballantine & Sons, Newark, N. J.

was ahead of him, facing him. "My name is not Mrs. Melaney. My name is Hagen," she said—"Mrs. Joshua Hagen."

"Joshua Hagen?" said Sergeant Tucker. "I know him. Tall fellow? Why, I had him under me awhile at Camp Darwin."

Camp Darwin! Speechless, she nodded. Then T. W. Tucker was the man about whom Joshua had written from Camp Darwin: "I like my sergeant here. He's my idea of Army—hard as a lead pipe and so American he's got red, white and blue stripes all over him." Joshua's red-white-and-blue sergeant!

"Wasn't Josh shipped?" Sergeant Tucker asked. "Where's he now? Do you know?"

"Missing," she whispered. "Three months ago."

She closed her eyes. This was what it had meant, then; the pieces fitted. This man had been driven into her house by a voice saying, "Joshua . . . Joshua." A uniformed man like thousands of others she had seen in the canteen, on the streets, it had needed a little miracle to bring her to recognize in him someone who had seen her husband since she had.

"Missing!" Sergeant Tucker said, grim-faced. "Well, don't let it get you. Missing guys turn up every day." Temporarily he had forgotten his anger; he sat down holding his hat in his lap, formally. Joshua's sergeant come to pay Joshua's wife a call. "He'll turn up. The world can't afford to lose a famous writer like him."

"Famous writer?" Joshua had said he was not known as a writer even to three men and a dog. There was one man now who knew.

"I'm not much of a reader," Sergeant Tucker said, "but if Josh Hagen wrote the phone book I'd buy it. That fellow can sling words like crazy." The fact that he used the present tense meant something: Joshua was somewhere at this very moment—slinging words.

"You read what he wrote?"

"Every word I got hold of. So did all the boys. He got up a little paper for the outfit, and the things he could think of to write . . . Say," he said, as she leaned forward begging for his words, "you really care about that guy, don't you?"

She clasped her hands, her face pale. "I care like crazy."

"Then how the hell did you let me come up and maul you?" The sergeant shook his head. "I felt bad enough when I thought it was just any soldier. But Josh Hagen!"

For Joshua's sake, then, she had to tell. So that Joshua should not be made ridiculous in his husbandhood. Sergeant Ted Tucker would listen politely, he would whistle, then he would tiptoe away from this screwball. That poor guy Hagen! he would think. Married to a loony.

Well, let him. At least he would not think Joshua had been cheated by an unfaithful wife.

She started at the beginning, with that moment in the pantry of the canteen when she had heard the tremendous voice summoning her, telling her that Joshua was in that place. She disclosed every doubt and torment the evening had brought her. She did not look up, but her voice went on and on, and to her own ears it sounded impossible, wild. When she had finished, the sergeant did whistle. Then he said, "Well, if you'd told me that in the first place it would have saved us both plenty grief."

"I—how could I?"

"Why, listen, girl, these are war times. Anybody knows stuff like that happens all the time during wars."

"You mean it really does?"

"Why, sure." He was as offhand as though she had asked him if it were really true that airplanes leave the ground and fly. "Every soldier knows it, and I guess everybody who loves a soldier. Things happen all the time; no explanation for them, but there they are. Why, my gosh, if you'd stepped up to me and said you had a hunch I knew your husband, I wouldn't have been surprised at all."

"I see," she said humbly. Ask this practical sergeant if he believed in mysticism, he'd stare. Ask him about psychic phenomena, he'd recommend that you have your head examined. No, all he believed in were everyday wartime miracles. Every soldier knows about those, and everyone who loves a soldier. "I see."

"Well, then," he said, pleased that only this little thing had been responsible for her indelicate behavior, "what did you want to know about your husband?"

The hours drained away in talk. No question was too silly for T. W. Tucker to answer; he let her linger over every word. He brought Joshua into the room, a new Joshua, confident, taking care of himself somewhere in this living world.

It was very late when Sergeant Tucker left. He shook hands with Bryn at the door, and the last thing he said was, "The next time I meet a girl like you, I hope she's not married. Or anyhow, that I don't find out about it. I'll sure as heck stay out of closets."

She closed the door, and in her haste to transport her wedding ring to her finger, she broke the slender chain from which it had hung so long. Half written in her mind was the note she would send to the New York Times before she slept: ". . . announce belatedly the marriage of Bryn Melaney to Corporal Joshua Hagen, the well-known writer."

Coming—Margaret Cousins' powerful story of a "First Love"

Casablanca Dead Ahead (*Continued from page 27*)

landings were carried out in the strictest secrecy and under conditions that closely simulated the surf-lashed shores of Morocco. Combat troops learned how to go from ship to shore.

Meanwhile, Navy ships maneuvered in small forces along the coast. Some went through strange battle drill; others uncorked full salvos at moving targets in the air and on the surface. A chief petty officer aboard one of the ships later told me, "Those were the strangest fleet maneuvers I'd ever seen, and of course none of us knew what they were all about. We knew something big was brewing, though."

Day by day, troop ships with their telltale landing barges hanging from davits over the side moved into a number of Eastern seaports. Unusual concentration of naval power assembled up and down the coast from Maine to Hatteras. You'd never have known, though, that all these ships were to sail almost simultaneously and form the largest military convoy in history.

With orders to report for assignment, I boarded a Navy airplane in New York one evening, and the next day found myself in a lazy little resort village "somewhere on the East Coast." It was a brisk fall afternoon when our station wagon rolled into the driveway of a sprawling, roomy hotel. The armed forces had taken over this one-time mecca for seashore vacationists. An Admiral's flag waved at the entrance. Here was headquarters for the American expedition to Africa.

Trailed by three press association correspondents, including myself, a Marine colonel walked past stiffly attentive sentries into the lobby. We climbed a flight of stairs. Another sentry directed us to the office of Rear Admiral Henry Kent Hewitt. Army and Navy staff officers hurried busily along the hallways. In the rooms, you could see others studying charts and operational plans. Pistol-belted sentries stood in the doorways. How Hitler would have loved this scene!

Admiral Hewitt, commander of the amphibious force, bade us enter his sanctum. The Admiral, a man of stately bearing and courtly manner, conversed with us in generalities. The nature of the African mission, so far as the press was concerned, still remained a heavily shrouded secret.

Captain Lee P. Johnson, the Admiral's rollicking, good-natured chief of staff, assigned each correspondent to a fighting ship, and in a matter of hours I was en route to my port of embarkation.

With a new set of orders signed by Admiral Hewitt in my wallet, I set out with an indelible impression of the momentous behind-scenes activity that precedes any large-scale military operation. The work that had been done in that faraway resort hotel was unsung heroism of dramatic proportions. A vital miscalculation by this group of officers would have been as costly as the concentrated fire of the entire French Fleet.

The "armchair" officers had carefully studied weather conditions, conditions of terrain, intelligence reports and other data, weaving them all into a gigantic, workable form. The Navy plans alone, stacked one atop the other, made a pile of paper more than four feet high.

One morning at eight o'clock, our fighting ships rolled in the rumbling anchor chains and we sailed out to sea, one following the other in a long line. The flagship of Admiral Giffen led the way. Elsewhere, at other Eastern ports, more Navy craft got under way, escorting large concentrations of transports and supply ships.

Each of these forces sailed alone for about two days, all steaming toward a little dot on their charts. The dot was marked "Rendezvous." There were about one hundred ships in the convoy when finally it was fully assembled.

Stretching for miles into the dim, hazy horizon, the great American armada made a picture that nearly defied the imagination. Far ahead of the troop transports was the Navy's screen of protective ships—first the swift, trim little destroyers, ever alert against Axis submarines; then more powerful battle craft, prepared to slug it out with any seagoing force the enemy might send to intercept us. Farther behind steamed the transports, their pulsating decks jammed with combat troops half-hidden behind their landing barges. There, too, were supply vessels, tankers and more Navy ships, including aircraft carriers and tenders. Other Navy vessels protected the rear and sides of the convoy from surface, undersea or air attack.

The convoy barely was out of sight of land before Axis U-boats struck their first futile blow.

Messages came crackling in code across the intership communications system.

"Am investigating submarine contact, bearing eighty degrees," reported a destroyer skipper, and through our glasses we could see the tiny "tin can" veer from its position in the protective force.

A rumble and thud rolled across the water. The tin can now was dropping depth charges. You could see it plainly. The sleek little destroyer was moving in at full speed, its bow standing out of the water and its stern leaving a foaming wake. Here was a hound chasing a hare. The charges rolled off the fantail or were catapulted into the air from Y guns on the sides. You could see them plummet into the water, churning up white geysers where they hit. Then there was the thud and rumble as they exploded deep beneath the choppy waves.

The tin can turned, crossed back over the spot where the U-boat was believed to be. More depth charges went overboard, and more explosions churned the ocean. Another destroyer wheeled into the attack.

Hardly a day passed that the fiery little destroyers did not report submarine contacts and dump their dynamite toward the enemy undersea. Even the eerie blackness of night was punctuated frequently by the flashes of depth charges.

So thoroughly did the destroyers beat off the U-boats that not a single submarine penetrated the protective screen far enough to fire its torpedoes. The vigil against subs also was kept by naval aircraft. In good weather, the carrier-based scouting planes swarmed into the air and maintained an anti-sub patrol for miles around the convoy.

It was estimated that at least fifty enemy submarines lurked in the path of the convoy. It is doubtful whether some of them ever returned to their bases.

Soldiers and sailors liked nothing better than to watch the destroyers in action. They seemed to be so fascinated by the twisting maneuvers of the fast little sea hounds that they had no time to think about the chances of being torpedoed. One doughboy, who had never been to sea before, told me:

"I thought I'd be scared when a sub got near us. But those durned little destroyers made me forget there was any danger for me."

Morale of the men was high all the way. Like all soldiers at sea, they played games of chance, read everything available from novels to comic strips, wrote letters home to be mailed "sometime, somewhere," and wished they'd get to wherever they were going.

The course of the convoy was changed from time to time, making it appear first as if we were going toward England, then toward the Cape of Good Hope. The maneuvers extended the period at sea, but they probably tricked Axis leaders.

What started out as fair weather turned foul after several days of cruising. Heavy swells crashed across the tough noses of the Navy ships. The little destroyers bounced about like dead leaves in the eddies of a creek. The bulky transport vessels pitched and rolled. Rain squalls dropped over the force like a heavy gray curtain, limiting vision. Some of the storms were so serious that officers began to grow apprehensive.

At best, the beaches along the Moroccan coast are fringed with a roaring, heavy surf. The storms, beating down on us from north and south, surely would whip the big swells into crashing canyons of water, making the navigation of landing barges practically impossible.

Two days off Morocco, however, the ocean lost its turbulence. The surface rippled like a calm mountain lake. God seemed to be with us.

But now came the afternoon of November seventh—the end of the trail to Africa—and what lay ahead was a mystery.

That Saturday night the chaplains aboard the troopships and larger naval craft held prayer services and the Catholic clergymen said Mass. American fighting men crossed their Rubicon praying for a peaceful reception but prepared for battle if the French refused to yield. The French soldiers and sailors were the last people on earth that these lads would have preferred to fight. The French, they remembered, had been side by side with their fathers in World War I. Moreover, the French had befriended America in its first crisis.

Admiral Hewitt ordered the large convoy to deploy along the Moroccan coast Saturday afternoon. Before the large orange sun dipped behind the cloudy blue horizon, troopships and naval escorts were moving shoreward over a 200-mile area from Rabat in the north as far down as Safi in the south.

Admiral Hewitt's flagship led a group of transports in toward Cape Fehdala, some fourteen miles north of Casablanca. The vital port city of Casablanca, meanwhile, was the objective of Admiral Giffen's contingent of fighting ships, because the units of the French Fleet lay at anchor in the harbor. A force approaching Rabat and the surrounding areas, including Port Lyautey, was under command of Rear Admiral Monroe Kelly, and the southern group at Rabat was commanded by Rear Admiral Lyal A. Davidson. The carrier group steamed offshore in charge of Rear Admiral Ernest D. McWhorter.

ADMIRAL GIFFEN'S force, to which I was attached, operated alone, unencumbered by troop transports. As we moved in toward shore, in the darkness of Saturday night, the suspense spawned that gnawing nervous tension.

Did the French know we were out there? How successful had the negotiations of General Mark Clark been? The answers were not available yet.

Down in the wardroom, a group huddled over the radio. They heard President Roosevelt's message broadcast to the French people. They heard the instructions of General Dwight Eisenhower put on the air. If the French were friendly, they would show a vertical beam from a searchlight as a sign of welcome.

I went back to the flag bridge. An orderly came to Admiral Giffen, saluted, and said, "Casablanca is dead ahead, sir."

It was a message from the navigator that we were on course. You could even see the flashing shaft of light swinging from the lighthouse at Casablanca.

Moments later, the lighthouse was blacked out. Not a pin point of illumination was visible now on shore. There was no sign of the signal of friendship.

At least, we knew that the French were aware of our presence now. What would they do about it? We were under strict orders not to fire unless they did.

Elsewhere along the long coast line, American combat troops were swinging into action. Landing barges were made ready; soldiers unsheathed their guns.

A flicker of light showed from the shore. It came from soldiers who had reached the beach several hours earlier, making the trip across in American submarines. They had located the exact landing spots, and these dots of light were signals.

Soldiers scrambled down the net-draped sides of the transports and into the landing barges that had been lowered alongside. The barges were jam-packed with men, and looked like water-going porcupines with the soldiers' rifles sticking up like quills.

Flashes were visible at Cape Fehdala. Gunfire! French shore batteries opening up. Our naval ships returned their fire. The landings continued.

A report trickled in from Admiral Davidson. The landings at Safi had been carried out bloodlessly, before the French had time to resist.

Sunday's pale dawn streaked the African sky, and now the low, undulating coast line was plainly visible. Admiral Giffen's force continued steaming near Casablanca, ready to block the French naval force in the event it came out to attack our troopships. The suspense at Casablanca was intense, for we had been moving around there for nearly six hours waiting for something to happen.

At four A.M., the ship turned to for breakfast. Nearly everybody had spent a restless night.

"Boy, these Fighting French-fried potatoes are going to go good," wisecracked an officer. We also ate steak, whole-wheat bread and coffee. Then came the klaxon sound of the general alarm.

"All hands . . . Man your battle stations . . . Make all preparations for battle," were the words a bluejacket from somewhere down South drawled into the microphone. He repeated the call in a monotone that seemed almost morbid. "All hands . . . Man your battle stations . . . Make all preparations for battle."

I grabbed the day's emergency rations —a can of sardines, a candy bar and a package of chewing gum—stuffed them into my gas mask and joined the officers and bluejackets scurrying to their battle posts. You adjusted your steel helmet as you climbed the ladder and lugged along a lifejacket—just in case.

Admiral Giffen already was on the flag bridge. "Looks as if they may fire a few at us," he said. "I'm sending our observation planes over Casablanca to see what they're doing."

The planes were catapulted with a sharp, explosive bang, soaring in single file into the gray, splotchy sky.

They were still in sight and buzzing shoreward when suddenly, up ahead, a swarm of French fighter planes appeared and roared down at our slow reconnaissance craft. A screaming dogfight ensued. One of our fliers was forced to land in the water. He was wounded.

Up in our radio shack, they were taking in a message from one of the pilots. He started with his code name and ours.

"This is Blondie. Calling Cobra . . . Look, I'm bringing these bums across the ships. Pick 'em off as we come over, but don't forget I'm leading them."

"Rajah," replied our radioman.

So the birdman wheeled out of the fight and headed toward the surface ships with the French in hot pursuit.

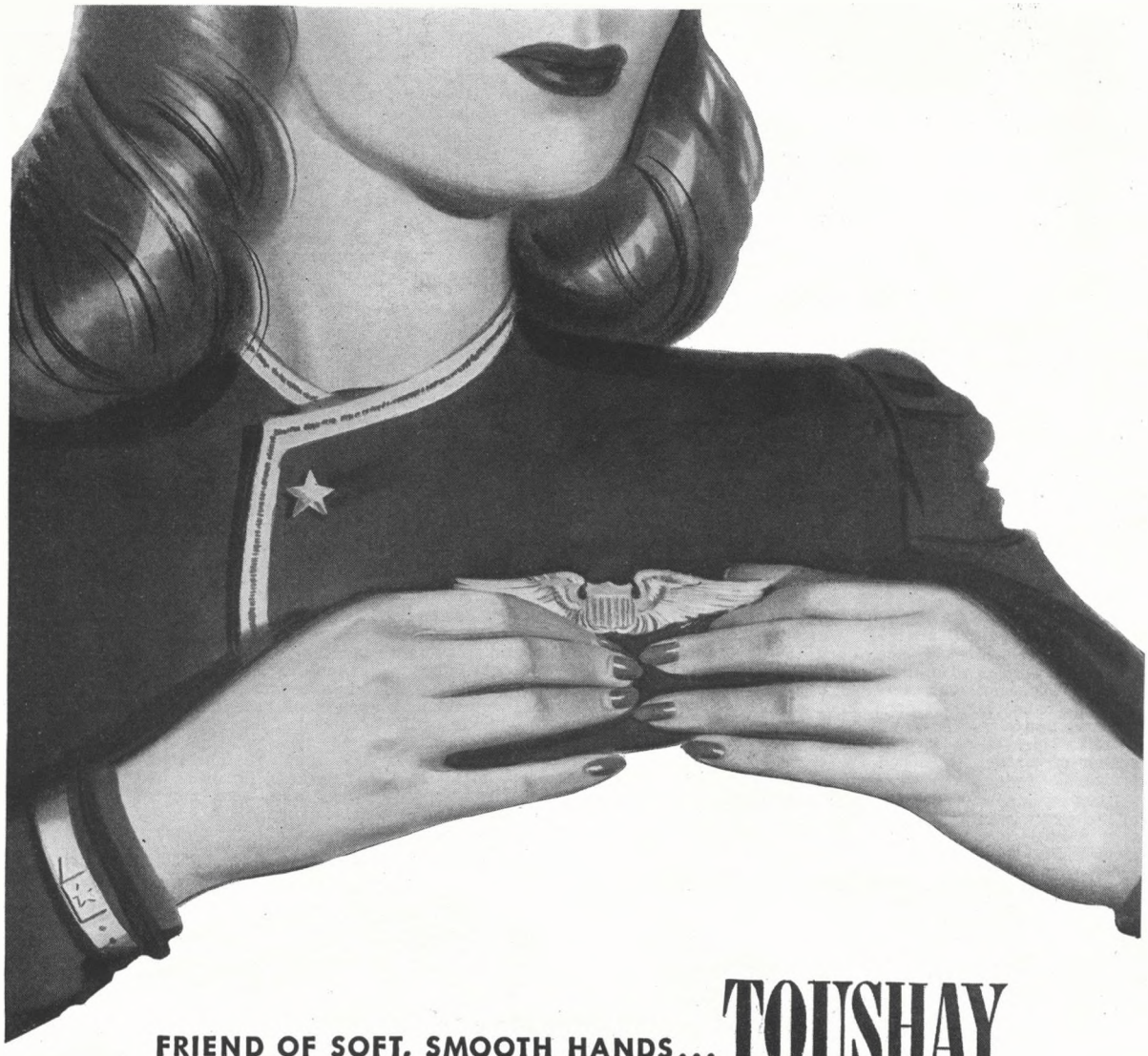
Instructions had been relayed to COMDESRON (Commander of the Destroyer Squadron).

Once within range, the French airmen were greeted by an angry crescendo of ack-ack fire from the destroyers. The larger ships joined in the rattle and boom, and the sky swiftly filled with the black plumy bursts of antiaircraft shells. The Frenchmen fled.

Our observation planes turned back toward Casablanca.

Time seemed to stand still now. All hands stood at their guns awaiting the next development in the incipient battle.

The stillness, so strange in contrast with the sputtering of AA guns only a few minutes before, was punctuated sharply by the whining scream of a shell. Over near the shore line we could see



FRIEND OF SOFT, SMOOTH HANDS... TOUSHAY

New "beforehand" lotion guards hands even in hot, soapy water!

Something you've needed always! A *beforehand* lotion to guard your hands from the harsh, roughening effect of hot, soapy water. So different from the old way of applying lotions *after* the damage is done! . . . So, before daily soap-and-water tasks, smooth rich, creamy Toushay on your hands. See how satiny soft they are when you are done!

Velvet skin all over! Combat winter dryness of the skin with wonderful new Toushay. You'll be delighted at the change made by Toushay used as an all-over body rub . . . Fragrant, soothing Toushay is grand for chapped hands. Use it to soften rough elbows and knees, too!

This generous bottle lasts a surprising length of time! Toushay is so rich that a few drops go a long, long way. Watch your skin respond to this delightful new treat. . . You can't afford to miss such a thrifty luxury! Buy Toushay today. Popularly priced at your druggist's.

Trade-marked Product of Bristol-Myers

the bright flash of gunfire. Heavy missiles splashed uncomfortably close to our ship. The reconnaissance planes radioed that the battleship Jean Bart had taken us under fire. It was 7:03 A.M., Sunday, November eighth, when the first shot was unleashed in the battle of Casablanca.

What followed was a blaze of compact action. You stuffed cotton in your ears, anticipating the thunder of the American guns. French shore batteries uncorked a hail of smaller shells at the task force, which by now was twisting and turning and changing course in a desperate effort to throw the French gunnery off range. Another siren-like salvo from the 35,000-ton battleship, the most modern fighting machinery in the French Navy, whistled through the air. The shells landed on both sides of the flagship. It was a "straddle."

Admiral Giffen, meanwhile, was roaring out orders, and directing the task group the way a musical maestro leads a band. "Play ball!" the Admiral shouted.

A yeoman standing near him, equipped like a telephone girl with earphones and mouthpiece, relayed the message to the fire-control tower and the gunnery officer. "Play ball!" he repeated. It was the secret signal to return the French fire.

Our turrets turned toward the Jean Bart like gigantic iron hands with their round, steel fingers jutting out as though ready to clutch a foe in the death grip.

Those few inches of steel deck beneath us vibrated with the force of the ensuing explosion. Our forward turret belched shells from all guns. Red, sulphurous flame spouted from the heavy barrels. Thick wisps of smoke and the stench of powder enveloped the flying bridge.

I lost my notebook in the roaring blast of the next shot. Funny how minor matters upset a person at the most impossible moments! The Admiral's quick-footed chief signalman, "Sandy," saw my plight and thrust a wad of scratch paper in my hand. The words I scrawled from then on looked like a Wall Street chart in the middle of a financial crisis, but they were strangely coherent.

Shells were flying thick and fast.

One gashed through our large battle flag, flying from the tower. American steel was hurled back, punch for punch, at the Frenchmen. It was eight o'clock, and nobody had noticed how time had flown. Fire control, by this time, had a report from our observation planes that the Jean Bart had been hit in the stern and had ceased firing from her main batteries. Smaller shore guns continued hammering at us, and were subjected to bombardment.

"If they keep this up," Admiral Giffen said, "there'll be nothing left of Casablanca." Our task group pulled away from the action, obviously to give the French a chance to surrender.

One of the "talkers," as they call the lads with earphones, blurted out a report from the radio shack. Units of the French fleet—submarines, a cruiser, two light cruisers or destroyer leaders, and three destroyers—were steaming out of Casablanca. Leaving the Jean Bart behind, smoking at the docks in the harbor, the French ships apparently were headed northward to attack our troopships at Fehdala. Nearly all the soldiers were ashore, however, and sporadic fighting had begun on land.

American fighting ships moved in to intercept the French craft. The blast and roar of rapid-firing batteries tugged at your clothing. Shells from the French ships whistled and whined overhead, some splashing close by.

Repeatedly, their salvos bracketed our beam. Blossoms of yellow, purple and green splashed out of the water where they landed. The French shells were dyed, a different color being used by each of their ships in order to spot the accuracy of their shots.

Admiral Giffen was striding about the flying bridge in a near sprint, almost bowling over his aides and myself. He bellowed encouragement to all within hearing. You could hear his husky voice above the din and roar of battle. "Keep firing!" he said. Then he yelled, "Let them have it! Pour it on 'em!"

The devilish scream of another shell pierced the air, so loudly that you were sure it would hit.

A tin-hatted bluejacket, sternly standing by one of the pom-pom guns, spoke his first words during the fight.

"Close one, eh?" he inquired.

"Yep," I said, and that was a conversation. Those clipped phrases lifted the strain. Another howling shell came near, and we felt a slight tremor through the ship. It was a hit.

But the explosion sent shrapnel clattering across the steel decks like dice rolled on a tin roof, and did little damage. The French had the range.

Then a new note sounded in the shattering symphony of battle. A shell thudded into the armor plating forward, penetrating into the Marine compartment below. You wondered if anybody had been hurt, but the activity on topsides held your attention and you forgot about being hit until a report came in from the damage-control party. The shell had burst in the Marine compartment, caused a fire which was quickly extinguished, and since nobody was in there, none were hurt. In the course of the battle, our ship got two more direct hits, but damage and casualties were slight.

OUR GUNS had been pitching steadily all the while, and at 9:48 A.M., the fire-control tower made its first report of success. Two light cruisers had been hit. All I could see over there was smoke and, at intervals, a flash of fire. Only the men with powerful glasses could observe all the destruction caused by our fire. One of the French ships was down by the stern. Another had sunk.

Loss of life on the sunken vessel must have been tremendous. Observers said it went down in less than a minute. There was no time to rescue survivors.

Word of our success passed from man to man, but no one cheered. This was grim business. Frenchmen—men whom Americans didn't want to kill—were dying.

But there wasn't much time to think it over. Suddenly there came the scream of a lookout: "Torpedoes approaching off the port bow!"

They were 5,000 yards away. You could see their foaming, slithering wakes.

The mighty ship came about in a swift turn to port. The vessels following us executed the same maneuver, all heading into the direction from which the surface missiles had been fired. It was a dramatic, all-out effort to parallel the approaching torpedoes. It seemed they would hit before we could extricate ourselves from that fast, dizzy turn. You forgot all about the shells plopping into the ocean so close by.

"Stand by for torpedoes!" cried the yeoman at the ship's loud-speaker. An order like that means the torpedoes are about to score a bull's-eye.

Men all around me fell to the deck, and so did I; we were clawing at bulkheads and stanchions for a death grip, bracing ourselves for the blast.

We waited—silently. No man said a word.

Nothing happened! Two minutes passed and the suspense died out. We all got to our feet to find that the torpedoes had gone by—one some ten feet to starboard and the other three to port. A horrible nightmare was finished.

At this juncture, the French naval force was on the verge of demolition. At least two of their ships were sunk, and the others had been badly battered.

Nevertheless, they refused to surrender. The French Admiral at Casablanca spurned all armistice suggestions; moreover, he dispatched another light cruiser of the Primauguet class and two more destroyers out to sea in a do-or-die effort to reinforce the French naval units.

The "fresh meat" in the fight also was taken under fire by our ships, and the running sea fight continued unabated.

The rumbling thunder of our own gunfire was broken by the crash of a French shell on the forward deck.

"Damn near got me," chirped a young signalman crouching next to me.

"You hurt?" I asked.

No, he wasn't wounded, but he was fingering a gaping slash in his trousers where a piece of shrapnel had torn through them without touching his skin.

You didn't have time then to consider the proximity of death, because the whine and whistle and thunder and turmoil of battle continued. Our ships were pouring it on.

Another French vessel was reported sunk, and over there along the horizon you could see the remnants of their crippled fleet staggering, reeling and creeping away. One French man-of-war was flaming from stem to stern. The battle was finished. They had ceased firing and were moving back toward Casablanca.

In all, ten French warships were sunk or damaged in the course of the fighting.

The American vessels then took up the chase, following the Frenchmen toward the port. Some of them failed to get in, and their officers and crews turned the battered ships into the beach and left them stranded there. Our guns unleashed a deadly barrage against the shore installations, which continued to pepper us whenever we were within range.

The last devastating salvo was fired into the shore guns at four P.M., and the rest of that quiet Sabbath evening our ships maintained a patrol along the opening to Casablanca harbor.

Monday found the American warships hammering again at the shore batteries.

An old battleship, pride of the fleet in World War I, waddled in toward the beach to fire a series of salvos, then struggled away proudly, as though she had proved herself to be as tough and rugged as she was in 1917.

Navy bombers roared across the Casablanca harbor late in the afternoon, unleashing a devastating coup de grâce, and with the dawn of Tuesday, Casablanca capitulated.

American losses, during the landing of troops and in the naval duel, were a minimum. We lost five ships altogether, all of which were troop transports. Torpedoes from enemy submarines sank them—but not before they had unloaded nearly all of their men and matériel.

The remarkable success principally was due to the long-range preparation and planning. Except for the seven-hour sea fight at Casablanca, the French received us as friends, as is evident in the fact that French troops now have joined the Allies in their smashing drive against the Axis armies on the southern Mediterranean coast.

Rosalind Russell IN RKO-RADIO'S "FLIGHT FOR FREEDOM"

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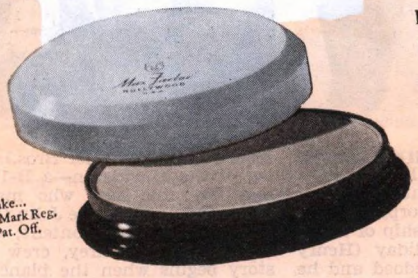

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ORIGINATED BY Max Factor • Hollywood

NEW Pictures YOU'LL WANT TO SEE

Cosmopolitan lists a few of the many fine pictures now in production in Hollywood. Release dates are approximate, but they will probably be shown at your neighborhood movie during the next few weeks. Titles are subject to last-minute change.

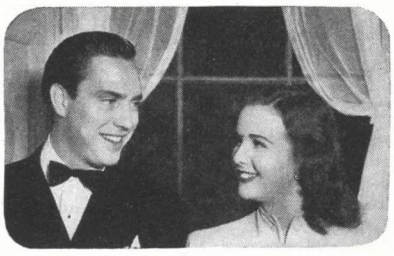
20TH—20TH CENTURY-FOX M-G-M—METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER COL.—COLUMBIA
U. A.—UNITED ARTISTS PAR.—PARAMOUNT UNIV.—UNIVERSAL CRP—A CHARLES ROGERS PRODUCTION

TITLE AND COMPANY		TYPE	STARS	WHAT IT'S ABOUT
Reunion in France	**M-G-M**	**Drama**	*Joan Crawford* *Philip Dorn* *John Wayne*	Joan is superb as a Frenchwoman who spurns escape to stand by her sweetheart and fight the Nazis. A powerful story.
The Powers Girl	**CRP**	**Comedy Drama**	*Carole Landis* *George Murphy* *Anne Shirley*	Based on a recent Cosmopolitan book digest, the intriguing process of turning a salesgirl into a model is deftly revealed.
The Immortal Sergeant	**20th**	**Drama**	*Henry Fonda* *Maureen O'Hara* *Thomas Mitchell*	Lost with his desert patrol, a shy British soldier becomes a fearless fighter and, when rescued, fights as boldly for his girl.
It Ain't Hay	**Univ.**	**Comedy**	*Bud Abbott* *Lou Costello* *Grace McDonald*	The boys tangle with a race horse, his owner and dangerous track touts in a comedy packed with hilarious "horseplay."
Tennessee Johnson	**M-G-M**	**Drama**	*Van Heflin* *Ruth Hussey* *Lionel Barrymore*	Splendid biography of the backwoodsman who succeeds Lincoln as 17th (Reconstruction Era) President, and is impeached.
No Place for a Lady	**Col.**	**Mystery**	*William Gargan* *Margaret Lindsay* *Phyllis Brooks*	Imagine reporting a real murder to police who find merely a "murdered" wax model! Swift-moving action with ingenious twists.
Young and Willing	**U.A.**	**Comedy**	*William Holden* *Susan Hayward* *Robert Benchley*	Hi-jinks in Greenwich Village as six young hopefuls trick their producer-neighbor Benchley into producing a play for them.
Lucky Jordan	**Par.**	**Drama**	*Alan Ladd* *Helen Walker* *Sheldon Leonard*	When his pals prove to be traitors to America, an ex-racketeer who is AWOL finds out about love of country and wins *the* girl.
Reveille with Beverly	**Col.**	**Comedy**	*Ann Miller* *William Wright* *Dick Purcell*	Gay story of a girl who becomes the sweetheart of an Army camp and one soldier in particular via her reveille broadcasts.

★ ★ ★ Three Good Bets ★ ★ ★

KEEPER OF THE FLAME (M-G-M). Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn are happily reunited in a story of contemporary American life.

As Steven O'Malley, a correspondent who has been thrown out of Germany, Tracy's first assignment at home is the strange death of a famous American. Steve meets and falls in love with Katharine, the widow. When his search for the truth leads him to suspect her of murder, he faces the age-old dilemma of love versus duty.



THE AMAZ NG MRS. HOLLIDAY (Universal) stars Deanna Durbin in a timely story with musical interludes.

Deanna an nine war orphans sail from China oard the flagship of a line owned by Commodore Holliday (Henry Davenport). They are torpedoed and he is lost but Deanna, the children and Davenport's steward, Barry Fitzgerald, are picked up. At San Francisco Barry uses a ruse to make Deanna heiress to the fortune. There's a nice romance with Edmond O'Brien and a surprise ending.

AIR FORCE (Warner Bros.) This is the log of the Mary Ann—a B-17 bomber—and the nine men who make up the crew. Among them are John Garfield, tail gunner and a malcontent; Gig Young, copilot; Harry Carey, crew chief. The story begins when the plane is ordered on a routine flight from San Francisco to Hawaii. The date is December 7, 1941! Caught in the Pacific holocaust, with barely enough time to refuel as airfields are bombed out, the feats of these men make a thrilling yarn.

"Her lovely, shining hair
It did my heart ensnare!"

No other shampoo leaves hair so lustrous ... and yet so easy to manage!*

HER GLEAMING LOCKS (shampooed with Special Drene) rival the glitter of her sequin gloves and dress! The smart simplicity of her lovely hair-do is accentuated by the tricky ornaments—satin bows with tassels of silken balls cut from ball fringe.

For glamorous hair, use Special Drene with Hair Conditioner added . . . the only shampoo that reveals up to 33% more lustre than soap, yet leaves hair so easy to arrange!

Nothing makes a girl so alluring to men as shining, lustrous hair! So, if *you* want this thrilling beauty advantage, don't let soaps or soap shampoos rob your hair of lustre!

Instead, use Special Drene! See the dramatic difference after your first shampoo . . . how gloriously it reveals all the lovely sparkling highlights, all the natural color brilliance of your hair!

And now that Special Drene contains a wonderful hair conditioner, it leaves hair far more glamorous . . . silkier, smoother and easier to arrange, right after shampooing! Easier to comb into smooth, shining neatness! If you haven't tried Drene lately, you'll be amazed!

You'll be thrilled, too, by Special Drene's super-cleansing action. For it even removes all embarrassing, flaky dandruff the first time you use it . . . and the film left by previous soapings!

So, before you wash your hair again, get a bottle of Special Drene with Hair Conditioner added! Or ask your beauty shop to use it. Let this amazing improved shampoo glorify your hair!

PROCTER & GAMBLE, after careful tests of all types of shampoos, found no other which leaves hair so lustrous and yet so easy to manage as Special Drene.

Guaranteed by Good Housekeeping

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

Soap film dulls lustre—robs hair of glamour!

Avoid this beauty handicap! Switch to Special Drene! It never leaves any dulling film, as soaps and soap shampoos always do.

That's why Special Drene Shampoo reveals up to 33% more lustre!

Special Drene with Hair Conditioner

submarine officer. About twenty-five, skinny and sickly-looking, he was the most nauseating man I ever met. This was the No. 1 Nazi and the most hated man aboard. He was as odious to his captain as to the men, whom he regarded as (and called) swine. When any member of the crew even spoke to him, the sailor had to salute and stand at subservient attention.

If that obnoxious officer had had his way, I would have been shot.

As a matter of fact, I don't know why I was released eventually—I guess the Germans figured that it wasn't worth the trouble to kill an ordinary seaman.

I was given sleeping space on the steel floor plates in the forward torpedo room. That night I had only a small piece of chocolate to eat. Next morning I was offered the crew's regular, unchanging rations, all out of cans: potatoes with jackets on, black bread that tasted like sawdust, cabbage, and "coffee" that was unspeakable. The bread came out of two-gallon cans and was spread with some kind of pork or goose grease.

"Do you still have butter in the United States?" one of the crew asked.

"All we want."

One of the younger sailors wondered, "What is butter?"

Older ones laughed cynically. "Ask Der Fuehrer what is butter!"

Double drama came the second night and day—an almost successful attack by an Allied plane, and the revelation that the German U-boat fleet has bases, land or floating or both, in and around the West Indies where the subs can take on supplies and torpedoes.

I noted that the torpedo racks in the forward room were empty, and remarked, "Pretty soon you'll go home." The crew gave that bitter laugh which was almost the only mirth I heard and went on working. They knew the voyage was to get a new lease, and their feeling was shown when a sailor walked in and raised his hand with a *"Heil Hitler!"*

Another grabbed him by the throat, snarled, *"Nicht Heil!"* and hustled the offender out the door.

Later the crew began talking mysteriously among themselves about "hide-outs." I caught snatches of conversation about "going ashore." Then one man looked at me and said, *"Nicht, nicht,"* and they shut up.

Around midnight they took up the floor plates in the forward torpedo room and made ready to store new torpedoes. I was taken into the crew's quarters so I couldn't see what was going on up forward, but actually I was given a splendid listening post. We had surfaced, and there was a lot of activity on deck. Later I was taken through the living quarters, the engine room, motor room and aft torpedo room, then returned to my old quarters.

For some time I could hear the men working, and the sub was rolling as though in a heavy ground swell near shore. She was at a land base, taking on torpedoes! And at this moment an Allied plane nearly smashed her.

Pop! Then a rapid succession of *pop-pop-pops!* There was a rush of activity in the control room. The antiaircraft gun on deck was shooting blue blazes.

Crump! Crump! Above the ack-ack din I heard the burst of two bombs.

The lookout jumped down from the conning tower, shouted something in German and demonstrated with his hand how a plane had swooped down and dropped two bombs.

"Missed by about ten feet!" he cried.

"Out of here quick!" screamed the captain, and the crew leaped into action.

It was too shallow to submerge, so the sub zigzagged out to sea at full speed until, half an hour later, the bells all started ringing, the red lights went on and we crash-dived.

We went down deep and kept to a zigzag course, running away from the Allied patrol for two or three hours. Then we stopped. I could tell from the tremendous pressure that we were very deep—as deep as the hull could stand. All machinery except the air system was stopped. Lights were put out and the crew were made to lie down. For hours we lay in utter silence, to prevent detection from Allied sound apparatus.

Here was my chance! I went to the head (lavatory) which is operated by compressed air. I was having quite a time, blowing bubbles to the surface by means of an air valve, when there was a shout from the control room and a German dragged me out and threw me on the floor. "You blow air bubbles to surface—bomb come down!" he cried, more frightened than irate.

I played dumb. As if I didn't know! But I certainly felt that the life of one seaman would have been well spent had our planes shattered that U-boat.

The air was getting very stale when we finally surfaced at nightfall.

Before dawn of the third day I could hear sailors on deck getting rid of the metal cases in which new torpedoes had been brought aboard. I counted six new tin fish in the forward torpedo room.

All the while I was aboard, the crew's chief amusement was talking with me, although conversation with the American prisoner was *verboten*.

The chief petty officer had spent some years sailing out of San Francisco. He was crazy about the city.

"San Francisco, ah!" he'd say. "But Yokohama, no good; Japanese, no good. American whip Japan quick but I don't like to see America fight Germany."

The men were shocked and incredulous when I told them that America had tried hard to keep out of the war, and that Germany declared war on us first, immediately after Pearl Harbor.

They showed me some newspapers and picture magazines. "But I saw these pictures a long time ago," I said.

"What! You print pictures about German victories—and even of the Fuehrer?"

"Sure. We even allow 'Mein Kampf' to be sold."

Once when we surfaced the radio came on with Hitler's voice—and the crew immediately began talking loudly to drown him out.

But then they got an American station and everybody kept time with his hands when they heard a favorite tune. It was "Deep in the Heart of Texas"!

An insatiable interlocutor was the Baron. "Why did the United States declare war on Germany?" he demanded, exhibiting the same propaganda-clouded ignorance as the crew. "Why doesn't the United States just fight Japan? We don't want to fight the United States."

I laughed in his face. "Forty-nine American merchant ships and three destroyers were torpedoed before Pearl Harbor; yeah, looks like it, doesn't it?"

I had one clash with the nauseating No. 1 Nazi. He started the skirmish abruptly. "Gibbs is a German name."

"Phooey!" I retorted.

"You came down through the Yucatan Straits, no?"

"Before Pearl Harbor our ships used the straits," I said. "That was because we wanted to keep out of the war—not because we were afraid of you!"

The Nazi officer clicked his heels and walked away, sizzling mad. The captain giggled, the quartermaster winked at me, and everybody else in the control room suddenly became very busy. How they hated that Nazi!

About this time I figured the end was drawing near for Archie Gibbs. The first hint that I wasn't worth shooting came on the third day. I gave all my American cigarettes to the crew (I had carried some in a waterproof packet). "Cigarettes won't be any good to me where I'm going," I said grimly.

"Oh, you're all right—you're going ashore by and by," a sailor said.

"Where to—a concentration camp?"

The crew only laughed.

But hope rose when an officer gave me back my papers. Later I saw the captain and an officer trace a line on a chart and glance often at me.

Early on the last day a sailor rushed into the torpedo room and shouted, "You're lucky! You go ashore—you see America!" There was envy in his voice as he told me to get my things.

Next moment the antiaircraft gun opened up. "Oh-oh! Here we go again," I thought. But it was a signal. I was taken up the conning tower and saw a small Venezuelan motorboat astern.

I plunged into the water. Held afloat by a life belt and the immediate prospect of liberty, I broke swimming records again in reaching the little craft. Her Venezuelan crew, thoroughly frightened, dashed off as fast as possible as I waved an uncomplimentary good-by to "Jeanie." That afternoon we were in Curaçao, where I gave all the information I could to American naval authorities.

Today I am back in New York, waiting for another ship. I'd lost eleven shipmates. Now I want to help speed up the flow of supplies to America and her Allies. "Damn the torpedoes!" We've got to keep 'em sailing!

? ?

Family Quiz Answers
FATHER

(*Questions on page 16*)

1. **Mrs. William H. Taft.**
2. **The classification and identification of fingerprints.**
3. **African elephants have large ears, small eyes; Asiatic elephants have smaller ears and larger eyes.**
4. **The Gigli saw is a wire with saw teeth used by a surgeon for cutting bones.**
5. **Bat and bender.**
6. **The bo'sun's pipe.**
7. **A marine mammal of the dolphin family.**
8. **Dutch. It derives from the word "taptoe," meaning "to beat the tattoo," or, figuratively, "that's enough."**
9. **Peter the Great.**
10. **An argumentative sailor.**
11. **Sam Houston.**
12. **Edgar Allan Poe.**

Questions accepted from J. C. Martin, Sioux Falls, S. D.; Mrs. A. B. Copeland, Long Beach, Calif.; Milton A. Stoddard, Livermore, Calif.; A. L. Kamps, Froid, Mont.; Mrs. Paul Finegan, Gouverneur, N. Y.; J. W. Hulff, Burbank, Calif.; Mrs. B. G. Copeland, Long Beach, Calif.; Mrs. H. Legare, Sanatorium, Tex.; Raymond Johnson, Detroit, Mich.; T. E. Skelly, U. S. A. N. A. S., 6G, San Diego, Calif.; R. D. Bowden, Carbondale, Ill.; Mrs. Roy Burkhart, Glencoe, Okla.

? ?

Call it Lightning!

– SAY THE PILOTS

NOBODY had time to name this Lockheed fighter plane when it was born. They just called it by a number, P-38.

Then the pilots sent it climbing over eight miles straight toward the stratosphere, up where even the highest-flying bombers couldn't go. They brought it screaming down out of the clouds like forked vengeance. They jammed down the throttle and it flew faster than any fighter ever flew before. They pressed the trigger-button and saw how *concentrated* fire-power from its cannons and machine guns could rip apart anything on wings—and there was only one name for it: *Lightning.*

So that's its name, a name it earned from British and American pilots alike, a name to watch: Lockheed *Lightning.* Lockheed Aircraft Corporation ... Vega Aircraft Corporation ... Burbank, California.

for protection today, and progress tomorrow, look to

Lockheed

FOR LEADERSHIP

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Buy War Bonds Regularly

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What Are You Worrying About? (*Continued from page 51*)

wasn't worrying, she was just thinking. In her philosophy, facing a thing and worrying about it are entirely different. If Eddie's death was a fact, she had to prepare herself to face it. Long experience has taught her that no news is usually good news. She assures you other mothers that if anything is seriously wrong with your sons you'll hear about it. In the meantime, hope and faith are powers.

Mrs. Rickenbacker regards maternal worry not only as a waste of time and emotional energy but as definitely harmful. During World War I she had harsh words on this subject with a certain Mr. White, who was painting the roof of the family home on Livingston Avenue, in Columbus, Ohio. A newsboy passed, shouting, "Rickenbacker shoots down two more Huns!" Mrs. Rickenbacker rushed forth to buy a paper and Mr. White, from his lofty perch, was so indiscreet as to remark that the next one down might be Eddie.

The next one down, in a hurry, was Mr. White. "I wouldn't trust you on my roof, thinking such thoughts," said Mrs. Rickenbacker. "You'd fall off and break your neck."

In her opinion, wrong thoughts can be transmitted—never mind the hows and wherefores. Seventy-nine years have convinced her of it.

"When Eddie was dangerously occupied fighting and flying to England and everywhere, a clear and untroubled mind was vital to his safety and success," she told me. "He had enough to think about without having to worry about his mother worrying about him."

She'd like mothers to think that over. A man fighting today needs a clear and untroubled mind; he has enough to think about without worrying about his mother. She attaches enormous importance to cheerful letters to boys in service. In those 1918 war times when there were meatless, wheatless and heatless days, she never mentioned such things in her letters to her fighting son in France.

But the cheerful letter has to be on the level. "If I'd just pretended everything was going to be all right, Eddie would have seen through it in a hurry."

Mrs. Rickenbacker doesn't think any mother has the right to worry about a son who is doing his duty and what he wants to be doing.

"If Eddie or any of my boys had been criminals or cheats or slackers—well, it would have been hardest for me to have sons like that. I guess I might have worried about them then."

Common sense will assure any mother that her son's chances in this war are greater than they were in the last. "They didn't have parachutes when Eddie was flying," Mrs. Rickenbacker remembers.

The record book shows Eddie Rickenbacker starting his career as a daredevil automobile racer back in 1910, when he was twenty, but his mother says he "sort of started practicing when he was seventeen" on country-fair dirt tracks. For seven spectacular years he knocked hubcaps with as fearless a lot of maniacs as ever inhaled exhaust fumes—Barney Oldfield, Ralph de Palma, the Chevrolets, Dario Resta, Bob Burman and others.

At the height of his racing success the United States entered World War I and Eddie leaped from one frying pan to another. He abandoned the snorting speed buggies to become America's ace of aces, a skillful and devastating aerial duelist who beat twenty-five German adversaries to the lethal punch and fought innumerable air battles without injury to himself.

After he returned from the war, Eddie gave up race driving for such pursuits as pioneering air lines, cross-country flights to make America air-minded, and helping with every kind of aviation test.

Everyone who reads the headlines knows what chances the Captain has been taking since this war began. The adventures have perhaps been fewer but they've been dillies. Not so long after he returned to civilian clothes he emerged unscathed from a bad early air-line crash at Omaha. There was a nonstop transcontinental flight in the first modern airliner in which, after almost breaking their necks, Eddie and his crew wound up breaking the coast-to-coast record.

Eddie had turned fifty, which seemed an age beyond which a man should keep out of trouble, when in February, 1941, the plane on which he was a passenger crashed in the night outside Atlanta, Georgia. Eddie, with a broken hip and other painful injuries, kept the situation well in hand until rescue appeared at dawn. For several days it was touch and go—but he made it.

His latest adventure—it would be presumptuous to call it his last—is too well known to need repeating.

When she first heard the news that he was missing Mrs. Rickenbacker was terribly upset because, owing to his accident the year before, his physical condition was below normal. Blindness to facts isn't part of her philosophy at all. But she quickly got herself under control and she prayed as she had done so many, many times through the years. She knew that her prayers would be heard and answered. *Knew* it.

And she is convinced that Eddie's deliverance from this latest danger was truly a triumph of faith and the spirit, for by ordinary medical standards Captain Edward V. Rickenbacker's body was in no condition to spend twenty-three days at sea in a rubber life raft.

I asked her if she didn't think the transpacific episode might well be the last of Eddie's flirtations with disaster.

"No, I'm not sure it is. As long as there's any danger around loose, Eddie's likely to get tangled up with it. If he's strong enough," she added, "I wouldn't even be surprised if he went on to wherever he started for in the first place. Eddie's like that. He's a good boy."

"Which did you regard as the most dangerous period of Eddie's career," I asked, "automobile racing or aviation pioneering or war flying?"

"Oh, war flying," she said. "Nobody ever shot at Eddie while he was racing."

I thought of days in the last World War when I was flying with the R.A.F. and news of the exploits of America's great ace Rickenbacker began coming to us. They had been shooting at him then, all right. But he was shooting at them first—and quicker.

Eddie Rickenbacker's mother smiled at me suddenly. "It's a fine thing to have sons," she confided.

"Even in wartime?" I said.

"Even in wartime," said Mrs. Rickenbacker sturdily. "That is, if you spend your time praying for them instead of worrying about them. That's what Eddie expects of me. Probably it's what most sons expect of their mothers. And—well, Eddie's safe, isn't he?"

Tomorrow Belongs to Us (*Continued from page 24*)

that was! Lots of nice boys at high school had given Janie a rush until they came to call for her and got a look at the cluttered Barnaby flat, and Mom drunk, like as not, and then they never came again. Or else they changed; they said, "Look, Janie, life is short and why not . . ."

Dottie had gone through that, too, and Dottie was doing something about it. Janie thought Dottie was grand, though Ralph never cared for her. Dottie was gay and everybody had a good time around her because, as Dottie herself was fond of saying, "Yesterday's gone and today's no good; but tomorrow belongs to us, so let's do a good job on it!"

But they hadn't done such a good job on it, after all, Janie considered, reaching into her red patent leather pocket book and taking out the small mirror. Mrs. Presby would be here any minute, and Janie wanted to look her prettiest for Ralph, when she saw him. Though there wasn't anything very pretty about her face now. Dark smudges shadowed the thick-lashed gray eyes, and her face was very white. Then there was that ugly, purple bruise on her cheek where Mom had hit her with the cup she had picked up from the breakfast table and thrown at Janie, shrieking, "You little tramp, you, disgracin' a fine name, stayin' out all night like a common alley cat!"

And Janie's father had said, "Elizabeth, please. The neighbors . . ." But by that time the entire neighborhood had heard, and a policeman was already on his way upstairs to investigate. Ralph had simply stood there, one arm across Janie's shoulders, his face gray and shocked, for he had never seen a family such as this one, and it had been so much worse, of course, because this wasn't what he had expected to find.

Suddenly, Janie began to sob convulsively. It wasn't fair! She wasn't bad; she had never been bad! She had told those lies to hold the only decent thing that had ever come into her life. And now she would probably lose it. Ralph must hate her. If these people with their questions and their court and their Mrs. Presbys made her lose Ralph, she would really be bad! And she hated them. She hated the whole world that had tricked her into this awful minute.

The matron's voice spoke quietly. "Come, Janie. Mrs. Presby is waiting."

Janie washed her face and ran a dampened comb through her short, reddish-brown hair. It sprang to life in shining ringlets and the matron said, "My, what lovely hair you have, Janie!"

Ralph, too, had loved her hair. He used to touch it lightly and say, "Most girls I know would give a million dollars for naturally curly hair like yours."

"What girls do you know, Ralph?"

That had been when they'd known each other almost a month. They had been sitting on one of the benches in the park near the Casino. It had been March, and cold, and they had sat close together for warmth against the wind.

"Oh, not so many," Ralph had said.

"One in particular? Back home?"

Silence then. Silence while she watched his thin, sensitive face.

Then "There was one, Janie. When I was drafted, she came down to see me off along with the rest of the town. They waved flags and played bands and made us a lot of promises and told us we were heroes. But afterwards—well, I guess it was just too much trouble for them to bother to write or anything. Anyway, I haven't heard from her in months."

"What was her name?"

"Irene. Irene Langley. She's away at college now, and I understand there are a lot of men stationed near there, getting special officers' training, so maybe a buck private doesn't look so good to her any more. But I'll be an officer one of these days!"

Janie had gone on, finding out other things about Irene as she and Ralph sat there talking. She had drawn a picture of Irene. A nice girl. A rich girl. A college girl. Janie had thought of the Barnaby flat, and of Mom getting drunk and fighting with all her neighbors, and of Pop. Poor Pop, who was so proud of his name, and of the fact that a distant cousin of his was a state senator. But Pop had been trapped into marrying a girl who had been a servant in his mother's home. Janie had got that from the short, ugly quarrels that issued from Mom and Pop's room in the night. Frank Barnaby knew he had betrayed himself, but he stuck to the bargain he had made with life. He had been well-educated, but now he was a waiter in the Country Club. The sort of club where girls like Irene Langley played golf.

All those things Janie had thought of, as Ralph talked of Irene, and in defense, in desperation, she had lied about herself so that he wouldn't be ashamed of her.

When he had asked her, "Where do you live?" she had told him vaguely, "Oh, in one of those big apartment houses near Beechmont Lake."

And the fiction, once begun, had almost built itself, with Mom becoming a school teacher, and Pop dead, and two younger children instead of four, and a picture of genteel poverty. Ralph had said, "Your mother must be a swell person. I'd like to meet her some time."

That very night, Janie had gone home to find Mom lying in bed drunk, and Janie had put her head down on the kitchen table and sobbed while the younger children watched open-mouthed.

The matron's voice, impatient now, broke across Janie's reverie. "Come. We mustn't keep Mrs. Presby waiting."

Mrs. Presby was waiting for her in the small anteroom that tried hard to be a pleasant sitting room. She stood up when Janie came in, and tried to look bright and cheerful, but her face looked tired.

Mrs. Presby was young and very pretty, which had surprised Janie the first time she met her, and which surprised her again now. This morning, she wore a pretty gray suit with a gay red blouse and a small bunch of violets pinned to one shoulder. Janie stared at the flowers and Mrs. Presby smiled suddenly.

"My husband gave them to me," she said. "He was stationed at the same Fort where Ralph was. He's gone now, though. Left this morning for—for nobody knows where." Her hand touched the violets and all at once Janie knew why Mrs. Presby looked so tired. She had been crying. "He's a brand-new officer, Janie," she said softly, "and I'm sure he'll be a good one, and that somewhere men will be proud of him." She stopped. In a minute, she began again. "And that brings me to you, Janie. To you—and Ralph Disbrow. Sit down, Janie. I want to talk over a few things with you."

But for all Mrs. Presby's prettiness and niceness, Janie instinctively distrusted her, and later, she found that she had been right: Mrs. Presby wasn't for her.

"I've been investigating," Mrs. Presby began, "and when we go before Judge Menkin in a few minutes, Janie, I'm going to recommend that you be taken out of your home, and put with some people who are willing—eager, in fact—to do everything they can for you. They had a daughter who would be just your age, had she lived. She was killed in an automobile accident a year ago. You'll have a lovely, pleasant home, Janie. You'll finish school——"

But Janie felt something inside of her go all hard and cold. She broke into what Mrs. Presby was saying, "I won't do it! I'm not going to live with people I don't know, and probably wouldn't even like! I'd hate it. I'd run away!"

"Do you like it at home, Janie?" Mrs. Presby asked gently. "Is that why you lied to Ralph, because you were proud of your home, and the people in it?"

Janie's eyes dropped. She felt suddenly alone and lost. It wasn't that she liked the home she had, she thought. But it was *home*. She knew it, and belonged to it, and Mom was all right when she hadn't been drinking. Janie didn't know what Mom would do without her. And the younger children adored her.

Janie mentioned that, and Mrs. Presby said, "They're going to be taken away too, Janie. You see, they don't get proper food and they're really sick, though they don't know it yet. And they're not very clean, Janie. You see, you were different, and you found ways to keep yourself clean and neat, and to work after school for money for nice clothes. And because you're different, we want to see that you get a chance, Janie. A real chance. After all," Mrs. Presby smiled, "I'm not so much older than you, and I know how terrible it is not to know nice boys. And you don't very often meet nice boys on street corners, Janie——"

JANIE'S head came up defiantly. "Ralph is nice!" she said. "He never said or did a wrong thing. Not once!"

"You were fortunate in Ralph. You'd met others over at the Fort who weren't so nice, hadn't you, Janie?"

Guilty color flooded Janie's cheeks. She didn't speak, and Mrs. Presby went on.

"I feel sorry for Ralph. His parents were so proud of him. He had the highest I. Q. of any man in his company, and he was slated for Officer Candidate School. His parents came down to visit him yesterday, Janie. A surprise visit, for his birthday. They found him in the guardhouse."

Janie had been about to say, "Well, that's not my fault!" and then she realized that, to a degree, it had been.

"We didn't do anything wrong," she said. "I know it looked wrong, but it wasn't."

"I know that, Janie. Ralph said the same thing. He said it was a shame to put you in an ugly position like this. And he seems to have an idea that he ought to get you out of it by marrying you."

Janie's heart leaped with a hope she had never dared allow herself. "Did he say that? Did he really say that?"

"Yes, he did. But I hope you're going to be big enough not to let him do it."

The cold hardness came over Janie again. "Why not? Don't you think I'm good enough for him?"

"No, Janie, I don't." Janie drew her breath in sharply on the hurt of those words, and Mrs. Presby looked sorry, the way the chaplain had looked with Ralph yesterday. "Someday, you'll be good enough for any boy, Janie. But if Ralph marries you under circumstances like these it will ruin his career in the Army. It can't help but ruin it. The Army is very careful about its officers, about the kind of men who lead other men to fight, to give up their lives. As it is, Janie, it's going to take Ralph time to clear himself of this. But it can be done, with our help—yours and mine. And the Army needs boys like Ralph just now. He won't thank you, later on, for spoiling things."

But Janie was on her feet before Mrs. Presby finished, her eyes blazing. "You don't care about me, though, do you? I suppose his precious parents asked you to make me give him up. Well, I won't. He's the only decent, fine thing that ever came into my life, and if he asks me to marry him, I'll marry him. I love him!" Janie sobbed. "I love him, do you hear?"

"Yes," Mrs. Presby said gently. "Yes, I hear you, Janie. I'm sorry, but you're making me do what I didn't want to do in order to save two lives from being hopelessly spoiled."

When they were finally in the courtroom and Mrs. Presby began to talk, Janie saw what she meant to do. She was going to try to make Ralph see that Janie was not his responsibility.

Janie never remembered very much about that hour in the courtroom. Just Ralph's eyes—his dark, dearly remembered eyes—finding Janie's over the heads of the half-dozen people in the courtroom, telegraphing their message of love and encouragement to her. That was in the beginning. And then Mrs. Presby's low, quiet voice, speaking sometimes to Janie, and sometimes to Judge Menkin, suggesting questions. And no matter how hard Janie tried to twist the answers around, those answers were ruining her!

There was the clerk from the hotel.

"Did you rent a room to this soldier and this girl?"

"No, the soldier come in alone. I didn't know any girl was with him. I don't run that kind of a hotel."

There was Mom. Her eyes were red from weeping, but she'd had her hair fixed, and she wore black gloves. It was hard for Janie to remember how evil Mom had looked yesterday morning, shrieking, "Fine thing, waltzin' in here at seven in the mornin', after bein' out tomcatting all night with this soldier!" Mom looked shaken and sobered now.

"Mrs. Barnaby"—Judge Menkin was speaking sternly to her—"have you had trouble with Janie before? Has she ever stayed out late nights, things like that?"

"No, Your Honor. Janie's always been a good girl, until this soldier——"

"All right, Mrs. Barnaby."

Mom sat down again, folding her lips.

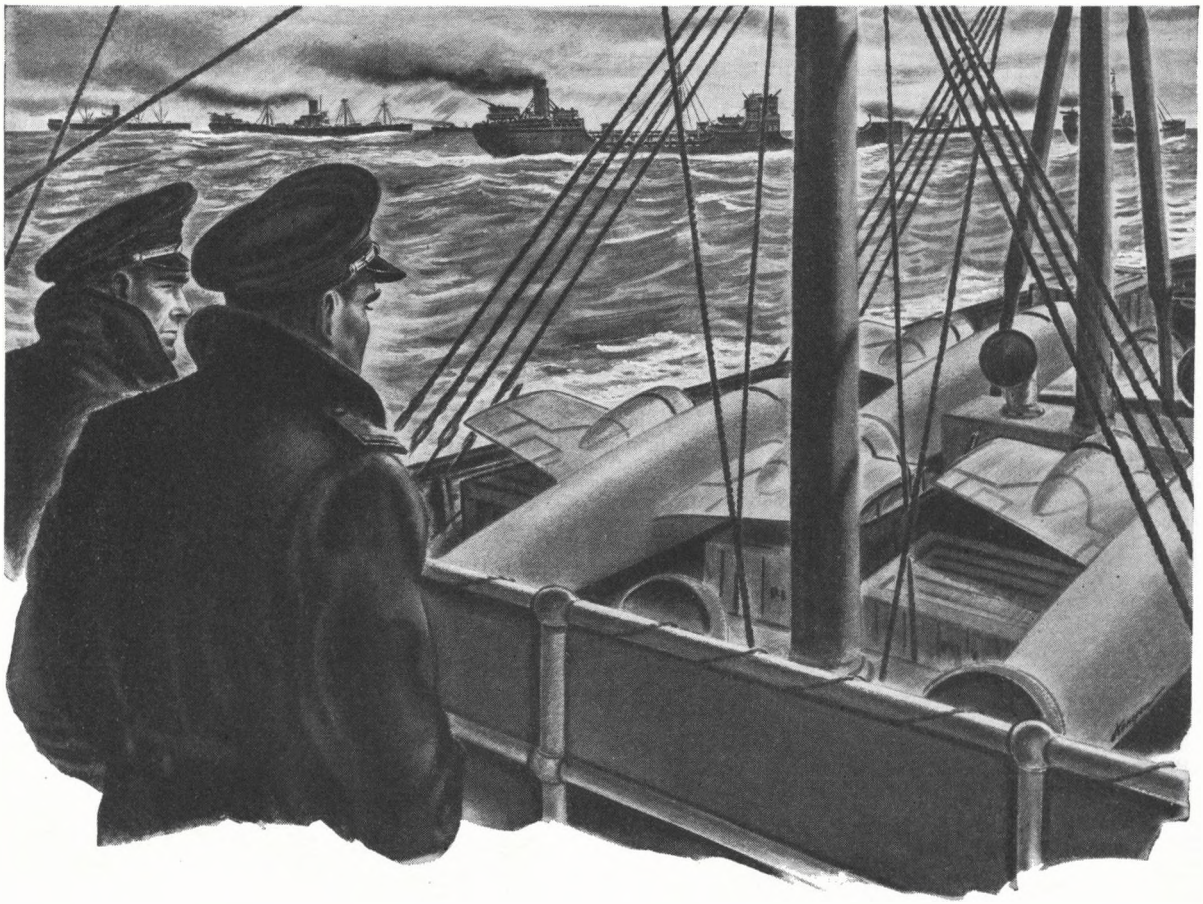
"Janie," Judge Menkin said, and his voice was nicer than it had been when he talked to the others, "how did you happen to go to a hotel with this boy, and stay away from home all night? You knew that was wrong, didn't you, Janie?"

Her heart pounded and pounded, and it was hard to talk. The chaplain, who had come over with Ralph from the Fort, turned his head and looked out the window. Ralph's mother—that must be Ralph's mother, the small, pretty plump woman in the bright blue hat—stared down at her hands. Ralph's father, who looked like a prosperous businessman with a lot of worries, was looking straight at Janie. And when she talked, it was to Ralph's father that she spoke, wanting him to know that she wasn't a bad girl.

"It was Sunday afternoon," she said. "We had a date, and it started to rain, and we didn't have anywhere to go."

"Why didn't you go to your home?"

Ralph had suggested that, at the time, but Janie had said quickly that the younger children would be there, and they wouldn't be able to be alone at all.



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She said now, "I was ashamed to let Ralph see how it was at home."

"Go on, Janie."

And now Janie's eyes went to Ralph's pale, strained face. You remember, Ralph, don't you? her eyes entreated him. It wasn't the way these people are trying to make it seem. It was raining and you said, "Well, gosh, honey, we'll be soaked if we walk around in this. Can't we see a movie, then?" But we'd seen all the movies, and it was only seven o'clock, and I didn't want to go home. I knew that you'd be leaving soon and I might never see you again. I wanted to be with you every minute that I could, because I loved you and you were all I had. And then you said, "We could rent a room in a hotel," and you stood there uncertainly on the corner, and I stared at you, and you said, "I just meant somewhere where we could sit and talk until it's time for me to go back."

"And so we sat and talked," Janie said, "and the rain made a nice kind of sound against the windows and the room was warm and I got sleepy. I'd been up late the night before."

"Where had you been?"

"Working at the ten-cent store. I work there afternoons, after school, and all day Saturday."

"All right. Go on."

"I told Ralph I felt sleepy after we'd had some sandwiches and coffee. He said he did, too, that getting up at five-thirty every morning made anybody sleepy. He said, 'Why don't we take a nap until this rain lets up?'"

The courtroom was very quiet. Mrs. Presby was sitting at a little table, making marks with a pencil on a paper and not looking at Janie at all. The Judge moved some papers on his desk and Janie knew he was looking at the medical report and her cheeks burned a deep, humiliated scarlet. It hadn't been like that! Her head had rested on Ralph's shoulder and his arm had been around her and he had said, "I'll kiss you to sleep, Janie. Would you like that?"

He had kissed her and kissed her, and then he had stopped. "Janie," he had said. "Janie, Janie!" The room had been still and warm, with just the nice sound of the rain. "Janie, do you love me?"

"You know I do," she had told him simply, "with all my heart." She had lain there curled against him. "I've never been in love before, Ralph. I'm glad I waited for you."

His hand had been cupped around her chin. He had looked down at her for a long minute while her heart stood still. "I know, Janie, and you're sweet. Terribly sweet." He'd spoken in an altered, uneven voice, and then he'd jumped up and walked around, smoking cigarettes.

"You go to sleep," he had told her, "and I'll wake you when the rain has stopped." And she had let her eyes close.

She had wakened, hours later, to bright sunlight, and Ralph sound asleep in the big chair near the window.

To the people in the room who were waiting to hear what Janie would say, she said clearly, and with her head high and unashamed, "I fell asleep on the bed and Ralph fell asleep in the big chair near the window. When we woke up, it was morning. That's all."

Mrs. Presby said, "The records agree with that, Judge Menkin." Janie knew what she meant, and again the color flared into her pale, thin cheeks.

"Janie," Mrs. Presby said, "Ralph Disbrow wasn't the first soldier you'd met over at the Fort, was he? I mean, you and Dottie Weber made a habit of going over to the Fort every Sunday afternoon and picking up soldiers, didn't you? And your mother never asked where you went on those occasions, or with whom, until you'd stayed out all night?"

Ralph looked startled. A tremor of fright ran, like an alarm, along Janie's taut nerves. Mrs. Presby was waiting.

"It was the only way Dottie and I knew of to meet boys. The boys we knew at school wouldn't have anything to do with us. They were ashamed of us."

"Janie . . ." The soft voice was at her again, sorry but determined. And piece by piece, Mrs. Presby picked out the parts of Janie's life until the whole lay finally assembled before Ralph's eyes that looked pitying again, the way they had that morning when he'd walked into the Barnaby flat for the first time. The pattern the pieces made was a cheap pattern. It was timed to the noisy beat of the music that drifted out of the high windows of the Casino, directly across from the Fort; its language was gay, flippant, like the remarks Dottie would make in reply to unknown voices that spoke out of the darkness of the Casino Park: "Here's a nice bench, girls. Why not take a load off your feet?" She would make fresh, airy comebacks, till a voice said, "Let's go in and dance." Then Dottie gave Janie the signal to accept.

You kissed the boys, because you felt you ought to after they'd shown you such a nice time, and you made a date which you might or might not keep, depending on who happened along meanwhile.

"Why did you pick up soldiers, particularly, Janie?"

"Because they came from all parts of the country, and it was romantic, meeting a boy from a ranch in Wyoming or a farm in Kansas. And they don't know anything about you, and you can pretend to be almost anything you'd like to be."

Then Judge Menkin asked Mrs. Presby what her recommendations were in this case, and she began to tell him about the family that wanted to help Janie. But now Mrs. Barnaby was on her feet.

"I'll not have my daughter farmed out like a common—like a common I-don't-know-what!" Mrs. Barnaby announced indignantly. "We bear a good name, and we come of good stock. Why, my husband's cousin is a state senator! It seems to me that this soldier's the one who's ruined my girl's good name, and it looks to me like he ought to marry her!"

There was a small, stifled sound from Ralph's mother, and then Ralph, too, was on his feet, walking steadily toward Janie. He stopped before Judge Menkin.

"I think so, too, Judge Menkin," Ralph said. "If Janie will have me." He turned to her, and she was in his arms again.

"Ralph," she sobbed. "Oh, Ralph! I was so afraid they'd send me away, or that you'd hate me."

"Hush," he said, and his hand touched her hair, just the way she had remembered it. There was no passion in his arms holding her now. Just compassion and tenderness. She didn't care. She was with him. They couldn't take her away from him. She didn't notice his parents quietly leaving the room. Mrs. Barnaby was crying noisily and Mr. Barnaby was standing beside her, looking at Janie and Ralph, and twisting his old gray hat in his hands and not saying anything.

Judge Menkin looked his question to Mrs. Presby.

"If Janie's parents are willing," she said, "there's nothing we can do except hope that it's all for the best . . . Janie, you'll have to come with me for a few minutes. There are some details about the parole."

"Parole?" That was an ugly word.

"Yes. You'll be paroled in my custody."

There was a funny look on Ralph's face, but he said, "I'll be waiting for you." Judge Menkin told Ralph and the chaplain that they could join Ralph's parents in his chambers, which weren't in use. But the chaplain sent Ralph in alone. Janie heard him say, "I imagine they have a lot they want to say to you."

Mrs. Presby led Janie into a small office to the left of the courtroom, and closed the door. In silence, she sat at the desk, drew a card toward her, and began to fill out names and addresses.

"I suppose you hate me," Janie said.

Mrs. Presby looked up in surprise. "Hate you? Of course not, Janie. I feel terribly sorry for you, that's all. Not for this one mistake you've made, because you could have had a lifetime ahead of you in which to rectify that, in which to be the kind of girl you always knew Ralph would want you to be. You've tried to achieve it the quick way, Janie. The easy way. Lies, deceit, and when he found out, by taking advantage of a situation to make him marry you."

"I didn't ask him to marry me!" Janie flared. "He doesn't have to marry me."

"He thinks he does. He's a fine, idealistic boy. And the world will think he had to marry you, Janie. We try to keep these things a secret, but they get about. If he gets a commission after all, jealous wives of other officers may find out, and everyone on the post will know, and Ralph will feel humiliated and angry, and so will you. If he doesn't get a commission, the war will be over one of these days, and you'll go back with him to live in the small town where his father runs a nice business, and people there will guess. Have you ever known a couple who had to get married, Janie?"

She thought instantly of Mom and Pop, of those ugly quarrels overheard.

"No," she said. She and Ralph wouldn't be like that!

Mrs. Presby leaned back. "I hope you'll be happy, Janie. I hope it with all my heart. I'd hate to see one small mistake paid for with two lifetimes of misery. Well," she said, "let's get on with this."

She asked questions, told Janie the details of parole, and then she said, "You'll find Ralph in the Judge's chambers." And it seemed to Janie that Mrs. Presby looked at her oddly as she left the room.

But Janie's thoughts were all of Ralph. Of seeing him again, of being with him forever, of being his wife. And her breath caught in a little sob on that thought. When she reached the Judge's chambers, she opened the door very softly, because underneath she was still frightened.

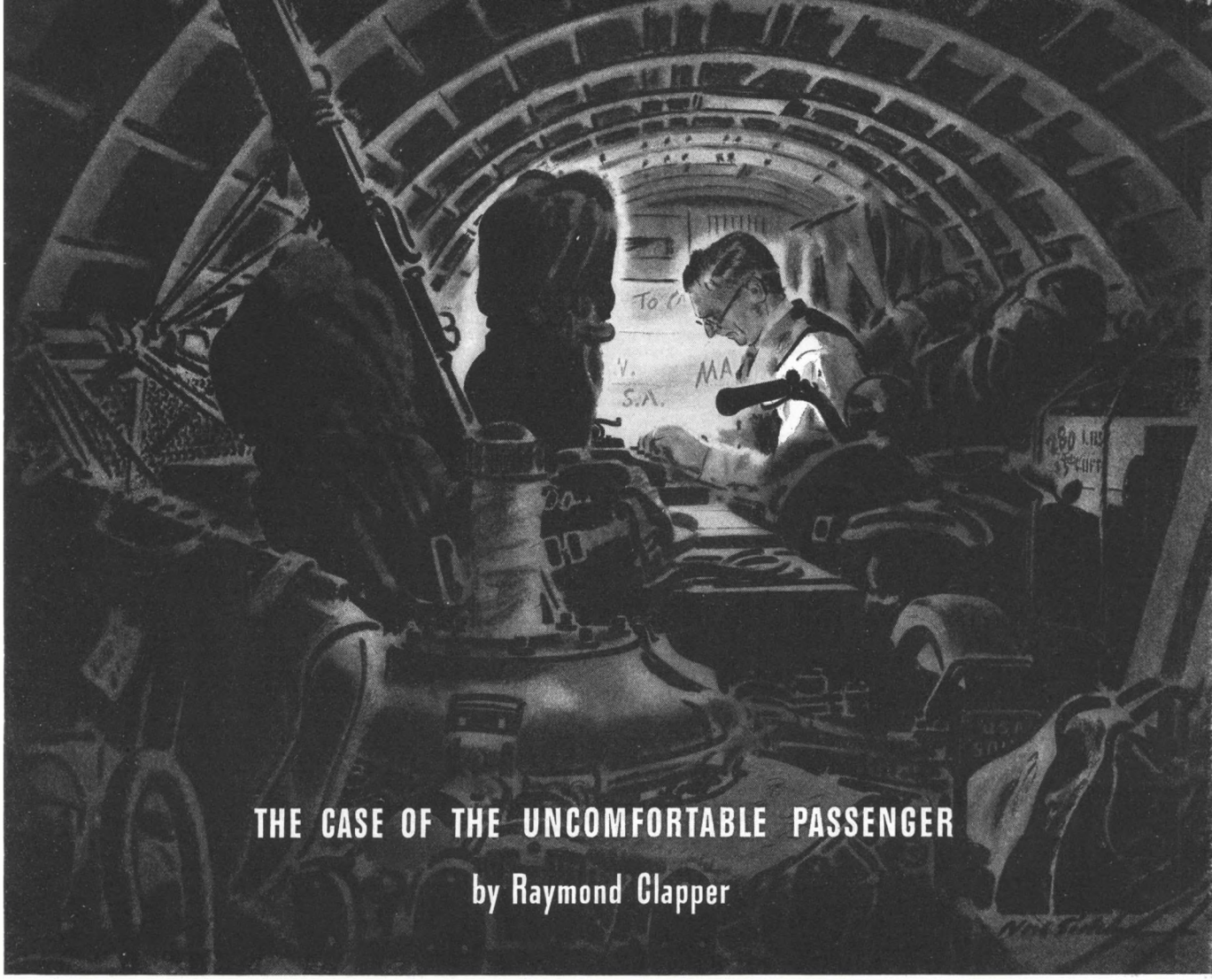
Ralph was there, over by the wide windows, his uniformed back toward her. And somebody was with him—a girl Janie knew instantly as Irene. Irene Langley. She wore a wool dress and a short, light fur jacket, and though she was older than Janie, she looked younger. Probably because she used no rouge, and not very much lipstick, and yet she was smart in a way that baffled Janie.

"It's so horrible!" Irene was saying. "Having to marry a girl like that!"

"I don't *have* to marry her," Ralph said. "And if you'd written to me once in a while, Rene——"

"I know, darling, and I'm sorry. I've just been so busy with school and war work. But when your mother told me she was coming down for a surprise visit for your birthday, I begged her to let me come along. Now I wish I hadn't."

Irene was standing beside Ralph, and Janie saw her half reach out to touch him; then her hand fell back at her side. She said softly, "Maybe if I'd written, none of this would have happened. But you should have known I loved you, Ralph. I've loved you since we were kids



THE CASE OF THE UNCOMFORTABLE PASSENGER

by Raymond Clapper

I'VE typed out newspaper stories in a good many odd places. On the steps of Warren Harding's front porch at Marion, Ohio, in the corner of a White House ante-room, in the rain in front of the Capitol when Franklin D. Roosevelt was inaugurated, in the court-house yard at the Scopes evolution trial at Dayton, Tennessee, and in trains and the back seats of automobiles riding over hair-pin mountain roads.

But I think the biggest story I ever covered was written on top of a crate of tommy-guns in the hold of a cargo plane 6,000 feet above an African jungle.

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We made the trip that night in ten hours. By surface-ship, rail and motor truck, it would have taken ten weeks!

I say it was the biggest story I ever covered because on that flight, I saw all our concepts of transportation thrown into the scrap heap. I saw the military textbooks being rewritten. And I got a glimpse of what our peace-time world will be like when this war is over and won.

These transport planes, operated for the Army Air Transport Command by Airline personnel, are spanning oceans and continents with vast aerial bridges. They hurdle the Atlantic in 16 hours. They fly to Australia in four days. To Cairo in five. To Chungking or New Delhi in a week. They bring the farthest fighting fronts of this global war to the back doors of America's factories — just as today our domestic Airlines bring factories from California to Connecticut door-to-door.

Our pilot this trip was a big veteran from Ohio, who until a month before had been pushing an Airliner across the midwest. Over sandwiches and coffee he told me: "The Army and the Airlines make a terrific ball-team. We had the pilots, the ground crews and 20 years of experience and the Army had a job for us to do. Every day the job grows bigger . . . because we're getting set to make Hitler sorry he ever heard the word *blitzkrieg!*"

I'm inclined to string along with him on that.

and you were always the one I chose when we played post office. Oh, Ralph, it seems such a shame to mess up your whole life like this for one crazy night. And what kind of a girl *is* this Janie, if she'd pick up a strange boy and go off to a hotel with him and stay all night? I mean, darling, are you sure you're not—well, being a sucker? I mean, can you be sure that sort of thing hasn't happened with her before?"

Janie stood rooted to the spot. How dared that girl say such a thing! How dared she! And then she thought: Well, why not? It was true, wasn't it? Innocent or guilty, the appearance of the thing remained the same. As Mrs. Presby had implied, Janie had just been lucky that the boy had been Ralph. And would Ralph someday wonder those things about his wife? Would he wonder whether he had been the first—or the last? No. Ralph wouldn't! But he might . . .

Ralph was saying, "She's just a kid, Irene, and a swell kid. I can't leave her to face this mess alone." And he said again, "If only you'd written. It's damned lonely, away from everyone you love."

"Everyone you love!" Janie's heart echoed. And though she had tried and tried to be like Irene, she saw now that she wasn't. It took more than leaving off rouge and remembering not to say, "God!" to be like Irene.

A voice behind Janie said, "I beg your pardon," and the two at the window whirled around. Ralph's mother and father came into the room and Ralph was introducing them. They all spoke to Janie politely, but she could see the heartbreak on his mother's face, and Irene looked sick and shocked and incredulous, and Ralph's father looked suddenly old beyond belief.

"Ralph, could I see you alone somewhere?" Janie asked.

"Why, of course." And when they were outside, with the door closed between them and Ralph's family, Janie said what she knew she had to say. She said it quickly, and her smile held as she spoke so that Ralph wouldn't know how much it cost her to say the words. "Darling, it was sweet of you to offer to marry me, and of course I wanted to, then, because I was so upset by this whole thing. It's been horrible, for both of us. But, Ralph, it's over now. Let's let it be over."

"What do you mean, Janie?"

"I don't want to marry you, Ralph. I don't want to marry anybody yet. I'm only sixteen——"

"But what's going to happen to you?"

"That family Mrs. Presby spoke of—I decided I'd like to go with them, Ralph, if you don't mind. They'll send me through high school, and even college, if I want it. And I'd have fun. I've never had much fun, you know," she finished.

His eyes were grave. "Janie, are you sure you haven't let somebody talk you into this? Because I do love you, and I don't want you to go back to that house."

"I won't go back, Ralph. I'm not going to like this other place much at first, I suppose. I mean, no matter how awful your home is, it's home. But I want a chance to make something of myself, Ralph, and maybe, after the war is over, you'll come back. Maybe I'll meet you again, darling, and we'll pretend we're meeting for the first time, and everything will be—well, the way everything ought to be between two people who love each other. But not like this."

"If that's the way you want it, Janie. And if you're sure . . ."

"That's the way I want it, Ralph. And I'm sure." She turned and fled because she would not let him see her tears.

Later, from the window of the little office to the left of the courtroom, Janie watched Irene, the Disbrows and Ralph leave the building, Ralph with his wide shoulders erect, and she thought of something Mrs. Presby had said today. "A brand-new officer, and I'm sure somewhere men will be proud of him."

Yes, somewhere, someday, men would be proud of young Lieutenant Disbrow. These two days had been a sobering experience for him, as well as for her.

"Janie"—Mrs. Presby spoke beside her—"always remember that it's not what you've come from, but what you are, that the right kind of people care about."

"Yes, Mrs. Presby," Janie said, and continued to stand there, watching Ralph walk out of her life forever. Irene didn't know about Mom when she spoke those terrible words to Ralph. She had just known that Janie had done things which the girl who would one day be Ralph's wife would not have done. If Ralph did come back from whatever front he was marching toward, he would not come back to Janie. Men did not often pick their wives from courtroom scenes such as today's, or from cheap hotels, or from park benches. Because there was a world to face, and a man had to know he could be proud of the wife at his side. And the wife had to know it too, in her deepest, most secret heart.

Janie was only sixteen. Someday, somewhere there would be another Ralph. And when she met him, she would not have to open her arms again and let him go, because when that day came, she would be all right. And she remembered Dottie's bright, tattered motto, "Yesterday's gone, and today's no good, Janie, but tomorrow belongs to us!"

"Come, Janie," Mrs. Presby said, and Janie's footsteps followed hers into tomorrow.

The Sin of the Angels (*Continued from page 23*)

up to some damn inferior man, but it's no good loving one you can't look up to." Her remarks, she discovered, didn't make much sense unless one knew the train of thought behind them, so she said, "What's this about the Abroughs? I know them as well as I want to, though they go everywhere nowadays. All that money!"

Kim laughed. "The Abroughs would be flattered silly if you paid them the slightest attention, wouldn't they?"

"Of course they would," said Lady Grossville.

"Then will you be friendly to them this afternoon?" Kim said.

"What for?" asked Lady Grossville.

"It's like this," said Kim. "In the old times da Vinci and Agnolo and Bramante had popes and kings and dukes to say, 'Build me this or that,' and open the coffers. Now, to get my chance, I've got to turn promoter too."

"You're certainly no shrinking violet," said Lady Grossville. "I take it you mean you've got to promote this fair you're so hipped about."

"The one in 1915 was a song of triumph. We were on top of the world, and we wanted to crow about it. Now, Marie darling, we're bankrupt. That's the plain truth. I don't want to get sentimental, but—we've got to lure people back, drag them back, to see San Francisco, to make them remember. When people come, they stay. Money comes in and offers growth. But it's a vicious circle. We've got to have money to bring it in—and the Abroughs are good at raising money.

You've got to help me sell them the idea of building the fair, not let it peter out now for lack of funds."

"Suppose they don't want a woman? We've never gone in much for career women in San Francisco."

"I'm not a career woman; I'm an architect," said Kim coldly. "And a woman had a great deal to do with the last fair."

"All right," said Lady Grossville. "We might even ask them to go to dinner with us after the reception."

"I've a dinner date with Clay."

"Bring him along," said her aunt, warming to her task. "He'll impress old man Abrough, and we might put the whole thing over tonight. Where does Clay fit into these ambitious schemes?"

"Keep your fingers crossed," Kim said. "I may have to answer yes or no before this night is over."

"If you don't take him, you're a ninny," Lady Grossville said, and got a flash of blue mischief from Kim's eyes in response. "We'll put it over—with a bang," Her Ladyship added. "And I must say, Kimmy, I never saw you look prettier. After all, Abrough and son are men!"

From another window, high on Nob Hill, old Sandy Farrell regarded the panorama before him with defiance. He had sat there in his favorite chair at the Bohemian Club for a good many years, and the scene before him had stayed young while he had grown old.

The Bohemian Club had grown old too, squatting there rose-brown and immovable, under the white wings of the Fairmont, with the last of the cable cars rattling up and down the steepest of San Francisco hills beside it. The world's finest composers, playwrights, authors, stars of the theater, painters and inventors, Cabinet officers and publishers and Presidents had gathered under its roof in a deep comradeship that was the club's own magic formula.

Within the warm lounge old Sandy Farrell stared at the spectacular glory before him as though it were a personal insult. Where Kim Lansing saw heartbreak in the empty bay and wept, old Sandy saw challenge and cursed.

"Trying to get rid of us humans, ain't ye?" he said aloud. "We licked ye before—I licked ye myself—and we'll do it again." He grinned triumphantly at the mighty bridge, symbol of man's conquest.

A uniformed attendant brought him the papers and was moving away when the old man's yell stopped him.

"Hell fire and damnation!" Sandy Farrell shouted, and something in his voice brought silence to the big room.

Into that silence—from the music room, where Iturbi and Paderewski had played the concert grand—a lusty baritone drifted: "Oh, the north countree is a cold countree, and it sires a bloody brood."

Sandy's voice cracked to top it. "Get me Washington on the phone, get me the Senator—and get him almighty quick!"

The merry voice persisted in the immortal ballad of the Hermit of Shark Tooth Shoals, and Sandy shouted, "Oh, shut up, you puling young fool!" Nice talk, but the singer was his grandson. Only a moment before he had been thinking how good it was to have the boy back from his years of wandering in far places, lonely years for Sandy. But in a moment that headline in the paper had changed everything.

The song ceased and a tall young man, smiling reproachfully, strolled in from the other room. "Grandpappy," said Tick Farrell, "are you making a scene?"

"Call me a Yellow Periler, will you?" cried Sandy. "All of ye been calling me a Yellow Periler because I been warning ye

about the Japs for years. Look at that."

The paper flew like a wounded seagull, but from it one unfamiliar word flapped in large type that screamed its new importance. The word was "Panay."

The tall young man caught the paper, and his eyebrows lifted. "Dear, dear, firing on the Stars and Stripes! They're coming out in the open, aren't they?"

"Now mebbe we'll get busy and smash those yellow-bellied tarantulas," said Sandy. "I guess now the United States Navy'll show 'em something."

"I hope they won't try," said Tick Farrell, "not right now. Remember those cute little mandated islands our late ally Japan was given to govern? The Japanese, my honored progenitor, have got them nicely furnished now with modernistic gun emplacements, beautiful color scheme in airfields and the finest thing in harbors—large enough for cruisers, and even a few available for battleships. They took a pot-shot at the British Ambassador the other day—a very nice duck if his name is Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen—and the British Navy, whose courage we never question, didn't even get up steam. They know."

"How ye get so smart about all this?" asked Sandy.

"I was trying to break a streak of bad luck I had out in Shanghai," said Tick, "so I went slooping around down in the South Pacific. Oh, and you should see our own backyard—Guam. Good old Guam! We kept our promise to the Japs like gentlemen, and they don't even allow the children to have firecrackers on the Fourth in Guam. What the hell? Let's mind our own business. We aren't strong enough to start a scrap now. Give 'em the Philippines and move Waikiki over to North Beach——"

The attendant said, "Washington's on the line for you, Mr. Farrell."

As his grandfather trotted out Tick spotted fat little Dr. Weil, and he strolled over. "How about a game of dominoes, sir? I suppose dominoes is still the Bohemian Club's game?"

As they settled to it, they could hear Sandy at the telephone in the lobby.

"All right, the Japs won't let me dredge a coupla pieces of coral out of the harbor at Guam . . . What? . . . Indicates menace? What about the Philippines? Folks back there know Corregidor was built in 1912, and while it's a fine piece of construction there ain't an antiaircraft gun . . . I know, Hiram; you've said everything a man could say and they call you a Yellow Periler . . . What about Wake and Midway? Couldn't we build just a couple airports? . . . The Navy Appropriations Bill? . . . Sure, I take off my hat to Admiral Hepburn, there's a *man!* Hiram, you tell *him* bigod Sandy Farrell's kept the Farrell Construction Company alive just for . . . Sure, I got labor troubles, but there's a few loyal to the old man; or I'll build 'em fortifications with a team of mules and my bare hands, the way I built railroads. I ain't one to make fists, but we got to get where we don't have to let 'em fire on the flag . . ."

He trotted back, his face belligerent. "He says mebbe we might start a little construction work out there before long."

"The way you go looking for work and trouble, Sandy, is a shame and a disgrace," Tick said.

A flush had come along his cheekbones. Sandy had seen it often in the old days—the gambler's flush, giving away nothing except an inner blazing excitement, win or lose.

In spite of the concern it caused him, Sandy's eyes warmed. A Farrell—and the last of them. Tick was well over six feet, slim, powerful of shoulder. But I was tougher, Sandy thought. Five feet four, but tough enough to crack men's heads together and no back talk. Equality. Poppycock and balderdash! They'd known him for the best man. All had the same chance, hadn't they? But those blatherskites couldn't say no to a woman or a glass of whisky or red meat. Sandy Farrell'd let his belly stick to his backbone, but he'd fed his mules; and it was his mules got him his chance to start in the construction business. They needed mules.

His meditations shattered as the fat doctor crowed with triumph and Tick Farrell stood up, laughing pleasantly.

"Beat ye, did he?" the old man said.

? ?

Family Quiz Answers
BROTHER

(Questions on page 16)

1. **That is Army slang for dishwashing.**
2. **William Harrison Dempsey.**
3. **A type of home used by the Indians of New Mexico and Arizona.**
4. **Nye of pheasants, farrow of pigs.**
5. **The Seminoles of Florida.**
6. **A ditch.**
7. **Phalanx is a body of heavy-armed infantry formed in ranks and files close and deep. Phalanges are the digital bones of the hands and feet.**
8. **For temporary use.**
9. **Ten yen, or about $2.36 in American money, of which $1.89 is sent to his family, 38 cents is deducted for compulsory savings, and 9 cents given to him for spending money.**
10. **For each six months' service there.**
11. **No. It is a one-horse vehicle commonly used in Ireland.**
12. **It is found in nuggets and small particles in alluvial soils; on some seacoasts, and in a dark seaweed to which it clings.**

Questions accepted from Mrs. Arthur Shane, Long Beach, Calif.; Mary K. Hart, Washington, D. C.; Mildred Austin, Beresford, S. D.; Mrs. Paul Finegan, Gouverneur, N. Y.; Beatrice Wilson, Aurora, Ill.; H. Sears Kershaw, Keene, N. H.; Mrs. Helen Ellis, Chicago, Ill.; Mrs. M. L. Ginn, Miami, Fla.; Bryan Via, Happy, Tex.; Mary Alma Tompkins, Washington, D. C.; Flora Dutton Jaquish, Saginaw, Mich., J. A. Nowell, Bangor, Me.

? ?

"After all," Tick said, "he's the champion."

"Champions can be beat by other champions," said Sandy. "Ye're a good loser. I hated to lose. That's why I didn't. I was a bum winner too; always had to crow some. Well, times have changed. Fashionable now to be a good loser and a good winner, because nobody gives a curse whether they win or lose."

"There's so little difference," said Tick, strolling to the windows. "Looks like a Ghost City of the West, doesn't it?"

"You never saw it before without ships. All these labor troubles—damn them!" said Sandy.

"Maybe they got tired of you old bandits always having everything your own way," said Tick.

"Anything makes me puke," said Sandy, "is a guy who can always see both sides of any question. You can't fight on both sides of a question."

"You're such a violent man, grandpa," said Tick. "Who wants to fight? And we must be fair. Prejudice is very bad for the gall bladder. Ask the doc."

The old man's face sucked in against the bones. Ghosts? Then they must be the ghosts of the 'forty-niners—men who'd dug out with their hands the gold God had hidden in the hills. He, Sandy Farrell, who'd built the first railroad out of there thirty-seven years ago, might be related to those ghosts. Lived past his threescore years and ten.

He'd made one irremediable mistake. There before him stood his grandson, the last of the fighting Farrells, and they'd bred the Farrell red out of his hair and the red out of his blood too, it might be. He, old Sandy Farrell, had put on the finishing touches, with his indulgence. There was no fight left in Tick.

"Was the woman worth it?" he snarled, out of his own bitter self-reproach.

For a flash the young man looked murderous. Then he laughed. "Sandy," he said, "gentlemen don't bandy a lady's name about the club."

"Maybe you can afford to be a gentleman," said Sandy. "I never had time, and from all I heard, Veronica Abrough was no lady."

Veronica Abrough.

They found her body on that dawn eight years ago, cold and white under the dainty revealing chiffon she had worn for her lover. When she put it on, she had not expected the grim eyes of her husband and her father-in-law to see her so, and later the eyes of strange policemen. But by that time, of course, none of it mattered to Veronica Abrough.

The gun lay like a blot on the white fur rug of her boudoir, so far away from her still hand that at first in his frozen fury her husband thought someone else had fired the bullet.

So far had she slung it in that last reckless, despairing gesture that even when the tall chief of detectives, the famous Dullea, found her note there was still a question between suicide and murder.

A trite note: "I can't live without you, my darling. Oh, Tick, Tick, I love you so much life isn't worth living without you." But even trite words gain tragic immortality when they are stained with blood.

So there was an inquest in a crowded, hideous courtroom, and there avid eyes invaded the last privacy of that shamed widower and the hawk-faced man who was his father. Eyes stared and peered, but mostly they peered at young Farrell, who had been so easily identified as that man without whom another man's faithless wife had not cared to live.

Watching Tick on the witness stand, Sandy had seen his grandson's arrogant helplessness under the questions.

"You had an engagement to call on Mrs. Abrough on the night of the fourteenth?" the district attorney said.

No use to deny it.

"You didn't keep it?" asked the district attorney.

"No," was all Tick said.

But the perfumed note said more: "You didn't come. You're never coming again."

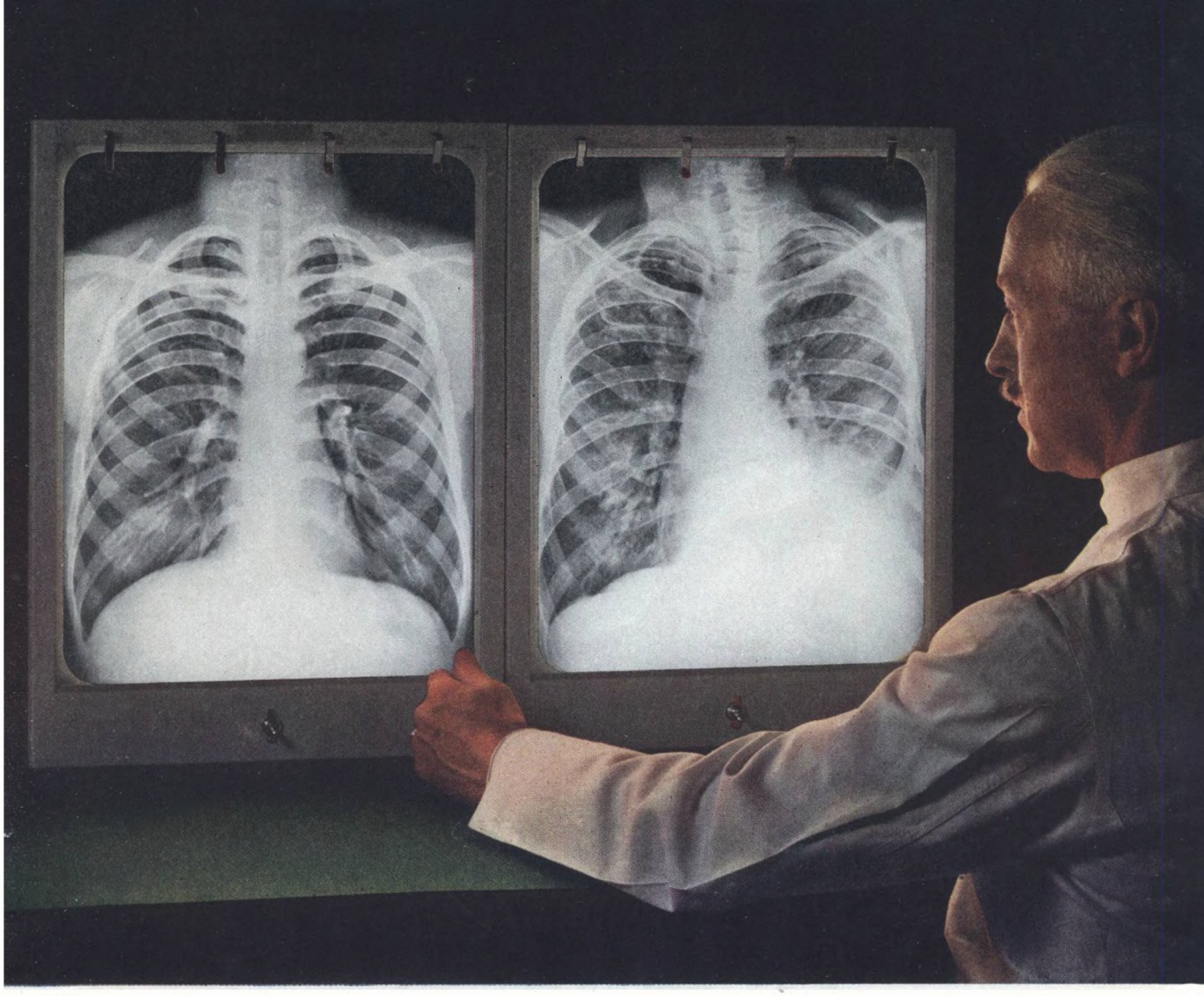
"Why?" the district attorney asked.

The young man kept bitter silence.

But there was no silence for the written words. Veronica Abrough answered now, like a forlorn ghost, always present in that crowded room: "You don't love me any more. You're tired of me."

The suicide verdict of the coroner's jury was a foregone conclusion. But Veronica Abrough had so arranged it that Tick Farrell might as well have pulled the trigger. How she must have hated him in those last moments of maddened vanity and frustrated desire, to throw him to the judgment of a world she was leaving, but which she had persuaded to think of her as the tragic heroine of a great love.

Driving away from the inquest, old Sandy Farrell's heart beat hard for the white-faced young man beside him. He thought maybe the old ways were better. In his time, that green-faced husband would have shot Tick's heart out. Instead,



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he had let him live, sickened, muddied, bereft of faith in anything.

Oh, yes, Veronica Abrough had taken her revenge. "When I'm dead you won't be able to forget me," the note had cried. "I'll haunt you always, and if you ever love another woman as you've loved me, I'll haunt her too."

Well, the boy might have licked it if he had stayed and faced it. But he had run from it to distant Oriental lands.

Now he was back. San Francisco had called him back. He was bright with that easy refusal to take anything seriously, gay with the belittling humor—now the fashion—for such dull things as ideals of honor or work or loyalty.

At last Sandy said, "You going to Mrs. Calhoun's reception?"

"Hell, I forgot it," said Tick Farrell. "Of course I'm going. Nice of her to ask me. Return of the prodigal and all that."

"Don't overeat on that fatted calf," said Sandy.

Tick's hot blue eyes turned upon him, and Sandy felt his knees turn to water. For there was something in the eyes he had not counted on, and it occurred to his sore old heart for the first time that it might be a terrible thing to be born for adventure and find none worthy of the name.

Geraldine Tobin, the bright young society editor, had once asked Mrs. Peter Calhoun if Café Society would ever spring up in San Francisco. And that terrible and wonderful dowager had said acidly that the term was a contradiction. Everybody could dine in cafés and frequently did. Society, said Mrs. Calhoun, was a term to identify persons who by breeding, culture, education and similar tastes took pleasure in each other's company, and whose manners were such as to insure their behaving properly in their own homes. If on occasion the young things overflowed to the Mark Hopkins or the St. Francis, that was merely a matter of expediency.

Today society had overflowed to the St. Francis Yacht Club for Mrs. Calhoun's final reception of the season. The club lay on the shore of the bay between the Golden Gate and Fort Mason.

As Tick Farrell strolled in, unexpected stage fright annoyed him into an arrogance of bearing not likely to endear him to some of the eyes that watched his entrance.

As he moved through the long rooms, Tick Farrell was aware that San Francisco was curious about him still. The eyes of the women were intent, frankly eager to discover why a beautiful woman had killed herself for his sake.

From a chair of teak, Mrs. Peter Calhoun beckoned him with fat ringed hand. As he dropped down beside her, he wondered how she kept her throne when so many others had crumbled.

"You're back, and about time." Abruptly she added, "Are you home to stay?"

"It's a big world," Tick said, "and there's a lot of it I haven't seen yet."

"I hear you gamble," said Mrs. Calhoun. "I could have been a gambler myself, so I understand it. It's worse than drink. But there are things more exciting to gamble with than pieces of pasteboard. You're needed here. We need young men with brains and imagination and daring. You should marry a nice girl with no temperament and the proper connections. I'll find one for you."

There was something in Tick Farrell that responded with delight to her grande-dame manner. So he said, "But Your Majesty, is love so important?"

Her smile was pure mischief. "We've lost our joy of it in preoccupation with other things—money, success, speed, but none of them are worth a tinker's damn without love's applause. Besides, I was speaking of marriage—not love."

"But I don't want to marry anybody," said Tick Farrell. "I've had my baptism of fire, and poor a thing as my life is, I'll be hanged and quartered if I ever trust it to a woman again."

"A good many men have said *that,* too," said the old lady.

Tick said slowly, "Who is that girl over there—the one who is really laughing?"

The crowd had parted and in an opening he saw her for the first time, a silvery Chinese tapestry making a background for her proud head.

"But you know Kim Lansing!" Mrs. Calhoun's voice was warm with pride and affection. "She's not for you," she added. "She has other things to do."

"Don't tell me she's a career woman," Tick said, not taking his eyes from Kim. "You made a career of living, lady."

"My husband was a *man,*" said the dowager sternly. "It's not the fault of the women that they've had to run after false gods. A woman can make a career out of a *man,* but there don't seem to be many of them around nowadays."

Long afterwards Tick Farrell was to remember her words, but just then the girl's eyes met his. His imagination took fire from the sparkle of her, and he left Mrs. Calhoun and crossed the room to Kim Lansing.

"I DIDN'T think you'd remember me," she said by way of greeting, "but I used to cut your pictures out of the sports pages. I was very young at the time, Mr. Farrell. And I've heard about you from Sandy since. He and I are going to build something together someday and make San Francisco proud of us."

"I'm all at sea," said Tick Farrell. "You must have been a baby when I went away. Surely I have a right to know what you are."

"It's no secret. I'm an architect."

Tick Farrell became aware that they were talking in a cold vacuum and swung to face the old man who had been Veronica Abrough's father-in-law.

The eyes around the room had in them now the same avid curiosity that had stared at these two men when they last met in the crowded courtroom. Tick Farrell was as white now as he had been then, but the face of the old man was without any expression at all.

There was a short, terrible silence. Then Miss Lansing took command of the situation. "Will you take me out on the terrace, Mr. Farrell?" she said. "I want to see the sunset."

It was too late for the sunset famous beyond the Golden Gate, but she was intent upon the gay yachts drawn up at the club's docks. There was a puzzled frown between the startling eyebrows, and Tick knew she was trying to remember what connected him unpleasantly with Abrough. He did not want her to remember—not yet.

Urgently he said, "Let's go somewhere and have a nice long dinner. We might as well start to know each other better."

"I have a dinner engagement," she said. "Rather an important one."

She pulled on her gloves absently, and he followed her along the terrace. To her intense inner amazement, Kim Lansing was going with Tick—a man she'd never seen until half an hour ago. She would not hurry, yet when the car swung out of the drive he heard her gasp of relief.

"I'm not used to running away," she said, by way of explanation. "You see, the dinner was really my plan and it was business. I hope you're not as shocked at my behavior as I am. I don't make a practice of dashing off with young men the first time I . . ." Her voice trailed away in sweet confusion

The echo of her aunt's triumphant whisper, "The Abroughs are coming; they were very pleased," was in her ears; the picture of Lady Grossville and Clay Jackson and the younger Abrough deep in discussion was before her eyes, and she sent the car forward at a reckless pace to escape her conscience.

The café where she told him she would like to dine proved to be a round, golden-brown room named after the poet whose verses adorned the walls. And who, thought Tick Farrell, could lend a more appropriate atmosphere to this dinner than Omar Khayyam? "What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence?* And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence? Oh, many a cup of this forbidden wine Must drown the memory of that insolence!" Young Mr. Farrell read it upon the wall and nodded agreement.

"This," he said, "is a momentous occasion. Has that occurred to you?"

"Of course it has," said Kim Lansing.

They were interrupted then by an enormous man in white with a chef's cap above his beaming face, who greeted Miss Lansing with touching regard.

Whereupon Miss Lansing said, "This is my good friend George Mardikian, who will feed you with jelly made of rose leaves and soup made from a gazelle, and other poetical dishes."

"You have very nice friends," said Tick Farrell.

"Miss Lansing," said the large man, "is of the ladies who appreciate food. On my famous radio program I have offered a prize for the finest menu, and it is she who wins my prize. Moreover, of all the famous ones who respond to my request, only she notes to begin the dinner by saying grace. I am an Armenian, so not afraid to be sentimental. We Armenians have had occasion to thank God for food. Has she not told you of this?"

"I haven't known her very long," said Tick. "In time, I hope she will tell me everything."

"So," said the big man. "I go now to arrange for you the dinner of the gods." And he went happily to his task.

"While he does that," said Tick Farrell, "tell me all about you."

"You've lived longest," said Kim; "you should tell first."

"I knew you had remembered," Tick Farrell said. "I'm a notorious character. You shouldn't dine with me."

"She must have loved you very much," said Kim.

"I don't know," said Tick. "I was too young to know."

"I envy her," said Kim Lansing. "Nobody seems to care that much any more."

The big man was bending over them again, holding out an enormous circular loaf, saying ceremoniously, "My friends, will you break bread with me?"

Their eyes met gravely; it gave them a warm feeling of intimacy.

"'A jug of wine, a loaf of bread—and Thou Beside me singing in the wilderness,'" said Tick Farrell, and then hurriedly: "You have nice quotations on your walls, Mr. Mardikian. And what do you suggest in the way of a jug of wine?"

The intimacy, which was a new thing to Kim Lansing, swept them into talk that flowed and whirled. They raced to answer each other's thoughts. It seemed to Kim Lansing that nobody had ever understood her before.

"So I went East and you went West," she said, "but we both came back. I want to go West sometime—to see China, most of all." She stopped because she was thinking that it would be a great

adventure to go to the Orient with him. "Tell me about the palace of the Dowager Empress. I've always wanted to see it. She received my father, you know, when he was Ambassador."

Without knowing it, Tick had dropped the brittle brightness behind which he had hidden so long. He told her things he didn't realize he had seen; he remembered the sweep of a Chinese temple doorway and the color of a shrine, like purple grapes and mackerel silver on a green velvet hillside.

She responded by telling him about Beauvais at the Beaux Arts, and how he used to scream at her for her preoccupation with color. "'You cannot cover up bad line by slopping color all over it. The line first, always line, line, line!' he used to say."

"Color's more fun," said Tick Farrell.

With the gazelle soup and its flavor of herbs, she found herself telling him of her design for a new ferry building. "Someday they'll have to build a new one and I'll be ready," she said. "It's difficult to give up the old one, though."

"I know. I burst into tears when I saw it after eight years. You should build from memory—keep the beauty and throw away what's dirty and outgrown. The way we ought to do with all memories and don't."

"That's wonderful," she said, and lost herself in a dream. When the *shish kebab* came, sizzling on long iron skewers, she applauded the culinary miracle only a moment before she said, "You've done something for me with that thought—if I could only get it. I believe in something that comes through to you if you keep your mind and heart open to it."

"I don't believe in anything," Tick Farrell said. "I've outgrown myths. Omar had the right idea. 'Oh, threats of Hell and hopes of Paradise; One thing at least is certain—*This* Life flies; One thing is certain and the rest is lies: The flower that once has blown for ever dies.' Or something along those lines."

Pity for his lack of faith had softened her eyes, and for a moment he lost himself in them. Then a furious warning clanged through him. What had he said to Mrs. Calhoun only that afternoon? "Poor a thing as my life is, I'll be hanged and quartered if I ever trust it to a woman again." And here he was, forgetting all she had taught him, because a girl's eyes were the blue of Our Lady's Mantle.

The rest of the meal was riotous, and Kim Lansing found herself laughing wildly, saying, "I don't know what we're laughing at, do you? I mean, *what* are we laughing at—or doesn't it matter?"

So that San Francisco's most famous society editor, Geraldine Tobin, coming around the corner from the stairs saw them in a storm of glorious laughter. Joining her city editor at the bar, Mrs. Tobin said, "This A.M. I said in print that San Francisco was waiting for the announcement of Miss Kim Lansing's engagement to Mr. Clay Jackson II . . . Well, take a look over your shoulder and tell me if you see headlines in the making."

Therefore it was perhaps as well that Miss Tobin could not follow them into the night, for Tick had discovered that Kim Lansing played the piano. He knew a joint out at North Beach where the piano was of a vintage and the fishnet draped above it lent an atmosphere. The proprietor claimed he had once been a tenor at La Scala; his wife sang bass.

Nor did Miss Tobin see them later when Tick said, for the hundredth time, "Do you know this one?" and began to hum. Kim played it with minor chords like a guitar, and at first they all sang together, and then the proprietor and his

fat Italian wife, who were romantic disappeared and Tick was singing alone that oldest of San Francisco love songs.

"Towsee Mongalay, my dear,
You'll leave me someday, I fear.
Sailing far away to see,
A blue-eyed gal in Melikee.
If you stay, me love you true.
If you leave me, how can do?
Me no cly, me only say—Towsee Mongalay."

"That will do for our song," he said. "Me no cly, me only say—good-by, good luck, God bless you. But it really belongs to the Cliff House. We'll go there tomorrow night and hear the seals bark."

As Kim drove swiftly home along the Bay Shore highway, she hummed the song. And this, she thought, must be what is known as riding on a pink cloud.

Fong opened the door for her. His voice very cross, he said, "Go up back stairs. Leddyship velly mad. Where you been?"

She sneaked up the stairs and into her room without waking Lady Grossville. She undressed without turning on the lights. She must think quietly in the dark, prepare to face her aunt in the morning, and Clay and the Abroughs, try to figure out why she had followed Tick and why she felt she knew him better than she had ever known anybody.

But she couldn't. She could only lie breathless, living over the time from the first moment she'd seen him.

Tick had to try his luck. With such wild excitement running in his blood, a man couldn't go home and read a book. The superstition of the gambler took possession of him. He must see if his luck was in. He went along Grant Avenue into Chinatown. His blue eyes were restless, fevered, insatiable. Yes, it could happen like this. Love *should* be sudden and secret and dangerous. He could still hear the nightingale notes of Kim's voice, and he thought the world was made in six days and somewhere between creating the sun and moon and stars it had taken only a moment to create love.

He turned into a dark alley between two black-red-gilt Chinese houses, found a studded door and knocked.

In the curtained rooms upstairs, he soon found out that his luck was in. Under a green shade the dealer stared with impassive almond eyes at his third blackjack and said, "Hot tonight, Mr. Tick." But Tick didn't want to break the blackjack game—not tonight. Just wanted to see if his luck was in. The dice galloped for him, and he laughed and heard an echo and through the smoke saw a squat young man prematurely bald grinning at him across the circle.

"Brick!" he shouted. "My luck *is* in."

"You were doing all right," Brick McMahon said drily. "You should not have taken your mitts off those ivories, boy."

"Can't lose," said Tick. "I'll buy you a drink, you ole horse thief."

In the brighter lights in the small bamboo bar, Brick was a little shabby.

"How you doing?" Tick asked.

"Fine," replied Brick, too heartily.

"Don't be coy with me," Tick said. "Where you working?"

"In a bowling alley," Brick said. "A lot of people have taken up bowling. Have a good time in the Islands?"

"Lazy man's paradise," said Tick. "You know I was always the laziest white man still breathing."

"Some guys over at Cal and down at U.S.C. would still testify different."

"They could have driven a truck through those holes you used to make for me," Tick said. "A six-year-old child could have carried the ball."

Brick said, "Remember they used to yell Brick-and-Tick-can-do-the-trick-and-make-it-stick-and-make-Cal-sick?"

They sang it to the tune of "Three Blind Mice." Brick's eyes glistened with the old adoration. Tick Farrell had called the plays then. Hell with ten yards in four downs! Touchdown or nothing. Sure, they got the hell smeared out of 'em sometimes, but they made more touchdowns than anybody. Brick wished they could do it again, fighting, smashing—that had been the top; there hadn't been much since. Probably didn't matter so much to a guy like Farrell, though it must have been pretty soggy climbing down off that pedestal; nothing was deader than yesterday's newspaper except last year's All-America. You could say that again for Brick McMahon.

"Nice to be in there one more game with you calling 'em, Tick," he said.

"I would be on my can the end of the second play. Come on, let's go places."

"No place to go except Shanty's," Brick said. "You better go home."

"Are you starting to wet-nurse me already?" Tick asked. "All right, you come home with me. Sandy'll want to see you. Must be jobs around somewhere."

"While you was doing the hula-hula over in Honolulu the unions really got this town where the hair is short," Brick said, as they went back through the alley. "And what happens to 'em all now if Clay Jackson *gives* 'em his ships and quits? He's heeled. It won't bother him. It looks to me like they're building themselves up to be pallbearers at their own funerals, some of these labor leaders."

"That so-and-so Clay Jackson!" cried Tick.

"He was a fair fullback," said Brick. "I seen him stop you a coupla times."

"I must have had an off day," Tick said. "Why don't you get in there on the union team? You guys sit around crabbing and let outsiders take the ball away from you on downs. If they need honest labor leaders to show 'em how to play smart, why don't you be one?"

"Look who's talking," said Brick.

The Farrell house, far out on Jackson Street near the entrance to the Presidio, was stately and dark.

The old man gave Brick a welcome that turned him red with pleasure, then said, "I been talking to Washington."

"Again?" said Tick. He bent over the map spread on the oak table. Red-circled pinpoints in the vast Pacific. Wake. Midway. The Philippines. He said, "You sure got a bug in your ear, grandpa."

"It's a contract I'm going to get," said Sandy, "and won't be long, either."

"Maybe Brick would like to go and build little forts on Wake Island someday," Tick said. "He's young and strong and beautiful. He was the best tackle ever played for Stanford."

"Played pretty good yourself," said Sandy, "and did a fair job first few years out of college. Got it in your blood."

"I am strictly a lily of the field," Tick said, "and you might offer us a drink." When he got it he lifted his glass. "Here's to the first scoop of dirt your steam shovels dig in Midway. Let's go to bed, Brick. I need my sleep." On the stairs, he turned to say to his grandfather, "I met a young lady tonight thinks you're wonderful. Name of Kim Lansing."

"They broke the mold when they made her," Sandy said. "She's a better man than you are—or me either, maybe."

"You can say that again," said Tick, but his face was white and he went up the remaining stairs as though the devil were after him, Sandy thought.

The old man stood staring into the flames. He was seeing again the blood-stained note: "I'll haunt you always, and if you ever love another woman as you've loved me, I'll haunt her too."

No—no. Not Kim Lansing.

He turned off the lights and went upstairs and stood for a moment outside Tick's door. Defiant whistling came through it. That Chinese love song, "Towsee Mongalay." Not tonight, but soon he must explain to Tick how different Kim was from other women. Of course he knew a dead woman couldn't come back to haunt anybody, but she'd left something behind her—something like a curse. And that mustn't happen to Kim Lansing.

From a corner box, Geraldine Tobin surveyed the opening night of the opera with the professional eye of a society editor. There would be nothing new to write; all was as it had been for years, according to tradition. Everywhere in the universe clocks were ticking away the old order; the new order had begun its march to rolling drums. But here was only the majestic music of "Aïda," and charming people gaily refusing to heed the warnings that soon the Four Horsemen would ride again into their private lives and put them to the greatest test humanity had ever known.

There was Mrs. Peter Calhoun in purple satin and the Calhoun diamonds; in the next box, Mrs. Clay Jackson fluttering priceless lace and pearls beside her handsome, florid son. Old Sandy Farrell, an elderly Puck, and across the circle the Abroughs with black pearls in their stiff shirt fronts. Kim Lansing, lovely and aloof in ermine, with her titled aunt and her distinguished father.

THE CURTAIN went down on the first act. The lobby was jammed, and Geraldine stood to watch the parade pass, hoping for news. Suddenly her eyes popped, and she said to herself, "Of all things! And at the opera."

Tick Farrell, striding through the mob, heard a voice at his elbow and turned to see Kim Lansing. "But—how are you?" she said. "It's been weeks and weeks, and I saw you and found myself running after you quite shamelessly. Everybody probably thinks I'm crazy."

"Everybody probably does," he said without a smile, and she saw that he was drunk.

"We can't talk here," she said, "and I've so much to—to talk to you about. It would be polite if you asked me to supper."

"I'm not fit company for a lady tonight," Tick said.

"Then pick me up tomorrow at the studio and we'll go for a drive." Kim kept her voice light. "There isn't any reason why we can't be friends, is there?"

"Yes, there is," said Tick sternly. "People must have told you a good many reasons. Sandy laid out a few for me."

"But it's not their business. Come tomorrow, and we can talk about it."

He looked down into her eyes. They were blazing blue. "I'll come," he said.

The music of the second-act overture swept through the darkened house. Under cover of it, Lady Grossville said to her niece, "Have you taken leave of your senses? Chasing after a man like that—a notorious man who is not received in decent society!"

Kim said, "Mrs. Calhoun receives him."

"Matilda Calhoun's a perverse old mischief-maker. She can afford to shock people. But you—you with all you have at stake—to take such chances!"

The curtain went up slowly. Lady Grossville's fingers went around Kim's slim wrist and held hard.

"Kim," Lady Grossville said, very low, "you're—you're like the child I never had. This man—what has he ever done that wasn't bad and weak and foolish? Your fair—do you think they'd let you have anything to do with it if you get mixed up with a—gambler? He'd bring ruin to you and everything you've worked for and dreamed about." She added softly, "Forgive me. I had to say it."

"I know you did," said Kim.

Patsy asked timidly, "Are you all right, Miss Lansing?"

"I think so," said Kim. "Were you able to reach Mr. Abrough?"

"He wasn't in," Patsy said. "I left word for him to call."

"You did that yesterday too," said Kim. "Run along. I want to think."

She sat very straight behind her desk in the bare studio, still shaken by the things Clay Jackson had said to her. She could still see him as he'd stood in the doorway, his face dark red, his finger pointing at her. "I don't take no for an answer," he'd said. "You'll come to your senses, but you'd better make it soon. When you do, let me know. You know what I have to offer, and I offer it still. You're the only woman I've ever wanted, but a woman who could fall for Tick Farrell is something different. If he takes you away from me, he'll have me to reckon with the rest of his life—and I'm no weakling like Herb Abrough."

Now she faced the fact that this thing between her and Tick Farrell had crashed into a life which she had mapped carefully. She had dedicated herself to ambition, to achievement, to service, to the divine fire of creation. She knew how far she had climbed and at what cost.

Now Clay Jackson's unexpected visit had destroyed the policy of delay and appeasement she had allowed herself. A stronger man than she had counted him, Clay. But she did not love him. Because of that and his love for her, she could rule him. Together, they could go far.

She weighed what he had offered against what Tick Farrell might offer.

The two men represented two ways of life, and the choice had to be made.

She was not capable of loving Tick enough to balance the sacrifice. She dared not let Tick run the risk of what she might become if she remembered too bitterly all she had given up for his sake. Better let Clay Jackson bear with her when she remembered he had cost her all of love she might ever know.

I am trading my chance of love for my future, she thought. And the chance is too small. It wasn't even a fighting chance, with Tick Farrell. She would see him once more—to say good-by.

Tick parked the car and they walked across the Golden Gate Bridge. When they stopped, leaning against the high railing, a fog had begun to sweep in. Slowly, the world was blotted out. They were alone together. Kim was like the figurehead of a ship, breasting the wind, her curls swept back, her scarf a brave bright sail. A last shaft of sunshine glided her from top to toe.

Tick knew in that moment that he loved Kim as he had not wanted to love any woman. Dreams stirred again, and he thought what it would be like to go through life with her beside him. The past was hidden in the fog, and a man might kid himself that he had a chance to begin again.

Then far below, ominous and angry, he heard the sound of the racing sea, and hope died in him. The fog would blow away and show an empty bay, a dying city and life which could be defeated only by never giving it any hostages—such as love. It would almost be

better to drown down there in the shark-gray water; then at least a man wouldn't have to say good-by to Kim.

He turned away blindly, and at sight of his haggard face Kim gave a little cry and was in his arms, weeping wildly against him. He tasted her tears and her lips were shy and cold and untaught beneath his. Her hands pushed and fought against him—but at last lay still. She had given him back his kiss. The fire and sweetness and yielding; all this he had of her until she swayed back and stood with her hands behind her on the rail, holding herself upright.

"Don't kiss me again," she said. "Not now; not yet. You see, I . . ."

"I know," he said, "but you're so lovely and I've wanted you so much."

The wind had dried the tears in streaks upon her cheeks. Her smile was tremulous, but brave as a crocus in the snow. This was not the Kim Lansing of whom his grandfather had spoken, nor the princess of the opera, nor the artisan of tall buildings. It was touching how like her surrender was to that of other women. For a moment Tick deceived himself into thinking there might not be a battle for mastery in their love.

"You looked so unhappy," she said, "I couldn't bear it."

The man stripped off her glove and held her hand against his face. "My sweet," he said, "I love you so very much, and I'm no good to you. I shouldn't have kissed you like that. I thought you were a grown-up woman able to take care of yourself—and you're a baby."

"I love you," she said awkwardly.

"You mustn't," Tick Farrell said.

"But the me that loves you can't exist except with you, Tick," she said desperately. "I didn't know she existed at all. You make me somebody else." Her eyes lifted to his accepted the mystery that it was this man—and no other.

"But you're so many other things," Tick said. "It's like Sandy said—you've got to have a man you can look up to and I'm just not tall enough." His lips twisted. "Look, Kim, I've got the will power of a grape nut. I probably couldn't even be true to you. I've never even been true to myself."

"You're being true to yourself now," said Kim, "and if you love me, I'll take my chances."

"Listen to me, will you?" he said brutally. "I am the guy who doesn't believe in anything. Remember me? I love you. And I'm a gambler, but the price on that one is all wrong. I'd gamble with your shining future and the things you've dedicated yourself to. Sandy was right about that. I sing a fair baritone and I have an itching foot and you are a girl to whom love wouldn't ever be enough. The thing for you to do is to forget me. We can't be friends, because every time I look at you I want you in my arms."

"That's where I belong," said Kim, leaning against him. She wanted to say that she could not let him face the hostile world alone; that she wasn't afraid of any gamble if they were together, but the words wouldn't come.

"You don't know what you're talking about. You'd start trying to reform me, and then I'd hate you and——"

Looking down Tick saw the quivering lips, and he had to kiss her, tenderly at first. Then time and thought and the world were lost in burning loveliness.

This time it was Tick who drew back. "I'm going to take you home," he said in a voice that shook.

"Then will you let me know what you're going to do with my life?"

Next month—Kim finds that she has a rival for Tick's love

It takes nearly one-fourth of all the Pepsodent we can make just to supply the boys in uniform with their favorite dentifrice. They come first, so they will continue to get Pepsodent . . . even if the rest of us may have to use it more sparingly for the duration.

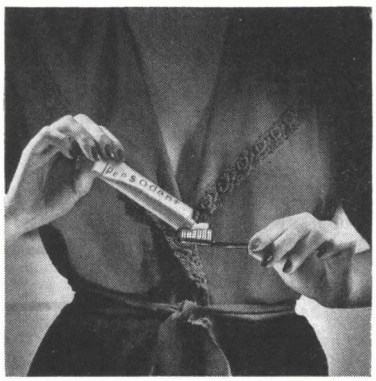
The biggest number of new customers in history are asking for Pepsodent these days. Yet, despite this record demand, there are wartime limitations on how much Pepsodent we can make. So it's easy to see why there may not always be enough to go around.

If your druggist disappoints you the first time you ask for Pepsodent, don't blame him. He, too, is limited. Try him again in a few days when his next allotment comes in. And remember: Don't hoard. Help save enough for others...and there will be enough for you.

Keep your smile bright...but

DON'T WASTE PEPSODENT

1. MOISTEN your brush before applying tooth paste. Otherwise paste may wash down the drain. Finish brushing teeth before rinsing brush.



2. MEASURE out only as much paste as you need. About three-quarters of an inch is enough. Always squeeze and roll tube from the bottom. Replace cap after using.

3. POWDER should be held in the palm of the cupped hand. *Don't* sprinkle powder onto tooth brush. Dab—don't rub—moistened brush in powder to pick it up.

4. SHOW children that a small amount of tooth powder is all that is needed. About enough to cover a five-cent piece is plenty. Always measure it out for them.

5. GET the full effectiveness from tooth brushes by hanging them up to dry after you use them. Soggy, worn, wilted brushes are inefficient, waste Pepsodent.

6. DENTAL SCIENCE knows no more effective, safe ingredients than those in Pepsodent —so effective, in fact, you need only a little to make teeth far brighter.

BOOK 3 — THE COMPLETE SHORT NOVEL

Ellen never knew

she had "a way with men"

till she tried a new system on Barry

and fell for it herself

ELLEN Mathews put her finger on the button over the card marked "M. James . . . K. Fieldston . . . S. Wicker" and pressed it firmly. When the buzzer sounded, she picked up her suitcase, opened the door and climbed two flights of stairs.

The door to the James apartment was open, and Matilda James stood just inside, smiling at her in welcome. Ellen was a tall girl, and she towered over the small, thin, middle-aged woman. She asked apologetically, "Am I too early, Miss James?"

"No, of course not." Matilda drew her into the living room, flooded with autumnal morning sunlight. She said, "Sally's away for the week end. Something exciting has happened. She's become engaged!"

Ellen said, "That's very nice. Someone in the Services?"

"Well, no, not yet. He's in her department. Her boss, in fact." Matilda's blue eyes twinkled. "Curious how many girls succeed in marrying their bosses. I never did."

Ellen laughed. She liked Matilda James, the efficient secretary of Stanfield Parker the banker, one of Ellen's father's close friends.

Matilda was saying, "It won't, I hope, make any alteration in your plans. Sally's leaving, I mean. Because she will leave shortly."

"No," said Ellen, "I don't see why it should. I'd much prefer to have a room alone, Miss James—and I can afford to pay a little more."

But not much more. She had the salary paid her as a Civil Service employee of the Navy Department, and also the money her father sent her. He was a naval officer, now on active duty somewhere in the Atlantic. Ellen and her mother had managed very comfortably, but Mrs. Mathew's final illness had been long and costly.

The debts paid—doctors, nurses, hospital, funeral expenses—and the household belongings disposed of, Ellen had moved into a boardinghouse occupied by government clerks. The Parkers had urged her to make her home with them. Their only daughter Bettina, Ellen's good friend, was to be married, and they would be alone. But she had refused the offer, as she had refused the offers of other friends, Navy people stationed in or near Washington. She had a horror of obligation. Jim, her brother, wanted to send her money too, which was absurd. Jim was a lieutenant (j.g.), at present on board a destroyer in the Pacific. He was engaged to be married. He should certainly save every cent, so that when he and Janice were married they would have a little backlog. They'd need it, she reflected, as Janice was horribly extravagant.

Matilda James was expostulating, "Oh, but of course not. I had expected Sally and I would go on here alone unless my young half sister's husband—he's an Army flier—is sent overseas, and Katie wants to come home."

"I see." Ellen smiled. "It's very kind of you to want me. I won't be much trouble, and I'll take my meals out."

"Nonsense!" said Matilda. "I hope you'll feel free to use the kitchen and to entertain your friends."

"Thank you," Ellen said gratefully, "but I don't want to upset your arrangements. I'm on an early watch——"

"Watch?"

"Navy for shift," Ellen explained, "under the stagger plan—so I have to leave the house early. If I could make my own coffee and toast and fruit juice, it would be nice. I eat lunch at the Navy cafeteria, and dinner wherever I happen to be. I am asked out now and again."

"Oh, don't be stuffy," Janice interrupted Ellen.

Matilda said briskly, "Well, that's settled, then. Until Sally goes, you and she will share the larger bedroom; then you can have a room to yourself—the one Sally formerly had. She's to be married quietly from her fiancé's sister's home, the first of the month."

Matilda looked at her new tenant, a tall girl with honey-colored hair, very white skin and direct gray eyes. She seemed unusually controlled, Matilda thought, different from the other girls. Sally Wicker was redheaded and volatile; Katie—well, there was never anyone like Katie, thought Katie's half sister with a pang of love and homesickness.

"I suppose you've lived practically all over the world," Matilda said. "Mrs. Parker said you had."

"I was born in Hawaii," said Ellen, "and I've lived in a lot of places. China and the Philippines, and once in Samoa. And of course here at various shore stations—Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Charleston."

Matilda rose. "Would you like to put your things in the bedroom? I wish I were free today, but I've promised to go out with an old friend."

Ellen unpacked her suitcase. Her trunk would follow. She hung up her simple frocks, put the lingerie in the drawers indicated, and set out on the dresser

Jim's picture, her father's, her mother's, and a small etching of Diamond Head.

Matilda appeared in the doorway, looking anxious. She asked, "Have you made any plans for luncheon? If not, there are things in the icebox."

Ellen said, "Thank you. I have a luncheon engagement."

When Matilda had gone and Ellen was alone in the apartment she sat down and put her hands over her eyes. She was so alone. She had a hundred good friends, but she was alone. While her mother had lived she had been companioned. They had worried together over Jim and Captain Mathews, and her mother had shared Ellen's grief when Van was killed at Pearl Harbor.

She and Van hadn't been engaged. They had known each other always. Van's father was Navy; Van too was Annapolis.

The last time Ellen had seen him, he had kissed her and said, "Don't forget you're my girl, Ellen."

Perhaps she hadn't been in love with him; she didn't know. She knew only that his death had stunned her into frozen, rebellious unbelief. Possibly, had he lived, he would have married someone else, and she too. If he had asked her to marry him that last time they were together she would most certainly have refused. Her mother was ill and needed her. But she might have said, "Later."

Ellen couldn't imagine marrying anyone outside the Navy. The Navy was her life; it was in her blood; she was, in Navy slang, a yard engine, an officer's daughter—an officer's granddaughter, if it came to that; an officer's sister and niece. Her mother had been Navy too.

Yes, it had been her life—the moving about; the settling in some strange port, accommodating oneself to climate, to alien tongues, the waiting during her father's hitches of sea duty. Regulations were as familiar to her as the alphabet; the rigid social rulings; the knowledge that the behavior of an officer's wife or daughter counted for or against him in curious, involved ways. She had had opportunities to marry into the Service. She was twenty-five years old and more than moderately attractive. But none of the nice, pleasant, eager boys had attracted her sufficiently—except Van.

Ellen sighed and rose, to change her frock, and presently, with the new key in her handbag, to descend the stairs and walk to a bus station. She had promised to spend the day with Janice.

She dreaded it, rather. She did it for Jim—in order that she might write him: "I was with Janice today. She is as pretty as ever."

But Janice and she had nothing in common. Janice was twenty, and definitely not Navy. She was the daughter of a lawyer whom they had known in Charleston and who was now doing government work in Washington. Jim had met Janice again on a leave and had fallen in love with her. On his last leave they had become engaged.

Janice was pretty and gay; she had, apparently, an enormous appeal to men. The house the Walkers had rented in Georgetown was always full of young men, in and out of uniform. Janice's engagement had not been announced, and she wore Jim's modest ring on her right hand. She worked at a Red Cross canteen; she modeled for charity affairs; she went to New York on holidays. "I write Jim everything I do," she told Ellen.

Well, perhaps. Ellen could imagine Janice's letters. A large "Darling," a great many exclamation marks and underlinings, and the information that she was rushed, but *rushed,* darling, and must fly—to this or that benefit, dinner or cocktail party.

Well, that was Janice. But Jim loved her, and his heart was set on two things: helping to win this war and coming home to marry Janice. If only he would come home, Ellen thought, he could marry Janice or a dozen like her, and his sister would be content.

"That woman had no right to ask me personal questions about Jim."

As usual, the small Georgetown house was full to overflowing. A buffet luncheon was in noisy progress. It was well after six when the house became quiet, and Mr. Walker retired to take a short nap before dinner, Mrs. Walker closeted herself with her maid, and Janice dragged Ellen upstairs to her bedroom.

"I'm dead!" she cried, flinging herself upon the enormous bed heaped with pillows, long-legged dolls and Disney animals. "But a cadaver, absolutely. I don't know why I work as hard as I do. I've been begging Father to let me go to Florida this winter, but he says that what with the Army taking over and all, to say nothing of taxes——"

Ellen, in a slipper chair near the bed, said, "You could cut out some of the things you are doing, Janice." She looked at the younger girl's narrow, cream-colored face, the flying wings of shoulder-length dark hair, the long restless eyes, a curious unexpected hazel, the small, full red mouth. "I don't mean the USO and canteens, but some of the purely social doings."

"I know," said Janice; "but if I'm not on the go I simply curl up and die. I get so bored, Ellen." Then she asked, "Have you heard from Jim?"

"Not since—let me see, ten days ago. And you?"

"Day before yesterday, three letters all at once, with different dates." She stretched out a long arm and opened a drawer of the bedside table. "Here." She tossed the envelopes into Ellen's lap.

Ellen frowned. "But I don't want to——"

"Oh, go on. He doesn't say anything that you shouldn't read." Janice grinned. "He isn't such a great lover, on paper."

Ellen looked at the small square envelopes and withdrew their contents—V mail. Jim was well; he was busy; he hadn't heard from Janice in some time, and he worried about her. How was she; what was she doing; had she seen Ellen?

Janice complained, "About as personal as—as a Pullman section."

"Well," said Ellen, "after all, he has censors to consider as well as space. Haven't you been writing him, Janice?"

"Of course I have," Janice said indignantly. "But it's so hard. He's so far away. I write about something that's just happened, and by the time it gets to him—if it does get to him—it's old news. It sort of cramps your style—that and censorship. So what is there to say except that I'm all right and dreadfully busy?"

Ellen smiled. "You could add that you love him and miss him."

"Oh, but I do," cried Janice, "and he knows it anyway! I wish he were here. It's so dull without him." She looked at her wrist watch and sprang up. "Dinner. Father's got some gruesome young man coming, and I asked Dolly and Pat. Perhaps we'd better go down."

Dolly and Pat were twins. Dolly was small and blond, and Pat was tall and dark. Pat was in one of the alphabetical offices, and Dolly, a recent bride whose husband was in Ireland, was Janice's closest friend.

The gruesome young man proved to be a tall, lanky, Lincolnesque person with a strong, ugly face redeemed by a quick, warm smile and fine dark eyes. His name was Barry Davis, and Ellen sat next to him at dinner. In a manner of speaking, he had been lent to the government by his company.

His job, Ellen discovered later, had to do with involved economics. "Barry's a genius," said Mr. Walker, talking to Ellen after dinner in the drawing room. "So he's been given a specialized job and frozen into it."

Janice had Mr. Davis in tow, sitting beside him on a couch, her eyes vivacious. She was never really bored when there was a man around, thought Ellen. I'm not being disloyal, she told herself unhappily, but after all, she has promised to marry Jim.

When Ellen was ready to leave, Barry Davis asked if he could take her home.

"Do let him!" cried Janice. "You know Father hates to have you go home alone nights, Ellen, and it isn't safe; really, it isn't." She kissed Ellen and turned to Davis. "Take good care of her, and don't forget our lunch date Tuesday—the Carlton, at one."

The door closed behind them, and they walked two blocks or more before they found a taxi. They got in, and Ellen gave her address. She said, "I'm afraid I'm taking you out of your way, Mr. Davis."

It didn't matter, he assured her. He was living at a small hotel on Sixteenth Street. "If I knew this job was going to last any length of time," he told her, "I'd try to find a small apartment and persuade my sister to come down from New York and keep house for me." He wasn't married, then, Ellen thought as he went on. "I felt at an utter loss here, knowing so few people, but I ran into Mr. Walker in the Mayflower bar the other night. It was like a message from home. I was born in Charleston, you see, but we moved to New York when I was twelve. I remembered him and Mrs. Walker. I didn't remember Janice, but boys are never greatly interested in infants." He added that Janice was very attractive.

Yes, thought Ellen, she's attractive and you are lunching with her Tuesday and she's engaged to my brother, but no one knows it except her family and my family. And she wouldn't want me to tell you, so I shan't.

He asked, "You're a Washington girl?"

"I'm a Navy brat," said Ellen, smiling. "I was born in Hawaii, and I've lived all around the world. At present, I'm here working in one of the eight bureaus of the Navy Department."

"You live with your people?" he asked.

She told him briefly about her family, and there was a short silence.

Then he said, with awkward gentleness, "It must be very hard for you, being alone now, with your brother and father at sea."

"For me," she said, "and for millions of women like me. There isn't much we can do about it, is there, except wait and hope and do whatever job is at hand as well as possible?"

He said, "I suppose so. I suppose I should feel like that too. Perhaps inside I do, but sometimes I'm beside myself with impatience, sitting here in safety, working with figures and legal technicalities, instead of learning how to use a gun on bigger game than grouse or pheasant."

She said, "There are men in the Navy

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Department who feel as you do, Mr. Davis. They know about ships and guns, and the sea is their life. Yet they are doing desk jobs because it is required of them. They aren't happy about it, but they know it's the place where they're most needed. So even though they miss their ships——" She broke off. You couldn't explain to someone who wasn't Navy; it wasn't possible.

But Davis said, "I think I understand." He added, "And you've helped me. I've felt for months like slinking around the nearest corner when I see a uniform." The cab drew up at Ellen's apartment, and he got out with her. He said to the driver, "Don't put your flag up. I'm going on with you."

At the door, he asked, "May I see you upstairs? . . . No? Sure you'll be all right?"

"I'm fine, and I wouldn't make you walk two flights." She gave him her hand and smiled at him. "Good night, and thank you for bringing me home."

He said, lingering, "Perhaps you would take pity on me and dine with me someday—or lunch?"

"We have only half an hour for lunch, Mr. Davis."

"Dinner, then. Are you in the book?"

"No, I've just moved." She gave him Matilda's telephone number; he produced a notebook and wrote it down, smiled at her, turned to the waiting cab and was gone.

Climbing the stairs, she felt a curious mixture of emotions—an exasperated irritation with Janice and a pleasurable expectancy which concerned itself with Barry Davis. He was a nice man, she thought, agreeable and intelligent.

She opened the apartment door with her key and found Matilda James in a big chair, a mystery book sliding off her lap. Matilda said, startled, "I must have fallen asleep. Sally came in a few moments ago."

Ellen went back to the bedroom, and Sally greeted her with a warm handclasp. "I'm sorry I wasn't here to welcome you," she said, "but Kim dragged me off to spend the week end with some friends in Maryland." She added, "I suppose you've heard the news."

"Yes," said Ellen. "I hope you'll be very happy."

"The funny thing is, I never expected to be. You never know your luck, do you?" Sally said, smiling as she went to the door. "I have to coax Tilda to go to bed; she's taken to such late hours since Katie married."

Ellen got ready for bed. She heard Matilda go to her room with Sally at her heels; heard them talking. Sitting up in bed, she wrote Jim that she had seen Janice, who had looked very pretty and was up to her little ears in war work. She wrote him news of friends. She said she had heard from their father. She sent her love.

She had finished and was about to turn out the light on the table beside her when Sally came in, saying apologetically, "I'm afraid I've kept you up, but Tilda's always so interested in everything—and I was the bearer of a special invitation from Kim. He wants her to dine with us tomorrow night. I wish you would too. I'd like you to meet him."

"Another time," said Ellen regretfully. "I have to be at the canteen. But it's nice of you to think of me."

Sally giggled. "It isn't nice at all. It's selfish. I'm so darned proud of myself I want to show Kim off to everybody."

"You've known him long?" asked Ellen.

"No, I haven't. It's one of those girl-meets-boss businesses. Just like the movies. But if he has his way he'll get out of the department into the Army. That's one thing that decided me. I suppose you'll think I'm crazy, wanting to take all the happiness I can now, living really from day to day."

"We all do," said Ellen. "And I don't blame you at all."

Yet later, after Sally was asleep, she thought that she hadn't felt that way when Jim had begged Janice to marry him on his last leave: "How do we know when I'll be home again, Janice? . . . We have these few days; can't we make the most of them? . . . It's—it's making sure, darling; knowing you'll be waiting; that I'll have you to come home to."

Ellen had been with them at Janice's house that afternoon. Jim had listened to Janice's arguments and then had turned to his sister in despair.

"You persuade her, Ellen. You tell her it's the only way."

The Navy way. You married your man; you waited for him; you were the port to which he returned, in peace or war.

Yet Ellen had allied herself with Janice. For Janice had said, "But I don't want to be married yet. It's so much more sensible to wait, Jim."

So Ellen had not helped Jim when Janice had insisted that the engagement be known to no one outside the family. She couldn't say, "No, I don't approve of it either—either she's engaged to you or she isn't. But if that's the way she feels about it, that's the way it should be."

One night Ellen had dinner with Barry Davis. He proved to be an interesting companion. He told her something of his work, asked about her life in the Navy, admitting that it was not a way of life for him. "I'm the type of man who likes finding his slippers in one place."

"You don't like traveling?" she asked.

"I haven't a drop of tourist blood," he said. "Trekking around churches and museums and art galleries leaves my mind cold and my feet burning. Perhaps I was conditioned in my youth. My mother was an indefatigable globe-trotter. Before I was sixteen, I had been dragged twice around Europe. It was dreadful. I used to get lost deliberately and be directed back to our hotel, where I could sit in peace until Mother and my elder sister Gertrude turned up."

Ellen asked, astonished, "But doesn't the romance of strange places appeal to your imagination?"

He shook his head. "You're assuming I have imagination. I haven't an ounce, really. It's pitiful but true, and probably why Janice told me the other day I was the dullest man she had ever met." His dark eyes laughed, and he added, with resignation, "When a pretty girl tells you that, you may as well realize life is over for you."

Barry had been seeing a good deal of Janice, as Ellen knew. She wondered whether he was falling in love with her. She hoped not. Whether he had imagination or not, he seemed to her the sort of man who could be badly hurt.

Arriving at the Walkers' on the Sunday following Sally Wicker's wedding, Ellen found Janice petulant and restless. The usual crowd seemed to be there, but Janice, announcing a crashing headache, carried Ellen upstairs and threw herself on the bed with a washcloth over her eyes. Her head throbbed; she was coming down with something, she prophesied gloomily.

Ellen sat by the bed and listened to Janice's complaints. Jim hadn't written; at least, if he had the letters hadn't come through. She wasn't going to the canteen any more; she couldn't stand the attitude of some of the women. "Can I help it if the boys try to date me?" she inquired indignantly. Florida was definitely out. Her father wouldn't hear of it. And Barry Davis was quite the most exasperating man she had ever encountered.

Ellen's heart quickened. It seemed to her that all this moaning was simply leading up to this: that Barry Davis' exasperating traits had assumed undue significance in Janice's eyes.

"Why do you say that?" she inquired. "I like him very much."

"Oh, you would!" said Janice. "He told me he'd been seeing you. Well, you're welcome to him. He makes me tired." She went on crossly, "He was coming here today, but at the last minute called up to say he had some work to do and couldn't make it. On Sunday! I don't believe it."

"He's very busy. Sunday is just another day to most men in these times, Janice."

Janice tore off the washcloth. It didn't help her head; nothing did. She was worn out. She should go away and rest. But everyone, everything, was against her. She said, "I met that absurd Mrs.—Ullen, isn't it?—the other day at the canteen. Dreadful old hag, and so prying. I could have slapped her down—and did," she admitted, "after a fashion."

"That wasn't very wise of you," said Ellen. Mrs. Ullen was the wife of a Rear Admiral.

"I'm not in the Navy yet," said Janice. "I don't have to wait until these old fluffs go out of a room. I don't have to jump to attention when spoken to."

"She's a much older woman, and whether you are Navy or not, it is mere courtesy to let her precede you, Janice, and to rise when she——"

"Oh, don't be stuffy!" Janice interrupted. "I don't need you to teach me manners. But the woman hadn't any right to ask me a lot of personal questions: when had I heard from Jim; what had he said and all that."

"Her son and Jim were classmates," said Ellen. "She simply showed a natural interest, for she has always been fond of Jim."

"What has that to do with me?" Janice demanded.

"It will have a great deal to do with you when you and Jim are married."

"If he thinks I'm going to kowtow to every old woman whose husband happens to have a higher rank, he will have to revise his ideas—radically."

"It's not kowtowing," said Ellen.

"I know some Navy wives," said Janice glumly. "I've talked to them—the young ones, I mean. Fancy everyone knowing just how much money you have, including any outside income, and how much you should or shouldn't expend on clothes, entertainment, servants. It's too silly. Like living in a lantern. Everyone knows everything you do. One of these girls—her husband's at sea now; they're regular Navy—well, it seems a man she was once engaged to came to see her and took her out, and it was all over Navy circles in no time. What do they expect you to do, shut yourself up in a convent?"

"Gossip is the same the world over. In Navy circles, perhaps it assumes more importance. Silly things do happen when a handful of people are confined to a jungle outpost. Petty meannesses come out, jealousies, envy, and unhappiness—but the finer qualities as well."

"You aren't painting a very attractive picture," Janice said.

They ran into Janice in the lobby and before Ellen could say yes or no, they were headed toward the Shoreham for supper and dancing.

"It's only a minor side of it. For the most part, it's a wonderful way of life. The sacrifices and friendships, the kindness you encounter and the wonderful loyalty. And if it's glamour you're looking for, there's plenty of that."

Dark velvet skies and stars as big as dinner plates. The moon, gold and crystal, a silver path along the water. Ships at anchor and wings overhead. Music and laughter, the uniforms, the pretty frocks of pretty women, the good Navy talk. The feeling of belonging to something big and important; something necessary, powerful and vigilant. Oh, there were rumors and jealousies, gossip and scandal, there were mistakes and criticism, anxiety and heartaches, but it had been her life. She asked for no better.

Janice was silent for a time. Then she asked, "Ellen, do you think Jim would consider leaving the Navy after the war is over? He's clever, and terribly good-looking. There must be other things he can do. Dad could get him a job. I like Washington. We might settle down here."

"Unless I don't know Jim very well," said Ellen carefully, "I doubt that you could persuade him."

"Oh," said Janice, "there are ways."

Many ways. Ways with arms and eyes and tears; ways with a soft red mouth and clinging hands; ways with urgency behind them; blackmailing ways.

She went on sullenly, "I thought I'd be crazy about the Navy—I mean, now, in wartime and all. But I've changed my mind. I don't want to be cooped up with a lot of women who know everything about me."

Ellen said, "Jim's Navy. It's as much a part of him as his hands or his feet. Take him out of it and you would cripple him as surely as if you had performed an amputation."

Her eyes were grave and her mouth was set in lines so stern that Janice was frightened. She didn't want to quarrel with Ellen. She had been stupid to say anything. Ellen would never see her side of it. But Jim was crazy about her. She could turn him around her finger, she thought. But this wasn't the way to do it.

She sprang up. "Skip it. I was just talking. I didn't mean a word of it, Ellen. I'm a fool. Let's go downstairs, darling. My headache's better. Sorry I was cross and silly. I don't know how you stand me!" She put her arms around Ellen. "Forgive me," she begged, "and don't tell Jim. I didn't mean it; truly I didn't."

Convince Ellen of that so she doesn't say anything to Jim; so she doesn't warn him. There were other ways to win him over; methods of which Ellen knew nothing. Funny, thought Janice, Ellen was such an attractive girl. But cold, and a little on the old-maid side.

Ellen's lack of emotion made her think of Barry Davis. Of all the hard to get——! Not that she wanted him; he wasn't her type. Yet it infuriated her when a scalp escaped her sharp, curiosity-whetted knife.

She said carelessly, "I guess I'll ring up Barry and see if he's through his stupid work and wants to come around."

He came after dinner, and he, Janice, Ellen and a young man who turned up at the same time—Janice called him "Bim"—went to the movies and then to the Carlton to dance. Barry took Ellen home, but she noticed that Janice had tried hard to manage things so that Barry would take her home and Bim escort Ellen. It didn't work. And when Barry Davis, standing outside the apartment, asked, "Dinner next Tuesday?" Ellen said, "I'd like to very much."

On the way upstairs she was aware that she had accepted this engagement because of Janice. She approached the apartment a little appalled at her own motives. Opening the door, she was greeted with voices and laughter. She looked in amazement at the dark, beautiful girl on the couch beside Matilda, and at the man in Air Force uniform. Of course, Matilda's beloved Katie and Katie's new husband!

There was a babble of introductions and explanations. Bud had been transferred very suddenly. He'd be in Washington for just one night. He'd leave the next day. Katie would join him later.

Katie glowed, thought Ellen; happiness was like a light she carried with her. When Katie looked at her husband, she had the beautiful arrogance of the beloved and the touching humility of the lover. Ellen's heart tightened. Janice wasn't like Katie. Janice was moody with Jim, sweet or rebellious by turns, demanding and possessive.

When Bud left the next day Katie stayed in the apartment, sharing a room with Matilda, cooking excellent meals and talking of her recent experiences, marking time until she could join her husband.

She said, "I suppose it's silly of us, the way things are, but we don't know when he'll go over, and I want to be with him."

"Of course you do," said Ellen.

They were talking in the living room one evening. Matilda hadn't come in yet.

"When he goes, will you return here?" Ellen asked.

"I don't know," said Katie. "Tilda wants me; she'll be hurt if I don't. But I want to go into defense work. I want the sort of job that will bring me closer to Bud—making planes, guns, anything—so that every time I go to work I can think: *This helps him.* I don't know if you understand that."

"I UNDERSTAND perfectly," said Ellen. Then she asked abruptly, "How do you go about getting a man interested in you?"

Katie chuckled. "By being yourself, I suppose. You're very attractive: you shouldn't have any trouble, Ellen."

"I haven't bothered until now."

"In love?" asked Katie.

"Oh, no," said Ellen, "it isn't that."

Katie raised a beautiful eyebrow. "You've never been in love?"

"Once," said Ellen; "at least, I think so. I've never been sure."

"Then you weren't," said Katie wisely. "What happened?"

"He died at Pearl Harbor on December seventh."

"Oh, I'm sorry," said Katie gently. "But you weren't really in love with him. Having him die like that, you'd think so, I suppose. That must happen often, especially now. And there's a new man?"

Ellen said, "I oughtn't to tell you this. I——"

"Get it off your chest. I can keep a secret," said Katie, and her eyes clouded, as if at some time she had kept one which was a burden.

"My brother is engaged," Ellen explained. "He's at sea. The engagement hasn't been announced. The girl lives here in Washington and is very popular."

"And two-timing?" Katie deduced.

Ellen shivered. "Perhaps," she said. "I don't think she cares for anyone except Jim. It's just the way she's made."

"Then she can't help it. But if she loves him, she'll make herself over."

"She's met a man recently," said Ellen. "I'm sure she cares nothing about him, but she sees a lot of him."

"And you would like to take him away from her?"

"I suppose that's it," said Ellen.

"Well, you should be able to. But what are you going to do with him if you get him?"

"I don't know," said Ellen helplessly.

"That," laughed Katie, "is your worry. Look, Ellen, what sort of a man is he?" Ellen told her, and Katie nodded. "Right up your alley. Not a playboy."

"But how?" asked Ellen. "I mean, she—the girl my brother's engaged to—she's so attractive and so——"

"I know what you mean."

"What do men really like?" asked Ellen.

"You'll have to find that out for yourself. Looks, of course, and good nature. Men get terribly tired of girls who chop and change, all one mood one day and another the next. They like a girl who isn't upset if there isn't any cab or the restaurants are all out of beef. They like a girl who doesn't cling like a barnacle. They like a girl who lets them talk about themselves. You don't have to throw yourself at them, but they like to think that for one man you might be persuaded to turn on the heat."

"Oh!" said Ellen, flushing.

Katie rose. "I hear Matilda in the hall." She touched Ellen's shoulder lightly. "Good luck. I wish I could be here to hear how it goes. Perhaps I shall be. Anyway, just be yourself, only more so."

But Bud telephoned that night, and the next day Katie had gone to a new field in upstate New York.

In the days that followed, Ellen was intent upon planned strategy. If you were accustomed to easy conquest you didn't plan, she supposed. You didn't have to. But if you were her type?

What is my type? she asked herself, and looked gravely in the mirror as she dressed to dine with Barry. He had seats for a new play at the National.

In looks, easy to classify—the tall, blond type, size twelve frock, good legs, a skin which could stand any sort of test, including sunlight, lamplight and tactile. But more than one man had said she was cold. What gave them that impression? She knew that she was capable of deep, passionate attachments—to her mother, her father, to Jim, to friends.

She had none of the vivacity which attracts men; none of the tricks. It was not in her nature to blow hot or cold, and so stimulate the chase. She told the mirror: You may as well face it. You have no sex appeal. The mirror replied gravely: But admit that you are easy on the eyes. Perhaps, she thought, frowning at her reflection; yet it's not the sort of easiness in demand. She was just what she seemed to be—a quiet, self-contained girl, thoughtful, capable, responsible and sincere. These were not qualities for the siren, they did not add seduction. With so few weapons, how could one fight a campaign? Well, possibly she could manage a delaying action, at least.

For this evening she had invested in a new frock—long, slim, high-necked, long-sleeved, more figure-revealing than her usual apparel. It was black, with flowers traced on the bodice and skirt in glittering sequins—dull rose and turquoise. She had bought a new lipstick, the deep rose of the sequins. She wore her grandmother's turquoises: the earrings and the bracelet and ring.

All this armament—for what? For Barry Davis, to divert his attention from Janice. The last time she had dined with him he had talked about Janice. There was little for Ellen to do but listen, wondering how to deflect the growing interest. She had had no experience in deliberate reaching out after a man's attention. She had always had attention; a Navy girl was bound to have that. She had never lacked for escorts or partners.

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LIFE for lovely Oona O'Neill, New York's No. 1 deb, is keyed to quick tempo . . . what with pressing war work and "doing the town." Yet Oona says: "Cross my heart—a Woodbury Facial Cocktail is my only beauty care. You see, Woodbury Soap does such a swell job of cleansing and clearing my skin." What's so "special" about Woodbury Facial Soap? It's 100% *skin* soap. Its purpose—to cleanse the skin, *gently*. A costly ingredient in Woodbury makes this soap milder.

1. **Who cares** if "doggy" cars are out for the duration? Oona borrows a 1907 model of gasolineless "electric" for jaunts with her soldier escort. "Most of the lads," says Oona, "don't even notice your clothes. But what a rush a girl gets, if she has a clear, smooth skin!"

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Not, she decided, turning away from the mirror, an ugly duckling, at all events. Probably just a good gray goose!

Later, sitting at the table in the Shoreham with Barry, she became aware that it would be impossible for her to turn siren between one course and the next. If she leaned closer to him, if she softened her voice to an intimate murmur, he would probably think the cocktail had gone to her head. She began to laugh.

"What's funny?" demanded Barry, adding, "You have a very attractive laugh."

She said, "I was thinking about an article my mother read years ago in a magazine. It was by an actress turned writer. It seemed she read somewhere that in order to hold one's husband a woman should treat him, in a sense, as if he were a charming stranger. I don't suppose the word glamour was in common use at the time, but it added up to that. So one night the writer greeted her husband in a new, alluring negligee. She had ordered all the things he best liked for dinner, including champagne. She talked to him vivaciously, also flirted with him—that was the term at the time. But he kept growing glummer. Dinner over, he said, 'Louise, you've been drinking!' "

BARRY laughed. "I see the point. Glamour's an overworked word, and quality too. I doubt if the average man falls for it often. A guy who tears out to Reno because his wife wears curlers or shines with cold cream or has colic or a cold in her head was never a husband in the first place. There's been too much emphasis on the trimmings. It takes something a lot more solid to build a marriage. Not that a little touch of charm isn't fun, and necessary. My mother had that always—to the end of her life. I've seen her tired to tears; I've seen her with her head shorn after typhoid, but there it was—the sort of enchantment that held you."

"What was she like?" asked Ellen. "I mean, was she pretty?"

"She was quite pretty," said Barry, "but not startlingly so. Heads didn't turn when she came into a room, but after a while people began to look at her. I can't explain it."

Ellen thought: Asking Katie what men like in girls hadn't been much good; all generalizations. What does a particular man like in a girl? Well, knowing Janice, she thought she knew. But here the man was, and she would ask him.

"What interests you—in a woman?" asked Ellen.

"Good Lord, what a question. I don't know how to answer it. Because apparently I am a man who simply likes women. I enjoy their company. So, in one woman, it's a sense of humor, and in another, her appearance; in still another, the fact that we have common interests."

"That hardly narrows the field," said Ellen. She asked, "Janice?"

"Janice? she's pretty and exciting. You never know quite where you are with her. She's a flattering little creature at times, and at others, she slaps you down with a word. One keeps wondering what's beneath the surface."

"Do men always want to be kept wondering?"

"What is this—a questionnaire on male psychology? As if you didn't know by instinct. All women know."

"That is a fallacy. I suppose it's to our advantage to have men think that—or does it put them on their guard?"

The smile in his eyes deepened. "I'm beginning to think you're an unusual girl. And you've started me wondering—about you."

"A step in the right direction," Ellen conceded. "Why me? I'm not in the least like Janice."

"No," he agreed, "you certainly aren't."

"Therefore," deduced Ellen, "I'm not your type?"

"I've just told you I have no type. I don't believe many men do."

She said, "I've never thought much about men."

"At your age?" he demanded. "Then what *have* you been doing?"

"Living," she said; "liking strange places; knowing a great many people, and latterly, working and waiting."

"For anyone in particular, or mustn't I inquire?"

"For my father, and my brother."

"And—unrelated men?"

"They were always there in the background. I've never found them engrossing to a point——" She broke off and looked at him. "I've disillusioned you!"

"No, merely wounded the male ego and affronted the sex in general." He added, "Why haven't we talked like this before?"

"It never occurred to me, or, apparently, to you."

"No, you don't encourage the—surface intimacies such a discussion brings with it. And I was beginning to think I knew you very well."

"You do," she said. "I decided earlier tonight that I am exactly as I appear."

"If so, you are unique among women."

Ellen shook her head. "It's just that I haven't learned the evasions, elusions and disguises. And now it's too late."

"Shall I sound very stuffed-shirt if I tell you that from the first evening I met you at the Walkers' I found you especially refreshing because you seemed to be completely sincere?"

"And you liked that?" she inquired.

He said, "Of course I liked it."

Ellen sighed. "But it isn't exciting."

"Men don't want to live on the edge of a precipice all the time. They like, as well, firm ground beneath their feet." Barry looked at her. "I beg of you, don't go mysterious on me just when I am beginning to feel at home with you. For it has occurred to me that you are that rarity, a completely truthful woman."

"A long time ago I remember a great-aunt of mine saying that men didn't like the truth. She was a wise and witty woman, and she had been married four times. Maybe she knew what she was talking about."

"She didn't by any chance influence you?"

"No," said Ellen, "I'm afraid not."

"Then will you answer a question—truthfully?"

She felt her heart shake, but she said, "Yes, of course."

"Then why—all this? You see, I am aware of the fact that our conversation took this turn through your guidance."

She thought: I'm no siren. We've established that much. The wise women warn you that you lose a man through honesty. We'll see. Not that I could lose what I've not had.

She said, "Very well. I was trying to attract your attention in a more personal way."

"In heaven's name, why?" he demanded.

"Do you really want to know?"

He hesitated. He said after a minute, "Truth for truth. I'm not sure that I want to know, but my curiosity is stronger than my better judgment."

She raised her eyes to his, dark gray, the color of rainy skies. She said, "It has been evident to me lately that you are a little in love with Janice Walker. As I'd rather you wouldn't be, I thought it might not be too late to divert you."

He said, "You are the most appalling woman I have ever met! You're incredible. Why? And why are you telling me this?"

"I can't tell you why," she said, "if you mean why I resent your interest in Janice. It isn't because I wish to evade the truth. It's because I can't tell you. I won't lie about it. I have a definite and, to me, important reason. I don't give a hoot about you, but I do about Janice. I don't want her to be seriously interested in you. Why I feel this way doesn't concern you. As for why I told you, you asked me."

He said blankly, "You terrify me."

"I'm sorry," Ellen said, and added, "It's getting late. We'll miss the curtain."

They went on to the National and she was never able to recall much about the play. Her mind was preoccupied with herself. She thought: What ever came over me? Well, what? Sink or swim. If she had labored for months to attract Barry's interest, she could not have succeeded as well as she had in a few short minutes of barefaced honesty. She thought: And I'll never be able to make him believe that I was being truthful. He'll assure himself that I am playing a new kind of game. It doesn't matter. She was conscious that her own uncertainty had passed; she felt at ease, even a little powerful, as if all the cards were in her hands.

Their seats were next to acquaintances of his, to whom he presented Ellen. Between acts, intimate conversation was out of the question. And as they left after the final curtain, they ran into Janice, her parents, Dolly and three young men in the lobby, and before Ellen could say yes or no, they were all headed back to the Shoreham for supper and dancing.

"Barry darling," shrieked Janice, "if only you'd told me, when you refused——"

Translated, this meant: "I asked you to dine and go to the theater; if you had told me with whom your engagement was, I would have asked Ellen too—as a necessary evil."

Ellen smiled, and Barry was suddenly angry with her. By what right—and what interest could she have in any relationship between himself and Janice? It made no sense.

"You haven't called me lately," said Janice, putting her hand on Barry's arm. He didn't look at Ellen as he made his excuses. He spoke smilingly to Janice, aware that one of her escorts, in an Air Force uniform, was glaring at him.

LATER, he learned that the lieutenant was a bombardier, recently transferred to a near-by field. He was a New Yorker, and his name was Stanley Worthington. Barry knew who he was in civilian life. You couldn't live in New York and not hear about the Worthingtons and their polo-playing, yacht-racing son, with his background of Manhattan and Bar Harbor, his money and his sensational divorce early in 1940.

"He's wonderful," said Janice in the powder room, to Ellen. "Most fascinating man I ever met."

Afterwards, watching Janice dancing with the bombardier, Ellen thought: I've made a fantastic mistake. She said as much to Barry when they danced together. She said, "Janice's new young man is very attentive. And she likes it."

"Do I appear crushed?" Barry inquired, and added, "Aren't you employing the wrong tactics?"

"I haven't the least idea. Why?"

"You are pointing out the possibility of a rival. And what a rival!" said Barry. "There's glamour for you—horses, seagoing yachts—now in the service—villas, money. Plenty of it, even nowadays."

She said coolly, "I'm not worried. I mean, even if the possibility spurs you on. I'm simply disturbed because I need not have spoken, when all the time nature was taking its course. Which makes it very difficult for me."

"Do you mean to say that you now feel it your duty to go all out after Mr. Worthington?"

"No! I'm afraid my lack of methods would hamper me, in this case."

"So it's only I? But how could it be?"

"Let's not go into that; it's too involved," said Ellen. "It's enough to say that as long as Janice plays the field I can retire gracefully from it."

"What happens next?" he asked her.

"Nothing whatever."

"Will you have dinner with me tomorrow night?"

"No. I'm going out with friends."

"I see. Then the night after?"

"Not until Monday," she said. "Of course you'll be at the Walkers' on Sunday?"

"If only to keep an eye on the lieutenant, provided he's there also," said Barry. "Monday night, then? And on what basis?"

Ellen smiled at him. "The old one. You'll be so much more comfortable."

The following Sunday Ellen arrived at the Walkers' just in time for dinner. The first person she saw was Barry Davis, and the slightly satirical smile he gave her brought the bright blood to her cheeks. Stanley Worthington was considerably in evidence, and Janice confided, "He's spending all his leave in Washington. He decided not to go to New York." There was triumph in her voice, and Ellen thought: Well, here we go again.

She did not sit near Barry at dinner, but between a youthful ensign of the Naval Reserve and Bettina Parker's husband, Dr. Lowden. The Lowdens had just returned from their honeymoon, and Ellen was glad to see her friend again. Looking at Bettina, she thought: Why couldn't Jim have fallen in love with her? She noticed that Worthington, although extremely attentive to Janice, reserved an appreciative eye for Bettina's red-gold hair. He wasn't the type to be very serious about anyone, Ellen decided.

Why, she wondered, did she care? She had never approved of her brother's engagement. If it were, so to speak, bombed out of existence, so much the better. Yet she could not endure having him hurt.

Other people came in after dinner, but Barry managed to draw Ellen aside as the card tables were being set up. "Can't we duck this contract game and go on to greener pastures?" he asked.

"I am ducking it," she told him. "The Lowdens are taking me home, and they're leaving early because the doctor has to go to the hospital. But I'm afraid you'll have to stay here."

"What's the idea of running out on me?" he demanded.

Before Ellen could reply, Janice came up to them. "You and Mr. Worthington, and Mother and I, Barry," she said. "We're waiting."

He bestowed a look of comic resignation on Ellen, and as Janice turned away, inquired solemnly, "Shouldn't you stay and protect me—or Janice?"

Ellen asked, "Have you forgotten that I withdrew from the lists almost as soon as I entered them?"

When he called for her on Monday night he said, "Fate conspires against me! My sister arrived without warning this afternoon, so we're dining together, the three of us."

Ellen said, "Barry, surely you know

me well enough to call off our date so that you can be with your sister."

"I don't know you at all," he said serenely, "and I want Gertrude to meet you. It merely means the postponement of an interesting conversation. I have been thinking over your recent unusual antics and have arrived at several conclusions. I'd like to discuss them with you, but Gertrude's waiting in the taxi."

"Even if she weren't," Ellen retorted, "I would consider the subject closed."

"You can't be so cruel," he argued; "it would be like reading the first installment of an enthralling serial and never seeing the magazine again."

Ellen was laughing as he helped her into the cab and presented her to his sister, a smart, attractive woman some years Barry's senior. They had shared an apartment in New York since their father's death.

Gertrude was great fun. After dinner, she asked Ellen if she and Barry would return to the apartment which a friend had lent her for the week she was to be in Washington, but Ellen refused. She said, "I'm a working woman. I've been doing far too much gadding about recently. It's time I caught up with some sleep."

They left her at Matilda's apartment, and Barry said, "I'll call you very soon. We have unfinished business to discuss."

She felt her cheeks grow warm, and silently cursed the thin betraying skin, so subservient to the wayward blood. She murmured something and went indoors.

In the cab, Gertrude said, "That's a very nice girl, Barry. I usually like your girls, but there is something especially appealing about this one."

"I assure you she isn't my girl."

"Then she should be," said his sister calmly. "It's time you settled down. But you'd encounter a very strong rival here, I think."

"Who?" he demanded, both displeased and shocked at the idea.

"The Navy. Haven't you noticed how her face lights up when she talks about her life and her people? If there's a Navy man in the offing you haven't a chance; it would be anchors aweigh for her. It's in her blood—stab her and you'd find an extra ration of salt."

Barry called Ellen one evening a day or so later. "Look, are you irrevocably committed to Sundays at the Walkers?" he asked. "Because if not, I have a suggestion to make."

"I usually go there," she said, "but Janice telephoned not ten minutes ago to say she wouldn't be home. Why?"

"I'm putting Gertrude on the train Sunday morning—by the way, she regrets not having seen you again—and I've borrowed a car with a little gas in it. I know a pleasant inn in Virginia. I suggest we drive out for lunch. I'll call for you around ten," he added, and hung up before she could say yes or no.

She thought: He's pretty high-handed. She found that she liked it.

He came promptly in the borrowed car. They were silent, driving out of town, once the greetings were over, and the discussion of the invasion of North Africa, news of which had reached the world the previous evening.

Ellen said finally, "I see it, of course, in personal terms as well. My father and Jim. I have a feeling that Jim's in it."

"Yes," Barry said soberly, "perhaps he is. I wish to God I were." He sighed.

They were silent for a time. Then he asked abruptly, "Ellen, can I offer any inducement to make you tell me what it was all about, that night at the Shoreham?"

"None whatever," she said.

"There was a reason. You admitted it."

She laughed. "If miracles occur, perhaps I'll tell you."

He said, "Miracles do. That was a minor miracle the other night. Sunlight is becoming to you," he added irrelevantly. "It does things to your hair."

The inn to which he took her was small and very old. They had sherry before the fire and ate their luncheon at a table not far away.

Over the sherry Ellen asked, "Shall we make a bargain?"

He said cautiously, "I never buy a pig in a poke."

"The legal mind," she deplored. "It is this. I am going to ask you not to refer again to my incredible behavior. In return, I promise that if ever I am released from certain obligations, I'll make full explanation. Not that it will be satisfactory, as I see now how little excuse I had, to say nothing of reason."

"All right, if that's the way you want it. But you can't undo certain impressions," Barry warned. "Just because I'm pledged not to talk about something, it won't mean it isn't remembered."

They were a long time over lunch. They found that they liked the same books, the same plays and the same radio programs. A scrap of Katie's wisdom came back to Ellen: Men like girls whose tastes are the same as theirs.

When they left the inn Barry told her, "We'll stop in Chevy Chase if you don't mind. I promised Janice. A friend of hers is throwing a cocktail shindig. I'm asked, and you too. When she called me, I told her that we'd be together."

"All right," said Ellen. She was conscious of feeling let-down, which was the first time she had realized that for several hours she had been exhilarated.

The house in Chevy Chase was imposing, and there were a good many people in it. Barry knew their hostess. She greeted him with delight. And there was Janice with Worthington in tow, looking from Barry to Ellen in astonishment. "How in the world did *you* get here?" she demanded.

They did not remain long, but it was long enough. Before they left, Barry took Ellen into the conservatory. "There are things worth seeing," he said, "notably, a collection of orchids."

The glass house was a dazzle of color and scent. Here were the orchids—and at the far end of the conservatory, Janice and Stanley Worthington, believing themselves alone and acting upon the opportunity.

Ellen stopped and turned. She did not speak, and Barry walked out beside her. She was very white. They reached the drawing room, made their apologies to their hostess and presently were in the car, headed for Washington.

Ellen spoke first. She said, "Janice didn't ask us to join her at the Trasks'."

"No," he said. "Miriam Trask rang me up this morning. Among other things, she said that Janice would be there." He grinned. "She may have received a wrong impression—too."

Ellen let that pass. She asked, "Why did you say it was Janice?"

"Simple enough. If I had said, 'A woman I know wants us to drop in at a cocktail affair this afternoon,' you would probably have said no. And I knew too that if I said Janice wanted us to come, you'd revert to your original fantasy about Janice and me."

"You aren't telling me all the truth."

"No," he said, "I'm not. I surmised that young Worthington would be in tow, and while, manlike, I regretted shattering further the illusion of my irresistibility——"

"Did you see them go in the conservatory?"

"I refuse to answer on the ground that it may incriminate and degrade me."

She had thought that she was far from laughter. She had been thinking: Jim, you'll be miserable with Janice. But I can't tell you, not while you're doing your job. And perhaps, as you love her, never.

But now she found herself laughing wildly. She stopped to ask, "Who's evading now? Did you see them, Barry?"

"Well, yes," he admitted, "when you were talking to Mrs. Trask and what's her name—the short little woman."

"Rear Admiral Ullen's wife," Ellen supplied. Her heart tightened. She thought: I wonder if Mrs. Ullen saw them too—later.

Barry was saying, "Believe me, I didn't expect to see that much."

"I suppose not," she said hastily.

She hadn't expected it either. The big man in uniform, his head bent, and Janice in his arms, her eyes closed.

Barry cleared his throat. "I'm sorry, Ellen."

"That's all right," she said.

They drove on in silence. And then he said, "Dinner and a movie, perhaps, to wind up the day?"

"No," said Ellen, "I'd rather not."

"Why are you so upset about Janice?" he asked. "It doesn't make sense."

She said wearily, "It's simple, really. Forget it, and don't be hurt. I had a lovely day; one of the nicest."

He asked, "How about tomorrow night?"

"No. They expect me at the canteen."

"Okay. Another time, then, and very soon." He parked the car at her door and said appealingly, "Look, you're like the girls in the advertisements. You never ask me up—or in. Can't I come up just for a moment?"

"I—well, if you wish. Matilda will be glad to see you. She likes you."

When they reached the apartment there was a note from Matilda on the desk, addressed to Ellen, lying on a letter which had come by air mail. She said, opening the note, "Matilda's been called out. Mr. Parker had some special work. She says there's supper in the icebox." Ellen looked at Barry. "Would you care to stay?"

"Of course!" He beamed. "And I'm very handy in a kitchen."

Cold cuts, a salad, coffee, and cookies Ellen had made. They ate at the kitchen table, and afterwards he helped clear away.

He said, "I wish you'd let me come here often. This is my first experience of real domesticity since I came to Washington."

Ellen said, taking off her apron, "Well, perhaps. But it would soon pall, I imagine." They went back to the living room, and she inquired, "Would you think me very rude if I asked you——"

"To go? Yes, very. But I've been living on borrowed time for the last hour or so." He shrugged into his overcoat and picked up his hat. "Thanks," he said, "and have you forgiven me?"

"There wasn't much to forgive," she assured him.

But now she was remembering again. What shall I do? she thought. And then: I can't do anything.

"Something's bothering you, Ellen. I wish I understood you. You're the greatest mystery!" He shook his head. He said, "I believe this is customary," and bending, kissed her on the mouth. It was a light kiss, shaped to laughter, but a

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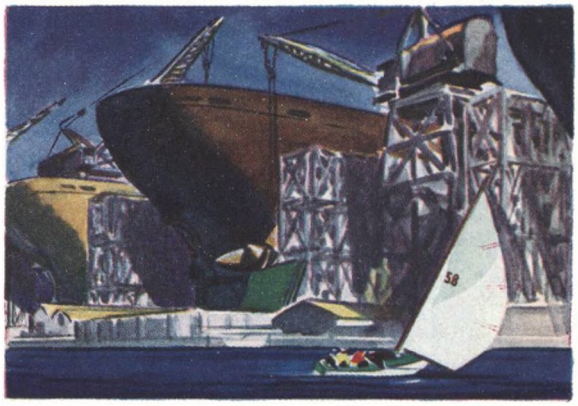

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kiss. He stood away from her, smiling. "And now I suppose you'll say, 'Never darken my door again.'"

Ellen said, "I've been kissed before."

"You are the most——" He broke off and regarded her curiously. "Up to your old—or new—tricks? All right. Then answer this: did you or did you not like it?"

"I liked it very much," said Ellen, and shut her hands tightly because they shook.

"Ellen——"

She said, "Good night, Barry," and held the door open for him. When it closed she heard him laughing on the other side.

He knocked imperatively. He asked, "May I come in? I forgot something."

"Just yourself," said Ellen clearly.

After a little while she heard his footsteps descending the stairs. She went blindly back to the desk. It wasn't possible. Yes, it was. Perhaps, she told herself, it had been an excuse, all of it—Janice, Jim. Perhaps I was falling in love with him all along and didn't know it.

She felt again that sense of power, of triumph, intoxicating. He is interested, she thought: he doesn't give two pins for Janice. I can . . .

She was standing by the desk, and she looked down at the unopened letter from Jim. She had completely forgotten it.

She sat down and broke the seal. She drew out the letter, which was thicker than usual. It had been mailed in the United States, apparently by some friend on leave, although it had been censored.

Ten minutes later she was still sitting in the chair, as if stunned. For Jim had fallen out of love with Janice, having fallen in love with someone else. "I'm enclosing a letter for her," he said. "Will you give it to her? Bill Madison's flying home; he'll take this along."

Jim had been in love with Janice. She was so pretty, she was so—oh, damn it, he wrote, you know what I mean. We laughed a lot, we fought like mad, but we had fun. And I had that crazy feeling—someone to come home to—you know, Ellen. But this girl . . .

She was Navy. He had met her in London, where her father was stationed in an important official capacity. She was tall, quiet, very lovely. She talked his language. They were terribly in love. It was the real thing. He wrote: "There's a big job ahead. I expect to shove off pretty soon. And when I come back, if Janice will release me . . ."

Jim, this is right for you. I know it, Ellen thought, on a wave of relief. But Janice? She thought: She won't care. Not if what I saw meant anything.

Jim was a coward; he said so frankly. "Take the letter to Janice; try to make her understand."

Ellen telephoned Janice that she had to see her at once. She found a cab and drove to Georgetown, the letters in her handbag. She thought: Tell her straight out. Give her the letter; listen to what she has to say. She doesn't love him; she can't. But there's her vanity.

Janice was in her bedroom, the radio going full blast. As Ellen entered she turned it off, and flung herself into a chair. She said, "I know what you came to tell me. All right, say it."

"You know?" said Ellen wonderingly.

"There's no use kidding ourselves. I saw you and Barry leaving the conservatory. Therefore, you saw Stan and me."

"Yes," said Ellen, "I did, but——"

Janice said, "It's no use, Ellen. I'm in love with him. I'm going to marry him. I was writing Jim when you telephoned."

"You're writing Jim, breaking your engagement?" asked Ellen.

"Yes. You'll hate me for it," said Janice. "If anything happens to Jim you'll blame me, and that isn't fair. It was all a mistake. I didn't want to get married. I wouldn't have considered an engagement if it hadn't been wartime. And he wanted it so much, and I hated to hurt him. But now——"

"What makes you sure now?"

Janice's eyes were shining; her mouth was soft. She said simply, "I—know, that's all; I never did before. Before I met Jim I was in and out of love a dozen times. Even after Jim and I were engaged—it didn't stop me from wondering when I met a new man. Barry Davis, for instance. He didn't fall in the least, and that annoyed me. Now I don't care if I never see another man; I'll spend the rest of my life worrying about other women. Perhaps it serves me right."

Ellen felt a warmth of relief. She said, "I think I understand."

Janice sighed. "I'm so happy, Ellen. I'm so terribly afraid——"

Ellen asked gently, "Of what, Janice?"

"Of losing Stan. This war," said Janice, "or some other woman."

"Your family——" began Ellen.

"They'll be wild," said Janice. "They like Jim. And Stan's been divorced. Mother will have hysterics if I elope with him, but I can't help that. Father will swear and growl. But they'll get over it."

"Suppose, then, that you tell them the truth and have a quiet wedding at home. Your engagement to Jim was never announced."

"If you'll stand by," said Janice, "I'll tell them tonight, when they come in. Ellen, why don't you hate me? I think of Jim and hate myself. But you know, I've thought he wouldn't mind too much. It was war with him too, and having fun together and all that. He knows I'd never make a Navy wife, Ellen. You know it. You've always been worried, knowing."

"Yes," said Ellen. She thought: Show her Jim's letter. Say, "No, he won't mind." Well, why? Why involve anyone further when it was so simply solved this way? She thought: I'll cable Jim.

"Later," said Janice, "I'll tell myself I've been a heel. Not now. I'm too happy, Ellen, and somehow it all seems so right—even for Jim. You thought I'd just met Stan, didn't you? Well, actually, I met him when I was visiting his cousin in New York over two years ago. I was insane about him from the first minute, but I didn't do anything about it."

"Why?" asked Ellen curiously.

Janice smiled. "You think I'm a lightweight. Maybe. But it was always just looking for something I could keep and still want after I had it. Something to hold to—for always. I hoped that about Jim after we were engaged. But almost as soon as he went away I knew it was no good. One thing I've never done, Ellen, is try to take other women's men. Stan was married then. I thought if he were free there'd never be anyone else for me—ever. But he wasn't."

"And you didn't try to make him even wish he were?"

"No," said Janice humbly. "I told myself it was like having a crush on a motion-picture star. When I read about his divorce I wondered if I'd ever see him again. And when I did . . . Ellen, will you write to Jim too?"

"I'll write," said Ellen.

"Father will kill me," Janice told her. "He'll talk about letting Jim down——"

"I think I hear the car now," said Ellen.

Ellen reached home late. The scene with the Walkers had been exhausting. But it had passed and had left Janice's parents bewildered but reconciled.

In the morning she would send Jim a cable and write him as well. It occurred to her before she slept that she owed it to Barry to keep her part of their bargain. It might be difficult. She thought: Why did I understand Janice so well? Six weeks ago I'd have wanted to shake her, no matter whether Jim was out of love with her or not.

That's what falling in love does to you, she thought; you are tolerant of everyone.

She had dinner with Barry a few nights later, and they came back to the apartment together. Matilda was there, but presently retired to her own room.

And then Barry asked, "What's so different about you?"

"I don't know," said Ellen. "What is?"

"I've seen that dress before," he told her. "But it seems different. You look very seductive," he remarked, "sitting there on the couch with the lamplight on your hair."

Seductive! She told herself she couldn't be. Yet of course she could be, because she was in love for the first time. When you were in love you didn't need charts and graphs, advice and warning.

He said, "You didn't seem surprised by the news of Janice's engagement."

"I wasn't particularly, and you didn't seem upset."

"I wasn't at all," he retorted, "and you know it."

"Barry, I promised to tell you why I behaved as I did if a miracle happened. It has happened." Two, she thought, and one is all my own.

"Then tell me. Mind if I sit beside you?"

"No." And when he was settled on the couch she said, "Janice was engaged to my brother, Barry. It hadn't been announced. When you came along I was worried. I believed she was interested in you. I wanted to divert your attention from her because of Jim. I couldn't bear to have him hurt."

"How simple," he said, staring at her. "I tried to fit a hundred pieces into the puzzle. That one I lacked. But what about now?"

"It's all right. Jim had already realized it was a mistake, so the engagement was broken by mutual consent."

"Another girl?" asked Barry.

"Yes."

"What kind of a girl?"

"Very charming," said Ellen. "I don't know her, but I know of her. Her people are Navy."

"Navy," said Barry. "I can see that Janice wasn't exactly——" He broke off. "We still have unfinished business as of the other night. Do you remember? I see that you do! Before we continue, I want to ask you something. How much will you miss the Navy?"

"How much will I——"

"Let me put it another way. Have you ever considered marrying *out* of the Navy?"

She murmured, "Not until recently."

"Ellen!" He put his arm around her, drew her close. He said, "Before I kiss you, I warn you, I hate to travel. I'm out of uniform and likely to remain so, but I love you to distraction."

"I've known one life and loved it. I could learn to love another life, Barry, with you to teach me."

"Darling!" he said, and after a long but fully occupied period of time, he raised his head to ask her, "And you'll always tell me the truth?"

"Always," Ellen answered, and crossed her fingers, with the new wisdom of a woman happily in love, who knows herself beloved.

THE END

I Was Hitler's Closest Friend (*Continued from page 45*)

Bruckman, an intimate friend who was active in the party, began to teach him table manners. He discarded his symbolic army boots, wore morning dress and on some evenings blossomed out in a tuxedo and patent leathers. Lower Nazi members openly grumbled.

The rôle of party "angel" was soon added to my mood-maker duties. Twice I saved the struggling Voelkischer Beobachter from its creditors. Hitler never thanked me—except verbally. He was eager as a newly arrived actor for the publicity I obtained for him in American papers. One night I suggested he learn English, for better understanding of America and Britain.

"Quite unnecessary," he said tartly. "I know the British, Americans, French and Russians. I saw them all as war prisoners; I understand them perfectly."

Then he launched into a monologue on his experiences in World War I.

"France—France!" he shouted. "That's where the future of the world will be decided. But this time we must pound a fanatical belief into our young soldiers. Only propaganda can immunize the masses to fear. And we must make a better job of hiding the dead on the battlefields. I remember at Langemarck the unburied corpses strewn on the fields, while we youngsters were plodding along in the dawn. A ghastly mistake—demoralizing. In the next war we must have a motorized funeral department to take the bodies out of sight."

I began to feel uneasy. It took a fanatic to unite Germany. But if he openly planned war it might lead to Allied preventive action.

"Make Germany a power first, before you talk of war," I urged him.

"Of course, we must arm. That is obvious."

On through the next three years my struggle against Rosenberg continued. Hitler constantly thought war, but talked less openly. By now Goebbels was one of his satellites. At his and Hess' prompting, the title of "Fuehrer" became official.

In 1928, Geli arrived in Munich. She was now twenty-two, a tall, attractive blonde with a good voice and dreams of becoming a singer. She moved into Hitler's house and began to appear in expensive gowns and furs. This caused angry comments from rank-and-file Nazis.

One party official said to me sorrowfully, "Hitler is making a big mistake. For years he's been ordering Nazi women to dress plainly. Now they see Geli dressed up like some Berlin showgirl. And what's more, they say it's party funds he's spending on her."

"That subject is dynamite," I answered. "Hitler flies into a rage if you even mention Geli."

"That obsession of his will cause trouble, Hanfstaengl!" he cried. "She's come to mean—well, Hitler made some sketches—intimate sketches. They fell into wrong hands—a dirty blackmailer in the party itself. We had to buy them back at twenty thousand marks. I begged Hitler to destroy them, but he refused. He keeps them so he can look at them. Well, you know what they say about him. It's a risky and dangerous streak in a man who's trying to become leader of newborn and purified Germany."

I was half incredulous, but some months later I encountered Geli and Hitler during an intermission of a play at the Residenz Theater. She was stunningly dressed. Even Hitler was "duded up," though he still carried the usual dog whip. His eyes had the look of a lovesick suitor. When he saw me, a curtain dropped over the moon-calf look. He was instantly the stern Nazi Fuehrer.

My wife and I suggested dining near by and asked them to join us. At dinner I observed Geli. She seemed only mildly fascinated by Hitler as Fuehrer, but I caught a veiled look of something else now and then. As we were leaving, Hitler spoke of his hopes and plans for the immediate future. Emphasizing some point, he slashed the air with his whip. I saw Geli's eyes follow the whip with a curious uneasy expression that puzzled me, although even then the whip was a customary Nazi weapon. Most of the Nazis carried whips on election trips through unfriendly areas; some were deadly enough to drop a man with one blow. Julius Schreck, who had replaced Maurice as Hitler's chauffeur-bodyguard, carried a bull-whip dangling from his left wrist.

In the next two years I had less chance to observe Hitler and Geli together. My opposition to Rosenberg had brought me at times near a break with Hitler. And I had my private troubles. In 1929, my little daughter died after a long illness. I composed a funeral anthem in her memory. Hitler adopted it as the official Nazi funeral march.

Then in 1930, the Nazis won 107 delegates in the Reichstag. Rudolf Hess phoned me the next day, and Hitler and he came to my home. Hitler was too excited to sit still.

"Now we're on our way!" he exclaimed, striding up and down. "Hanfstaengl, I want you to take over the foreign press department. You know England and America. Watch what they say about us. Also, see that they hear what we're doing; perhaps they'll wake up to the importance of what we are trying to accomplish."

My appointment enraged Rosenberg. It also increased the ill-feeling between Goebbels and myself. The clubfoot was now Gauleiter for Berlin; at his secret direction, rowdy Storm Troopers had broken store windows and looted shops. When I protested that this was causing bad publicity abroad, Goebbels denied responsibility.

The clubfoot was insanely jealous of anyone near Hitler. One day Hitler and I dropped in at his Berlin apartment. Someone had just presented Goebbels with a grand piano. Hitler immediately asked me to play. The little doctor faked approval. This went on for months. And then one day I found the piano had been put out of tune.

The winter of 1930-31 was a busy one at the Brown House in Munich. One afternoon as I was coming out I saw Geli. She was radiant, gayer than I had ever seen her.

"I can't stop to talk," she said. "I'm on my way for a singing lesson. I have a new teacher from Vienna,"

I never saw Geli again. Not long afterward she died from a pistol bullet, in Hitler's house. The power of the Nazi Party was swiftly exerted; the story, minimized, was given out as "suicide."

Hitler and Geli had quarreled; that much I soon learned. It was many months before I knew some of the details. Geli's new singing teacher was a handsome young Viennese—a Jew, and she had fallen in love with him. Hitler had discovered this. On the day she wanted to leave Hitler's house, she died.

For almost three years, she had been the center of Hitler's bizarre emotional life. At the thought of losing her, all the fury of that abnormal nature had burst loose.

Geli died by a bullet from Adolf Hitler's revolver. Afterward, Hitler in sudden panic sent for Hermann Goering and Gregor Strasser, a party leader. Soon after they arrived, Strasser left, grim-faced. Hitler's hatred of him dated from that moment: Strasser had refused to call it an accident.

For a time after Geli's death some thought Hitler would go to pieces. Haggard from lack of sleep, he would sit for hours, staring into space. At last he began to take sleeping powders. He would emerge from his nightly drugged state harsh and morose, plunging into party work in a fierce attempt to forget. One day at the Brown House he asked me into his office.

"Meet me at my home at two o'clock. I'm having an interview with a certain Japanese—a Professor Momo. I want you to act as interpreter."

"I don't speak Japanese," I objected.

"You can talk in English."

Professor Momo, I knew, was a student of international affairs. The Japanese Embassy in Berlin was his headquarters for periodic "tours" of Europe. It was evident he had some powerful connection with Tokyo.

We met in an upstairs room of Hitler's house. Momo began the conversation with the usual false humility of the Japanese.

"I am, Herr Hitler, a professor, and I have come to discuss your movement, the heroic spirit of which we Japanese so admire."

I translated his stilted English into German. After some exchange of compliments, Momo got down to business.

"Herr Hitler, we are both victims of the democracies. We both need living space, colonies; we must have raw materials to insure our future world power."

Hitler straightened up. "Tell him all that will be changed for Germany when we take over."

Momo's caution was gradually dissipated by Hitler's frankness. "It is Japan's destiny to lead in all Asia."

I translated.

Hitler said, "Tell him Asia and the Pacific must belong to their sphere. Tell him when we Nazis are in power we shall not interfere with their aspirations."

Momo photographed Hitler and me and smilingly bowed himself out.

It was then that I began to worry about the future of German-American relations!

Later I went to see Hess. The moment I mentioned Japan he stood up and began exercising with a chair—a favorite trick of his to avoid discussions.

"Those people who are flirting with Japan are setting the scene for a second Versailles," I said.

Ignoring me, Hess picked up the chair and balanced it on one finger.

"Those fools—they'll destroy Germany with another big war. Why did we lose in 1918? Because the United States joined the other side."

He put down the chair and glowered at me, and said, "So you really think the United States would come into a second World War?"

"Yes—if you make an alliance with Japan!"

"Japan can take care of the United States," he said.

I gave up, for the time. Much would happen before Hitler came to power . . .

Hitler's sense of guilt about Geli finally waned. Although he evinced a mystic worship of her memory, it did not keep him from turning to other women. His heart interest seemed to center around Henny Hoffmann, daughter of Heinrich Hoffmann, Nazi staff photographer.

Henny, a superficially pretty blonde, reportedly had had an erotic affair with Hitler during her teens. It was at the time Hitler made her father chief photographer. Today, Hoffmann is a millionaire.

Of course, Henny had access to Hitler at practically any hour. One day we were having luncheon in the Kaiserhof Hotel, our Berlin headquarters. Hitler, Captain Ernst Roehm, Hess and I were discussing coming elections, when Henny brushed in past the guards.

"Ah, *mein Sonnenschein,*" Hitler greeted her. His blonde of the moment was always "my sunshine," or "my golden one." She chattered insufferably. Hitler's face changed to a mask of adoration. Roehm, and I, disgusted, got up and left in a huff. Hitler ignored us. He was happy with Henny . . .

At Goebbels' house, some time later, I saw another of Hitler's "sunshine" girls. This was a young actress whom I shall call Fräulein Schmidt—one of the first in a long line from stage and screen, served up to Hitler by the clubfooted doctor. Hitler asked me to play for him, then withdrew to a secluded corner with Fräulein Schmidt.

Hitler began kissing her hand. His face had a look of slavish schoolboy adoration. He closed his eyes and, with his head against her breast, began rubbing her hand along his cheek.

And suddenly I understood. In his twisted subconscious mind, Hitler was back in his mother's arms, comforted, protected against a world he found too harsh. An Oedipus complex?

After Fräulein Schmidt's first surprised embarrassment, I saw a conflict of emotions in her face. Awe for the Nazi Fuehrer, and for the man himself—pity. The girl's perplexed look touched me. I finished playing Puccini and ended with a melody of Richard Strauss, which gave the Fräulein a chance to use her nice soprano voice.

Hitler had opened his eyes, and I saw a gradual but not subtle change. Awakened from his mother-sweetheart dream, he was obviously stirred by the music and her intimate nearness.

In 1933, after he became Chancellor, Fräulein Schmidt reappeared. The Gestapo had found that her grandmother was part Jewish and was threatening to make things unpleasant.

For months, the actress pleaded for Hitler's help. He curtly refused even to see her.

Hitler's eccentricity is an open secret in the Inner Circle. Incapable of a normal relationship, he takes a brutal satisfaction in humiliating the object of his desires. This abnormality is the key to the whole brutal Nazi system. The need for a constant "front" of normality has made him adept at underhanded maneuvers.

January 30, 1933, was the Nazis' night of triumph. With Joachim von Ribbentrop, I watched the torchlight parade as it wound before the Chancellery and the Kaiserhof. Ribbentrop was a cold-blooded opportunist, ready to repudiate his former Berlin socialite friends and the Jewish backers of his liquor business, to gain Nazi favor. I knew Hitler and Hess considered him a bore, but I thought him the ambassador type, of which the party was woefully short. Then, too, he had privately declared opposition to Rosenberg's plans.

"Are we agreed, then," I said, "that the Rosenberg-Hess-Haushofer scheme would mean a dangerous war with America?"

"Do you think so?" asked Ribbentrop.

"Yes," I said, "you can bank on that."

We shook hands. Even then, he was undoubtedly resolved to sidetrack me.

My problems as foreign press chief increased with Jewish and anti-Nazi outrages. One day in March, 1933, I approached Hitler on the subject of Goebbels' proposed Jewish boycott.

"It will cause a bad foreign press," I warned him and outlined a plan which had been submitted to me by prominent American Jews—a plan for a systematic exodus of Jews from Germany. This would have avoided the atrocities and the resultant bad press and boycott of German goods.

Hitler interrupted me. "The die is cast!" he said. "I will follow a plan exactly the converse of your proposal!"

The April excesses of 1933 were the answer!

Constant toadying to the "Leader" had finally brought the clubfoot his reward. He now controlled domestic propaganda—films, theater, radio, press. Beside instilling the Nazi "theme" into all these fields, he applied the gangster tactics which terrorized Berlin into giving him a costly villa, expensive furnishings, fine cars and anything else that he desired.

Goebbels soon reached out for the foreign press. I had suggested to Hitler a German Library of Information in the United States and England. I followed this with a plan for exchange students to spread the aims and ideals of Germany and the German people in America.

Some days later, Goebbels said to me, "Hitler told me your ideas. They're good, but he's hesitating. I'll back you if you help me get control of the foreign press. Of course you'll still keep the party foreign press; I will need you as an adviser."

When he attained his goal, Goebbels promptly forgot our agreement. The Library of Information was transferred to the Propaganda Ministry. The clubfoot had his personnel trained as secret agents. Many of the clumsy Nazi spies recently trapped in the United States were products of Goebbels' training.

By the fall of 1933, the German-American Bund was getting unfavorable attention in the United States. When I warned Hitler, he reduced my contacts, and control was given to a young Nazi, Ernst Wilhelm Bohle.

"The Bund will do us more harm than good," I told Bohle. "I'm afraid you don't understand Americans."

"Certainly I do," retorted Bohle. "I met a number in South Africa. I was born in England, you know. Of course we'll have to be careful, but the Fuehrer has told me to build up a strong organization of Ausland Germans in all parts of the world."

Soon after, I found employees of Goebbels and Bohle were bribing my staff to act as informers. I determined on a showdown. Hitler was evasive.

"It can't go on," I insisted. "We have two foreign press bureaus, two foreign policies. If Goebbels understood America, he would know that certain collaborators backed by him and Bohle are doing tremendous harm. If this continues we are going to see a repetition of 1917-18."

Hitler said, "You are emphasizing the personal element. Never forget that it is the cause, the idea that counts—not the people."

"But Goebbels——" I began.

"I'll talk with him," said Hitler.

Before I could say more, Hess and Amann arrived. Then Goebbels came in, and Hitler began to talk of his future plans.

"We have practically all essential things now. Goering holds the reins in Prussia. We have all propaganda and control of labor, youth groups and Reich funds. Rearming is coming fast, but we must be careful. We must talk peace, peace, peace, so we don't frighten England and France before we're ready."

"And Hindenburg?" someone questioned.

"Wait until the Old Bull closes his eyes," Hitler said grimly. "I'll show them who's master. We'll set the pace! And I'll clean out the stables on the Wilhelmstrasse."

In June, 1934, I came to the the United States to attend my twenty-fifth class reunion at Harvard.

My visit was cut short by the Blood Purge. I was in a church pew at Newport, a guest at the Astor-French wedding, when an usher brought me a cablegram. Names of murdered men leaped at me from the paper, Captain Rochm's at the top. Roehm, the revolutionary. Gregor Strasser's name was also on the list—Strasser who had denounced Hitler for Geli's murder.

I took the next ship for Germany. Berlin was in a fearful state, dreading more murders. I found Hitler and Goebbels in seclusion at Heiligendamm. Hitler had a flushed, evil look, as though gorged on the blood of his victims.

He stared as I came in. "Haven't they killed you yet?" he demanded, half jokingly. A moment later he laughed—but it had an ugly sound.

At dinner, Hitler asked me America's reaction. I told him that the press had never been less sympathetic to Germany. Of course I knew the word "Nazi" was now synonymous with murder, but I couldn't say so.

Hitler merely shrugged. "What does it matter? Your Mr. Roosevelt and the Americans will have to get used to us as we are."

When I returned to Berlin I told a few close associates I thought we were headed for disaster. One day Ribbentrop stalked into my office.

"Hanfstaengl, you scold too much about the Fuehrer. You'd better go away and think it over."

? ?

Family Quiz Answers
MOTHER

(*Questions on page 16*)

1. **It is a member of the mink family found only in Japan.**
2. **Nathaniel Hawthorne and Washington Irving.**
3. **Anna. Her middle name is Eleanor.**
4. **Open spaces.**
5. **A wedding ring and a watch.**
6. **Light cream, less rich in fat, weighs more than heavy cream.**
7. **(a) James Madison, (b) Geoffrey Chaucer, (c) Hippocrates.**
8. **Sour milk.**
9. **By saying to her three times, "Thou art divorced."**
10. **Used to store butter.**
11. **Dye as a color.**
12. **A thimble.**

Questions accepted from Kathleen McClure, Aurora, Mo.; Mrs. E. Petersen, Chicago, Ill.; Elra Johnson, Denver, Colo.; Frances Pircher, Witt, Ill.; Mrs. Albert Harris, Mineral King, Calif.; Mrs. Art Mattis, Augusta, Kan.; Jean Vogt, Bloomfield, N. J.; Mrs. John R. Wilkes, Lewisburg, Tenn.; Maynor W. Camp, Rome, Ga.; Bessie Rigney, Miami, Fla.; Anna Guinn, Taft, Calif.; Bertha Stivers, Chattanooga, Tenn.

? ?

"Thank you, my friend," I said ironically. "The way we are doing things now we are headed for a second World War."

For a while I was left alone. Then the murder of Dollfuss brought a new crisis. Hitler phoned me to take a special plane to Bayreuth, the Wagner shrine, where he had gone for a short rest. At his villa I also found Goering and Theodor Habicht, who, I was later told, had engineered the assassination.

"What is the foreign reaction?" Hitler flung at me.

I told him Italy was threatening to march, the Serbs were ready, the French and English fuming.

"Those Italians!" Hitler screamed. "If I chose I'd mobilize five divisions and drive them into the sea."

Goering nodded approval.

Habicht approached me. "A fine mess we are in now," I said. "All our work in Austria is destroyed. This infernal putsch —couldn't we have waited until the plum was ripe? Nothing has been accomplished this way!"

Hitler motioned to me. "Hanfstaengl, I want you to fly to Vienna as my special envoy. You should be able to smooth things over with the English and American ambassadors. You know how to handle those women in pants who want peace."

"It's too obvious," I answered.

"Well, what do you suggest?" Hitler shouted furiously. I thought he would start on another tirade, but he abruptly turned away, Goering and Habicht at his heels like trained dogs.

It was the beginning of the end. I was in an awkward spot. I had opposed too many of Hitler's plans. I knew the war preparations, the possibly projected Japanese alliance. I knew about Hitler's grafting through Goering, Amann and Goebbels; about his personal immorality, the complete rottenness of his entourage and the whole Nazi system. And perhaps I knew too much about Geli's death.

For months I had known my telephones were tapped.

As I fell from favor, old friends who had feared to talk came to me with stories of Nazi atrocities. In a few cases I could aid them without Gestapo knowledge, but I felt my peril increase. At last I determined to have it out with Hitler. He seemed to sense something was wrong. He motioned me silently toward the music room; his eyes were icy and remote. Inside, he turned and stared at me for a long moment. Then he pointed to the piano.

"Play your funeral march," he said.

My own funeral march! I sat down, with a chill foreboding.

Hitler stood with his grim eyes fixed on me until the last chord. "That's all, Herr Hanfstaengl." He turned and left. It was the last time I ever played for him.

I left the Chancellery with the sound of that somber music in my ears. Had this been my swan song? I went back to duty, and stubbornly held to my post as Nazi foreign press chief.

Several months passed without incident and I began to relax. Then Julius Schreck mysteriously died. I knew Hitler and he had frequently quarreled. Schreck was hot-tempered, and sometimes devoid of the worshipful deference Hitler now demanded.

I made quiet inquiries. Schreck had been feeling sluggish, and someone had suggested it might be his teeth. On an official recommendation, Schreck had gone to a well-known Berlin dentist patronized by high Nazis.

Was that the answer? For years, I later learned, this dentist was used se-

cretly by the Gestapo. More than one difficult German had died after visiting him. It was a simple matter to inject a slow-acting poison into the gums. Death, after two or three days, was covered up as caused by a blood infection. And Schreck had died, so the report said, of a "blood infection." Peculiar, wasn't it?

I went to Schreck's funeral, in civilian clothes, and I saw the calloused looks of certain attending party members. Were some glad to be rid of Schreck? For a Nazi underling, he had known far too much.

Anton Drexler, founder of the party, also in civilian clothes, stood beside me. As we approached the grave, Storm Troopers stopped us, because our civilian clothes would ruin the military character of the funeral.

Back in Munich, I lived through more fruitless months, watching the Nazi monster feed on German youth. My own personal life was one of increasing isolation.

In the summer of 1936, Professor Momo returned from a "tour" in Africa and India. A Berlin associate told me that Momo was being secretly received by Hitler, and I knew the die was cast. On Party Day, in Nuremberg, I saw Haushofer at the Grand Hotel.

"Remember 1917," I warned him. "A Japanese-German alliance will again mobilize the English-speaking world against us."

Haushofer stroked his white mustache and laughed. "Nobody plans an alliance. Where did you get that notion? I promise you, none of us dreams of such a thing."

Two months later the pact was broadcast to the world.

By the first part of 1937, I was completely isolated. Then, suddenly, the Chancellery's long silence was broken. On February eighth the phone rang in my Munich study. It was a message from Berlin: A special plane was being flown to Munich for me, and I was to return at once to see Captain Fritz Wiedemann, Hitler's adjutant. He told me I was to go secretly to Spain, take charge of Nazi press efforts there, and try to improve German co-operation with France. Goebbels would make the necessary arrangements.

Later I learned Goering wished to see me. His manner increased my vague suspicions.

The next day I went to Staaken Airport. Goering's adjutant, Colonel Bodenschatz (now a Luftwaffe general), had arranged for a two-engined bomber to take me to Salamanca. I saw him talking surreptitiously with the pilot, whom he introduced as "Froedel." (This was not his name.) My suspicions reawakened, but it was evidently too late to back out. They put a parachute on me. The crew did not wear them!

The plot, as I later learned, was to drop me behind the Red lines in Spain. With my false credentials, this would have meant certain death for me—even if the parachute had not been tampered with. Only a failure of our motors saved me from death that night! We were forced down on a field between Leipzig and Dresden.

It was one of the secret Nazi fields. Froedel barely made it in the dusk. The base was only half finished, and we stopped violently, bogged down in mud. I quickly unbuckled my parachute and climbed out. Froedel and the gunner followed me to the barracks. They were obviously worried; their orders hadn't covered this situation. They were afraid to let me go free—and afraid to use force. We went into the canteen and I bought several tumblers of vermouth. After a moment's hesitation the crew accepted a drink. On the pretense of being sick from the rough air, I stumbled outside.

My act must have been fairly good, for no one followed me. I looked around for a telephone, called a certain number—and told my office everything.

As I hung up Froedel came in and asked what I was doing. I told him I'd telephoned my secretary. I ordered more drinks and, when opportunity offered, walked away, this time for good.

One hour later I reached a small station named Machern, where I took a train for Leipzig.

There I kept hidden until time for the train to Munich. In Munich I waited for the train to Zurich. At 2:30 that afternoon I crossed the border—a fugitive from Hitler.

As I crossed the frontier—with the frantic Gestapo trying to pick up my trail—a thought flashed through my mind: Hitler is chaos—chaos is Hitler.

On the day I reached Swiss soil newspapers throughout Germany were publishing my photograph. The caption over the pictures read: "Felicitations to an Old Party Friend."

It was my fiftieth birthday!

From Switzerland I soon made my way to London and eventually to North America, where my present whereabouts *must* for my own personal safety remain a mystery.

Coming: Anne Homer Warner's tender story of a real-life cupid, "His First Word"

Perfect Wife (*Continued from page 33*)

with a car, but apparently none of that impressed her.

"I wish you'd tell me what you're thinking, John."

Anger unsteadied his hand as he poured another drink. "I'm thinking that I want you to skip the frills. I don't know Mrs. Howell, but he's as plain as beans and steak on Saturday night and——"

Elsie's voice came discreetly from the doorway. "Dinner is served, Mrs. Russell."

Mary nodded and rose at once. "Well," she said, "I can't help feeling you're wrong, John dear. However——" She glanced at his half-emptied glass. "Do drink up, please, before things get cold."

He was acting the fool in deliberately refilling his glass. He was, as Mary so often said, being childish. He knew it, but he couldn't help himself. He felt his mind taking a stand against Mary in all things. He found himself resenting the sudden concern of her long blue eyes.

"John, *is* there something wrong with you? Is there something worrying you that you haven't told me? You've seemed different, lately."

His fingers clenched on the stem of his glass. Suppose he did tell her? Suppose he said to her: "I'm sick and tired of your perfection and of having you make up my mind for me, even down to the tie I'll wear. I'm sick of your well-planned orderly way of living. I'd like a wife who'd perch on a corner of the kitchen table and wisecrack with me and let the dinner go to pot while I shook up a different kind of cocktail every night in the week. And most of all, I'm sick of your being *always right.*"

Suppose he said all that? He leaned back hard against the blue-striped couch. No use supposing. He couldn't say those things to Mary. She would rationalize his irrationality on the spot and suggest a vacation.

So, instead, he said, "Nothing's wrong with me. Nothing at all. Go on in to dinner. I'll be with you in a moment."

Maybe he did need a rest. Most men, he knew, would give their eyes for a girl like Mary. And something about the hurt, bewildered way she looked at him before she left the room wrenched his heart. Because of some queer quirk inside him, he couldn't stab through Mary's self-esteem. How could he render intelligible for her the utter unintelligibility of the fact that her very perfection bore within itself the seeds of their growing discord? And failing to make her see, how could he keep on loving her, living with her?

His thinking ceased abruptly. He did love Mary *now,* but he couldn't go on without coming to complete indifference toward her and all she stood for. *And then what?*

He finished his cocktail slowly and went in to dinner, his mind a welter of confusion.

The Howells' expensive car trailed John's car up the driveway, and Mrs. Howell, alighting, made an instant appraisal with her large brown eyes of the house and grounds.

Ever since he had met Mrs. Howell in the hotel lobby, John had known misgivings. She was big and blond, with twin silver foxes trailing to the hem of her expensive-looking gown. Her throat and wrists were jeweled, and Sam, shorter by a head than she, looked unbelievably plain beside her.

"Isn't it peculiar," she smiled, "how all you New Englanders go in for the same plain things? Why, all your houses are just like overgrown boxes, aren't they, Sam?"

Sam laughed apologetically and looked about him. Mary's garden was a tapestry of rich autumn beauty in the soft half light of early evening.

"Don't let her get you down, Mr. Russell," he said. "Connie here was raised in a section of New York where if money don't talk out loud nobody believes you got any. This is a right nice place, I'd say."

John was saved from answering by Mary's voice from the doorway, warm and cordial, dispensing with obvious introduction. "Mrs. Howell, how nice of you to come. And Mr. Howell. I'm so glad to know you."

Crackers and cheese, John was thinking. Oh, Lord!

The living room was friendly with a cheerful wood fire and the mellow glow of lamplight on bronze and yellow pompons from the garden. John watched Mrs. Howell taking mental inventory. The Oriental rug from Mary's grandmother's Back Bay drawing room. His own quaint ancestor, Uncle Joshua Starr, in oils above the fireplace, and Uncle Joshua's perennially disapproving wife, Araminta, above the priceless antique fruitwood desk. And on the mantelpiece, the cranberry-glass candlesticks with their glistening cut-crystal pendants. Heirloom pieces.

All this, thought John, and crackers and cheese for people like the Howells.

Entertaining *down* to them, as Mary said.

Then he caught sight of Mary's finest crystal on her finest Sheffield tray, and an almost comic sense of relief set in. And when Elsie presented the Staffordshire plate of appetizers, he leaned back in his chair with a curious feeling of detachment.

He wasn't entertaining a prospective customer. Mary was. *He* didn't even have to think any further. Queer, how he felt about this dinner. It was almost as though he were holding a stop watch in his hand. The final heat. Something of that sort. Some conclusion to be reached when it was over.

Yet he poured the drinks. He even told a joke or two, and Mrs. Howell, flushed with the mingled warmth of wood fire and cocktails, laughed her appreciation.

"He *simpully* slays me," she told Mary. "It must be a riot having a man like that around. Sam takes life so serious."

In the dining room, the light from tall white candles pointed up the gleam of old mahogany and silver. And in the center of the table, laid with Mary's cherished Point Venise, white gardenias floated in a shallow crystal boat.

"Now *that*, Sam Howell," his wife said, pointing, "is what I call an *elegant* table."

Plain home dinner! Holding Mrs. Howell's chair, John felt that he had said that in another life, another world. A night and a day had elapsed since then. No more than that. Yet overnight, he was changed. But Mary wasn't. Beautiful and poised at the foot of the table, patrician in her black velvet gown, she was forever and eternally herself. Taking his place at his own table, he felt like an outsider.

Conversation, skillfully led by Mary, flowed freely, until Mrs. Howell was calling Mary by her first name, as well as John. He seemed to be doing all right, too. Through habit, he was filling in momentary pauses with tidbits of flattery for Mrs. Howell. Mary had taught him that trick too. But he scarcely tasted his food and scarcely knew when the dinner hour ended.

At bridge, Mary, usually expert, played abominably. She underbid her hands and lost to Mrs. Howell with pleasing grace.

"Honestly," Mrs. Howell laughed, "you're so sweet, honey, I almost hate to take your money. Let's see." Rapidly she totaled the scores. "Twenty-seven dollars. Penny a point."

"Twenty-seven dollars," Sam said uneasily. "That's a lot of money to lose, Mrs. Russell. Here we drink your liquor and eat your food and then walk out with your money. I don't like that sort of thing. If I had my way, I wouldn't play for money. Makes bad friends, sometimes."

"Nonsense!" John heard himself saying. "Bridge has become a sort of business in itself, you might say."

"Sure it has," Mrs. Howell laughed. "What was that saying we heard the other night, Sam? Modern business means getting the maximum amount of service with the minimum number of squawks, or something. Wasn't that it?"

Sam reddened. "That was the saying, all right, but I don't believe in it and never did. Business can be decent and friendly, with a break for the other fellow too."

Mrs. Howell shook her blond head. "Isn't he the pink limit? Turns everything I say into something I didn't. Here, Mary, just add this up so you'll be sure it's okay, will you?"

Mary raised her slim hands in horror. "I can't add two and two," she laughed, and John avoided her eyes.

Mary, who handled their finances, and even computed their income tax!

"Well, I tell you what," Sam said, "If you folks'll promise to come in town and let us blow in these winnings, I'll feel all right about it."

"Lovely!" Mary laughed. "We'll look forward to it."

Funny, John thought, what creatures of habit we are. He was performing all the functions of the thoughtful host, walking to the car with the Howells, calling a last good night with his mind a total blank.

Back in the living room, Mary was setting things to rights. Her every move was tranquil and composed, devoid of any tags of triumph. It wasn't until she turned to smile at him that John saw it in her eyes. Complete self-satisfaction. Silent self-applause.

"Well," she said, "let's go to bed. We can talk about it all in the morning."

He didn't want to talk about it, *ever.*

The feeling carried over into the morning. He simply didn't want to talk about the Howells or about woman's intuition, either. The combination in his mind was a kind of time bomb. If he took it up wth Mary, he felt it would explode in her face.

Before her dressing-table mirror, she was giving her soft brown hair the required number of morning strokes. Fifty on either side of the center part.

"Forty-seven," she said aloud, and paused to gaze at John. "You should be at the collar-and-tie stage this minute, John Russell, and you're still in your shorts."

He couldn't trust himself to speak.

"Do hurry, dear," she said a few seconds later. "And I think the brown plaid tie would be better with that suit."

John jerked a knot in his tie and caught up his vest and coat. "I won't stop for breakfast. I haven't time."

Before she could protest, he was gone.

"What a shame, Mr. Russell," Miss Brownlee, fresh and alert in her smart green wool, looked up from her typewriter. "Mr. Howell just telephoned a few minutes ago. He's on his way out of town for the day and won't be able to call back until tomorrow."

She caught up her notebook and followed John into his private office. The mail lay opened on his desk.

"I'll wager my next pay check," Miss Brownlee grinned, "that you got that Howell account sewed up last night."

She was wrong, John thought. He hadn't sewed up the account; Mary had.

"That's fate or something for you," Miss Brownlee ran on. "Naturally I'm tickled we got it, and we sure can use it, but we don't begin to need it the way poor Sanderson does. It's life and death with him, just about." She sighed. "Well, nothing succeeds like success, does it? All you do is have the Howells for dinner, and Sanderson runs the leather off his shoes, poor devil."

"Suppose you run along yourself while I go through this mail," John suggested. "I'll ring when I'm ready for you."

His eyes followed her trim figure through the door. She had given him something else to think about. Never before had he questioned his own ability to secure new business, but he was questioning it now. It was Mary's shrewdness, her innate knowledge of human nature, that had clinched the Howell account. He had made an error of judgment with the Howells. What was to prevent his doing it again? Suppose he got to a point where he couldn't go ahead without consulting Mary? Was she actually having this effect on him; undermining his confidence in himself?

The telephone rang, and his hands felt cold as he picked it up.

Mary's voice was eager. "John, did you hear from Mr. Howell yet? I'm so anxious to know."

His nerves tensed. "He telephoned this morning before I got here."

"Oh, John!" Her disappointed sigh came over the wire. "I do think, dear, that I'd have made a point of being in on time this morning if I'd been you."

Blind reasonless fury burst in his brain. The last of his self-control scattered before her words. His fingers clenched about the telephone, and with the other hand, he caught up his onyx desk clock and smashed it to the floor. Damn her cool assumption of superiority. *Damn her!* He tried to answer, tried to shout, but his throat was corked with rage.

"I really do think that's terribly poor business." Her voice was going on and on. "I feel absolutely sure he called to tell you——"

Then all at once John was carried beyond his anger. He saw with startling clarity the answer to everything that irked him. He was not going on with Mary. *He was going to leave her.*

"Mary," he cut in, and his voice was strangely quiet, "I'll be home shortly. I've got to talk with you."

He sat staring at the telephone. No, he wasn't going on. The future stretched before him like a well-posted highway. This triumph of Mary's had whetted her ambition, and now she was following up. It was *her* business, *her* account, and she was checking his handling of it as he might check one of his employees. There would be no stopping her now.

He gathered up the pieces of glass from the clock and walked into the outside office. "I'm leaving for the day," he told Miss Brownlee. "I'll call you later."

Miss Brownlee nodded. If she had heard, she gave no sign. "About that taxicab account," she said. "McArdle phoned to say he can't place it. The experience on the risk has been too bad."

John stared at her. That summed it up pretty neatly, he thought wryly. The experience on the risk has been bad, so the business is rejected. He had never thought of marriage in that light before.

But on the road, driving home, he found himself going back through the past two years: thinking of Mary and all she had meant to him. If only he could strip her of her self-assured efficiency and see her standing before him utterly dependent. He shook his head despairingly. Wishful thinking. He might as well try to resolve one of these oaks along the road back to the acorn from which it sprang . . .

Mary, in a lovely white morning coat, was waiting in the rose-damask chair. Her slender brows were raised inquiringly as John came in.

"Why are you home?" she asked. "Is it something to do with the Howell account? I should have imagined you wouldn't want to leave the office."

His blood ran hot. He couldn't wait. He had to say *now* the thing he had come to say, and he must force himself to look at her, sitting there so sure of her right to be annoyed with him.

"Mary." His voice, surprisingly, was steady and controlled. "I've come to tell you that I'm going to leave you."

It was said and over with. The words, abstract before, were concrete now. He saw the startled lift of Mary's chin, saw her eyes go dark with shocked, incredulous disbelief. "You want to—*to leave me,* John! Are you mad, or am I?"

He nodded grimly. "I can't go on."

A piteous quiver struck across her mouth as she asked the only thing there

was for her to ask. "But why? John, why? You can't know what you're saying. You're ill. How could a thing like this happen to us?" Her voice ran into panic. *"John, do you know what you're saying?"*

He had been wrong in coming home. He should have written. Cowardly it might be, but he wouldn't have to see her sitting there, white and strained, in desperate unbelief. Somehow, he hadn't thought of her like this. He remembered, startled, that he hadn't thought of her side at all.

"John," she said again, struggling for her customary self-control. "John, if you'll just explain." She half rose from her chair and sank back again with horror in her eyes. She pressed her hands against her shaking mouth. "How can you hurt me so terribly? What have I done? John, don't stand there staring at me. Tell me!"

He heard his voice, then, telling her; making a brutal tangible thing of the bitterness stored up in him. The words were coming out like lines rehearsed. All he had thought and felt and hidden; his weariness and boredom with her perfection, his fury over her interference; his need for something different, something unexpected—for liberty of thought and action.

"Can't you see?" he cried desperately. "I'm sick to death of this foolproof setup you surround us with, and it's getting worse. You're not satisfied with running this house and me along with it; you've got to run my business too. And you can't do it, do you hear me? I won't let you do it." His voice choked with anger. "*You* got the Howell account. *I* didn't. You——"

"John." She got up and crossed to him. "You're talking like a crazy man. Why should you object to my helping you? Did I gloat over you last night? Did I say one single word to point out that my way was best, after all? Did I even intimate——"

"You didn't need to. It was sticking out all over you, shining in your eyes. Triumph. Satisfaction. You were right again. You won, but I hate you for it, do you hear me? I hate you for your everlasting rightness. I can't go on living with it. I'm smothered in this house."

Mary went slowly back to her chair. She sat with her eyes on John's face, studying him. Then she spoke to him, soothingly, as she might have spoken to an intractable child. "John, do you know what ails you? Because if you don't, I can tell you. You've developed a horrible inferiority complex."

Rage shook him. "If not wanting to hurt you, to bring you to your senses long ago is a sign of that, then you're right! And before I lose the little self-respect I have left, I'm getting out. I can't face living with you, going on day after day, dreading to come home."

"Dreading to come home!" Mary repeated, dumfounded. "Is *that* how it's been with you, John?"

"That's exactly how it's been, and if you hadn't been blind——"

Mary rose. Outraged pride and anger blazed from her eyes, and her voice shook with suddenly roused passion. "I have been blind. Utterly blind. For two years I've been living up to an ideal I thought you had of me. I've learned to run a home efficiently; I've tried to help you in every way; and now you hate me for it. *You hate me all of a sudden for the thing you once admired most in me.* Is that what you're asking me to believe?"

"I'm not asking you anything. I'm telling you the truth."

"Oh, no, you're not. You couldn't pos-

sibly hate me for the reasons you've given. It's true that I secured the Howell account for you. I was proud of doing that; proud of my judgment. I thought you'd be proud of it too." She shook her head. "No, John, you're not telling the truth." She went on. "If there's someone else you care for, why don't you tell me so? I could understand that, but not the things you've said."

"There's no other reason." John's voice was flat, toneless. "I'm simply fed up. I can't take it any longer."

She walked to the window and spoke without turning. "Well, John, if you hate me, you must go, of course. But first there's something I want you to understand. I've loved you, I've lived for you, and"—her voice broke—"I'll go on loving you, no matter what you do." She turned back to him. "I'd like you to think that over, if you will. And I'd like you to place the blame for this where it belongs. No sane person, John, could despise another for being right. I'll never believe that."

John sighed. He had been a fool to think he could make her understand. A fool to believe that perfection could ever accept a thought of imperfection in itself.

"Mary," he said, "I can't help what you believe, and it doesn't matter anyway. Everything you've said and done these last few minutes bears me out, but I don't expect you to see it. I'm not *blaming* you for being what you are; I'm simply telling you it's not what I want out of life. There's evidently nothing I can say to make you understand that."

All at once she sank into the damask chair and turned her face against it, and he knew that she was weeping because at last she believed him; because at last she had accepted the reasons he had given. And his heart went sick for her. Mary never wept. He felt confused and awkward, strangely at a loss.

The telephone rang with startling suddenness, and he crossed the room mechanically to answer it. "For you," he said, but Mary shook her head. "It's Mrs. Howell," he added. "Shall I say you'll call back later?"

Mary nodded without looking up.

He spoke into the telephone and turned back to her. "She says she simply must talk to you; that it's urgent."

Mary got to her feet. With the back of one hand, she wiped her tears away. There was something in that childlike gesture that tore at John's heart.

"No," she was saying, "I've a heavy cold."

A long silence followed her words, and he moved about the room, thinking for the first time of leaving it and living elsewhere. It was the only thing he could do.

"I beg—your pardon, Mrs. Howell?" Mary's voice, sharp with disbelief, caught his attention. "Did you say that Mr. Howell——" She paused again and then said in a breathless rush, "Why, of course, Certainly we understand, and thank you for calling."

She put down the telephone and turned to look at John with a dazed expression in her wide wet eyes. "That was Mrs. Howell."

"I know." His voice was strangely gentle.

"She called to tell me——" Mary's eyes were looking through him, not seeing him at all. "I simply can't believe it. It's absurd. It's senseless."

"Would you mind telling me what she said?"

"I'm trying to tell you." Mary went on confusedly. "She's furious with Mr. Howell. It seems they quarreled because she interfered. He says meddling women are a damned curse in business, and——"

Mary paused and seemed unable to go on. She gazed straight before her with an incredulous look.

Watching her, John felt something giving way inside him that he didn't want to give way. The strange, almost frightened look that she was wearing now, he told himself distractedly, would pass in a moment and she would be herself again. Mary couldn't change. Something had shocked her out of her complacency, but it wouldn't last.

"I'm still waiting to hear what this is all about," he said brusquely.

Mary nodded like a person in a dream. "I know," she whispered. "I know you are." Then her voice rose hysterically. "It isn't just what she said. It's finding out that I was wrong—and remembering the things you've said. It's everything—coming at once like this."

John waited. Mary, hysterical, was new to him.

She paced the room and came back to stand before him, fighting for self-control. "You'll probably be glad when I tell you, or perhaps I'm wrong again. Perhaps you want to go on hating me. Perhaps when I tell you——"

"Tell me what?"

She tilted her chin and swallowed before she answered. "I lost the Howell account for you."

John's shoulders jerked back. "You *what?*"

"I lost the account." Mary's mouth began to tremble. "Mr. Howell feels, because of the way we live, and being able to lose all that money at bridge, that Sanderson should have the business. He believes he needs it more than we do." Color flamed in her face. "Because of all the splurge I made, he thinks, Mrs. Howell said, that we have everything and that Sanderson has nothing."

"Sanderson!" John repeated in blank astonishment. "Do you mean to tell me that because of last night we've lost the business to *Sanderson?*"

Mary sank like a stricken child into the rose-damask chair. "I'm sorry," she wept. "I'll go to him; I'll explain. I've made a terrible mess of things, but I loved you—and I thought I was helping—and I thought you were proud of me."

John couldn't bear to hear her cry like this. She looked so small, so helpless, crumpled up in the chair.

"Mary," he said, "for God's sake, don't!" He bent to hear the broken things she was saying, and a strange aching came into his arms.

"I'll feel so lost, so afraid without you. I've never let you know, but I need you terribly." She raised her tear-streaked face to him. "John, could you, oh, darling, *could* you forget you've hated me? Couldn't we start all over?" Her voice ran up to a poignant cry. "John, *don't leave me!*"

His arms went out to her then. He held her close and murmured all the endearing things he thought he had forgotten. And a long-lost feeling of contentment swept over him in a warm, comforting tide.

"I'll never, never leave you," he said, and gently wiped away her tears. "We've both been lost, I guess, and trying hard to find each other."

You could, he thought with his arms tightly around her, resolve an oak tree straight back into an acorn. It had happened here before his eyes.

One Man's Secret

(*Continued from page 50*)

The thing was inevitable. He had not realized the injustice to Gladys. His selfish blindness placed her in a position that had the ugly odor of scandal. As long as she decently could, she had stood it without a word. And now she said she must go . . .

His eyes were on her again. Hungrily. Was the fear that gripped him fear only of another vista of aloneness? Or was a chemical change taking place after all these years of monastic living? The woman before him, tempting him, was this the answer? Or did he actually need her in every way? Without his knowledge had she become necessary to him? Had she quietly entered his life and taken possession? He was not a man of quick decision, so he could find none of the answers. She was going tomorrow. Tomorrow!

"Why didn't you tell me long ago," he demanded, unable to account for the flare of anger, "instead of breaking it to me suddenly like this? You might at least have given me a chance to handle the situation."

"There's no way—except the way I've worked out." She paused at the window, her back turned. "Don't think it's easy." In the silence Dean heard a low sob, instantly smothered.

"I'm sorry. Gladys, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you. But you hurl this thing at me——" He stopped short, his throat closing. "Think it over, won't you?"

"It's best to leave quickly." She still stood with her back to him. "Please believe—this is worse for me than for you. Much worse. And forgive me, won't you?"

Abruptly he asked, "Where will you go?"

"Home."

"Home?" he repeated. "You know that place isn't home. You know how miserable you were."

"I can't afford to choose."

"But you can't go back to helping your mother run a boardinghouse," he protested.

He thought of her as he had first seen her five years ago on the lawn of her widowed mother's house, her pallor emphasized by a black dress, looking older than she did tonight. He had taken Pauline for a motor trip through the Adirondacks. They had inquired in a village where to get a good lunch and Mrs. Mayden's was recommended. Gladys was cutting June roses for the table when they arrived. He remembered distinctly how she came forward to greet them; how she selected a table with a view of the garden.

He remembered how afterward on the porch Pauline sank back, sighing, "I like it. I like that girl. Can't we stay awhile?" When they were leaving a week later Pauline had wished hopefully, "If only I could take Gladys. If you'd let Gladys live with us, Dean. Her mother makes her a slave and she isn't happy. She told me." He remembered the slender black figure on the lawn as they drove away; the strange pleading look in her gray eyes that Pauline couldn't forget. All—all of it, he recalled vividly. "Let her live with us, Dean." And so he had gone back the following winter and asked Gladys to come to them.

"I won't let you go!" he said suddenly, hearing himself say it, wondering . . . He went over and put his hands on her shoulders and swung her around. "I can't. Do you hear, Gladys? I can't let you go." Her lips were unsteady. He bent down and his closed over them . . .

Dean held the telephone waiting for Wynn's, "Swell, Dad." It was the boy's usual way of greeting good news. The clear ringing voice had answered his call to Dartmouth with, "'Lo, Dad. What's up?"

But when Dean announced that he and Gladys were going to be married, no answer came. He thought the connection must have been cut. "Wynn, are you there? Do you hear me?"

"I heard you."

"Well, is that all you have to say?" Of course it must be the shock. After all, he couldn't quite realize the thing himself, so why shouldn't the boy——?

"Okay, Dad."

"Wynn, aren't you glad? I've been pretty lonely, you know."

"Sure, I know. I hope you and Gladys'll be happy."

"Can you come down next week end?"

"Can't make the grade. I'm in a jam—exams soon, and I——"

Dean said, without attempting to hide his disappointment, "Make it whenever you can, son. Sorry you can't come soon."

"Me too. S'long, Dad. Good luck."

That "S'long"—was it imagination that gave it a note of finality? Gladys had come in while he was at the telephone, and now she said, "Wynn isn't pleased." It was not a question. She must have gathered the truth from his end of the conversation.

"Unpreparedness, rather," Dean tried to put it lightly.

"He's not coming down?"

"No." Dean swung around. "Don't let it worry you, dear. He'll get used to the idea."

"Cara is happy about us, isn't she?"

Yes, Cara was happy. The night before she had whirled into Dean's arms. "Oh, Daddy, it's so right. Gladys is such a darling!" Then her gentian-blue eyes brimmed over. "And you've been so terribly alone, I'd almost made up my mind never to marry. You need a woman to adore and spoil you."

"Cara has no reservations," Dean smiled. "But then she's a congenital romantic. She's never had inhibitions. Wynn is inarticulate—like me, I dare say. Wynn doesn't find readjustment easy. Neither do I." He smiled again. "That's by way of warning."

Gladys bent over his shoulder, her arm slipping about his neck. "Will you feel unhappy about Wynn's not being here? Shall we wait—would you rather have it that way?"

"We settled on next Saturday, and that's the way it is." He drew her down to him and whispered, "That's the way I want it."

After a moment she said softly, "We don't want any fuss. Cara will be here. There's no need for anybody else."

"Yes, Max Conrick. He's my lawyer and best friend—I'd like to have him. And you'll want your mother."

Gladys drew away, her gray eyes clouding. "I'm afraid Mother couldn't stand the trip. She isn't well, you know."

"Your cousin, then. He takes the place of a brother. You ought to have someone."

"Barclay doesn't mean anything to me." The pale olive of her skin flushed. "Actually, I don't like him. I never did. You must have noticed. Mother depends on him, that's all."

Now that she spoke of it, Dean had noticed her lack of interest in this second or third cousin—whichever it was—Barclay Haggart, a blond young man with features sculptured somewhat like hers. He had lived with the Maydens, looking after their finances, ever since Mr. Mayden's death when the widow had been forced to turn the homestead into a boardinghouse. On Haggart's brief business trips to New York, he always took Gladys to the theater or concerts. Yet she never welcomed his visits.

"I don't want anybody. Just to be married quietly and go away with you," she said presently. "To be in your arms—that's all I want. I don't need anybody. Except you, Dean."

They were married the following Saturday. The soft lap of waves against the rocks was like an organ accompaniment. The stream of sunlight through the oblong window made a pool around the small bridal party: Cara with hair and eyes shining; Max Conrick with his gentle expression of understanding.

This was what Pauline would have wanted; Dean felt sure of it. If she could have chosen for him, it would be this girl. Only Wynn was missing, and that still hurt. Until the last minute he had hoped the boy would change his mind and come.

No one spoke of Wynn's absence that day. Earlier, Cara had seen through his alibi of impending exams. "He's a crab," she pronounced. "He's jealous and doesn't know it. I'm going to call him."

"No, dear," Dean said, "don't, please. I know you and Wynn understand each other. But don't interfere. If he doesn't want to be with us, you mustn't try to force him."

There came no word. Not even a telegram. Nothing . . .

Before they went away that night Dean stood with Gladys at the window in the study. Moonlight silvered her, the satin-smooth olive skin, beige crepe dress, the long spray of orchids trailing along the low neckline, the turban twisted around her hair, hiding it—all merged mystically until she seemed part of the shimmering waters, as if she had risen from them.

"We can see the horizon tonight. That silver line," he said, "there's a new world on the other side." She went into his arms, and he murmured, "You're beautiful, my darling. I never dreamed how beautiful . . ."

Following their return from the honeymoon, Dean went up to Dartmouth to see Wynn. Whatever the boy had on his mind must be met and overcome. In this long lanky son of his were glimpses of himself at the same age. It was not so much marked physical resemblance as Wynn's laconic manner of expression, his easy embarrassment, the sensitivity he refused to admit. The bond between these two was close.

"I thought you'd come back with me. Just the week end," Dean suggested.

"Can't yet."

"You're coming for Christmas, of course."

Wynn frowned. While his lips were silent, his fine dark eyes told too much. They told Dean he was searching for means of evasion. "Can't tell. Thought I'd spend the holidays in New York with Ned Conrick. He'll be home on leave. Chances are he'll be overseas soon after. Might not see him again."

"Ned is coming to us for Christmas. He and Cara, you know—just a pair of kids, but in these times I haven't the right to stand in their way."

"Sure, I know. Ned told me. They ought to be married straight off."

Dean studied the set face and hard jaw. There was something more to Wynn's insistence than the haste of wartime romance. Max Conrick's nephew had grown up with the Steward twins. Entering Harvard at seventeen, he had quit his law studies at twenty, immediately after Pearl Harbor, to enlist in the Air Corps. Ned frankly stated to the world at large that he couldn't re-

member when he wasn't in love with Cara; a pity she knew him too well. Until the Air Corps thing came along she had treated him exactly like Wynn, like a brother. The war certainly held great compensations!

"Plan to be with us, son," Dean urged. "You can't stay away from a family party." And finally breaking through the boy's stubborn silence: "What makes you dislike Gladys?"

"You like people or you don't," came harshly. "You just like them or you can't."

"Not you! I never knew you to reach any conclusion without some logical reason." Then Dean added, to convince himself, "Are you sure it's not because Gladys has taken your mother's place?"

A streak of fire shot across Wynn's eyes; came and went, leaving somber resentment. "Maybe that's it."

"No one can take your mother's place, Wynn. But I've been a very lonely man. All the years Pauline was so ill——" He stopped, unable to go on, embarrassed.

Wynn asked suddenly, "You're satisfied now? You're happy?"

"Very." What was the boy driving at? "Come to Rockland with me for the week end. Convince yourself. For my sake—for everybody's."

They arrived next day in time for lunch. In the entrance hall, Cara was playing with Red, her sad-eyed spaniel. She plunged over the dog into Wynn's arms. "You old crab, taking such ages to crawl home!"

Anxiously Dean watched Gladys extend a welcoming hand. "Wynn, this is nice. Thank you for coming."

Wynn shook hands. *Quickly,* Dean thought; *too quickly.*

The meal went along smoothly. They talked about the weather; it looked like snow. Skiing possibly tomorrow. Small talk. With everyone except Cara, forced talk despite attempts at quips and gaiety, and the superficial air of reunion. Every so often Dean caught Wynn's brooding glance straying toward his stepmother.

Suddenly it hit him with a shock: Can the boy imagine he's in love with Gladys? Is this pose of dislike camouflage? A youngster might very readily fall for an attractive woman he's seen day in, day out for years. But no, that was absurd. Wynn would not have been able to hide it. Sometime or other he would have slipped up in word, in look.

"How about skating this afternoon, Wynn?" Gladys asked. "Cara and I tried the lake. It's perfect."

"Think I'd rather stay here with Dad. Have to trek back tomorrow. Doesn't give us much time. But you and Cara go ahead."

Dean pushed back his chair. "Let's have coffee in my study."

The coffee table was placed below the picture window. Dean watched Gladys' white hands move gracefully among cups and service. Why were her hands always a focal point?

For a while no one spoke. The stillness was restful. It was Cara, feeling none of the strain, Cara whose laughing voice applied the spark to dynamite. "Isn't Gladys a knockout since we acquired her? What do you say, Wynn? Wouldn't she put Garbo out of business?"

"I'd say she could put any other woman out of business." There was no enthusiasm in the way he said it. His voice had an edge.

"Praise from Sir Hubert," Gladys smiled.

"You know we almost didn't get her," pursued Cara, her gentian eyes traveling from Gladys to her father. "That sweet old babe-in-the-wood over there

didn't know he was in love until she was all packed to go."

"What d'you mean—go?" Still that edge to Wynn's voice.

Hastily, trying to head off an explosion, Dean put in, "That's all in the past. We've got her now."

"She wouldn't have gone," came as if Wynn couldn't hold it back.

The cool gray eyes of the woman at the coffee table were on him, wide and questioning. She asked softly, "Why do you say that, Wynn? I felt I wasn't needed here any more. I was ready to go."

"You had no idea of going," burst from him. "You were set to stay the rest of your life."

"Wynn, shut up!" Cara tried to head him off.

But now he couldn't stop. "You put the screws on Dad. Told him you were quitting so he wouldn't let you quit. I got wise to it last summer. I got the whole blueprint."

Gladys was on her feet, hand outstretched as Dean sprang up. "Dean, don't say anything, please. If he believes that, better have him tell you than hide it. I won't come between you. I won't hurt you through him."

"You're a selfish cruel beast, Wynn." Cara took hold of his coat lapels, trying to shake him. "Apologize to Gladys. Tell her you were crazy to say such dreadful things."

But Gladys was on her way to the door, handkerchief to her eyes. Then the door closed and she was gone.

Wynn loosened his sister's hands from his coat, gripped them tight. "Wish to God I'd cut my tongue out first!" He turned to Dean helplessly, pathetically. "Sorry, sir. Why did you make me come home? I didn't want to. It's too late to make up for what I said. But one thing I can do. Quit for good."

"No, there's another thing, son. You can come clean and tell me what's on your mind. I knew something was wrong. From the day I told you Gladys and I were going to be married, I knew. You've got to clear this up."

Wynn's fists pressed to his forehead. "I can't. I'll get out of your way."

Cara gave a low cry, "Wynn!"

"You don't mean that," Dean hastened to say. "Cara is your twin, part of you, just as you're both part of me. Nothing has ever come between us. Nothing ever will. I understand why you prefer not to stay here," Dean added. "Suppose you and I go into town for the night."

He tried to remember what his reaction would have been at seventeen. Shyness, a false armor, determination not to involve others in his emotions.

When they were settled in a hotel suite, he decided to get in touch with Max Conrick. The boy had tremendous admiration for Max. His ambition had always been to study law, to enter the Conrick office like Ned.

It was a stroke of luck to learn from Max that Ned—Lieutenant Edward Conrick, to be exact—had arrived in town that morning on leave, possibly to take the place of Christmas.

Dean sent the boys out to dinner, to be followed by a musical comedy and a night club. He wanted to be with Max alone. They dined in the living room of the suite and he poured out the whole story. "You see the impossible situation. He won't come home again until we can clear up whatever stumbling block is between him and Gladys."

"It's a delicate job," Max observed. Known in court for his quiet manner that covered piercing shrewdness, Max Conrick had a voice that held affection when he chose. "In the three years Gladys took care of Pauline, did Wynn ever quarrel with her?"

"Never to my knowledge."

Max hesitated, slow color seeping under his sallow skin. "I hate to ask this, old man, but youngsters of that age are up against mental confusion most of the time——"

"I know what you're going to ask," Dean broke in. "Did Wynn ever fancy himself in love with her?"

"Exactly that."

"No. Wynn and I were close companions from the time his mother became ill. I had his complete confidence. He hates Gladys, Max. It's bound to smash us—smash Wynn and me."

"Not that bad," Max assured him. "We'll get at causes tonight."

In the end, it was neither of them who made Wynn talk. It was Ned, who had shared Wynn's triumphs and defeats since they were kids.

"How was the show?" Max inquired when they came in.

"We didn't go to a show." Ned shut the door, backed against it. "We walked the streets after dinner. Fun in a dim-out! I led Wynn to a couple of bars, but he couldn't get plastered. He hasn't learned how to forget. It's an art."

Wynn dropped in a chair, very pale, lighting a cigarette with a shaky hand. "I'm okay."

"Go on," Ned directed. "Give your Dad a square deal. Quit the Spartan-boy pose; quit letting this thing tear your guts out. If you don't tell him what you told me, I will."

Wynn said nothing for a time. Finally: "I said what I did—that she hadn't any intention of going—because I used to hear her and Mother talking. My room in the apartment was next to theirs. I had my window open one warm evening. Mother was sitting on her balcony." Wynn wheeled around to face his father. "I shouldn't tell you this, sir. I haven't any right."

"Go ahead. I can take it."

"Gladys was inside. They were talking back and forth—you know how—but I got every word Mother said. She said, 'Of course Dean loves you. Why shouldn't he? I'm only a shell of a woman.'"

Dean started to protest the suggestion as sheer madness.

Max raised a hand. "Did you hear Gladys answer?"

"Not clearly. But Mother said, 'I know it's only natural. He's still a young man, and you're strong and healthy, Gladys.' She began to cry. Gladys came out on the balcony, and I heard distinctly, 'Be brave, dear. Don't cry.'"

Max said, "Remember, your mother wasn't well. She might have imagined anything."

"You couldn't make a mistake, sir. You could tell by the way Gladys answered, she wanted Mother to believe Dad was in love with her. She didn't deny it. She just said, 'Be brave, dear,' as if Mother had to take it."

"Was anything more said?"

"Not that night."

"Other nights?"

"Plenty. I got so I believed it too."

"You mean you thought we were lovers?" Dean demanded.

"That's what Mother thought."

"I swear I never thought of Gladys in any way except to be thankful for the help she gave Pauline."

"Help she gave Pauline?" burst from Wynn. "Help her to want to die—that's what she did."

"Good God, Wynn!" Dean's hands were on the boy's shoulders.

"I can't help it. All last summer while she was making a play for you and you didn't know it, I kept thinking how

people subject to melancholia—how easy it must have been for Gladys to convince Mother she wasn't wanted."

Dean's hands gripped tighter. Then they dropped, and he turned helplessly to Max. "You talk to him."

But again it was Ned who did the talking. "Listen, kid, you think your Dad is tops, don't you?" The look Wynn gave his father answered. Ned hurried on, "Sixteen—that's all you were when this nutty idea got you. Well, you'll be eighteen soon, and in uniform. Two years make a lot of difference to a guy. The way he thinks; the way he reasons. Fight this thing out with yourself before you tackle the fight with your enemies."

Max added, "You overheard snatches of conversation which led you to certain conclusions. The intonation of a person's voice isn't admitted as evidence in court. Did you ever see any evidence in your father's relationship to Gladys to justify these conclusions?"

"No," Wynn admitted.

"Then, without justification, you were actually ready to believe your father would carry on an affair with a woman under his own roof."

"No! I told myself that couldn't be."

"But you just said what you overheard made you believe it. You see how confused you must have been."

"I think"—the look the boy now gave Dean was heartbreaking—"you'll never forgive me for this, but I've got to tell you what I think."

"I want you to, son. What do you think?"

"That from the day Gladys came to take care of Mother, she meant to marry you."

Dean said, "Wynn, all the years ahead of us are going to be decided tonight. If you leave me with this corrosion going on inside you, can't you see we're finished? I take it you still think something of me—my judgment, my integrity?"

"And how!"

"Leave the solution of this misunderstanding to me. Trust me to clear away all doubts. Just keep on having faith in me, son."

Wynn said, "You know I will." And relief was in his white face.

Before he returned to Dartmouth the following day, he told his father he was glad to have unburdened himself; it was like letting down prison bars. Not for a moment did Dean consider seriously the fragmentary bits with which Wynn had built his prison. His own boyhood had created tragedy out of less.

At Rockland once more, he went to his study and stretched in his favorite lounge chair. It was good to be alone for a while. He too had shed a burden.

Toward five Cara burst in, yesterday's difficulties forgotten. Ned had telephoned from town. She had to dash for a train and have dinner with him. On the way out she flung over her shoulder, "Don't think Gladys and I were alone last night just because you and Wynn deserted. Her good-looking cousin Barclay Haggart was here. I couldn't make her ask him to stay over."

Gladys came in from skating and pulled off her gloves, stretching hands toward the fire. More than ever they looked like marble against the flames. "I didn't ask Barclay to stay," she explained when Cara had gone. "I wouldn't let him bother you."

"Bother?"

"He came to borrow money—quite a sum." She tossed her knitted beret on a chair. "The boardinghouse is terribly in the red. I didn't mean you to know. I thought I'd manage to work it out with the little savings account I had."

"How much does Mrs. Mayden need?"

"Several thousand. I don't want to ask you for that much, Dean. It's only because Mother is ill."

He went to the desk. "I must arrange to give you enough in your own name to use as you please."

"No, don't do that. I don't want any money of my own." The fright in her voice amazed him. Then she said, "It's a new and heavenly sensation to have a man pay my bills. Don't stop doing it, darling."

"But you'll want to take care of your mother."

"I'd rather have the money come from you." Her hand swiftly covered the hand holding the pen. "Make the check payable to Mrs. George Mayden. Mother will enjoy the feeling of independence."

"What do you say to delivering it in person? Would you like to pay her a visit?"

Gladys folded the check in a small square to fit the pocket of her blouse. "No, I want to stay here. With you."

He got up and held her. He kissed her. "You'll be happy to learn all the trouble with Wynn is behind us."

"I couldn't sleep last night because what he said and the look in his eyes haunted me."

"Nothing but a sensitive youngster's imagination."

"Aren't you going to tell me?" she prompted.

Dean looked out of the window. It was getting on toward twilight. Ice caked on the pane, and the view was blurred. The sound of waves came like a Greek chorus. Splash, silence, splash, silence . . .

"Will you feel better—knowing?"

"Yes. Of course, darling."

"Well, then." It was difficult to put Wynn's suspicion into words that would not wound. "I don't know how to begin." Again he paused. "Wynn got a notion you and I were in love while Pauline was alive."

She seemed stunned. "But such a mad idea, Dean!"

"He happened to overhear snatches of conversation and pieced them together."

"What do you mean, pieced them together?"

"His room was next to the one you shared with Pauline, and he frequently heard you talking to her."

"Didn't he tell you what he heard?"

"We had a time getting anything out of him. He wanted to spare me——"

"We?" she interrupted. "Who else?"

"Dear, don't be so upset. I called in Max Conrick to help straighten things out."

"Max Conrick—a stranger!"

Her vehemence, like her fright, startled him. "Not a stranger by any means. My attorney, my friend for years, who has stood by as adviser in every problem I've had to handle."

"Was Max the only one there?"

"Ned Conrick."

"Ned—that boy! What business——?"

"Wynn confided in him. It was Ned who made Wynn speak up."

"Everybody except me. Your lawyer, your son's pal, everybody but your wife! You didn't give me the chance to defend myself."

Her eyes had changed from transparent gray to green with a curious glitter. The swift transition was like the effect of one chemical on another. How often he had seen the same metamorphosis take place in laboratory experiments.

"What reason have you to believe you had to defend yourself?"

"Your son makes an outrageous accusation before two other men, and you dare to ask what cause I had?"

"I haven't begun to tell you all," Dean continued, and he had an odd feeling of wanting to pull back, like a man walking toward a precipice. "I didn't expect to tell you. I did my utmost to convince Wynn he was wrong. So did Max. So did Ned. I succeeded in convincing myself along with him, because what he told us appeared too horrible. Too fantastic. But since you've put yourself on the defensive . . ." Still he could not bring himself to speak.

"Tell me," Gladys insisted. "Don't torture me like this."

Dean paused in front of her. "I don't know how to say it, Gladys. It's so inexpressibly cruel—to you; to me. Wynn said that you fed like slow poison to Pauline the idea that I loved you and she was in the way. He believes that was the cause of his mother's suicide. Now you have the whole of it."

She sat down, and for a second her eyes closed. Then: "You don't believe it. You can't believe it, Dean."

"Until a few minutes ago I was ready to dismiss the whole thing. Completely."

"Why do you say, until a few minutes ago?"

"Your own reaction—panic, Gladys—that came when I told you Max was present."

"Isn't it perfectly natural?" She caught his arm. He felt the pinch of her fingers. "Would I be human if I were willing to have anybody except you hear anything so foul? We know it's not true, you and I. You said yourself it's an insane notion. A phobia existing in Wynn's mind and nowhere else. Dean, you agree, don't you? Or do you hate me? Has Wynn made you hate me?"

He loosened her fingers. "We've been happy. But only one kind of happiness cannot be smashed. We've got to trust each other."

"Dean, don't you know I couldn't possibly have done such a thing? Don't you remember, Pauline was getting better? Why, we all thought she was going to get well."

"Yes, those last months. I was sure she was going to get well. But she killed herself."

"That's why Wynn was eager to read a double meaning into anything I may have said. Oh, not consciously! But you and I married so soon afterward. He doesn't realize why he hates me; why he's willing to believe evil. Don't you see, he's young and impressionable, and he adored Pauline? Be patient, darling. I'll make him believe in me." Her face was against his, and he felt her tears. "You said—trust. Won't you trust me, Dean?"

But that night, even with her in his arms, her body pressed to his, he kept seeing her eyes chemicalize from gray to green. He lay awake seeing them through the darkness.

Of his own accord Wynn came to Rockland the following Saturday. Until he left Sunday afternoon he was in the house scarcely at all, yet Dean knew how to translate unspoken words into "Okay, Dad." He could feel it in the boy's friendliness to Gladys.

For himself, it was not so easy. It was as though Wynn had stirred up a hornet's nest of memories. He remembered Pauline's sad way of repeating, "Are you sure you love me, Dean? We used to be everything to each other. I know I'm not much good any more, but do you still love me?" He remembered her blue eyes filled with tenderness and appeal; helpless appeal like a child's. He remembered how often she had murmured, "This isn't fair to you. I know it isn't fair, but I'd get well, Dean, if only I knew how. I want to be your wife again—I love you so." The way she clung to him. "I haven't any right to spoil your life." The way he had to reassure her. Constantly.

Memories of little things magnified, like looking through the end of an opera glass bringing the past close in gigantic proportions. This would never do! Obviously the chemicalization was in himself.

At Christmas, Wynn came home again. Ned had to remain in camp in Texas, and Cara went down to be with him. It was Gladys who skied and skated with Wynn. "I'll make him believe in me." This had been her promise.

One evening shortly after the New Year Barclay Haggart telephoned Gladys. Mrs. Mayden had had a heart attack in the early morning and, no doctor being available, he had rushed her to the nearest hospital through a snowstorm. Her condition was precarious. Would Gladys come at once?

The message came while they were reading in the study after dinner. Dean heard Gladys answer, "Take a private room. Never mind the money . . . Do you hear? Don't talk about money. I'll bring enough. And get a heart specialist. I'll see what connections—probably the midnight if I can get into town in time."

In less than half an hour she was gone. "I won't stay away from you long, darling," she said in Dean's arms.

"You must stay until your mother is better."

"I don't believe she's going to get well." In her voice was fright, the same breathless thing he had been unable to fathom when she asked him not to give her any money of her own. Yet Gladys never appeared to worry about her mother.

"Dear, you'd better have me with you."

"No—no! If I need you, I'll send word. I'll take a room at the hospital. Barclay can take care of everything."

"What hospital is it?" And after he had written down the name: "You'll phone me."

"Every night."

Toward midnight Dean stood at the window listening to waves slap against the rocks. Yet the sound was more disturbing than soothing. He realized why. He could not understand what had kept him from going with Gladys. Good Lord, here was her mother critically ill! This cousin, Barclay Haggart, why should he be the one to see her through a crisis? That was a husband's job.

And so early next morning he boarded a plane. He did not notify Gladys. In a few hours they would be together . . .

But she faced the crisis alone. Dean arrived at the hospital to learn that Mrs. Mayden passed away in her sleep in the small hours of the morning. Mrs. Steward had gone out to the Mayden place, he was told, leaving Mr. Haggart to take charge of all arrangements.

Dean did not wait to telephone Gladys. Probably she had tried to reach him immediately on her arrival. She would know he was on his way to her.

It was late afternoon when he got out to the Mayden place. In the driveway tire tracks marked the hard-packed snow, but there was no sign of a car. He found the door to the porch on the latch and went inside.

At one side of the hall was the parlor and at the other a reception room, the front half of which was an office.

Before the hearth at the far end knelt Gladys. She did not hear him, and for a moment he stood in the doorway. She was feeding papers to the flames, gath-

ering them in both hands from piles beside her, tossing them into the fire; eager, hurried, as if she wanted to get through quickly.

He stepped forward, and Gladys glanced sharply over her shoulder. She made an instinctive gesture as if to sweep the papers together, to cover them with her body. A foolish, futile gesture.

Then she stood up. The flames sent a flare around her. "You gave me a shock. Why didn't you let me know you were coming?"

"Didn't you know? Didn't you make any attempt to reach me at Rockland this morning?"

"Yes. Yes, I did. When I got here and they told me Mother was gone, I went straight to the telephone. I couldn't get any connection—the storm."

He knew she was lying. He looked down at the scattered papers and saw that some were letters with the engraved address of the Steward apartment on the envelope flap. He picked up one and turned it over. It was addressed to Barclay Haggart and the distinctive handwriting was unquestionably Gladys'.

She reached out a hand and he put the letter in it. "I'm getting rid of a lot of old rubbish," she said. "Barclay wants me to put the place on the market."

"Have you the right to destroy your mother's papers before her will is read?"

"Mr. Carruthers, her lawyer, has the will. Everything is left to me. I'm afraid the estate is largely debts."

"Is Mr. Haggart aware that you're burning letters addressed to him?"

"They're nothing. They just have to do with Mother's business."

Dean bent to pick up another. And in that instant's swift survey, he saw that some were from Rockland and others from New York. But all of those she had attempted to conceal bore Barclay Haggart's name. "I see you and Haggart had quite an extensive correspondence."

"Dean, give that to me!"

Panic again! The same panic as when she begged him to give her no money; the same that chemicalized her eyes from gray to green.

"Do you really believe I'd read any letter you wrote to another man?"

"I tell you, it's nothing. I'll make a package for Barclay. He can burn them himself." She shuffled through the lot hastily and tied the package with a string. He saw that her hands were shaking. Those hands always so cool and poised!

"What are you afraid of, Gladys?"

"Afraid? Why do you ask? I've just been under a frightful strain, and you open the door and walk in like a—like a ghost."

"I should have come with you last night," Dean answered. "Now I'll stay until all this business is settled."

"But you can't stay in this house. It's too cold."

"You intended to stay here. If you can stand it, I can."

She made haste to dump the remaining papers on the fire, then locked up the Haggart letters in the office desk. With the key still in one hand, she linked the other through Dean's arm. "You were good to come. I do need you."

But Dean scarcely heard. He was listening to the hammering of his thoughts, like the hammering of the waters against the rocks . . .

The radium of his watch showed a few minutes after one when he suddenly awoke. It was as if something pulled him upright. The high-ceilinged bedroom had an arctic chill. He tugged on his dressing gown and hurried over to close the window.

But with one hand on the sill, he

paused. A woman was sobbing, "No—no, I tell you. I won't! You can't make me do it." The answer came too low to hear, yet he recognized a man's rage. The voices came from the porch.

In a stream of moonlight, as he started for the door, Dean noticed the covers of the bed next to his pulled to the pillow and humped to give the appearance of someone snuggled underneath. He wondered when Gladys had stolen out and how she had managed to get in touch with the man who was downstairs. Or had it all been planned in advance? Had the man—it could be nobody but Haggart—expected to spend the night here?

The stairwell was dark and the stairs uncarpeted. Dean had to feel his way. He must have been overheard, for as his foot touched the last step Gladys came in.

Before the flashlight in her hand turned full on him, he saw that she had flung a tweed topcoat over her lacy nightgown. He saw, too, that she was shivering.

"I wasn't asleep and I heard a noise down here," she explained. "But it's all right. There isn't anybody."

"There was." Dean found the switch and lights blazed on. Her face was stricken. "Is Barclay Haggart on his way down the drive now? Don't lie to me any more. It's no use. I heard you talking to him."

She asked, "What did you hear?"

"You were refusing something he wanted you to do, Gladys; crying that you wouldn't."

She turned to go up the stairs, but he blocked the way. She sat down, the tweed coat hugged around her. "I'm so cold. Won't you go up to our room?"

"You weren't too cold outside when you were with Haggart. Are you in love with him?"

"I hate him." She began to sob again, but Dean did not touch her. "He's tortured me for years."

"What does he want that you refused?"

"He wants me to divorce you and get a big settlement so we can be married."

"What's in those letters you'd have destroyed if I hadn't come in? Are they love letters, Gladys?"

"No. No!"

"But you were in love with Haggart once and the affair resulted in terrific fear of him. Isn't that so?" She sat looking up at him. He felt again she was searching for some way to avoid a direct answer. "Don't try to lie. I won't let you."

She shook her head. "No, I won't lie. I should have told you, I suppose. I was sixteen and I'd never been away from this place, Dean. You see how it was, don't you? He came to my room one night——" She stopped. "I'd never known any other man."

"And you've been lovers ever since."

"No—I swear!—please believe me. He wouldn't let go, but it wasn't for myself. Money—that's all he cares about. I wouldn't let you give me any in my name because I was afraid he'd never leave me alone."

"You hated him and this place. You always wanted to get out."

"Yes, yes."

"That was why you begged Pauline to take you with us, wasn't it?" The mention of Pauline caught her off guard. She stiffened, and although her eyes were wet, they went green as he had seen them under stress. Should he go on; find out all there was to know? Wynn's statement: "From the day Gladys came to take care of Mother, she meant to marry you." An ambitious woman determined to change the color of her drab and disillusioned life, was this the woman he had married? This woman, his wife,

was she completely unknown to him?

Events from the day she entered his house passed swiftly. Kaleidoscopically. He brushed a hand across his eyes as if the gesture could banish the vision. At last he was seeing Pauline's death as Wynn saw it, and he knew how a drowning man felt.

Gladys was pleading that long before they met she had broken with Barclay Haggart.

He halted her with, "Was the scheme to marry me yours alone, or did this fellow have something to do with it? Is that his hold on you?"

"Dean, don't say such frightful things. I love you."

She had flung out her hands and he was staring down at them. Sculptured, muscular, unmarred as marble and—suddenly his lips found the word "ruthless" and said it aloud. Her eyes followed his. That was why she did not go on. Neither spoke. It was as if those hands held a key less tangible yet more real than the key which had locked up the letters.

"What did Haggart instruct you to do when you came to live with us?" Dean pursued.

"Nothing, nothing! Why do you suspect me?"

"If what I suspect is true," he said very low, backing away, "if it's halfway true, I could kill you here and now."

Her answer came, and there was no life in it. None at all. "I almost wish you would."

It was unbelievable that he could return to Rockland with Gladys and take up the daily routine as if nothing had blasted their life.

Actually, nothing cataclysmic had occurred except in his own mind. And looking back, it became clear that it had been happening ever since Wynn planted the first seeds. Except that he went far beyond the spot where Wynn had stopped; far beyond the belief that Gladys had goaded Pauline to suicide.

Useless to tell himself his nerves were shot to pieces. Pauline had been on the road to recovery; Pauline's wish had been realized, she was getting better. Health, the possibility of being with the man she loved—his wife again! No, there was no motive for suicide. None whatever.

All the physical aspects of the household at Rockland remained those of order and calm. Outwardly, Gladys and himself, husband and wife, devoted as usual. But he made certain they were together only when others were present. He worked late in his study. He slept—when he slept—on the couch in his dressing room. He told the servants he was not feeling well and preferred not to disturb Mrs. Steward. He became a master of subterfuge. And he wondered what the finish would be.

He wondered too if Gladys had any idea of the nightmare he lived in. When she begged him to take her in his arms, did she guess why he could not bear to touch her? Did she realize he could not look at her hands? Whenever he did, it was to picture them seizing Pauline's frail body in the darkness of night . . .

If the thing he was convinced of should ever come to light, what would Cara's future be? Cara knew something was wrong. He could feel her studying him anxiously when she thought he was engrossed in a newspaper or book.

Then came Ned's final leave before going to parts unknown. With Max Conrick, he was lunching one Saturday at Rockland and he broke the news in his casual way. "This is s'long, I guess, for a while, folks." He glanced around the table before his eyes rested upon Cara.

"When, Ned?"

He shrugged. "Can't say, baby."

Cara gulped hard before words came. "You're taking it like a—a soldier."

Dean spoke up. "Why don't you two see a parson before Ned goes?"

"I've proposed to him a dozen times," Cara protested. "I'm just a washout. He won't have me."

Ned's lips tightened. Then he blurted out, "I'd be a bum to tie her up with a guy who may not come back."

"Time is of the essence in love as in everything else today," answered Max.

Dean smiled. "Max is right. I want

? ?

Family Quiz Answers
SISTER

(*Questions on page 16*)

1. **2,739 years.**
2. **Irish Sea.**
3. **The history of trees.**
4. **Harvard in 1636.**
5. **Pure white.**
6. **Duck.**
7. **It is a remote, weird, desolate part of Western Queensland, Australia.**
8. **The bluebird—upper parts blue, breast red, under parts white.**
9. **Ladders.**
10. **It was the day of Christ's crucifixion.**
11. **Daniel Boone, Benjamin Franklin, Andrew Jackson, Stephen A. Douglas, Theodore Roosevelt.**
12. **(a) Venus, (b) Psyche, (c) Eros.**

Questions accepted from Joe C. Martin, Sioux Falls, S. D.; Mrs. Marie Brewer, Berwyn, Ill.; Laura Lee Luedde, St. Louis, Mo.; Elsie DeLacy, Forest Hills, N. Y.; Milton A. Stoddard, Livermore, Calif.; Mariann Redeker, Springfield, Ill.; Mrs. M. C. Rambo, Mountain City, Tenn.; Mrs. Otta Lee, Sioux Falls, S. D.; Alma L. Pope, Alden, N. Y.; Mrs. R. C. Mayfield, Glencoe, Okla.; R. D. Bowden, Carbondale, Ill.; Mary Schlert, Atlantic City, N. J.

? ?

Cara happy. You're her happiness, Ned. You should be together while you can."

Ned bent to the girl beside him. "Hello, my bride," he said.

"We'll have the wedding in front of the window, the exact spot where Dean and I were married," Gladys suggested. "That would be perfect, wouldn't it, Dean?"

He did not answer but looked at Cara's shining eyes, as she left the room with Ned. At last he had found escape for the child.

A few minutes later, the maid announced a visitor. She whispered the name to Gladys, but Dean did not need to be told. "If Barclay Haggart is calling"—he tried to give no hint of the sickness inside him—"I suggest that you introduce him to Max and me."

Gladys was on her way out. "Yes, of course. He's been wanting to meet you."

"Why the excitement over Barclay Haggart?" Max inquired when they were alone in the study. "Gladys looks as though she were going to her execution."

"Not hers," Dean corrected. "Not hers, Max. Mine."

Max waited. It was his habit to wait for confidences.

Dean said in a drained voice, "You probably know I've been holding back information you ought to have."

"I do. You've looked like hell for weeks."

"I'm living with an obsession, Max. You've got to cure me or it will kill me. I believe my wife is a murderess."

Max tapped a steady tattoo on the arm of his chair. "So do I," came finally.

Dean met the sympathetic gaze of the eyes that missed little. He might have known Max would be ahead of him. "How?" he asked.

"I credited every word that boy of yours told us. It was my business to appear not to. I had a bigger job than getting at the truth. I had to save your son for you."

"How much do you know?"

"Suppose you tell *me*."

The steady tattoo kept up as Dean related the history of his Adirondack trip. "The man with her now has knowledge of something that terrifies Gladys," he ended. "That's my reason for believing her guilt. But I can't prove it, even to myself."

"If I could prove it, would you find it possible to forgive me? Or do you still love her too much?"

"I think, Max, there's only one woman I ever loved. Pauline."

"I had an idea that was the case. You understand the science of chemistry, old man. My science is the chemistry of men and women."

They waited a long time for Gladys. When she finally came in, she asked why they were sitting in the dark. Her voice sounded weary and hoarse. She switched on the lamps.

Dean inquired, "Where is Haggart?"

"Barclay apologizes. He had to get back to New York. Will Ned and Cara be in to dinner?"

Dean almost wished Max were not here and the thing could go unsolved. Gladys looked so frightened. "They've gone to see Ned's mother. Max will stay."

"I'll tell cook."

Max inquired, "What bad news did Mr. Haggart bring you, Gladys?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Come over here, my dear." He pulled a chair so that, seated, she had to look directly up at him. "You don't have to hold back anything. I know all there is to know about you and Barclay Haggart. He's blackmailing you."

"Did you tell him, Dean?" Her voice shook.

"I have ways of finding out," Max went on. "You were corresponding with Haggart all the years you were with Pauline. Is he in possession of a letter from you telling exactly how Pauline died?"

"Why should I write him about that? It was all in the papers."

"But suppose what you told him wouldn't look well in the papers. He'd be able to keep on blackmailing you."

"He has nothing, I tell you." She turned to Dean. "Don't let him ask me any more questions. I know you hate me. But don't let him do this to me. I'm so tired."

"I want to help you, my dear," Max said. "Surely if this fellow Haggart is making your life miserable we ought to get after him. The letter he has, you've been trying to get away from him, haven't you? And his price isn't money alone. It's yourself."

"You did tell him, Dean."

"Yes, I told him. I had to."

"Why did you have to tell him?"

"Because we can't go on like this. There's something horrible between us. Ever since Wynn——"

"Don't!" She jumped up. "Don't say it. I can't bear any more." Dean reached out as he might have reached to drag her away from oncoming wheels, for Max Conrick's eyes had the eager tenacity that marked them in court when he cornered a witness. Gladys clung to Dean's hand. "I love you. That's my punishment. I love you and you hate me."

"If you love him that much, help clear this up, Gladys. Help us get hold of that letter Haggart keeps on his person. Where can the police find him in New York?"

Like her hands, her eyes had been clinging to Dean. Now they slid away. But not quickly enough. He caught the swift change from gray to green that told him so much more than words or touch. At last he was able to interpret its meaning. Desperation. The glazed fright of a cornered criminal.

She backed to the shadows. "I don't know where he is."

"I didn't imagine you'd tell us." Max went to her. "Why won't you?"

"I tell you, I haven't any idea where Barclay is. There's no use calling in the police."

"You must leave that decision to me."

"No, no."

"But why, my dear? Why attempt to protect this man who threatens you?"

"Oh, won't you leave me alone?"

"Max, let her alone," Dean pleaded. "It's too much——"

But Max apparently did not hear. There might have been no one else in the room, only the woman and himself, the criminal and the law. "We don't need you, Gladys, to locate Haggart. We'll catch him upstate. We'll get him at home."

She slumped down in a chair and bent almost double. "What do you think that letter would prove?"

"That Pauline Steward was murdered. Not psychologically, mind you, but coldbloodedly and premeditatedly. That she was getting well, and all the plans you and Haggart made were being defeated. That one night she wasn't sleeping well and you told her to go on the balcony for fresh air. Then you stole out behind her and lifted her in those strong, pretty hands of yours and let her fall."

Gladys shivered. She held her hands under the lamp and examined them as if they were no part of her. "Is that why you won't let them touch you, Dean?" she said. "Do you believe what he says?"

"Yes. I'm afraid I do."

"You're wrong," she whispered. "I used to beg her not to go out on the balcony. I used to fear the very thing that happened."

"You mean fear of the temptation to kill her?" Max leaned closer.

She shivered again. "Barclay said it would be so easy. From the minute he spoke of it, every time she went out there, I thought: He's right and it could never be proved."

"That," said Max, "is the common belief of crime."

"But he was right. Even though you force a confession from me, it could never be proved. You know that too, Dean. Only—I'd have to go back to Barclay. I could never stay here, could I?"

"No," said Dean. "You must leave here."

Max moved to the desk and picked up the telephone. "Give me New York——" he began.

"Not yet, Max!" Dean strode across the room. "We've got to talk it over first. There's too much to consider. Cara—think what finding this out will do to her. Don't call in the police. Not yet."

"It's not our job to play God. Not for your peace of mind, Dean, or Cara's happiness. This thing is bigger than eitner of you. And my job is to see justice done." But Max made no further move to put through his call. He looked past Dean toward the picture window. He was leaning forward as if listening for something. It came at last—a thud, a splash.

Dean wheeled around. The door was shut, and Gladys was gone.

Max hung up the telephone. "It's what I expected she might do."

There came only the rhythmic sound of waves against the rocks.

THE END

Next month: Rita Weiman's powerful story of a woman who felt that life was not worth living until she met the girl in the swank dress-shop fitting room

"Praise the Lord . . ." (*Continued from page 54*)

we go! The battle's begun! Our boys are driving straight at the Japs. Man, they're streaking like so much lightning. Bother the fighters trying to stop 'em, they're going full tilt for the bombers downstairs. Three miles west, I'd say—three or four. *There!* First blood! First enemy down! He's burst into flame! He's out of control, spiraling seaward! There goes a wing! He's splashed in Davy Jones' locker . . ."

Below the waterline of the carrier, Pudge Delaney, a fireman 2/c, confronted his boiler in vaporous heat, the mermaid upon his bared chest swimming through glistening sweat while he tended the valves.

"Hey, Stinky! Not bad for a Holy Joe. Like hearing Clem Manning report the fights—remember?—at Mamacita's."

If Stinky recalled it, he neglected to state. The steel deck under his twelves took a leap to the tune of a shattering detonation—so close, it seemed, on the starboard plates, that both men jumped to avoid being struck.

They gaped at the bulkhead. But nothing opened. No seams peeled apart. No water rushed in.

"What the hell?"

A quick voice answered, coming to them from the speaker, forward, "Hold your hats! That bomb burst close—a near-enough miss, but as good as a mile. The Jap who dropped it won't come back. One of ours has him square in the sights, and . . . *he's going! He's going! He's burning! He's gone!*"

The voice, a moment ago so excited, seemed calm to them now, though its tone hadn't changed. Sheepishly Pudge Delaney grinned at his boilermate Stinky.

"Well, wha'd'you know, a jerk of a preacher callin' 'em off like he was in church!"

"Yeah, like in choich." Stinky's eyes looked awed. "The way I'm feelin', I'd say me a prayer. Only I can't remember the woids."

The attack had been beaten, formations broken, without a single bomb or torpedo bursting aboard the dodging carrier. The birdboat steadied once more on her course, dead in the wind, while her cocky fighters chased the enemy toward his ship. They were dots, no more, in the western sky—dots which would flash the light of the sun as a wing caught its rays and reflected them back.

Boggs was jubilant. This was the life! His face was glowing with excitement; and when the young ensign grinned at him and nodded, "Nice show," the padre's cup of joy overran.

"*Wasn't* it, just!"

"You told 'em, eh, chaplain?"

"Blow by blow." Boggs wagged his head.

Surreptitiously he glanced at a dent in the quarter-inch plate above his head. By fourteen inches, as close as that, a bullet sprayed from a passing

bomber had missed taking *him!* The padre blinked. Yet he found it exhilaratingly pleasant to be shot at in battle without being hit—or at least, so it seemed in retrospection.

Now his broadcast was over. He'd have to sign off—with a prayer, he decided, as seemed only right in this hour of their triumph. A sort of Te Deum.

"Attention, men." Boggs spoke at the mike. But his words were cut short by a hail from aloft. He stared toward the outboard rail, where the skipper was standing, legs braced, binoculars leveled, peering at something off to eastward.

Almost at once the bullhorn bellowed, "Stand by for barrage! Stand by for barrage!"

Barrage? From *what?* The chaplain saw nothing. He shaded his eyes, straining hard at a sky which shimmered ovenlike under the sun.

The ensign, passing him, shouted, "Decoy! First attack—to decoy our fighters."

"Eh?" Then Boggs saw. The Jap's ruse became clear. "Attention, men! They're coming again, but this time out of the *east*. You get it? That first attack was a decoy, to lure our fighters away from the ship. They've got *two* carriers, and their other squadrons were waiting to eastward—waiting until the radio told 'em to come on in. Stand by for barrage."

To himself, Boggs muttered, "The yellow devil as a roaring lion flieth about." He saw the devil, yet could not hear him. The roar of his flying, as a roaring lion, was drowned in the louder roar of the fighters starting to rise from the birdboat's deck.

Exactly three planes had cleared the apron, were zooming steeply to get upstairs, when the first Jap ships, high-level bombers, came on their target. The sticks hurtled down. Boggs clutched at the rail as the rudder, hard left, lurched the great carrier into her turn. The thunder of ack-acks deafened his ears, the smoke from their salvos stung his eyes and strangled his throat.

"Our batteries," he gasped—"making so much smoke, they're firing so fast, can't see to report. Stand by. Let you know as soon's——" Boggs paused, as though what he heard had mesmerized him. In a lull, a brief second which seemed suspended, an eternity marching in awful review, that pleasant low whistle became a shrill screech which instantly changed to a shattering burst.

Something shot past him to crash with a ping against the "island's" tough sheathing of steel. To starboard, a second bomb exploded, erupting a geyser of ocean skyward. The chaplain was drenched, his battle helmet shedding the water as though in a squall.

Over his head the raucous bullhorn, surprisingly calm, found voice to trumpet, "E Division, double-quick to the bows!"

To the bows? Boggs stared. But of course! There were flames. The birdboat had taken a hit up forward. Below and to port, he glimpsed the flashes from five-inch guns talking back at the Japs. As he lifted the microphone he was thinking: Careful, now, careful. Must help morale. Be sober, vigilant—calm like that voice dispatching the damage-control boys forward. He took a deep breath.

"We've taken a bit of strafing, men. One bomb just hit us near the bows, and fire's broken out. But we're fighting it now. I see Lieutenant Jack Madder up there. The hoses are playing. We'll have it put down. Our ack-ack guns are still on the job. We're making it hot for those devils upstairs—not just our guns but the escort's too, all blazing at once like the Fourth of July. Here comes a Jap diving straight for the ship, machine guns sputtering. *We got him! He's out of hand. He's slipping sideways, trying to crash us! It's going to be close! . . . He missed us! He's DOWN!"*

The chaplain wiped the sweat from his face with a quick sweep of his grimy hand. As he did so he started, his smarting eyes gaped, and he felt that his heart must suddenly have stopped. The carrier, swinging from zig to zag, had altered the course of the wind on her deck, and the smoke eddied clear to reveal the battery nearest the bridge abaft the "island." Five men lay crumpled about their gun behind the blast screen canting upward.

Boggs thought: Red Kerkle! God rest his soul . . . Strange what thoughts will come to one's mind. Boggs thought: He'll be troubled by girls no more.

In that moment something went tick in the chaplain. Red Kerkle—why, Red

had been one of his sheep, an erring black lamb in the shepherd's new fold. Boggs, who preached love, was flaming with hate, a white-hot fury which seared his vitals and left him no longer a man of God, but primitive man, a man of action.

"I'm signing off," he snarled at the mike. "Red Kerkle's dead. Red Kerkle's been killed. His gun crew's short. They need replacements."

He ran from the bridge and down the ladder, through battle hatches, to gain the deck. He knew what to do. How frequently Boggs had watched the drill of those long Navy fives.

The gun crew stared at the cross on his shoulder. Boggs tore off his blouse and then his shirt, while he shouted, "What job? I could handle the tray or the powder."

A marine grinned, said, "Okay, chaplain," and took the long metal trough from a fellow that looked like a minstrel whose make-up had streaked. "You take the rammer, Otto. Let's go!"

They went. Back and forth from breech to locker the padre toiled with his heavy brass tray, for the rifle was minus two of its shellmen. He carried his burden up to the gun and held it in place while the powderman followed, the rammerman shoved the full load in the bore; then scuttled back for another shell as the muzzle was pointed, the primer fired, and the deadly projectile shot thundering out.

He lost all track of the battle's progress. He was just an automaton serving a gun. The bullhorn warned, "Stand by for barrage!" and vaguely Boggs knew that a Jap, flying low, was streaking directly at his station, aiming to take the birdboat abeam with a long torpedo clutched in its claws. The pointer was frantically twirling a lever, dropping the muzzle to meet the assault; the trainer had pivoted the carriage; and all the time, from the Jap's machine guns, bullets kept spitting a leaden stream.

Boggs heard profanity, terse and lurid. But that was all right, seemed fitting now, not shocking at all. Indeed, he subscribed to every word. The Jap came on like a mad tornado, and the padre, stumbling back with the tray, felt the sharp blast as the gun exploded. A hit or a miss? He would not know, for the tray clattered down from his nerveless hands and he tumbled beside it prone on the deck . . .

A fan was whirring—as it seemed to Boggs, the wraith of some F4F prop now dead, sheared from its twisted shaft in the sea. The motor which once had turned it lay still. There was just a propeller endlessly whirling through gray eternity far, far away.

As he listened, trying to grasp that sound, the chaplain grew conscious of others as well. The sounds of groaning; the pleasant plashing of water breaking away from the bows.

Then the ship was afloat! She had not gone down. The padre sat up as he remembered. But a sharp pain stabbed him through the shoulder and again he lay back, while he remembered. He remembered searing hot orange flames, acrid gray smoke and great fierce birds which darted like luminous ghosts in limbo.

An hour whirled by on the blades of a fan. Boggs was watching a finger of light which fluttered above him. The light disappeared. Something had come between him and the light, and he heard a voice greet him with, "Hello, Battler."

"Hello," husked the chaplain. "Hello, lieutenant!" No question of it, that face was Madder's. Tired hazel eyes, bloodshot from smoke, with lines of weariness under their rims. Yet that smile—there was no mistaking that unregenerate smile.

"You did the old number proud," said Madder. "Even though you played hell with regulations."

"What?" gasped Boggs, and his visitor chuckled.

"Don't you know it's against international law for a padre to fight?"

"Why, yes. I forgot."

The chaplain could only blink. So now Jack Madder had come to gloat over him, to enjoy his squirming, caught in the toils.

"That's partly why I blew in to see you. To tell you don't worry. I've seen the skipper. Requested appointment to be your counsel if they give you a court. *If*, I just said. So much smoke, there's a good chance the bridge didn't see you breaking the law. But with everyone making talk about it—well, skipper says he is hard of hearing, gun-deaf, you know, and it may be that he won't catch what the men are saying!"

There was healing in Madder's wink, in his grin, in the knowledge that, dog-tired after the battle, he had gone to the captain and asked for the job of defending him, Boggs, if there were a court. Dimly he saw, from the kite's changed manner, the chance of his being accepted now. Maybe the men felt differently too. Maybe they'd think of him as belonging. Maybe more of them would come to service!

But the grin had vanished from Madder's face, and his eyes went serious. "I've got a confession. You ought to be told. When that Jap came at us, tin fish ready, I thought we were cooked. I was scared, all right. I prayed out loud. You hear me? I *prayed!*"

Boggs smiled.

"And my prayer was answered pronto. Last shell you lugged to the breech was *it*. I know. I talked to the men on your gun, and that was the baby that got the Jap."

The chaplain remembered. It came to him now. He had hustled a shell to the breech of the gun, had started back to get another, while someone was swearing. His smile faded out. He could hear that voice, could recognize it, could even recall its terrible words.

Boggs felt his face going hot with fever. Jack Madder appeared to sway before him. The chaplain was weak, but he'd have to go on. He would have to confess, as his kite had done.

"You prayed," he whispered. "But I—I didn't. While you were praying, I cursed! Yes, I did. Worst language I ever heard in my life. Like drunken stevedores having a brawl."

Now Boggs was alone. His kite had left him. But Madder's delight, the crinkled-out lines which had all but concealed his laughing eyes, stayed with the padre. He was weak but happy—still very weak, yet very happy. What was it Madder had said to him then? Something like, "I won't give you away. That's between me and my alter number." And then: "We must go on a ding-dong bat, you and me, when we get into port. I shall drink sarsaparilla, of course; while you—you'll gargle Scotch and soda and start making passes at all the girls!"

Weakly, Boggs smiled. He thanked God that a tail—aye, a sinful, law-breaking tail—should fly on such excellent terms with its kite.

Soon: Gladys Taber's delightful story of the daily life and problems of "The Family on Maple Street." You'll love them!

My Favorite Champion

BY LAWTON CARVER

"I'M GLAD you won that argument, Walter; I don't want you to have any excuses when I beat you."

That was Gene Sarazen speaking to Walter Hagen in 1922 during their match for the world's championship of golf, after Hagen had got the better of officials in an argument over his lie in a trap. That also was Gene Sarazen settling down to a career which has been gaudily high-lighted by outspoken, cocky self-confidence such as few champions have had.

Six inches taller, thirty pounds heavier and wearing boxing trunks instead of his sawed-off knickers, Sarazen would have been a match for Dempsey in killer instinct and fighting heart. It just so happens that he was attracted to the more or less sedate atmosphere of the country clubs and wound up with golfing canes as weapons. With them he has been a terrible foeman. For twenty years and more he has been at his best in the so-called clutch. He is the toughest of all stretch runners.

In that 1922 match with Hagen, he stood aloof while the argument was on, and not until after the hole had been played did he enter into the thing by word or gesture. Then he calmly announced to Hagen that he expected to win, although he was trailing at the time. He played the last few holes with sharp pains stabbing into his side and a few hours later was rushed into an emergency appendectomy. He won the match, of course.

Between 1922 and the present Sarazen has won every golfing title worth having. He has held some of them several times. Almost invariably his victories have been accompanied by the dramatic and unexpected, with everything high-lighted by Sarazen's boldness and his coolly superb skill under fire.

Craig Wood was in the clubhouse accepting congratulations for winning the Masters Championship at Augusta in 1935, after playing the final eight holes in four under par. Sarazen was three strokes behind with four holes to go, when he sank a double eagle and went on to tie. He beat Wood in the play-off.

At Cleveland in 1940, Lawson Little was sitting in the press tent with the National Open virtually clinched. Sarazen was at the sixteenth hole when a courier dashed up and told him he could tie with pars on the last two holes—the two holes which Sarazen had complained about all week as the toughest finishing holes he had ever encountered anywhere.

"I pity the man who comes to the seventeenth on Saturday needing pars on the seventeenth and eighteenth to tie or win," Sarazen had said after a mid-week practice round. If he pitied himself now as he found himself in that very predicament he didn't waver.

On the par three seventeenth, he casually walked up and holed out a twenty-five-foot putt for his par. On the par four eighteenth he made the green in two, but his ball was in the fringe forty feet away, with berserk spectators in a wild melee. Harold Pierce, president of the United States Golf Association, personally appealed for order.

"Just give me a clear path to the hole," Sarazen said, and, with the championship riding on the shot, he walked over, sighted it ever so briefly and briskly hit the ball as though he were making a practice shot. He rimmed the cup, missing his third Open championship then and there by the margin of half a golf ball's diameter. He holed out for a tie.

He lost the play-off in the mud to the longer-hitting and younger Little, but the point is he had to be Sarazen to carry the match into an extra round.

Sarazen summed up his whole viewpoint when he was winning one of his National Professional championships. Having been two down with two holes to go in a late round, he finally won at the twentieth and a well-wisher rushed up with words to the effect that it was a great match.

"Great match?" Sarazen said with a pained expression. "Can you imagine HIM going extra holes with me?"

There has never been a more confident champion, nor a tougher one to beat in the stretch in any sport.

Wedding Date (*Continued from page 31*)

He winced. Why did everything have to remind him of Tom Garrett?

"It won't be as bad as all that, Loren. You needn't cringe."

"I was thinking of something else. Dinner, you said?"

She nodded. "Mother and Father want you to have dinner and spend the evening at our house."

"I'd be very glad to," he said politely.

"Oh, you don't have to say that, Loren. Just agree to come."

"Of course I agree. When?"

"Tomorrow evening. I figured we'd meet somewhere after work and go over together."

"Yes, of course."

He was suddenly anxious to get out of the elegant room where they'd dined. There was something appalling about the thought of going over to that squat suburban house to have dinner with Wendy's parents. Why was it necessary?

He did not regain the delight with which he had started the evening until they were entering the theater. The brilliance of the opening had drawn crowds that seethed with excitement and anticipation. People were staring at Loren and Wendy. Their glances gave back to him a feeling of beautiful well-being. He was proud of his appearance and of Wendy's loveliness. It disturbed him a little, however, to find that so many theatergoers had not bothered to dress. It rather took the edge off things, he thought.

"I feel overdressed," Wendy whispered.

"You shouldn't," he said stiffly. "You're properly turned out for an opening."

Again she smiled a little sadly, a little amusedly.

They met at their regular rendezvous the next evening directly after they had finished the day's work. There was time for only one cocktail before they headed for the suburbs, but Loren consoled himself with the thought that he would never have to go again. Once they were married, he could tell Wendy gently but flatly that he loathed suburban dinners. She would understand, and in time her parents would accept the fact that a nice home-cooked meal was no treat to him.

Wendy's house was only a block and a half from the station. It was the sixth house in the row. Wendy fitted her key in the lock and they walked into the miniature foyer. Loren began at once to feel uncomfortable. He loathed visiting servantless homes. It was so obvious that one was causing no end of trouble to one's hostess. Besides, in this particular case he was on trial. It would be the first time he had actually sat and talked to Wendy's parents.

Her mother came bustling out of the kitchen, wearing an apron and looking harassed. The smile which she turned upon Loren was hopeful and apologetic.

"Now, you just make yourself at home."

She disappeared into the kitchen like a rabbit popping back into a hole. Wendy and Loren turned toward the living room and encountered Mr. Hayden on the way. He was in his shirt sleeves. At sight of his guest, he scampered for his coat.

He reappeared as Loren was seating himself in the living room. He shook hands with Loren, offered him a cigar and settled down for a nice little talk.

"Weather's terribly cold, isn't it?" he began. "It's really winter."

"I find it very invigorating."

"Do you? Well, I guess it's no trouble to you, at that."

He looked a little envious, and Loren remembered that his future father-in-law was a letter carrier.

"I guess in your line," he said hastily, "the weather can make things pretty miserable."

"Yes, it can, but I'm not complaining. It's a good job."

"Have you been at it long?"

"Twenty-two years. Started at it when I was twenty-three. I always tell people I've got old toting their bills around."

Loren smiled and wondered what else they could talk about.

"I'll fix a cocktail," Wendy said and left the room. Loren was glad she thought of the cocktail before her father did. She'd mix a good one. But her absence meant he had at least ten minutes of Mr. Hayden's company all to himself.

"That's quite a diamond you bought for Wendy."

"What? Oh, the diamond. Well, I believe in buying the best."

Mr. Hayden chuckled. "Who don't? Only you got to have more than belief."

Loren's discomfort increased. He didn't like people to talk about money unless they had plenty of it. It was poor taste, he thought.

Wendy's mother came in from the kitchen. "Wendy's fixing a cocktail," she said. "Dinner will be along right after it. I'll bet you're starved, Mr. Vincent."

"Simply famished," he lied. "And don't call me Mr. Vincent."

She laughed. "Well, it's so hard to think of you as Loren. You know, on account of——"

Wendy arrived with the cocktails. They were disappointing. A little on the watery side. Mrs. Hayden had timed her cooking so that there was barely a moment in which to swallow the cocktails and race for the dining room. That was all right, too. There was a chance that the visit might be over by nine-thirty.

The Haydens were not accustomed to dinner guests. Wendy's mother was in a state over the serving, and it was apparent she had forbidden Wendy to help. There was an apology with every glass and plate; an explanation with every fork and spoon.

"I don't know what's the matter with me tonight. I can't seem to get going properly. I think it's because I've had flu, and you know it takes weeks before you can pull yourself together after flu."

Loren agreed, sympathized and tried to conceal the fact that he had no butter knife. He glanced at Wendy and was proud of her. She was not in the least embarrassed by her mother's fluttering inefficiency. She sat there cool and calm. She would make an ideal hostess in the home he would give her to manage.

"Oh, goodness, I'm afraid my Yorkshire pudding is soggy tonight. Just when I'd have given anything for it to be right."

"Why, it's wonderful, Mrs. Hayden," Loren said. "The best I've ever tasted."

"I think you're just being polite."

"Not at all. It's simply perfect."

They ate in silence for a time. Loren wondered if Wendy would help her mother with the dishes so that he could have a long talk with her father. Or worse, would Wendy do the dishes alone so that he could grow to know both her parents better?

He looked about the dining room and smiled secretly to himself. She had done the best she could with the room. That nice little etching was something she had certainly introduced. Here and there were other touches that were completely Wendy-esque. The copper kettle was really eighteenth-century. The installment-house furniture seemed a little surprised to find itself wearing jewels instead of geegaws.

There was a pie for dessert. Pie. After Yorkshire pudding. It was, however, a good pie. No doubt one of Mrs. Hayden's specialties. Mr. Hayden ate two pieces. Mrs. Hayden was upset that Loren couldn't duplicate this performance.

"But look at all the Yorkshire pudding I ate," he protested.

That was another thing about dining in a home where hostess and cook were one. It was impossible to avoid a second helping without precipitating an emotional crisis.

"Never, never, never again will I take dinner under such circumstances," Loren vowed to himself.

But suddenly dinner was over. Now what? He held his breath.

"You folks go in the living room," Mrs. Hayden said brightly. "I'll be along in a minute."

"Can I dry?" Mr. Hayden asked.

"No. I'm going to leave the dishes. They'll only take me a jiffy in the morning. I'll just scrape up and be right in."

In the living room Loren found himself seated beside Wendy on the sofa, with her father confronting him across the coffee table.

Loren stole a glance at the clock on the mantel. A quarter of eight. If the visit ended at nine-thirty it would have still been one of the longest evenings he had ever known. He wondered if the clock was fast or slow. He wanted to look at his watch, but he was afraid of hurting Wendy's feelings. Then an idea came to him.

"Is that clock right?" he asked.

Mr. Hayden nodded. "Yes. Why? You aren't thinking of leaving us, are you?"

"Oh, no, indeed. You won't get rid of me so easily. Only this afternoon someone mentioned a radio program that I ought to hear at seven-forty-five. I can't remember what it was."

Wendy walked over and switched on the radio. She did not spin the dial in a search for Loren's program. She was very understanding, he thought. That was nice, but he wasn't sure he liked being seen through so effortlessly.

"That's just popular music, daughter. That doesn't sound like any program a person would be asked to listen to."

"Oh, I think that's it. Don't you think so, Loren? Loren's just crazy about hearing popular music at seven-forty-five."

It did away with the necessity for talking. That was something. They sat listening in deep concentration.

Mrs. Hayden came bustling in. She had taken off her apron, fluffed out her hair and put on some make-up. She gestured toward the radio. "What are you listening to?"

"It's a program Loren wanted to hear," Wendy explained.

"Oh." Mrs. Hayden turned respectfully toward the radio set.

Fifteen minutes ought to be time enough to think of something to say, Loren thought. Surely at eight, when the programs changed, he would have two or three ideas in mind which they could discuss till the time came for him to take his departure gracefully.

But at eight, when Mrs. Hayden shut off the radio with the remark that the music had been perfectly beautiful, Loren still had thought of nothing sparklingly intelligent to say.

He need not have worried. Mrs. Hayden was fully prepared to make conversation. She began at once.

"Well, it certainly is good to have a chance to really talk to you, Loren. Of course we talk *about* you a great deal, but that isn't the same thing, is it?"

"Not at all. I hope when you talk about me you say nice things."

Mrs. Hayden smiled archly. "You

should just hear the things we say. Shouldn't he, Wendy?"

"Should he, Mother?"

"Perhaps you're right. Maybe he shouldn't. If he knew everything you say—— Well, I guess men should never know exactly how they stand with a girl."

The smile on Wendy's lips was tight and cold. Loren could understand that. There wasn't an ounce of vulgarity about Wendy. Certainly she'd resent it in her mother.

"And that diamond, Mr. Vincent—Loren, I mean—it's simply exquisite."

"Oh, I think Wendy's much lovelier than the diamond," Loren said.

"Isn't that sweet?" Mrs. Hayden looked from her daughter to her husband. "Doesn't he say the nicest things? No wonder Wendy's crazy about him. Tell me, Loren—I can't get a word out of her—when are you two going to get married?"

Loren glanced questioningly at Wendy, but she did not meet his eyes.

"I can't answer that, Mrs. Hayden. I wish I could. I keep asking Wendy to name the day, but so far I haven't had any luck."

Mrs. Hayden turned to her daughter with a smile and a roguishly wagging finger. "You naughty girl, you! Why don't you take this poor man out of his suspense? Why don't you set a date? What's wrong with the twenty-sixth? That's my birthday. I think it would be sweet if you chose the twenty-sixth."

Wendy faced her mother and smiled. But there was something wrong with the smile. It was a performance as contrived and controlled as a wire walker's stroll along the tightrope. One false move, and there would be no wire walker. One small faltering in Wendy's determination, and there would be no smile.

"You don't mind, do you, if I choose a time that's convenient for me?" she asked, still smiling.

An annoying memory stirred in Loren's brain. He had heard those exact words recently. He had spoken those exact words himself. To whom? He waited for his mind to tell him the answer. To whom had he said those words—and why?

And then he knew. He had said them to Tom Garrett.

Tom had replied, "No, not at all. Only if I don't keep hounding you, I know you'll never do it at all because you really don't want to."

Then he had said, "That's right. I don't. But I said I would, and I will."

Tom had been badgering him to set a date for dining with the old couple with whom he boarded. Loren found himself growing angry at Tom all over again as he considered the injustice of being forced to set a date for something that would please everybody but himself. No wonder he had said, "You don't mind, do you, if I choose a time that's convenient for me?"

For a long moment Loren Vincent sat on the sofa in the ugly suburban house. He sat there thinking, and he didn't like what he thought. He looked at Wendy's father and mother. They were smiling at him, adoring him. They wanted him in the family as they had never wanted anything else in their entire lives.

He turned and looked at Wendy, and he felt an overwhelming pity for her. She was young and beautiful. She was their star of hope. The luxuries they had never known they would achieve through her. What difference did it make whether she was happy or not? It surprised him that he had never before wondered about Wendy's happiness. He had taken it for granted. He had even thought that she was a mightly lucky girl to be chosen by a man like Loren Vincent. Funny how he knew the truth now just because she had spoken the identical words that he had spoken when he had wished to put as far in the future as possible the thing that he had promised to do and dreaded doing.

Funny. He sat there remembering that she was only twenty and that it was her right to fall in love and to scrimp and save and to hope that her husband's raise would come through and to be proud of him when it did.

He wondered if every middle-aged man who fell in love with a young girl fooled himself into thinking that age gave no true picture of the girl or of himself. And he remembered that he had never heard Wendy laugh. She had been a lovely, obedient, spiritless companion trying to do as she was told. Only tonight they had hounded her too far. She had seen herself almost pinned to a date, and she hadn't been able to stand it.

Loren Vincent got to his feet and said good night. The Haydens protested at the earliness of the hour, but Loren had no further need of their good will. He did not even pretend that he was expecting an important long-distance call at home.

Wendy went to the door with him. He had not intended to pause a single second in the little foyer, but a beam of light from the upper hallway caught in her hair and he hesitated.

They stood looking at each other and Loren felt a sudden lifting of the heaviness that had lain upon his heart for the last few minutes. He had been wrong. She wanted him. Of course she did. Everything was just as it had always been. He had misunderstood. Wendy had been vexed with her mother, and he, overpowered by the dullness of the dinner, had found himself lacking in his usual keen perception.

"Well," he said brightly, "I'll call you in the morning."

"Will you?" she asked. "Do you want to?"

"Do I want to? What nonsense. Of course I——"

"Loren." There was a little choking sound in her voice. "Loren, you've been so nice. It's hard to say this but I can't set a date. I can't——"

"What do you mean you can't set a date?" His tone was sharper than he had meant it to be.

"I just can't, Loren—I just can't go through with it."

"You make it sound," he said, "as though marrying me needed courage and strength. As though it were an ordeal."

She did not answer him.

"Wendy, I think it's my right to know what all this means." He was pleased with the dignity in his voice. Only a fool went to pieces. "Why can't you set a date? What are you trying to say?"

When she looked up at him her eyes were wet. "Do you want me to tell you, Loren? Must you really hear it?"

He shook his head. No, he didn't have to hear it.

Adelaide was sitting in his chair in the living room when he came in. "What goes?" she demanded. "You're home so early."

He dropped into the chair opposite and picked up a murder mystery from the end table. "Is this good?" he asked.

"It's a chiller-diller."

He smiled wearily and opened the book. She offered him her box of candy. He took a peppermint.

"There," she said. "Now you're sewing with silk."

He nodded. It was pleasant here beside the fireplace. Outside, it was very cold. Leaving the Haydens' house he had realized for the first time that people were right. It was really winter.

I Pick Winners—But You Can't Win (*Continued from page 55*)

That's when I go into high, for I wish to finish in time to see the afternoon's racing. (I'm good at picking them. At my last meet I named forty-two percent winners—two out of every five races. The average handicapper brags when he hits twenty-five percent.)

My main stock in trade is my knowledge of horses and horsemen. In days past my physical equipment consisted of binoculars, a typewriter and a stopwatch. Now I leave the watch at home, for professional clockers are available at each track whom we can hire to sit on the rail, mornings, and time "Sunny Jim" Fitzsimmons' newest find or Man o' War's last grandson as he breezes down the stretch. They also relay facts which may affect an entry's chances: a colt coughed—a filly pulled up lame—but an old bag o' bones came to life, was fighting for his head on the far turn.

Now here's a six-furlong race for three-year-olds that haven't won on this track. Star Gazer's entered—just missed winning by a nose last time out. Less weight up today; good boy riding, too. But wait—here's Comet Red. My clocker says he worked out in 1:14 yesterday; then he can run this distance in 1:11—winning time on any track. But whoa! Here's a colt that by rights shouldn't be entered—too fast for the field. Let's see, wasn't he a bang-up third—only a neck behind the winner—in 1:10⅘ at Chicago recently? Carried 115 pounds, too. In light today—a standout. One minute—look at the jock. Just a kid. This colt has the bad habit of running for the outside rail coming around the turn and losing several lengths. He needs a stout-armed veteran like Georgie Woolf.

Suddenly my eyes open. Old Man Blank trains the colt—and next week there's a $10,000 handicap, same distance, for three-year-olds. If the colt doesn't win today, he'll get a light impost in that big contest. This race is simply a workout. The kid will try to win, but his mount will run wide and lose. Blank will say, "Sorry, bub, but I need a stronger boy for the handicap." So I name Comet Red as winner. And in tomorrow's race the colt does run out—and Comet Red shoots through on the pole and wins.

Now and then I follow a hunch. One day I saw a cheap horse entered that hadn't raced for months, and then on distant tracks. Papyrograph. Why, the son of the great Papyrus, winner of the Derby at Epsom in 1923. Impulsively I put him at the head of the list. He did win next day. Later I learned he had been secretly prepped for that contest.

You may ask: If I follow your selections can I win?

Answer: *You can't win, I don't care whose selections you play.*

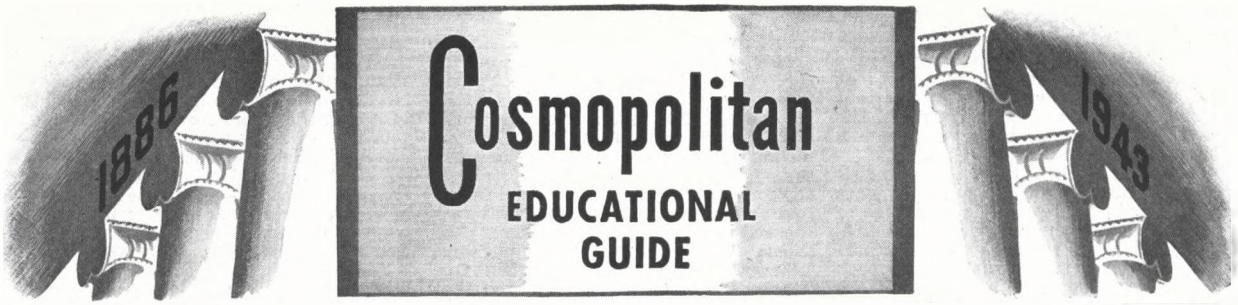
The reason: no selector picks enough winners to pay for his losers. Remember, the horse is an animal, not a machine. He has good and bad days, like humans. But, unlike us, he can't get it over when he has a tummy-ache. That's one reason the best horse is sometimes beaten. But you say (I'm waiting for this one!) you pick about two winners out of five races. Can't I start betting a dollar, and double after each loss till I have a winner? Sorry, but here's the truth:

My handicap figures are based on the last 1,000 races. I pick an *average* of two out of five winners—not two out of five consecutive races. I'll pick five winners today—which five I don't know! Tomorrow I may win the first race, lose the following seven. Next day I may lose the first five races, checking up twelve straight losses. If you started with a dollar, doubled after the losses, you'd be out $4,095, and it would cost you—to double your twelfth and last bet—an even $4,096 more to place this thirteenth bet, with no guaranty you'd win. Play an even amount—a flat bet—each time? No dice! Most of our selections are favorites, paying about even money when they win. You'll be in the red at the 1,000th race.

You may ask: Do track owners gamble? You'd be surprised. A few do not—but there are others. Some weeks ago a track director stopped me in the clubhouse. "Who do you like in this race?" he asked. I told him. "Think you're wrong," he said, as we walked down to the rail. "I've had twelve straight losers," he confided, "but now I like"—he named a horse I listed as runner-up. Swinging into the stretch his fancy bumped my horse—and won. Mine finished second. "Got you that time!" he beamed.

"Wait!" I called. He followed my glance to the bulletin board where the word "Objection" flashed. My choice's rider claimed a foul. The stewards disqualified the first horse, made mine the winner. I saw that director turn green. "Even when you win, you lose," he said.

"You've got something there, brother," I said under my breath. For after a lifetime following the bangtails, I can truthfully say: I've never seen any good use come from gambling winnings. That money all goes back whence it came—with more added. I well understand the observation of the wise Chinese: "It is conceded that one horse runs faster than another, so what does it matter which goes around a circle first?"



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She had yet to come to grips with the truth, or what that young man thought was the truth.

In her heart was a sensation of cold agony. It was anguish to believe—as she must believe if she credited that boy—that Peter had come to her in Florida in calculation. She thrust back every other pain to confront that predominant one.

But how true was it? She tried to think that naturally an appreciation of her social value was implicit in any feeling for her. Then that despairing, defensive struggle in her failed as she remembered this and that circumstance. The Assembly. The dinners. His membership in the Chicago Club.

Peter was a man of simple background, of intense pride, and he took satisfaction in these things. He could not see them done away with. She wondered what had happened to frighten him so badly. She could imagine. The social structure was a curious thing. Some of your friends would gossip endlessly about you over a luncheon table, but let disaster threaten you and they ringed you round like protective wolves. And if they themselves felt affronted . . . The boy had said that "society" would not receive Betty. That must have been the threat that had got to Peter.

But to believe that he had come coldheartedly; that all his contrition, his tenderness, had been an act! Well, she had to believe it. An inner trembling set up in her as she thought of Peter's lovemaking.

She had been a dupe. Their love story was a myth, a hoax. The child that she carried was not the child of love, but of expediency.

Well, what if it was? What was so awful about that? What was so awful about the life Peter had made for her? Better a half loaf . . .

A wasting breath of humiliation blew over her heart. Her thoughts fled before it, unable to endure it; fled toward the other truths—the things that boy had said about Peter's visits to New York.

She had never thought of planes; of quick jaunts back and forth. It was easy to deceive one so completely credulous. Of course he could go back and forth. No wonder he had grown so assured that he had dared this longer vacation. She thought of the planning that had gone into it; the arrangement for forwarding telegrams and letters from Washington. She thought of Peter's deliberately affectionate kiss in leaving.

And then she thought of their brief talk outside the hotel. Why, that was today, she thought surprisedly—only this morning! "I think you are the finest woman in the world. I am grateful you are my wife." She saw his face staring straight ahead, the muscles taut. Could that sincere face, that sincere voice, be all a lie?

No, there had been honest feeling in him. Hearts were complex. He had been moved by her coming on to safeguard the situation. He wanted it safeguarded. What had he said about his feeling for her? "It's you—what you are; what you mean to me." That might have been true, only she had thought he meant love, and he had meant convenience. And he had said, "This thing came out of a clear sky," and that was false, unless—her irony threw out—unless he meant the sky had been clear for him until discovery clouded it.

She was sinking in quicksand. There was no sure ground anywhere; only lies, evasions, half truths . . .

"Whereabouts in New York, lady?"

She had been unconscious of the passage of time; of the change of scenery outside the car, yet now she saw they were in New York, and it was dusk.

She said, "The Seymour," remembering the pleasant hotel where she had stayed as a girl, and then she thought of the awkwardness of arriving without luggage at a hotel where she might not be remembered, and she said, "Go over to Broadway," for there might be shops open as late as this where she could buy things. On Broadway, near Forty-sixth, she said, "Put me down here."

She had not spoken of charging the car at the hotel in Clearburg, and she hesitated to do so now. She paid the man, and that left her only two dollars. The Seymour might remember her and cash a check for her, she thought, and then she thought the driver would remember the name and Peter might get it from him and hurry after her. She couldn't stay there now. Where do you stay when you have only two dollars?

In the morning she could cash a check; she could call up some acquaintances—the Langdons, the Greenoughs—and be identified. But now it was night. It was lonely and a little frightening to be alone on Broadway. She turned east and hurried toward Grand Central Station.

She would telephone people from there. The thought of Don Fielding flashed toward her. It would be easier to ask Don Fielding for help than any other soul she knew here. His address was in her address book in Chicago, but she knew the hospital where he worked in New York. She went to a booth and dialed the hospital.

"Dr. Fielding?" said a precise voice over the wire. There was a delay. Then: "Dr. Fielding is not in the hospital."

"Where can I reach him?"

"Wait a moment." There were little clicks, a wait; then another voice gave her a telephone number. She dialed that number, her fingers trembling in their eagerness.

The voice that answered her was dubious. "I'll see." A wait. A long wait. Then, unbelievably, Don Fielding's voice: "Yes? Yes? Hello?"

She said breathlessly, "This is Virginia Thorpe. I happen to be here suddenly—without money. I wonder if you could cash a check for me tonight. Could you meet me somewhere?"

"Certainly I can. Where are you now?"

"I'm at Grand Central. I'll be at Information."

"How much do you want?"

"Would fifty——?"

"I'll get it for you."

"That's awf'ly kind. You see, I came so unexpectedly——"

"It happens to the best of us," he told her. "Could you have dinner with me?"

"Why, yes. Yes, I could."

"I'll be along as soon as I can."

It took him some time. She put on fresh make-up, combed her hair into soft curls, walked about.

At last she saw Fielding; saw his face lighting with welcome when he glimpsed her. His coming to her so unquestioningly gave her a feeling of security; of there being something true and honest and stable in the quicksand she was in.

He said at once, "Here's your money." He produced a roll of bills.

"I haven't written the check yet."

"I'll keep you in sight till you do."

"I want to spend some of it now," she said. "There are shops here where I can buy things for the night. I haven't any luggage."

He made no comment, but went with her. She got a small overnight case and filled it. Then he took her arm and steered her toward an entrance. "Where would you like to eat? What sort of place?"

"Oh, quiet. No music. No crowds."

His look was searching. His voice was matter-of-fact. "Just my idea."

He found a quiet place. They had a corner table. He ordered a drink and a good dinner, and she found herself eating and felt better for it. The terrible panic in her quieted.

Fielding talked; he told her about the restaurant and the Frenchman who ran it.

"It's nice," she said. "It was nice of you to bring me here."

He looked at her. Her eyes were too bright, and there were shadows, like bruises, beneath them. "Do you want to tell me about it?" he asked. "Or would you rather we just talked off the tops of our minds?"

"Am I as transparent as that?"

His hand covered hers for a moment. "You forget I'm rather fond of you."

"And you're a doctor!" She gave an unsteady laugh.

"Yes. That makes me remember—I've got to telephone. Will you excuse me?" When he returned he said, "I'm waiting for the quaintest thing. Did you ever hear about loa?"

"Loa? Oh, yes. You wrote me about it."

"Did I? Did I tell you what it was?"

"'A thin filament-like parasite,'" she quoted. "It sounded horrible. And you said you had a patient, a pretty patient, who had one in her cheek."

"Well, she's got it again. I mean it's always there, but it's only an inconvenience when it moves. Luckily, the loa is a sluggish creature, prone to brooding, and sometimes it doesn't stir for years."

"You mean the thing lives for *years?*"

"It's known to have lived in a host—that's you, if you have one in you—for twelve years. They do no harm, apparently, except for this swelling. There's a discomfort about that, and when it's in the face it's disfiguring. In this patient of mine the swelling is very near the eye, and I'm hoping it will cross the eyeball."

"Good grief!" said Jinny. "Why should you hope that?"

"Because then I can get it. If she phones me the instant she feels it in the eye—it will tickle—I can cut the cornea and catch the tail, so to speak, and wind him up and out."

"And it won't hurt the eye?"

"Not a bit. I'm very good at it, thanks to my practice in the Cameroun. It's the only way to get rid of those creatures. I've been waiting for this one for months. I can get it if I get to her quickly enough. That's why I leave word where I can be reached."

"It sounds a gruesome performance."

"It's a little—quaint. But it's better for her than to go on swelling unexpectedly. She's a very pretty woman. Now, shall we go back to what we were talking about, or shall I go on about the loa?"

"How about Picasso?"

"No! 'Guernica'—that horse's head—is too much. The war is too much."

Jinny said bitterly, "My own life is too much—for me."

He studied her. Then he said, "You wrote me you were happy."

"I was. I truly was." She hesitated; then the wavering barrier went down. "Until yesterday, or night before that. But it was a fool's paradise."

His face grew serious, though his words were light. "Has your snake come back?"

"She was always there, only I didn't know it. He didn't come back to me be-

cause he wanted to," Virginia explained, "but because he had found it was going to be hard to cram *her* down people's throats. They weren't going to accept her. He found that he needed me socially or he'd be out of things. I don't know exactly what happened when I was away, but I can guess. And he's terribly proud. He can't bear to be slighted. Anyway, something happened that made him decide the world wasn't well lost for love. So he came to Florida to get me back."

Fielding was looking at her strangely. "And you went—for that reason?"

"I didn't know the reason. He didn't tell me that. He said——"

She broke off. It was horrifying to be talking about Peter like this. It was mortifying to have Don Fielding know what a dupe she had been.

She said bitterly, "It was my own fault. I was too ready to believe." And then she defended herself. "You see, we *had* been so happy before."

"Oh, for God's sake, don't harp on that!"

Don's sudden violence was astonishing. She looked at him in surprise.

"I'm sorry," he said. "But it isn't such good hearing. For one thing, it infuriates me to think that you were lied to—if you were lied to. Suppose you tell me the story."

She told it. She talked a long time. "So then I came away!" she concluded. "I had to get away. That's why I hadn't any money with me."

Fielding had been following her words intently. His eyes were fixed on the swiftly changing expressions in her face, the desolate self-mockery in her mouth that was made for softness and sweetness. He said, "Now I hope you are through with him."

She looked down. She had a feeling that when she told him the final circumstance she would be stripping herself of the last shred of glamour she had possessed for him.

"It isn't as simple as that," she said.

"You mean you still care for him?"

"He still wants me to go on with him."

"That isn't the question. The question is, what do you want?"

"That's rather complicated. You see, I'm not a free agent."

Fielding thought about that. He said bluntly, "Is it the money?"

"No—oh, no!"

"I thought you might have—oh, relations or something that you were helping." She shook her head. He said patiently, "You mean you don't want to give up—your life together?"

"I couldn't bear to go on with it!"

"Then what?"

She looked up at last. Her eyes looked dark, the pupils were so large. Her skin was tight-drawn across the fine bones of her face. She said, "Tell me—you're a doctor—how can I get rid of his child?"

The low, rapidly uttered words seemed to come from her without volition, yet instantly she recognized that this hot fire of repudiation had been burning in her from the instant of disillusionment. She realized that her flight, her thought of Fielding had been dictated unconsciously by this frantic desire to be free.

Fielding showed no sign of the shock the revelation must have been to him except in the time he gave himself before speaking. Then his voice held its invariable kindness, deepened by distressful sympathy.

"My dear, you don't want that!"

She said chokingly, "Yes, I do! It's the only thing I want. Oh, I know it's dreadful—it's dreadful for me when I've wanted a child so much. But I don't want this one. I'd hate it. I have a horror of it."

Fashions in Fiction

Sarra

By LEE RUSSELL

Joan Fontaine is the perfect valentine, says *Bradshaw Crandell*. Breaking precedent, the artist presented his original cover pastel to Mrs. Aherne as a surprise gift for Mr. Aherne. We hope Brian doesn't read this before February fourteenth.

Joan is the antithesis of the reserved rôles she played in "Rebecca," "Suspicion" and "This Above All." She's natural, full of fun and makes you feel as if you had known her a lifetime. Glib of tongue, her repartee zings with originality. A practical down-to-earth gal, she attaches importance to material things. She says the dress she is wearing here, a two-piece jewel-encrusted black silk suit with pink faille blouse, "was a gift from *Hattie Carnegie* for only a million dollars." Extravagant and simple in the same breath, Joan supports eleven English orphans and washes and sets her own long, blond hair.

You'll be seeing her soon in "The Constant Nymph," then in "Jane Eyre," and in "Frenchman's Creek" with the new Mexican star, *Arturo Cordova*.

Perry Peterson, new addition to our roster of young artists, outdistanced even our expectations in his drawings for "The Sin of the Angels." *Adela Rogers St. Johns'* new serial with a colorful San Francisco setting. The luscious ermine cape on page 22 was designed by *Esther Dorothy*, outstanding woman furrier, who also did the unusual mink jacket for the lovely heroine of *Libbie Block's* "Wherever You Are," page 40. If you can take your eye off the lingerie dummy in this illustration, we'd like to inform you that the superb fur hat is an original *Lilly Daché*. *John LaGatta*, now living in Los Angeles, had the unique experience of conferring with *Vina Delmar* on the situations illustrating her story, "Wedding Date." He also writes us that the dress he used on page 31 is from the new *I. Magnin* shop out there. All the clothes for "Navy Girl," beginning on page 97, are from *Bonwit Teller*, New York. The black one on page 100 is a *Traina-Norell* and the red an *Adrian*.

"You are overwrought," Fielding said.

"All right, I'm overwrought. But I'll always feel I was a dupe. It was a—a spiritual rape. You have the right to rid yourself of the child of rape, haven't you? Right or wrong, I don't care. I'm not going to have it!"

"You'll feel differently. The child will be a comfort to you."

Her eyes blazed. "Do you know what it will mean? It will mean that I have to go back to him."

Fielding said doggedly, "That doesn't follow."

"Doesn't it? Just think about it. It is his child; it would be hateful to divorce him and keep him from it when he's waited so long. After all, he didn't know it was coming. He might not have gone on this trip if he had known."

"He went on other trips."

"I know. But this might have changed him. He'll tell me it would have changed him. Perhaps it would. He wasn't in love with me, as I thought—I was just second best, but I was a good second best. I mean, socially good. And he wants to go on with me, even though he knows he will have to give Betty up. He doesn't want any scandal, and he does want the kind of life we have. A child would mean a great deal to him."

"I don't think he deserves the child."

"No, he doesn't! But if it's born——"

"You think it obligates you to go back?"

She nodded. He looked at her in grim thoughtfulness.

Finally he brought out, "If you are not willing to take the child from him by divorce, how can you be willing to deprive him of it by abortion?"

The blunt medical term struck her harshly. Her color rose. She said defensively, "It isn't the same thing."

"It amounts to the same thing."

"This isn't a real child yet. It happens every day. Anyway, I can't help it!" she said frantically. "Think as badly of me as you like, but help me free myself!"

She looked so desperate that his eyes filled with compassion, and it was all the more startling to her, seeing that compassion, to have him say, "It's impossible. You are asking me to do the one thing I can't do."

She thought he had misunderstood. "I don't mean you. But you must know someone—someone reliable."

"My dear, you should get your divorce and have your child. You can let your husband have it part time if you don't want to be unfair to him."

"Part time!" Her eyes blazed again. "Let Betty be its mother while I'm separated from it? I'd rather go back to him than have that happen."

Fielding could only say, "Well, you know how you feel about it. But you must give yourself time to think. Remember, this has come on you without the slightest warning. You may feel very differently when you have got over the first shock." He said, more confidently, "You will—take my word for it."

"A doctor come to judgment!" Her eyes were half ironic, half entreating. "Please! You're just putting me off. Please promise to help me."

"Don't ask me that! I've told you that I can't."

"You can't? You mean you won't."

"No. I mean I—can't."

She said in a low voice, "Even if it means my going back to him?" And then: "Perhaps you think I ought to go back, anyway."

"You know what I think."

"No, I don't."

"You know what I hoped—in Florida."

"That was in Florida."

"I haven't changed."

She felt a throb of exultation. If she was still so dear to him, then he would do what she wanted.

She said that childishly. "Then you ought to want it too." As he was silent, she went on, "You surely don't want to care for a woman who's having another man's child!"

"It isn't what I'd have chosen," Fielding said drily, and the laconic comment touched a mordant humor in her.

Her lips twitched, then curved into a quivering appeal. "Then please, Don, for both our sakes! Don't make me go back to him."

He exploded, "God, what do you think I am?" She stared at that, and he said harshly, "Do you mean to tempt me?"

"To tempt you?"

"Yes. Do you think I relish this situation? Do you think I enjoy exhorting you to go on with it? Do you think I don't appreciate all a child will mean of encumbrance and reminder, even under the best of circumstances? You say that you may go back to him if you bear the child. You say to me, 'For both our sakes,' as if you were coming to me if you don't have the child; if you don't go back to him. Isn't that tempting me? Isn't it putting pressure on me to get it out of the way? And that isn't decent, Jinny! Don't you see I can't lift a finger to help you without despising myself? Don't you see you are the one woman in the world I can't help? Because I'd profit by it!"

The words seemed to go on saying themselves over and over to her after he had stopped speaking. "All right," she said at last. "If you think it isn't—right for you, I'll go somewhere else."

"Jinny, for God's sake! You don't know the risks you run."

"Oh, there must be good places I can find out about!" She gave him a smile meant to be challenging that seemed immeasurably desolate. "I'll manage."

"I implore you!" He checked himself. It was evident that she could go nowhere that night and that he would have other chances to say what he wanted to say when she would not be so overwrought. He finished quietly, "We aren't going to talk any more about it tonight. You've had enough for one day. Now, I'm going to take you home, and you're going to bed."

"Home?"

"Wherever you plan to stay."

"I haven't planned. I want to go somewhere that Peter doesn't know about."

"There's a small hotel near where I live. It's not pretentious, but very comfortable. Only I don't like to have you alone. I wish I knew some family——"

"I'd hate a family. Any hotel's all right."

Fielding looked around. The waiter came forward, and Fielding put a bill in the plate. In a few moments the waiter brought change, and they were out on the sidewalk and a cruising taxi drew up for them. Fielding gave the name of a hotel and they rode in silence for a block or two. Then he put out his hand and gripped hers.

He said, "Put this all out of your head—for tonight, at any rate." Her face was turned from him and her profile was outlined against the passing lights. What he saw in it made him add urgently, "For anything else in the world I'm your man, my dear—whatever that's worth to you."

She smiled. There was something almost tragically mocking in that smile. "Only you won't help now?"

"No. No, I cannot."

In the hotel, he took her to the clerk; he suggested one of the front suites and went with her to the elevator. He said, "I'll ring you a little before noon. Will that be all right? I don't want to wake you too early."

"I shan't be sleeping late," she said. "Good night. This has been very nice." Then, involuntarily, her eyes showed a faint amusement at that absurd tag to the evening. She said quickly, "Oh, I never wrote that check!"

"I'll collect tomorrow."

In the little suite Jinny sat down on the bed and stared blindly before her.

Don was kind, he was still in love with her, but he would not help her. She could not change him. She knew finality when she saw it. The resistance in him had surprised her and stirred something she had not felt for him before. There was resentment in what she felt, but he had, strangely, gained stature.

But neither could he change her! she thought passionately. Right or wrong, she was not going through with it. Everything that in other circumstances would have been so magically bright and beautiful was now an utter mockery.

A child would bind her to Peter. This chance of one would give Peter his opportunity for appeal, for persuasion, and she knew all too well how Peter's persuasion could tug at her. He would persuade her to be persuaded, and all the time, deep within her, would be the certainty that she was being beguiled; that his tenderness was calculated.

The whole thing was horrible. Sordid and degrading. And this child would keep her involved with a husband who had made a mockery of her love for him. But she would rid herself of it. Women did this every day for less cogent reasons.

She slept finally, in utter exhaustion. Late in the morning she began to dream; she cried in her sleep and finally woke, her face wet with tears.

Her waking thought was no happier than her dreams. She was still determined that she would not bear Peter's child. The hope of help from Fielding was gone, but another plan stood in its stead.

It had the virtue of simplicity. She thought about it, lying there in bed; she thought about the clothes she would have to get for it and the way she would manage. Her head was throbbing, and finally she got up and put cold water on it, and phoned for breakfast. Then she called a riding stable.

She did not know how fast they let you ride in Central Park, but she could ride fast enough . . .

The telephone rang before she was through with her coffee. It was later than she thought. Fielding might want to come to see her, and she must be careful not to seem to put him off, not to arouse his suspicion. She would tell him she was going to be lazy, to rest.

"Hello?" she said evenly.

"Mrs. Thorpe?" said a strange voice. "Mrs. Peter Thorpe?"

"Yes, this is Mrs. Peter Thorpe."

The voice said, "This is Dr. Glover. I am sorry to have to tell you this, Mrs. Thorpe. But there has been an accident."

That was what Peter had said when he telephoned: "There has been an accident." The repetition of the words brought a strange sensation of having lived through this before. Only it was not Peter speaking. It was Dr. Glover.

"Yes?" she said urgently. "What has happened?"

He began to tell her something, but it was not a good connection and she did not understand him. She said sharply, "What is it? Please speak louder," and the doctor spoke louder. At the first words she felt the room going black about her, and she sank to her knees, holding the phone against her ear . . .

Bob Durand stood looking blankly after the car. This had not turned out as he had planned. He had no clear idea in his mind as to what he had hoped to effect by a talk with Mrs. Thorpe, but certainly he had not intended to send her flying off like that.

How was he to know that she had not guessed what her husband was up to? Durand had never given any thought to Mrs. Peter Thorpe; he had taken her for granted as a cold "society woman," willing to accept a shameful compromise to keep the surface of her life unchanged. It had never occurred to him that she might be young and full of feeling—sensitive, jealous, anguished feeling.

For a moment the memory of Virginia Thorpe remained real to him. He was sorry for her, but the sorrow was almost instantly submerged by a return of his anxiety as to what she meant to do. Betty would certainly marry Peter Thorpe if his wife divorced him.

Perhaps he ought to have gone to New York with Mrs. Thorpe; tried to tell her that she should not get a divorce, but just crack down on her husband. He tried to remember exactly what she had said to tell Betty. Something about not having known; about her husband's having said she was the one he cared for; about having had her eyes opened.

Would it open Betty's eyes if she knew what Thorpe had told his wife? Durand's mind swarmed with doubts, fears, conjectures. Presently he went down the street to a drugstore and had coffee and a sandwich; then he asked where the hospital was and started toward it. He turned back and bought a box of candy.

He walked faster as he neared the hospital. When he asked the girl at the desk, "Could I see Miss Shearer?" he thought she hesitated, so he flung in boldly, "I'm engaged to her."

The girl looked interested at that and said, "You can go right up. She has a private room. Room twenty-two."

Upstairs, the place smelled of soap and antiseptics, a hospital smell. The door of twenty-two was ajar, and he knocked, and Betty's voice said, "Come in."

She was sitting up, bolstered against pillows, and there was a tray before her. He couldn't say anything for a moment, looking at her; then he said, "I thought I'd come to see how you are," and she smiled, but it wasn't a glad smile. He held out the candy. "Can you eat this?"

"Of course I can! A broken leg doesn't put you on a diet. You open it."

She had finished her supper, and she glanced at the tray and said, "The nurse is having dinner now. Later she'll take this away."

Then she asked, "How did you know about it?" and he told her, and she wanted to know what was in the New York paper, and he told her that. Then he asked about the accident, and she told him about it. She said, "I was staying here with the Thorpes'."

He said cynically, "Yeah, I know all about that. I've just seen Mrs. Thorpe."

Betty's eyes were wary. "Is that so? How did that happen?"

"I heard she was at the hotel, so I asked to see her."

She made a sound of astonishment and anger. "What did you do that for?"

"Because I had some things to say to her." Betty looked furious, but he drew his chair closer to the bed and spoke in a low voice. "Betty, I want you to cut all this out. I want you to marry me."

For a moment she stared at him. Then her eyes crinkled impishly. "Did you

know I had only one leg left?" He felt a sickening sensation. She said swiftly, "That's a joke, Bob! It's only broken."

"You had me scared," he said thickly.

"For fear I'd take you up?"

He smiled at that. He said, "You know I'd want you if you lost both your legs." After a moment he told her, his voice still husky, "You don't know what it was like, seeing that in the paper."

"And you don't know what it's like to have this on you," said Betty.

She gave a little nod, and he saw the cast then; he hadn't seen anything but Betty's face before, looking so pale and sweet. She looked like a little girl, lying there against the pillows. Seeing the cast made him angry all over again.

He said, "This thing has got to stop."

Instantly her eyes grew hard. "You're not to talk like that here."

"I can talk any way I want to." But his voice was carefully low. He told her, "Mrs. Thorpe sent you a message."

He could see the quick change in her face before it steadied and grew blank. "Yes? What was it?"

His hands were gripped into fists, and he could feel the palms sweating.

"She said to tell you that her husband had told her quite a different story from the one he told you. He told her that he was crazy about her. She said she thought that might open your eyes."

Betty gave a short laugh. "So you talked it all over?"

He said defiantly, "Yes, we did."

"I hope it did you both a lot of good." Betty's voice was bitter. "Nothing she can say is any news to me. I know what he told her."

Bob knew when Betty was lying. He gave her a cynical look. "He brushed you off—and you don't care? You don't care what he told his wife?"

"He didn't brush me off." A sudden smile touched the corners of her lips. After a moment she added musingly, "He said what he had to, I suppose."

"And you don't care? You'll stand for anything he does? You'll just be anything he makes of you?" Bob's voice rose, then quieted. "Maybe I shouldn't talk like this when you're sick, but you've got to use your head. There's no future in this." He felt the trembling start up in him again. "Mrs. Thorpe isn't going to get a divorce."

"How do you know?' Betty asked that quickly.

"She said she wasn't." That wasn't quite true. The words Mrs. Thorpe had used returned to him. "She said she wasn't a free agent."

"Oh!" Betty leaned back against the pillows; after a moment she began to smile in slow bitterness. "That's her excuse. She'll play it up."

"I don't know what you mean."

"You don't know *anything*," said Betty furiously, "and you come butting in here——" She broke off. She had heard a rustle of skirts in the hall. She said, "This is awfully nice candy," in a polite voice, though her eyes still glared at him.

The nurse came in, and Betty said, "Miss Johnson, this is Mr. Durand."

Miss Johnson smiled at the young man, picked up the tray and went out. In the hall she said "Good evening!" brightly, and there was an answering "Good evening" in a man's voice, then the sound of nearing steps.

Durand had never seen Peter Thorpe except from a distance, but he knew this was Thorpe coming into the room, even before he saw the arm in a sling. There was something unmistakable in that erect assurance, that air of confidence.

Betty said, "This is Mr. Thorpe, Bob . . . Peter, this is the boy friend, Bob Durand."

"I'm glad to meet you," said Peter.

"How do you do?" said Durand. He thrust his hands into his pockets. Thorpe made him feel young and outclassed. He hated his youth, his rawness.

He saw Peter give a quick inquiring look at Betty; he guessed Thorpe knew his name, all right—Betty had probably talked about him. But there were a lot of other things Thorpe did not know.

Durrand said, feeling his heart pump, "I met Mrs. Thorpe this afternoon."

He felt a savage satisfaction at his own daring. The big shot hadn't known about that. All he knew was that his wife had rushed off to New York.

"Indeed?" said Peter. His tone was casual, but his glance was sharp. He added, "Perhaps you know where she's stopping in New York?"

"I wouldn't know."

Betty said surprisedly, "You mean she's gone?"

"So it seems. Rather inexplicably. And if Mr. Durand met her, as he said——"

Betty said quickly, "You'll hear from her. Why go into that now?" Then she added—and Durand could feel her being diplomatic, trying to get him out of the room without more friction, "It was awfully nice of you to come all this way, Bob, just to find out how I was. But they won't let me see people for very long, so—— And I suppose you'll have to be getting back to New York."

"Yes. Yes, I suppose so."

He could feel his assurance deserting him. He said jerkily, "I just wanted to know how you were doing."

"I'm doing fine. Thanks a lot for coming." There was a hint of mockery in that conventional politeness.

"Good night," said Peter, and Durand said, "Good night." He felt he made a poor exit from the room. He had been dismissed. Those two were together.

Write direct to the camps and schools listed on pages 136 through 139 for booklets, or to the Cosmopolitan Education Department for recommendations in other locations. The coupon on page 139 has been arranged for your convenience.

Irresolutely, he walked up and down outside. He had accomplished nothing; he had not stood up to Peter. He had been dominated by him, compelled to leave. He had been clumsy, ineffective.

That was the trouble with him always. He stood aside. He let others push him back. He had meant to impress Betty with his forcefulness and his determination, and instead, he'd acted like a schoolboy, a clerk, the clerk he was. Looked down on by the big shot!

But he wasn't through yet, by God! He'd see Thorpe alone. He'd tell him a few things!

He waited, walking up and down in the dark. It was not long before Thorpe came out. Durand saw him go to a car, get in and start off slowly. He guessed Thorpe would go to the hotel, and he hurried there and asked the clerk if Mr. Thorpe was in.

It was the same clerk who had been there that afternoon, a little bald man with bright eyes. He said, "Mr. Thorpe was here a minute ago, but just to telephone. He's gone out to the cottage."

"The cottage?"

"Yep. Rose Cottage. The place where they were staying before the accident."

"When will he be back?"

"He didn't say. Just said he'd go out and pack up there—might be back tonight, and again he might not. I guess driving with one hand isn't so easy in the dark, but he won't have it any other way."

"I don't think a man ought to be allowed to drive himself with one hand!"

"Well, it isn't so easy to tell Mr. Thorpe what he can or can't do. Any rate, he couldn't get into a worse smash-up than he did last night. Lucky to get out alive. I hear the young lady's doing all right."

"Yeah, she's doing all right. I've just been up there."

"Is that so?" Bob could feel the clerk looking at him speculatively, wondering about him; wondering if he could get anything out of him. Lowering his voice to a confidential undertone, the man hazarded, "Mrs. Thorpe went off pretty suddenly, didn't she? I saw you talking to her, and I guess you must have brought her some news."

"Yeah. Yeah, I did. She had business in the city," Durand said. "How do you get to this Rose Cottage?"

The clerk told him. He asked, "Want me to call a taxi?"

"No. I guess it isn't worth it. I mean, I've got to catch the bus back and that wouldn't give me time for it. I saw Mr. Thorpe at the hospital," said Durand, "and I talked to him then. I just forgot one thing, and that isn't important enough to go out there for."

He asked about the time the bus went through; he bought a packet of cigarettes and went out. He walked a few moments, then went to the drugstore where he'd bought the candy and asked the clerk there if the bus stopped at the crossroad. The clerk told him, "Sure, you can flag it there. People from Myron do."

Durand headed for the crossroad. Outside the town, he walked rapidly, oblivious of everything but the urge in him.

He reached the crossroad; he turned into the Myron road and then into the wood road. It was dark in the woods and the cars on the highway sounded very distant. Frogs were trilling in a high, incessant ululation. Something small scurried in the underbrush. The road went on so long he began to think he'd taken the wrong way. Then he saw the lights of a house back under the trees.

In the concluding installment Jinny finally has to decide between the old love and the new

Louella O. Parsons—Cosmopolite (*Continued from page 13*)

that people can get in touch with her if they have news. She was on a far-off excursion when Dolores Costello telephoned that she was going to divorce John Barrymore. She has eight phones all over her house and somewhat like the man in the Cole Porter song, she is never far from the city room. Her news nose is the McCoy. At various times she has handled general assignments, particularly when she took the wind-blown trip down the bay in the cutter to intercept "Wrong Way" Corrigan on his return to his point of cockeyed departure. She was the first one in America to interview Bernard Shaw. She was the first to report the Mary Pickford divorce. A city editor can relax if Louella is on an assignment. She is a Northwest Mounted Policeman who gets her man even if she occasionally garbles him. Her aggressive activity in Hollywood probably started the whole procession of correspondents and today there are more than three hundred reporters stationed out West banging the telephone for a beat on Louella or at least a tie.

Louella admits the competition is getting tough but she has a backlog of thirty years in the racket and her energy is as great as when she first tied up with E. R. Thomas, then publisher of the Telegraph. Recently Joseph V. Connolly, her chief, gave her a birthday dinner to celebrate a quarter of a century with the Hearstian press. Time hasn't dusted her raven hair, but it has made her as executive as "a bailiff's hymn." She is more of an overseer than she was in her Telegraph days, and with the lines of communication still intact, she retires to her farm outside Hollywood. It is called the Marson's Farm and has many acres, many cows, horses and chickens. There she is a generous host and you may even get champagne. She prides herself on her cuisine and is a personal barbecue expert. It is not established whether she herself planned the decor of her interior establishment but its taste is as good as the wine which she herself occasionally sips. And though her head may be like a storm off Hatteras and the hours wee, it never interferes with her attendance at Mass. She is deeply religious. The house is decorated with holy medals.

Last year in Dixon, Illinois, they had a Louella O. Parsons Day. Many important movie stars went out with her, including Bob Hope, George Montgomery, Ann Rutherford. The purpose was to raise money for a hospital and to christen the Louella O. Parsons Children's Ward. The schools for towns around were closed for the day and a whole section of Illinois came out to honor their native daughter. The Louella O. Parsons Fan Club sang. Louella wept. Then the smile returned as they lined up to shake her hand and she took in the whole line in her drawing-room manner. Louella never looked lovelier.

It was a great day and it will live forever in her memory as she walks through her important domicile and waits for one of the telephones to tell her that Hedy has eloped.

BOOK 4 THE COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

Lovely Edith Kenyon was no ordinary woman. There had been three men in her life—a rich American, a French prince and an arrogant Austrian. When this dazzling expatriate sought refuge in the country she had forgotten for so many years, why should the FBI question her, a woman who had lived only for love?

Edith was feeling bored and alone at Madame de Manville's

THE BERINGSHOLM arrived in New York harbor late one summer afternoon, bringing the last of the American expatriates and a load of refugees from Europe. She came in slowly, anchored in the bay, and remained there a long time.

Her decks were thronged with people from the lower depths of the ship. Their faces were travel-stained, worn and thin. Against this backdrop of wan faces and shabby bodies, the clean-cut, smart outlines of Edith Kenyon stood in relief.

For a long time the slender woman in a gray suit and small black hat had leaned against the rail of the upper deck, gripping it with her white-gloved hands, as if for support. She had been there since the first green of land had come into view. Blinking away tears, she had caught her first glimpse in many years of the Statue of Liberty.

Then she had done a queer thing. Instead of saluting the statue, Edith Kenyon prayed to it, as the sailors entering or leaving Marseilles pray to the statue of a saint in that harbor. "Give me a chance to start again," she prayed. "Teach me to be of some use. I'm so grateful to be home—at last."

She stood staring at the goddess—a symbol fresh and solid and stern, impressive to people passing on a ferryboat, and almost overwhelming to passengers sick from painful memories and a troubled voyage across the Atlantic.

For a second there flashed across Edith Kenyon's mind an image of the house she had left in France—a beautiful white villa facing the Mediterranean Sea—and the hours of peace she had known there. But she brushed the vision away. This was no time for self-pity or nostalgia. There were all the terrible homeless on this ship, and millions more like them; there was what had happened to France, to the world.

"Teach me to forget myself; teach me how to be of some use," she prayed again. She took a deep breath and felt a surge of happiness and hope.

Then she heard her name being called: "Mrs. Kenyon. Mrs. Kenyon." She turned, expecting the boy who was approaching to hand her a radiogram. Instead, he said, "You are wanted in the First Class lounge. At once, please."

She walked after him, a little frown between her eyes.

It was difficult moving through the crowd around the door. It was as if the silent men and shabby women and the pale children had been shoved around so much that they would no longer help the people who wished to shove them, but would stand their ground. She apologized, and ended by shoving them aside too. There was no resentment, merely a slight giving way.

"In here?" she asked the boy, at the entrance to the lounge.

"Yes, madam. The second desk near the window, please."

An official at the other side of the desk was looking over papers in a folder. Edith Kenyon waited for his nod and then sat down. She thought: I have nothing to be afraid of. My passport is in order, and I have nothing to declare. There's only a little personal jewelry, a change of underthings, and a few clothes. I needn't worry.

She opened her neat leather handbag and took from her flat gold case a cheap French cigarette. She was aware that the man opposite was holding a lighted match for her, and as she leaned forward, she thanked him.

"Mrs. Kenyon," he said, "you are an American citizen?"

"Oh, yes," she said brightly, determined to be as patient and as helpful as possible. She was a lovely woman, especially when she smiled. She was in her middle thirties, though

ILLUSTRATED BY ANDREW LOOMIS

party when Prince Bonnat approached her.

she might have been younger—or older. It was hard to judge the age of a woman of Edith Kenyon's type. Her hair was soft yellow and carefully coiffed under the small straw hat; her skin was fresh and cared for; she used no cheek rouge, and in the pale oval of her face, her large violet-blue eyes were startlingly beautiful. The red of her lipstick was well chosen. Her suit fitted her slender figure perfectly. The bit of blouse that showed between the opening of her jacket was crisp and clean. Her shoes were expensive-looking, and her stockings were so fine they were almost invisible. She had lived in these same clothes since the day she left France, but they were immaculate. She had removed her gloves, and on one slender hand a blue diamond glistened.

"How long since you were last in the United States?" asked the official.

"Fifteen years," Edith Kenyon answered—and it seemed to her, surprisingly, that her voice sounded apologetic.

"No visits back? Not once in fifteen years?"

"No," she said, and she felt uncomfortable.

"You have been married—several times, Mrs. Kenyon?"

"Three," she answered. She put out her cigarette nervously. The questions seemed unnecessary, to say the least. "Do you mind telling me why this questioning is necessary?" she asked. "I am an American citizen. My papers are in order. I have made an honest declaration of what I am bringing into the country, which is very little. My family and friends will be waiting for me. Can we hurry this a bit?"

She smiled charmingly. Then her smile slowly faded. He had not answered her. His eyes were brown and keen, and he appeared intelligent. She felt he would waste no words.

"I'm sorry," she said, stirring uncomfortably. "I know there is a war. You must be careful about people arriving now from Europe. But I assure you, I am quite all right. My father was Senator John P. Andrews. My ancestors came over on the Mayflower." She tried to laugh. She went on quickly, "I have a sister living on Long Island. Mrs. Stacey Hutchinson. She will be waiting for me on the pier. I'm—perfectly safe. You can pass me without qualms."

"I'm sorry to detain you," the official said, "but there are other questions. Please tell me when you first left America."

She had never been good at remembering dates, but she tried now. It should be simple. Fifteen years from the year 1942—that made it 1927. She said so. He wrote it down.

"I went over on my honeymoon," she offered.

"Your first husband, then, was Oliver Kenyon, financier. His fortune was largely invested in Rumanian oilwells. Your income—now frozen—derives mostly from that country?" He was looking at the papers before him.

"Yes," she said, nodding, complacently at first, and then her eyes widened. She began to understand why she was being questioned. With some fear, now, she watched him as he read.

The wedding had been at noon, and she had worn a traveling suit and hat. It was disappointing not to have been a bride in satin and a veil, but their ship was sailing that afternoon and there was no time to dress again.

Oliver, in his pepper-and-salt business suit, didn't look much like a bridegroom. His face was set in a grim expression, making his chin square, his eyebrows beetling. There was a frown on his forehead, above which the receding light brown hair, streaked with gray, still showed the marks of his brushes. He was a big man, large of frame. She had always liked Oliver and admired him too—and it was flattering that he should have wanted her for his wife. But now, as the minister spoke to them, Edith had a panicky desire to run away, to escape.

Rose was standing behind her, her sister Rose, smiling and solid. Rose wouldn't let her run away. Rose would expect her to see it through. Rose was one of those people who believed that if you gave your word you couldn't back down on it. Well, in another minute Edith Andrews would be Mrs. Kenyon. A minute wasn't long enough to change a decision that had been made after long hard thinking. She wasn't listening to the minister, but her lips made responses in the right places. She saw the vein over Oliver's left eye twitch. Then he leaned toward her and kissed her. It was over. She was a married woman—Oliver's wife.

She turned and threw herself into Rose's arms, and they both cried—but Rose would say it was from happiness, and that people always cried at weddings.

There was a breakfast, later, at the St. Regis, with just the family and a few family friends. Edith's mother and father were dead; her sister and her sister's husband and her aunt Jane were her closest relatives. Rose was only two years older, but she had always been sensible and mature. She and her husband Stacey were going to live in the old house at Rockhampton, where the girls had been born and grew up. If Edith hadn't married, she would have had to go on living with Rose, who had a baby daughter, or else take an apartment in town with Aunt Jane. There wasn't much money anywhere in the family. There never had been, though she and Rose had gone to good schools. Oliver's asking her to marry him had seemed an answer from heaven. The girls had known him a long time, and Edith had always liked him—always. And yet, when he took her hand in the taxi driving to the pier, she felt a chill.

"You'll have time to rest after the boat sails," Oliver said, patting her hand. She moved closer to him and rested against his arm.

"You're sweet," she said. "I'm all right—only rather ex-

cited. I've never really been anywhere before, and now I'm going to visit the whole wide world."

Their stateroom was sumptuous; in fact, a suite. It was overflowing with gifts, flowers and books and telegrams of congratulations. And there was a maid hanging up the bride's beautiful new clothes—her own personal maid, not a stewardess. Sinking nervously on a divan, Edith realized she was rich, very rich, and that the days of worry over a run in a pair of stockings were gone.

Through the haze of other memories, she would always remember standing on deck at the rail with her husband, waving good-by to her relatives and friends on the dock. She was happy and smiling. Then she caught sight of her sister's round pink face beaming with pride. The sirens blew, and Edith burst into tears.

"How long were you married to Mr. Kenyon?" the official asked.

"A month," Edith answered.

The April crossing was short and pleasant. Edith spent most of it in a deck chair, being pampered. The sea fascinated her. She was content to sit for hours on the sun deck with her eyes half closed, listening to and breathing in the sea.

Oliver was considerate, decent, kind, almost too self-conscious and aware of a responsibility toward someone younger, less sophisticated than himself. She wanted several times to tell him that she was not a child; that she knew a few of the facts of life. But she was afraid he might be shocked or disappointed. During the hours when she looked out at the ocean, she promised herself she would be a good wife to Oliver. Usually, she simply daydreamed about the places she was going to see that she had romanticized all her life: Paris, London, Berlin, Vienna—and lots of queer countries, far, out-of-the-way places, little cathedral towns, fishing villages. She would try to learn languages. She would then be of real help to Oliver, who would have to entertain important people all over Europe. She wanted them to say, *"Tiens,* Monsieur Kenyon, your wife is not only beautiful—she is intelligent!" Oh, wonderful future! She wished to embrace it with thankfulness! She was, incidentally, full of gratitude and affection toward Oliver.

He was always at hand to see the deck steward tuck her in comfortably. But sitting idle made him restless, and he spent most of his time either up in the radio room, sending and receiving messages, or in the smoking room with men he had met on board and whom he knew from other crossings. Edith was impressed with the way the ship's officers treated him, and she found basking in his importance extremely pleasant. There were thank-you notes to be written when she grew tired of the sun deck. And in the evening she and Oliver drank champagne and danced and went to bed late.

"Are you sure you aren't sorry you married me?" Oliver asked her half humorously, the last night on board, as they entered their bedroom. He smiled down at her, but she could sense real anxiety and doubt.

"I'm so terribly happy, darling," she told him. "Is that why you bring up these silly doubts? It's like—well, hitting yourself on the head because it feels so good when you stop, isn't it?" She'd had a lot of champagne. She came closer to him and drooped in his arms. "I love you," she said. "Don't talk that way any more. Promise!"

But toward morning she sat up in her own twin bed and stared at the gray light coming through a porthole.

"*Am* I sorry I married Oliver?" she asked herself. "If life is as easy as this—suppose I had waited? Oh, Lord!" She lay down again. "What a rotten sport I am! Never, never, never will I think such nonsense again. I swear." She reached over, touched the edge of Oliver's bed, and fell asleep.

No one could have seen France for the first time under more perfect circumstances. Oliver had brought his Daimler over on the ship, and at Le Havre, it was rolled out, waiting for them. They sent Anna, Edith's maid, up to Paris on the boat train, and then Oliver and his bride started rolling toward Paris, through Normandy. It was April, about the middle of the month, and the apple trees were in blossom.

No songs, no poems, no paragraphs of prose could catch the lyric quality of Normandy in the spring. Elusive memory, a song without words alone could approach it. The ribboned roads, bordered with tall straight trees whose trunks bore a green patina of age—and off to the sides the low trees with apple blossoms pink and white against a clear blue sky; the painted carts, the cyclists along the way; the farmhouses, the peasant women in white coifs, the men in blue clothing that matched the blue of their carts; the smells of blossoms and fertilizer—all these became part of the memory of that trip; and, queerly, the brighter they became through the years, the more faded became the image of the man who sat beside Edith at the wheel of his car and smiled with pleasure at her eager appreciation.

They stopped at sundown to dine in a restaurant hidden in the shadows of the Rouen Cathedral. They had *gigot* and *haricots verts,* and a bottle of wine from the local vineyards. It was, to Edith, as if symbolic words had turned on her lips to food and wine.

As they dined, the cathedral chimes rang for vespers. "I'll never be so happy again as long as I live," she told Oliver.

They entered Paris at night, drove down the lighted boulevards and registered at a hotel near the Place de la Concorde. They bathed, dressed and went out to dance, drink and eat again. When Edith woke the next morning, Oliver was gone. He had left an affectionate note for her saying he would be busy most of the day—there were people he had to see, business conferences and the like. She was to amuse herself, and he mentioned a few of the shops, modistes, couturiers. All Paris was hers, if she cared to buy it. But she was timid about going out alone that first day, and instead, she sat dozing and dreaming, writing letters home and telling herself how lucky she was.

She was alone many days, but soon met friends of Oliver's, French and Englishwomen, who took her in charge, showing her where to shop, fussing over her, flattering her—and of course finding things to criticize behind her back—because she was young, more beautiful than they, charmingly naïve, and maybe because she seemed pleased with life and still expectant about it. She had sense enough to know she amused them, yet she was grateful for what they taught her. There was so much she wanted to learn, so that she too could have poise, smoothness, and an air of always doing the right thing at the right time.

There were dinner parties, evenings at the opera and theater, entertainments in private houses, which she shared with her husband. But most of the time she was left to herself, to acquire a new language, a new approach to living, new mannerisms and almost a new philosophy.

> I haven't been to the Louvre yet (she wrote her sister) or Versailles or the cathedrals. Just think, the other day I lunched within a few yards of Notre Dame, but I haven't been inside. One of these afternoons I'm going to slip away with a Baedeker under my arm, or even pay seventy-five centimes or whatever it costs to follow a guide around while he tells me how much the marble in the Venus de Milo is worth. *Then* I'll write you a real travelogish letter, Rose angel, but right now what I'm truly thrilled about is three new dresses that have just arrived from Lanvin, made especially for me! Nobody else has anything exactly like them. They are "creations," dreams. Rose, remember Miss Jennie Hawkins, who made us six ginghams and two white piqués every summer—always cut from the same pattern, just with more material in them as we grew older?

Later she wrote:

> I've met the King of Sweden, the Prince of Wales, Barney Baruch, Sir Charles and Lady Mendl, Ivar Kreuger (the Match King, whatever that means), Douglas Fairbanks, a son of the Crown Prince of Germany (yes, I know, but he seems almost English), Paul Morand, Josephine Baker!!!—and lots and lots of round, polite rich Frenchmen and their round, polite black-gowned and black-hatted wives—but these last were for business, not pleasure.
>
> Of them all, the one I like best is Suzanne de Manville, who is half English, half French, and lives in an incredibly wonderful modern house in Neuilly, outside Paris. I think you might like her, Rose. She's been awfully kind to me, but I guess you'd think her too extravagant. She gives parties that cost thousands of francs, and she's one of the world's best-dressed women. Oliver is so busy I'm glad to have a woman friend. She's introduced me to her hairdresser, who is marvelous. And I've learned this much here: if a woman lets you in on her pet hairdresser, she likes you. I may do some real traveling soon. Oliver has to look over his oil business in Rumania, and I'm trying to coax him to take me with him. Bucharest, Rose, and the Black Sea—maybe!

But Oliver was firm. His trip was to be strictly business, he explained to Edith. He would be occupied every minute of the time in Rumania. He planned to be back before the week was over, and then he would take her on an extended tour of Italy, Spain and Germany. Later they would go to England. "Just this one enforced absence—less than a week, my dear, for business," he apologized. "Then my time is for you—for us and our happiness." He kissed her gently and left at six, to take the night train to Bucharest.

It was warm in the lounge, which was now crowded with people seated at desks or waiting in line to be questioned. They looked worried; some angry. Edith heard a woman say to her husband: "What right have they to question us this way? It's disgraceful. They wouldn't treat us worse in Ger-

many. I thought we were coming to a land of freedom, and here we are held up by their Gestapos, treated like sheep again." The woman's husband tried to silence her, and Edith realized they had been talking in German, which she understood and spoke now as well as French or English.

The official said, "So you were married only a month?"

Edith stared at him. Then she said slowly, "Oliver Kenyon was in the wreck of the *rapide* to Bucharest. He, along with a lot of other prominent people, was killed. It was exactly a month after our wedding."

She had dressed slowly, that evening after Oliver's departure. She was to dine at Madame de Manville's house, her husband having insisted that she accept the invitation for herself after she had made his excuses. She wore one of the new Lanvin gowns, the pearls that Oliver had given her for a wedding present, and the short silver-fox cape he had bought her during their first week in Paris.

Her hair was dressed in a new way, and she looked radiantly beautiful. Her maid Anna told her so, but she knew it—down to her toes, as all women do. It gave her confidence, but she still felt a remnant of stage fright and wished Oliver were with her.

In the taxi to Neuilly, she leaned back and enjoyed herself. The Champs Elysées blazed with lights and streams of cars. The night in Paris was beginning. The de Manville house, off the Bois, was lighted from mansard to basement. A butler and maid admitted her and showed her where to place her wraps. Then Suzanne appeared, to take her under her wing, and Edith found she didn't feel shy at all.

At dinner, in a room lined with mirrors, Edith found herself between a famous diplomat and a handsome dark young man about whom Madame de Manville earlier had issued a warning. He was a prince of a family that had received its title from Napoleon Bonaparte. It was an illustrious family, even today, but Robert was a black sheep. He was handsome, clever, charming, but completely cynical and unscrupulous.

"Everyone knows it," Suzanne de Manville said, in the powder room before dinner, "and as long as one is forewarned, he can do no harm. Like removing the poison sacs from a snake. Though snake isn't the right word for dear Robert—chameleon would be better; one of those lovely orange lizards."

Edith was puzzled. "But why do you invite him if you feel that way?"

Suzanne shrugged her slim shoulders. "Handsome young men are rare even in Paris. He is an amusing dinner partner, so he gets invited everywhere, and because I know how much you are in love with your husband, Edith, I felt you would enjoy him for this evening, with a grain of salt. Most of the other men are celebrated enough to give a momentary thrill, but they grow tiring after the fish course. Robert will keep you entertained up to the dessert. But remember, my dear—*méfiez-vous*—and take out this *tuyau* I give you as if it were a charm and rub it before you listen to him. I enjoy a little danger, don't you? How charming you look tonight. I love the way André has done your hair. Are you ready? Everyone is eager to meet the lovely young American bride."

At the beginning of dinner Edith gave all her attention to the diplomat on her right, listening demurely while he told her what he thought of the League of Nations and the whole Geneva setup. He had just come from there.

Waving a *crevette* at the end of a fork, he said, "Last September the assembly unanimously admitted Germany to the League and to a permanent Council seat. Top that for idealistic nonsense! Next they will take our army of occupation out of the Rhineland, and we will all be brothers. Like the lion and the lamb. Mark my word, dear lady, Germany is splitting her sides laughing at us. Idiots, those men at Geneva, carrying out the dream of an insane college professor who should never have been allowed out of the classroom. I hope I do not offend you. I think more highly of your new President, Mr. Calvin Coolidge. Tell me, how does your country feel about him?"

She felt her cheeks redden as she searched for an answer, and then she heard a voice say brightly, "Have you been to the races? Will you go with me tomorrow?"

She turned quickly. Prince Bonnat was smiling at her.

"Hello," he said. "I thought you were never coming. Ah, yes, about the races. I have some splendid *tuyaux*—a tip, you would say. I will share it with you. There is one horse that is sure to win the Grand Prix this year. Come with me and bring us both luck. What a charming ring!" He picked up her hand as if to look at it better, but he was looking into her eyes, and he whispered, "Don't turn around again. Bores like that should be buried under six feet of earth, with quicklime thrown in. Have you tasted the Pouilly? It is excellent."

Prince Bonnat talked as incessantly as the tiresome diplomat, but Edith was enchanted by everything he said. He spoke with only a trace of French accent. He had blue-black hair, handsome brown eyes, an impudent nose, and was smooth shaven. His dinner clothes suited him perfectly. His hands were long and delicate. She was attracted by him to such an extent that she hardly tasted her food, but nervously sipped the wines with which her glasses were kept filled.

Once she glanced up and caught her hostess looking at her with an odd expression. Edith turned her eyes away. She promised to go to the races with Robert. Hadn't Oliver said she must keep herself amused until he returned? And one really should go to the races at least once—they were famous.

She was restless during the time she sat drinking coffee in the drawing room with the other women. They were so terribly vivacious and talkative. She decided she didn't like Parisiennes much; they were so damnably sure of themselves, their wit, their beauty, their taste. They were always trying to impress one with their superiority over all other women. Their laughter sounded as false as the laughter of women on a stage. They were always acting, rehearsing, she decided, until the men should join them. And they really hated one another, she was sure. Suzanne de Manville seemed better than the rest. She was so much cleverer than any of them.

Edith wished the men would join them. It was a barbaric custom, she decided, to separate the sexes at the very moment when, having dined well, people felt at ease.

The salon was enormous. A large plate-glass window filled one end of the room. It had the effect of carrying them all out into infinity, into darkness. She longed suddenly for the coziness of the living room in the old Rockhampton house, where everything was covered with chintz, and the chairs and divans were grouped together so that nobody could feel left out in the cold.

She had a pang of lonesomeness for Oliver. If he had been with her tonight, she wouldn't have had to exert herself. One of the advantages of being married to a man as important as Oliver was that she could bask in his position, relax in it and be assured of importance without exertion.

Prince Bonnat entered the room with the other men, but he was captured by the most vivacious Parisienne of them all and detained by her for nearly half an hour. Madame de Manville beckoned Edith to join her group, but Edith felt it was better to slip away.

Then Prince Bonnat was beside her, holding out a tiny crystal glass with a green-yellow liqueur in it. "Pure gold. Priceless. Try it, please."

She accepted the glass of chartreuse and drank a little as he moved a chair close to hers and began talking as if they had never been interrupted; as if they had known each other for years and had secrets between them.

There was an entertainment later in a room made for private theatricals. Edith, who had acted in private theatricals herself, at boarding school and at Rockhampton, prepared to be bored. She was surprised at the eagerness of the sophisticated audience. In the minutes before the curtain went up, there was a silence that was almost breathless. She observed that even Prince Bonnat leaned forward, clasping his hands.

"What is it to be?" Edith asked, and she thought he was annoyed with her, because he moved impatiently.

Then he whispered, "A new play of Jean Cocteau's. It has never been presented before. Madame Clément is acting in it. The part was written for her. Haven't you noticed that Jean looks nervous? That is he beside Suzanne. I hope this is one of his good things. He is a great poet, but he makes mistakes sometimes. Excuse me; I am annoying you with talk. The curtain is going up."

She felt his hand brush hers as darkness settled over the room, except for the small stage. Then he seemed miles away from her.

She couldn't understand the play, because the French was spoken too rapidly, or perhaps the whole thing was too abstruse for her, even if she could have understood the words. There was a lot of symbolism, she was sure, but it was meaningless to her. And nothing seemed to be happening up there in the light but talk and a few beautiful gestures.

She could feel Robert's intensity as he watched and listened. There was not a rustle in the audience; not a cough. When the curtain fell, there was a hush and, as the lights went on, a rush to the place where Cocteau sat, thin, nervous, with patches of color on his cheeks. To her surprise, she saw Prince Bonnat kiss the poet on both cheeks, congratulating him.

Edith rose and went out to the entrance hall to find her wrap. She was cold and tired.

Someone touched her arm, and turning, she saw Prince Bonnat. His voice, full of regret, said, "But you are not leaving? Not alone? I am desolated."

She said, "I'm sorry, but I'm rather tired. And I have a slight headache."

His face brightened. "It was not one of Jean's good plays. Your headache is understandable. One always suffers with an artist when he has failed of achievement. What you need is cheering up. Wait here; I will get Suzanne and we will say our prettiest thank yous. Then you and I will go to a new *boite* I have discovered. You will love it, and forget your headache one-two-three. I am a wonderful doctor. No, don't say a word. Wait here; I will join you in a moment."

She waited. She took out her lipstick and mirror. She didn't feel tired now. After all, it was silly to go to bed when there was so much to do in Paris. Oliver would show her a lot when he came back, but she was sure that there were sides to Paris her husband could not show her, and she wanted to see everything before she went home.

The *boite* in Montmartre was small and crowded. A girl from Harlem sang songs in English and French. The tiny dance floor was crowded, the champagne inferior, but Edith enjoyed it all.

They did not stay long, but went on to another place and then another. They were at a table on the Butte Montmartre when dawn crept over the rooftops of the city.

Edith said, "I had no idea it was so late. I must get back to my hotel now. Thank you, Prince Bonnat, for a wonderful evening."

HE HELD her hand across the table and said, "Why should we spend these miserable little hours to morning alone, each of us like a little orphan? It would be so sweet, darling, to finish it as we have begun it—together and happy." His voice was low and caressing; it was a beautiful voice.

But as the sky turned to pink, Edith was in a taxi with him driving toward her hotel.

When the cab stopped before the gates, Robert said gently, "I'm sorry. It would have been so nice."

Edith stiffened and said, "You know I am an American, Robert. We don't go in for 'affairs' much when we are married. We take marriage pretty seriously."

He kissed her hand and said good night and bowed. But as she was passing into the courtyard of the hotel behind the concierge she heard his voice call out gaily, "But you *will* go with me to the races this afternoon and bring me luck?"

"Phone me later," Edith called back.

The night clerk at the desk looked as if he had seen a ghost when she asked for her key. He handed it to her and said lugubriously, "Here is a telegram for you, Madame. And—and some of the late journals."

She took them and stepped into the elevator, still feeling as if she were walking on pink clouds. Robert's voice was in her ears. She felt pleased with herself for the manner in which she had turned down his proposal. Someday she might even tell Oliver about it. But no, Robert had done, perhaps, only what he thought was expected of him. He was really a delightful companion; rather a dear. Suzanne de Manville had exaggerated, of course.

She hummed as she walked along the corridor to her suite. The lights were on, and Anna was waiting for her.

"But I told you not to wait up," Edith said, throwing off her cape. "How silly of you, Anna."

The maid said, rushing forward, "Madame—oh, my poor Madame!"

And then Edith saw that Anna's eyes were red, as if she had been crying.

The official said, "The train to Bucharest was wrecked on the night of May fifteenth. What we would like to know, Mrs. Kenyon, is this: How is it that you, a young widow, did not at once return to your family in the United States? You had no intimate friends in Paris; there was nothing to keep you there. Wouldn't it have been natural for you to return home?"

Edith Kenyon asked, "Why do you care what I did fifteen years ago?"

"I am trying to make a point clear; it's not curiosity," he said, in his monotonous voice that was somehow kind.

She hesitated. Then she said, "I can't remember everything, so long ago. I suppose I planned to go home; I guess my sister expected me—now that I think of it, there were cables from her insisting that I come and stay with her in Rockhampton. But I didn't go back." She went on earnestly, "If you are curious about anything, perhaps it is about Oliver's business in Rumania—his interests there. But I swear to you I never knew anything about them, except that there was money sent to me every so often by the Morgan-Harjes Bank, in Paris. You'll have to believe me."

"Yes," he said, and waited patiently.

"I don't know how to answer your question," she said, a little nervous now. It was not the questions he asked or her answers that were upsetting her. It was the train of memory they evoked—memories she had buried long ago, that rose now with the clamminess of ghosts.

"Would you like some tea, Mrs. Kenyon?" the official asked. "Or a drink of anything?"

"A glass of water will do, thank you," she said.

She could feel the pressure of those others in the crowded lounge bearing down upon her. Her blouse felt sticky against her flesh, and no longer crisp. And she had twisted her white gloves so that they were moist and limp. She placed them on the desk beside her handbag.

"Do you think there is a possibility we may not get off the ship this evening?" she asked. "If not, I should like to get in touch with my sister. It must be awful for her, waiting on the pier, not knowing. She's probably been there hours already."

The official said, "I can't tell you just when you'll get off. But you'll be able to send telegrams later, of course, in case you are detained. Your glass of water, Mrs. Kenyon."

She accepted it from the steward, who looked sympathetic. She thanked him with her lovely smile.

"And now?" The official had his pen in his hand again and was waiting.

Edith Kenyon drew a deep breath and said, "I married Prince Robert Bonnat in the autumn of 1927."

For the first week or so following Oliver's sudden death Edith was crushed. She had been so confident of her future that she could not realize the cruel blow that had fallen.

She had mapped out a life according to a familiar pattern. She had gone so far as to see herself a stoutish blond dowager, mistress of a large house, where she would entertain the important men who were always conferring with Oliver. She saw herself serving on committees, being chairman of garden clubs and such. She had even amused herself visualizing the children they would have—a son, of course, who would go to Groton; a daughter who would have a splendid debut.

It had been such a solid, nice future—all to begin after the honeymoon and the traveling. She had planned to buy furniture here and there in Europe—pictures and *objets d'art,* and in later years, when anyone admired them, she would say casually, "Oh, yes, that *is* interesting, isn't it? Oliver and I picked it up in Florence—or Cairo."

And now, all that future was crushed—as Oliver's body had been in the wreck of the train to Bucharest.

People were very kind. Oliver's Paris lawyer arranged for the cremation and took care of the red tape and financial matters. Anna nursed her and petted her. Suzanne de Manville took care of sending cables to America.

Rose had cabled: "Come home at once. I'll fix up a wing for you in the Rockhampton house."

Suzanne was with Edith when the cable came. It was late in the afternoon after the simple cremation ceremony. Edith was still stunned, but she was making an effort to prove she could stand up under tragedy. "I suppose I'll be leaving soon for America," she said. "I'll never be able to thank you enough for your kindness to me."

"Are you anxious to go back?" Suzanne asked.

"I don't know," Edith said helplessly. "I—I can't seem to make any decisions at all."

"Why not wait, then, until you feel stronger? What you need is a chance to recover. I was about to suggest that you come on a Mediterranean cruise with me. The Mary Jane is waiting at Villefranche. There will be a few others, but you needn't make any effort with them. You haven't seen the Greek Islands yet, have you, or the northern coast of Africa?"

"No," Edith said slowly. "Perhaps I will, someday."

SUZANNE shrugged. "You may never have a chance like this. It would really be a shame to miss anything while you are here and it's at your elbow, as it were. How about postponing your return for a month and coming along with us?"

Suzanne de Manville was a small woman with dark hair and peculiar almond-shaped green eyes. She was nervous and highly keyed and forever searching for novelty. She dreaded boredom as if it were some pernicious disease. She was extremely wealthy and could indulge her fantasies, no matter how extravagant. She had a daughter in a convent outside Paris, but none of Suzanne's friends had ever seen her.

Suzanne herself looked a perpetual twenty-six. She was one of the best-dressed women in Paris, and her collection of jewels was famous. But she was restless and unhappy, because she wanted to be known as a poet. She had published several volumes of verse. They were not bad, but her wealth and social position stamped her as a dilettante. In the catalogue of modern French literature, her name was never mentioned. This rankled and made her miserable, and at heart, bitter. She was generous, however, toward other writers, and gave money and praise lavishly where she thought it would promote the arts. But she was driven by the devil of her own frustrated ambition. It sent her into byways and queer paths as strange and hopeless as those of Francis Thompson pursued by his Hound of Heaven.

Marjorie Worthington

At the time of meeting Edith Kenyon, Suzanne de Manville was without any particular fad or interest. She admired anything beautiful, and since Edith's loveliness was of the frail blond sort, it was a foil for her own dark beauty and no cause for anxiety. Perhaps the younger woman's admiration was something she needed too, at the moment. It may have amused her to watch Edith's reactions to new sights and experiences.

Or perhaps, as Edith came to believe later, she had planned from the beginning to make some sort of liaison between Prince Bonnat and the rich young American. There was a strange bond between him and Suzanne de Manville; perhaps she saw a chance to help him. Edith was sure the money angle was only a small part of it. Suzanne may really have thought Edith would make Robert happy. She was a worldly and hard woman, but, like most hard people, had her soft spots, and Prince Robert Bonnat apparently was one of them.

If Rose had been there to say in her warm voice that was full of common-sense-and-no-nonsense, "Come home, Edith, where you belong," Edith would probably have returned to America. But Rose was across the sea, and Suzanne was near, and at that time it was impossible for Edith to make a decision of her own.

So she left Paris soon after Oliver's death and drove south with Suzanne de Manville and Robert Bonnat in a bright red racing car that skimmed the Napoleonic roads of France at seventy miles an hour. Edith was traveling in a dream.

But at the first sight of Provence, with the pink-roofed farmhouses and the pale olive trees in terraced gardens, she awoke and began to live again, and to see. So that when, after the city of Grasse, she caught her first view of the Mediterranean, a vivid blue strip on the horizon, she almost wept with joy. "It's ungrateful to be sad in such a beautiful world," she told herself. "It's one's duty to be happy."

Suzanne's yacht, the Mary Jane, lay at anchor in the jewel-like bay of Villefranche. Once over the gangplank, there was little to indicate a ship at all. The staterooms were bedrooms with private baths, the living rooms spacious and furnished in natural woods, white upholstery, thick rugs. The other guests were old friends of Suzanne's and Robert's. They were all pleasant, but even Prince Bonnat kept tactfully aloof, and Edith at first had to make no effort to be sociable.

Smoothly, the Mary Jane left Villefranche and made her way through the Greek Islands, stopped longest at Crete, then slowly made her way back. And all the time Edith lived in a pleasant dreamlike state.

She was sitting on deck one evening waiting for the others to appear for their before-dinner cocktails when a difference in the air made her lift her head and sniff. She could see land not far off, green at first, then gold in the sunset.

She was dressed for the evening in a long white chiffon gown, cut square at the throat. The weather was hot, and she wore no wrap.

She felt a little excitement as she walked to the rail and shielded her eyes from the setting sun. She was almost certain that the shore she could see was Africa.

At that minute she wanted someone to share the experience with her. The people on the Mary Jane had been here before; they would accept it casually; they probably wouldn't understand her making such a fuss. She wished for Rose, Oliver—somebody to whom the approach to the Dark Continent would mean as much as it did to her.

And then she heard a low voice say, "You know, I've approached it many times, but always with a sense of excitement. It isn't so much what you find when you get there, it's your own imagination about it. This is the moment when you feel what it is—a great strange continent which we have tried to make part of our prosaic world, but which we never will."

She looked up and smiled at Robert Bonnat. He had a drink in his hand, and he drank it slowly, never turning his gaze from the approaching shore and not saying another word.

There was a party that night in Oran, at the villa of a friend of Suzanne's. It was a gay party, with music and dancing and a card game called *chemin de fer*, at which large sums of money changed hands. Edith noticed that Prince Bonnat was losing heavily. She began to wish he wouldn't be so foolish; the more he lost, the gayer and more reckless he grew.

She left the room and went out on a balcony. The sound of music reached her. It was a phonograph with Libby Holman singing her hit song from the "Little Show" that had recently closed in New York.

"Moanin' low, my sweet man . . ."

Tomorrow, the yacht would return to France. This night was all she would have of Africa. It was so silly it made her angry. She should never have accepted an invitation for a cruise. It was wasted time. Instead of making her forget the loss of Oliver, it was showing her how much she needed him.

BOOK 4 THE COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

She was a stranger to all these people; to their ways of life, their habits of thought. She was homesick.

"Don' know any reason why he treats me so poorly, mmm de de dum de da."

Prince Bonnat appeared and leaned against the rail of the balcony facing her. "Very good song," he said. "Is she a Negress, that Libby?"

"No," Edith said shortly.

"I have heard Negresses singing in Africa," he said. "Would you like to hear about my travels to the interior? No? Too bad. Nobody ever wants to. I am always trying to bring into a conversation something about the cities of the Niger or camps in the jungle, but I never succeed. People just say, 'Oh, how interesting,' and change the conversation at once."

"Do you always have to make clever remarks?" Edith asked.

"It is better to laugh than to weep," he said, "because to laugh is more dignified." He added, "My favorite philosopher wrote that. Shall we talk about philosophers?"

"Must we talk?" Edith said.

He looked keenly at her for a second, offered her a cigarette, lighted it and murmured, *"Ma pauvre petite."*

They smoked in silence. The song had stopped. There were millions of stars above the balcony. There were far-off sounds now distinguishable—the sea, and stranger sounds.

"Lost baby," Robert said softly. "But I am lost too," he went on. His voice was low and caressing. "Darling," he said, "you are the loveliest woman I have ever known. I adore you."

She felt that these words came to his lips automatically. In her heart, she refused to believe them. But she was desperately lonely, and even from Robert, they were pleasant to hear.

"I have adored you since the first evening we spent together in Paris—the evening when you made your little Victorian speech about virtue. I assure you I was very much impressed. I could hardly contain my joy when I found you had accepted Suzanne's invitation and that I was to be close to you for several weeks. Do you know what I said to myself then?"

"No." Edith found to her annoyance that she was interested.

"I told myself, 'Robert, before the end of the cruise you will be in love, and you will propose marriage—and this time it will be the real thing. And if you are refused, you will die.' So I tried to wait. But I am not good at that. I cannot wait, ever, for what I want. Will you marry me?"

His arm was around her waist, his face close to hers, his eyes pleading with her. She tried to draw away, but it was difficult, not because he was holding her, but because she wanted to be close to him. She wanted the awful loneliness to be over. She wanted to belong to somebody, to love and be loved. What was the future as it faced her now? A wide stretch of emptiness, during which she would unconsciously be seeking something that was being offered her now in the most romantic of circumstances and when she needed it most.

But she did draw away, and she said, trembling, "How can you talk this way about love? I can't say to you that I love you. I don't know—maybe someday. But tonight I know what I feel toward you is not love. It—it couldn't be."

"Words!" he said impatiently. "Why should you give it so much importance, this definition business? It is nonsense. Because I know you are going to marry me, *petit ange.* A—a fortuneteller in Paris told me so. It is all written. We will be married, and we will live happily ever after." He hesitated. "No, I hate this 'ever after.' But we will be happy together, very happy—for who knows how long! You have only to nod your head, darling. No more words, please."

It was the simplest thing in the world to be taken in his arms and kissed into a state that was so wonderful it was almost like peace. This was the future nearest at hand and so much more promising than any other. Whether it was love or anything else, it was the most thrilling thing she had ever experienced. There was no reason for denying it to herself; her life was her own. Suzanne had spoken of danger. Suzanne was right. It was wonderful.

"I think I love you, Robert," she said, when she was able to speak. "I think I would like to be the Princess Bonnat."

"Did you remain in France during the years you were married to Prince Bonnat?" the official was asking her.

She frowned, because she had forgotten him. Then she said, "Oh, we traveled a good deal. We made a trip to Indo-China and to Bali. We spent one winter in Cairo and some time in Algiers. And oh, yes, we went to Italy several times. We went wherever our friends went; wherever it was smart to go."

"You had no permanent domicile?"

"Home, you mean? No. Robert was too restless. He didn't like responsibilities. Our only permanent address was my first one in France—the Morgan-Harjes Bank, in Paris."

They were like bright birds flashing by on the wing, colorful, a welcome sight on any landscape. She had plenty of money to draw on; there were no ties. They were free to love and play and amuse themselves. The wedding at the Paris Mairie, in the fall, was followed by a request from Robert's brother for a religious ceremony, and so, to oblige him, there was a second wedding in the family chapel. There were a few of Robert's relatives, including his serious-minded older brother. That was the only time she saw Robert's family.

Edith knew she should consult Oliver's lawyer to learn the extent of her fortune, but she kept putting it off. When she and Robert seemed to be spending too recklessly, she had guilty moments about Oliver, and the fact that it was his money they were being happy on. But she told herself that she could do no more for Oliver except to respect his memory, which she did, in her heart; and she reasoned that he would want her to be happy. If there were times when her gaiety seemed feverish, she told herself it was because the effort to keep up with the ebullient Robert gave her no time to relax and catch her breath.

When statements came from the bank, she put them away, planning to take time some morning to go over them. The checks which she signed were always honored.

On their return from Lake Como to Paris, after an enchanted week that seemed a prolongation of a honeymoon never to end, Robert himself broached the matter of finances.

Edith was having breakfast in bed in their suite at the Ritz. Fresh and rosy from a long sleep, she was hungrily eating a crisp *croissant*.

Robert came from his room, wearing blue silk pajamas, his hair rumpled. He seated himself on a stool beside the bed.

Edith's morning mail lay on the counterpane, unopened. Robert was carrying his, with the envelopes slit.

She was so full of her own lazy enjoyment of the moment that it was some time before she realized Robert hadn't said anything funny. In fact, he hadn't said anything beside a brief *"Bon jour, ma chérie."*

"It's a lovely day," she said. "Let's do something different. How about taking one of the little boats on the Seine and going to Vincennes? It would be amusing." She was always pleased when she could suggest a way of passing the time. Usually it was Robert who had all the bright ideas.

"Tomorrow," he said. "But we have just returned to Paris, and there are some things we must attend to. By the way, don't you think it's about time we paid a visit to your *homme d'affaires?* I know it is stupid, but—well, I must tell some of these nasty creditors of mine how soon I can satisfy their greedy appetites. Unreasonably, they expect me to pay their sordid bills. Had I not married, darling, they wouldn't dare insult me as they have been doing lately. But since the news has reached their swinish ears, their chops are watering. Is that a good metaphor? No, it is awful. I am not in a mood for good speech. I am damned annoyed."

"Why, Robert," Edith said, "do you need money? My checkbook is on the desk. Bring it to me."

He shook his head sadly. "No," he said. "We must find out just where we stand. I hate these bits of knowledge more than you—uncertainty is nicer. Shall I call to make the appointment or would you rather?"

"I haven't seen Maitre Duvivier in a long time. He has asked me to call on him, but I never seemed to get there. I suppose there is no sense putting it off any longer," Edith decided.

She reached for the telephone beside her bed. But the lawyer's office, like every other business house in France, was closed between the hours of twelve and two.

"Let's do it tomorrow," she said. "I'll take a bath and dress, and we'll do something all by ourselves today. I'd love to ride on one of the little river boats."

She thought Robert, who was always putting things off until tomorrow, would be pleased. He had proved the gayest

companion she'd ever had—too flippant, of course, according to American standards for men and husbands, unable to be serious longer than a moment at a time, his mind constantly leaping from one idea to another. He seemed incapable of growing up, of taking a serious view of anything. She, who had avoided responsibility most of her life, because at first there had been her parents, then Rose, to take the burden of things from her, began to feel that she was maturing since her marriage to Robert Bonnat. He was so utterly irresponsible, she sometimes felt like his mother, responsible for him.

But it was Prince Bonnat who at two o'clock phoned the office of Maître Duvivier and made an appointment for that afternoon. And when the time arrived, he sat in the lawyer's office and looked, for the first time since Edith had known him, alert and businesslike.

When the lawyer explained that his client, Oliver Kenyon, had left money in trust for his widow, but that the capital was never to be touched by her or her heirs, but was to revert to his relatives at the time of her death, Robert Bonnat lighted a cigarette and said in a cold voice:

"In France, a wife's property belongs to her husband. There must be some law of ours that will reverse this complicated and selfish arrangement you just described."

"Princess Bonnat has retained her American citizenship," Maître Duvivier said smoothly. And added, "I hope?"

"Oh, yes, indeed," Edith said quickly. She added, "But the income—exactly how large is it? I have been spending money carelessly, I'm afraid, because I was always led to believe there was—well, an unlimited supply." She smiled nervously.

The lawyer's reply made her feel easier. Apparently there was to be more money every month than she and her sister had spent in years. It made her eyes large with wonder when she heard the amount. It also made her feel ashamed. There were so many people who lived on a very small part of her income. She glanced at Robert to see how he was taking the good news, but he was staring grimly at the lighted end of his cigarette.

"I have a few debts," he said. "I don't want my wife to be embarrassed by them. My brother, who inherited what wealth remains in our illustrious but impoverished family, has hitherto always met them for me. Naturally, now that I am married, he no longer considers himself obliged to do so."

Edith wished she had not heard him. She knew Robert was not mercenary; he had always shown an utter disregard for money. She was afraid the lawyer would get a false impression of him. Maître Duvivier, however, seemed to accept Prince Bonnat's statements without surprise. He merely said, "You and the princess will have to arrange that by some mutual adjustment. Oliver Kenyon's will made no provisions for such a contingency." He rose and walked with them to the door.

They crossed from the lawyer's office on the Avenue de l'Opéra to the terrace of the Café de la Paix, where Robert ordered a brandy and soda for himself and a glass of dry Vermouth for his wife. He didn't speak until he had drained his glass. Then he turned to her with a charming smile and said, "Thank God, that sordid business is over with. Now, what would you like to do with this golden October day? I am yours to command." He held her hand for a moment, then raised it to his lips gently. "I know," he said. "We will get an open fiacre and drive in the Bois, and we will buy some stale gingerbread and feed it to the swans."

He ordered a second *fine à l'eau,* which was unusual; he rarely drank anything before lunch.

Before they left the café some friends joined them, so they didn't go to the Bois to feed the swans that day or any day. They were swept up in a program of fevered activity. The Paris winter season was starting.

Their names were constantly in the social and gossip columns, their pictures in the illustrated weeklies of Paris and London, and occasionally in the rotogravure sections of New York newspapers.

Edith's sister Rose wrote:

> Your niece is becoming a snob. She keeps bringing the name of her aunt the princess into every conversation. She sends her thanks for the wonderful birthday gift.
>
> Edith, aren't you ever coming back, even for a visit? We are dying to see you, and we'd like to meet Robert. He sounds like the Prince Charming out of our Blue, Pink, or was it Yellow Fairy Book? Thanks for the large check, only don't do it any more. Stacey is doing well, and you know what a good manager I am. However, I did use part of the money you sent to repair the roof. You'll hardly know the old house when you see it again. Don't you ever get homesick? I know I would! But I suppose after meeting such exciting people, we'll seem awfully dull to you, dear.
>
> Please give our love to your husband, and save a lot for yourself.
>
> Your devoted sister, Rose

"Edith, if you have loved me," Kurt said, "just help me get safely back to my own country. Then you can forget me."

Edith had twinges of homesickness now and then, especially around Christmas and Thanksgiving. But she was too occupied for retrospection or introspection. She was now working full time at a job that was new to her: trying to keep herself attractive to her husband. Never by one little overt act did he even suggest that his interest was wandering, but she could sense it. The knowledge hurt at first, and then became a challenge.

After the interview with the lawyer, Edith arranged for the payment of Robert's debts, which amounted to something like a million francs. She had enough on hand to pay some of it; the rest she contrived by selling a few of her jewels.

She never refused Robert money when he asked for it. And often she handed him banknotes with a little joke, trying to be tactful about it, until she realized he wasn't at all embarrassed at accepting money from her. He considered scruples about accepting money from women stupid and middle class.

But now, when she received statements from the bank, she went over them painfully, because it often happened that she had used up her balance and had to wait for the next installment of her income. Most of Oliver Kenyon's capital had been invested in Rumanian oil interests, but there were a few solid American investments too. Her future seemed safe enough, but she lived in fear of temporary embarrassments. It was startling to see the amount of money Robert could let slip through his aristocratic fingers. She knew he gambled and lost heavily, but she couldn't see how he could make so much of it go so fast.

She began to long for a home, so that she could collect some of the beautiful things she saw and wanted to possess. But Robert was impatient at the idea of settling down. When she suggested it, he would always contrive a trip to some city or country which she had said she wanted to visit. Each summer they cruised on Suzanne de Manville's yacht for a few weeks. The friendship with Suzanne seemed to remain the same as it had been before the marriage. Suzanne was ready with good advice when Edith felt she needed it—usually when Robert had done some worrying thing.

"You cannot hope to change him," Suzanne said. "His pattern was set long before you met him, my dear. Accept him for what he is; don't try to reform him. It would be hopeless. If you have the *cafards,* remember, we *all* do. My remedy is to buy new clothes, or change my perfume—or find a new man."

And Edith would order a few new gowns or have her hair fixed differently, and sometimes the doldrums would pass. She didn't care to gamble, and she drank very little. Her greatest amusement was seeing new places, learning new languages, educating herself in the ways of the world. She was not by any means an intellectual, as Suzanne was. Most of the new art in music and painting bewildered her. And there were other amusements of Robert's which chilled her and which she tried to ignore, since he persisted in them.

The official said, "Prince Bonnat's brother Georges was a notorious Royalist. He was a supporter of the newspaper, L'Action Française. There is an account of an attempted demonstration he fostered, in 1929."

"My husband was not interested in politics," Edith said earnestly. "I only wish he had been! I assure you, Robert Bonnat cared for nothing in the world except his own amusements and comforts. We were both completely frivolous."

"I see." The official stared at her; then his eyes turned to the papers in his hand.

She wanted to say, "But I've changed since then. I'm no longer that silly, wasteful, selfish woman. Those were the years of my youth that I threw away because I was stupid. But I did learn, through suffering, and I've paid for my mistakes—and I'm another person now; can you understand that?"

Then she realized the official didn't know anything about her except the few cold facts that filled a brief space on his papers. Her own bitter memories, traveling faster than light, had supplied the gaps in his questioning, but would never fill the gaps on his papers.

"You divorced Prince Bonnat in 1930?"

She nodded.

It had taken a few years, but at last the time came when she was ashamed to face herself in the mirror. The face that looked back at her had lost its soft contours and was becoming sharp, the cheekbones pronounced, and the eyes had a glittering look that no expensive eyeshadow could soften. She began to feel tired most of the time; to awaken in the morning with no desire to get up.

Robert's energies seemed to be continually finding new fountains of supply. He was tireless, always on tiptoe. There were times when she longed to ask him to stop; to give her a chance to catch up with him. But she couldn't stop trying, not unless she was ready to drop out of the race—and she wasn't ready. What she felt for him was not love, but something between fascination and fear.

There were many nights that she spent alone. But even then, when she had a chance to relax, she couldn't, because she suspected what Robert might be doing and was afraid of the company he was keeping and of vices she only half understood. She believed it would have been easier for her if she heard that Robert had taken a mistress. She might have suffered from hurt pride, but not from the awful, sickening fears that haunted her during the night-long vigils.

The end come during one of these nights, when a party of them had left Suzanne's yacht at Toulon and driven to Marseilles. After a dinner at Basso's, which was the seeming purpose of the trip, the party separated in search of various amusements which the city offered. Robert left Edith at the hotel, where they were all planning to spend the night.

He had said nonchalantly, "Go get some beauty sleep, *ma chérie*. You look dreadfully tired. I'm going to be late. Don't wait up for me. See you at breakfast."

The hotel was near the old port, and it was a dreary place, with hideous wallpaper and red plush hangings. Suzanne and her friends patronized it because they said it had "atmosphere."

Edith undressed slowly and went through some of the exercises she now practiced when she was alone. When she had finished, she went out on the balcony of the bedroom for a breath of fresh air. She could see the masts of ships and the little lights of the cafés along the quay.

"It's lovely," she told herself. And then she added calmly, "But not lovely enough—nothing is. I've gone as far as I can go. I'm through."

She went back into the room just as the telephone rang shrilly. She picked up the receiver. It might be Robert, phoning to ask her to send an envelope with money in it by the hotel *chasseur*. He had done that before.

But it was Suzanne. "Is Robert there?" she asked.

She sounded angry when Edith said no.

"Can you reach him now, at once?"

EDITH LAUGHED. "Of course not," she said. "Perhaps you know where in Marseilles he would be amusing himself at this moment. I don't." She hated Suzanne as she talked to her; she hated the world, including herself.

"Don't be a fool!" Suzanne said sharply. "Can't you forget your Americanisms; your supreme smugness? I have something of importance to tell Robert. If I don't reach him at once, it may be too late. I'm leaving for Paris immediately, by a chartered plane from Marigny. When he comes in, advise him to do the same." She hung up.

Edith brushed her hand over her eyes and watched the man across the desk. He was reading the paper carefully.

She looked around at the saloon filled with passengers who were going through an ordeal similar to hers. She knew there was a reason for all this—that among them were enemies of the United States hoping to enter along with the innocent; hoping for some loophole of inefficiency or indifference to let them through.

She had nothing to fear for herself. Before long the questioning would be over, and she would be free to leave the ship. She must give whatever help she could to the official who was trying to be thorough in his job.

He glanced up at her now and seemed embarrassed. He coughed and said, "Prince Robert Bonnat was involved in a scandal in June, 1930. He was sent out of France. He went to South America."

She nodded. "Yes, that's true," she said in a tired voice.

There was first the flight with Robert early that morning by plane to Paris. Then their arrival at the Ritz, and the visit from the head of the Paris police, who was a friend of Robert's family. He advised Prince Bonnat to take a vacation in some South American country. Arrangements were made for passage that same afternoon on a freighter going to Rio.

And then the last few moments, when Robert, immaculately dressed, his bags packed, bent to kiss her and say, "I'm dreadfully sorry, darling. You will, of course, get a divorce at once. As for me, I've always wished to see the bay of Rio de Janeiro. Sorry you won't share the experience with me."

"Robert," Edith managed to say, "is there anything I can do for you?"

"Yes," he answered, at the door. "Say good-by—forever and ever. Maybe there is such a thing. And," he added, "how much money can you let me have, *chérie?* Well, that is not much, but it will help. My brother is paying for my passage, since I have promised not to return. Good-by. It isn't a bore. this life, is it? Thank God for that."

"There was a scandal," Edith said, "but I thought it was hushed up. I suppose there was an account in his Paris dossier. He went to Rio, and I was divorced in Paris. Is there anything more?"

The official said, "He is now with Laval, in Vichy. Did you know that?"

"I am not too surprised," Edith said. She added quickly, "But that has nothing to do with me—nothing. I never saw him again."

The official drew out another sheet of paper. But he looked at her before he read it. "Mrs. Kenyon, how is it that even then you didn't return to America?" he asked. "You were free once more; probably, if you'll forgive me, unhappy. What caused you to remain in Europe? Please understand, I am not asking out of curiosity. There are questions printed here." He put his hand on the paper. "Questions that ask definitely, 'Length of stay abroad? For what reason?' "

SHE LOOKED grateful. He was trying to be as considerate as possible. Then she said, "It's hard to explain. You are right, I was very unhappy, not because I had any love left for Prince Bonnat, but because I was full of poison; my mind was tainted with it. I was sick of myself—sick mentally and morally, though not physically. My family had thought of me as a success; they were proud of me. I couldn't face them with the mess I had made of my life. I needed to convalesce first. So I leased a villa in the south of France. I remembered a little fishing village between Toulon and Marseilles. Not on the fashionable Riviera, but a little place that was unspoiled. I liked the people—natives, we call them—natural and soft-spoken and happy and proud. I lived among them simply and quietly for a while—until I began to come alive again. But the convalescence took a long time. I kept putting off my return to America. In the south, one keeps putting off decisions like that, you know."

She felt herself getting nervous. She tried to prepare herself for his next question.

"In 1932 you married the Baron Kurt von Braunwitz, an Austrian?"

"Yes," she said.

"Why is it you now call yourself Mrs. Kenyon instead of the Baroness von Braunwitz? You were never divorced from the baron, were you?"

She shook her head. "No," she said, "not divorced. But we have been separated for many years. When I decided to come home, I dropped the title and used the name of my first husband. Is there a law against that?"

He didn't answer. He shuffled the papers, leaned forward and said, "Now, tell me where Kurt von Braunwitz is at present."

She said, "I don't know. I wish I did. You'll have to believe me. I swear I don't know." But as she looked into the official's eyes, she realized he was aware of the pounding of her heart and the cold sense of fear that was creeping over her. She asked, "Why, if he is in this country, shouldn't you know his whereabouts? And why are you so anxious to find him?"

She had ripped her gloves, pulling at them nervously.

"We will find him," the official said slowly, "only we thought perhaps you could save us some time."

She shook her head. "I know less than you—much less, I suppose. If I had the courage, I would ask you questions. But I haven't. At least, not now."

A gong sounded in the corridor. It was the call for the first sitting at dinner.

The official said, "I think that will be all of this third degree for today, Mrs. Kenyon. I'm afraid you will have to stay on board tonight. We may need to question you again in the morning. I'm very sorry."

She picked up her handbag and gloves, nodded to him and passed through the crowd again, to the deck. She walked proudly, but she was frightened.

The Corniche Road goes through Nice and Cannes, Saint Raphaël, Le Trayas, Saint Tropez—and stops somewhere along the route to Toulon. After that it is no longer known as the Riviera, but as the Mediterranean shore. France becomes itself again, after Saint Tropez.

Skip Toulon, and travel along a road lined with plane trees, through villages whitewashed and smiling, smelling of freshly baked bread, new wine, lemon trees and fish; called by some outlandish and almost unpronounceable name,

such as Ollioules—and you have the Midi, with no English, American or Parisian *chichi* about it.

Edith Kenyon, as she became again after her divorce from Prince Bonnat, remembered this unfashionable strip and chose it as a place in which to make a home for herself. She was still young, but the years she had sped through at the mad pace set by Robert Bonnat and Suzanne de Manville had been crowded until they were equal to a greater number than they actually were. She was considerably older, in some respects, than she would have been if she had remained in America, leading the lives of her sister and friends. There were things in her heart and her soul that had to be expelled. She didn't want to go home until she was rid of them.

Remembering the Midi countryside she had driven through with Robert, she went there for quiet and peace. The search for the right house was absorbing, and when she discovered it, on an isthmus between the villages of Bandol and Sanary, in a bend of the seacoast, she bought it. There followed months of finding the right furnishings; months in which she was too busy to remember the past or think of the future.

She acquired a little car and went up into the hills for pieces of Provençal furniture. She bought copper cooking utensils, earthenware dishes and pewter; rugs that had come from North Africa, block-printed chintzes from Paris, and hand-woven sheets for her beds.

This was her first home and she had money and freedom to make it as she wanted it to be; as she had dreamed of it.

"It's lovely," she told herself, when it was finished. "It's very near perfect."

She sat down in a small love seat she had brought down that day from Draguignan, in the hills. She lighted a cigarette and looked about her. She felt suddenly tired.

The mistral, wind from the Rhone, had risen that afternoon and was sweeping furiously about the house, filling it with fine white sand that had sifted through the closed shutters. It was sweeping away clouds and dampness, and would be followed by beautiful clear weather. But it would blow all night long, with the sound of ghosts wailing.

It's a lonely business, she thought, furnishing a house by yourself—for yourself. The first excitement was over, and a reaction was setting in. For a moment she thought she couldn't stay here alone. She considered going back to America, at least for a visit.

The next morning when she awoke and saw from her window that the wind had stopped, and the fishing boats with orange-red sails were sitting out on the bluest of seas to collect their sardine nets, the charm of it won her again and she decided to stay. This is what I need, she thought; this is good for me. And if it isn't, then nothing will be, ever.

Living with her was a married couple whom she had hired as cook and houseman.

As a rule, she lunched on a terrace, shaded by plane trees, but with an unobstructed view of the Mediterranean. She dined there alone on evenings when there was not too much wind. And once she heard a bird singing when night fell in the garden behind the house. Though she had never heard one before, she knew it was a nightingale.

The servants felt sorry for her, because she was so young to be alone. Tactfully, they suggested guests. Madeleine, the cook, mentioned dishes she could only prepare for more than three people. Emil, who went each morning for the mail, brought back letters hopefully, asking each time politely, "Good news from your friends, I hope, Madame?"

But Edith asked nobody to visit her. Those friends she had known with Oliver were too far in the past; those she had known with Robert she did not want to see. She would make new friends, but that would take time, and she was in no hurry.

She received invitations—from Cannes and Nice and Juan-les-Pins. To all of these she answered, "Thank you so much. Perhaps later in the season. I'm busy now fixing up my house. You must come to see it when it is finished." But she never followed up the invitation, not even when the furnishing was completed and summer folded into autumn.

Even in the south of France, autumn brought a tinge of melancholy. The early mornings and late afternoons were chilly; a little rain fell, enough to make a lingering dampness.

Edith's house, like others in the Midi, was constructed with the optimistic illusion that the sun always shines. There was no central heating arrangement in the villa, only the big kitchen stove with its sloping copper roof and the small ornamental fireplaces in the bedrooms that burned coal slowly and ineffectually.

It was still possible to swim every noon and to lie in a bathing suit for at least a half-hour in the sun on the sand; but it was not too pleasant. It was not the way it had been all summer, when a whole morning could be wiped off the calendar by going for a swim and taking a sun bath.

An afternoon could be got through with a walk through the woods to the lighthouse on La Gouguette; followed by

BOOK 4 THE COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

a cup of tea in the garden that was sheltered by a wall from the wind and sea. There was the radio to turn on after dinner with the news broadcast or music from Paris or from Basle or Rome. There were letters to write and accounts to go over with Madeleine.

It was "the simple, good life"—just as she had planned it, to wipe out the past years, to get back, if possible, an attitude toward life she had had when she was a girl. Sometimes she had little flashes when she could laugh or be surprised or enthusiastic, as she had been then. And her plan of recovery seemed to be succeeding.

But, as she heard Madeleine say one day to her husband, "Just the same, this is a life for a woman of sixty. It is not for a young woman." They were right, of course. She must make the effort to go out into the world again. This had been meant for a temporary retreat, not a retirement.

She began a letter that afternoon to Rose, to say she would be home for a visit soon. She was seated at a small desk beside a window. From where she sat she could see a soiled gray sky and lead-gray water. There was a small fire in the grate across the room. She remembered the big house at Rockhampton, and how the enormous fire in the low-ceilinged living room would crackle with the flames from four-foot logs. At this time of the year there would be piles of leaves burning outside, and the sweet smell of them would creep into the house.

It would be good to see and smell all that; only . . .

She sat for a long time without writing a word, and then she got up and walked about the room. She felt cold. Her mind refused to warm up to the idea of going anywhere at all. She stood beside a small table on which were a few new books and magazines that had come in the morning mail. She turned over the pages of an American magazine, and her eyes mechanically ran over the pages of advertisement. Her hand stopped at one that read:

COME TO AUSTRIA

the world's delight, because of that *gemütlich* charm which belongs to her alone. Adventure in the magnificent Alpine provinces of Tyrol and Vorarlberg, linger beside the sparkling lakes of the Salzkammergut and Carinthia. Waltz by the beautiful blue Danube. Taste Life's romance in the festival towns of Linz, Salzburg, Imperial Vienna . . .

She remembered poring over travel advertisements like this when she was a little girl. She had imagined, then, how wonderful it would be if she could afford to say, "I think I will," as she read these "Come to . . ." blandishments.

"Why not?" she asked herself slowly. She had never been to Austria or Germany. If she went back to America now, she might never come over again. She should really see more of the Continent before she left it. She reread the advertisement. "Why not?" she asked herself, actually feeling some excitement at the idea. "I could use a little of that thing they call *'gemütlichkeit.'*"

It was difficult remembering all those subtleties as she sat in her stuffy cabin on the Beringsholm, wondering when she would be called for further questioning. There was no use telling all that to the poker-faced official. Even if he were interested in why she had gone to Austria instead of America, how could she tell him of her bewilderment when she actually found herself alone, one evening in late October, with a fierce rain pouring down on the Vienna railway platform, trying to remember the name of a good hotel? How could she say to him that it was all because her hand had turned a page in a magazine and stayed there? She might have turned another page and read, "Come to Holland." It was the mood of the moment; she had been looking for a sign, and she had grasped the first indication of one. She had gone to Austria because she had to go somewhere, and she was leaving the decision to some mysterious thing like destiny.

"I was free, you understand," she could say to him. "I had money, no one in authority above me, nobody I was responsible to below. I was free to do anything I wanted to, and I was young, and I didn't want to go anywhere at all."

He would probably only stare at her and suspect her of hiding intelligent motives.

The Beringsholm was tied close to the pier in New York, but there were guards at the foot of the gangplanks, refusing reporters permission to walk on them. No explanations were given. The refusal was brief but emphatic. And because of the tenor of the day's news, there was not much protest, and as a matter of fact, some satisfaction. The word "caution" was at last being understood.

Edith had tried staying on deck, but it was too crowded and too depressing. She remained below after her first in-

terview until the gong rang for the third sitting at table, and then she went into the dining saloon. It was pretty awful, to sit there in a room with people who had spent many days together and were still unfriendly. There was none of the camaraderie that appears spontaneously after the second day on an ordinary transatlantic crossing. These passengers were silent. They were anxious to make no new connections, no new acquaintances. Perhaps it was through fear; perhaps merely a dread of hearing other troubles that might parallel their own. They were not traveling for pleasure or for business, but from necessity.

She stayed through the first course of dinner. She dipped her spoon several times into her consommé, trying not to look at the couple who shared her table; trying desperately not to be drawn into a conversation with them. It was not that she disliked them or felt superior to them; it was that she didn't feel like talking.

She left the dining saloon, to the regret of the steward, who was about to bring her roast beef. She climbed to the deck where the radio room was located. A queue of people was standing before its door, and she had to wait her turn.

It was fairly cool on deck. There was a moon over the ship, and almost unbearably near, the dim lights of New York. But the only light that seemed to interest the people near her was the light from the radio room that was blotted out now and then as someone entered or left. At last Edith's turn came.

She sent a wire to her sister saying she was to be delayed and asking her not to bother to meet the boat again; that she would arrive in Rockhampton when she could.

Then she asked if there happened to be any radiogram for her which had not yet been distributed. (If Kurt were in New York, perhaps he would know of her arrival, she had thought. But even as the operator went through a stack of envelopes, she remembered the official and his questioning, and she had a return of cold fear.) The operator handed her a message, and she smiled as she opened it. It was from Rose, of course. Why should she have imagined it would be from Kurt? She must be a little crazy.

Her cabin was first-class, but it was a narrow place, with a washstand and no private bath; a berth instead of a bed. She sat down on the berth when she reached her cabin, took off her hat and placed it on the white counterpane. Then she folded her hands and stared at the blank porthole.

"Kurt is in America," she said to herself. "That man wouldn't have asked me about him so anxiously if he were not. Kurt is in America, and maybe I will see him again."

She had been so careful of the gray suit and the white blouse and the wave in her hair. But now she threw herself face down upon the narrow berth, and with her head smothered in the pillows, began to cry.

On her first visit to Vienna, Edith had stopped at the Hôtel Impérial and met several people she had known before. That started a chain which twisted on, until in one of the links she met the Baron Kurt von Braunwitz.

She had been lonelier than she realized after her self-imposed retreat from the world. The fact that she was still known as the Princess Bonnat was no disgrace, it seemed. Rather, the mention of her name made certain faces brighten. She did not like those faces, but she was in need of company.

She had said to herself, on the station platform, that first rainy night, "This was a mistake. I don't want to be alone in a strange city. I shouldn't have come."

But as soon as she had stepped into the warm lobby of the hotel, someone approached and said, "Princess Bonnat! How nice to see you. Are you going to stop here? You must join us. There is to be a little celebration. You won't be too tired after you've washed up a bit?"

She remembered only vaguely the pink-faced man who had addressed her and his thin wife, who came rushing up to second the invitation. She only knew she was surprisingly glad to see them and to be spared the grimness of spending the first night in a strange city alone.

She found Vienna as gay as Paris, perhaps even more so. There were beautiful women in lovely gowns and jewels; attentive men; music to dance to—and bits of a great city caught in flashes from the window of a cab or in the few minutes one waited under the canopy of a night club.

"It's the same thing, like a merry-go-round," she told herself, but she kept going.

The Viennese liked Edith. She was well-born; she had money; she dressed well, and she could laugh. Those who cared to look for more than these qualities found Edith really beautiful, in a way their women were not. Her features were as delicately cut as theirs, her figure as good, with slim waist and high breasts, but whereas they were for the most part short-legged, Edith was tall, with the long handsome legs of American women, and an easy graceful carriage. She had something else that pleased them: a calm poised manner, a directness of speech, and also an ability to listen and be silent. Their women, like Frenchwomen, talked too much.

She was invited to spend a long week end at the so-called hunting lodge of the Archduke Paul, a scandalous but amusing old man who had shocked his imperial family to such an extent that he and his wife were left free to live as they pleased. Edith went, a little reluctantly, but certain she must see more of Austria than Vienna before leaving the country.

She had gone occasionally with Robert to hunting, or rather, shooting lodges, for week ends on which the men drank too much and the women grew shrill. She hated the great to-do they made about tracking down some poor scared fox or bird.

But this week end was different. The archduke and duchess had built their lodge along the lines of a Swiss chalet, but a gigantic one, so that it seemed like an Austrian child's dream of a fairy-tale castle. It was situated in a valley surrounded by steep mountains. At every guest-room window there was a wooden balcony from which one could look upon a fresh world, beautiful, clear, majestic. And although everyone wore tweedy clothing, with variations of felt or chamois jackets, short skirts or knee pants, and foolish little fedora hats with feathers, they gave an effect that was happily childish and healthy rather than brutal and serious. And eventually Edith found out that nobody killed anything at all at this hunting lodge.

The morning following her arrival, which had been late at night, she stepped out on her balcony at sunrise. It was perhaps the altitude that had made her sleep lightly.

She took a few deep breaths of the fine clear air, while her eyes absorbed the beauty of the snow-tipped mountains that surrounded the chalet like a tiara. She felt more alive than she had in months, and more hopeful. In such a bright clean world that renewed itself with each sunrise, there must be a way to renew one's self. Shivering a little in her thin dressing gown, she experienced a rare moment of exaltation. She remembered, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

The smile on her lips disappeared, and her hand went over her eyes. Then she went back into the bedroom for a pair of binoculars she had noticed on a table. She returned to the balcony with them and focused them on the closest mountain.

A tiny figure was moving toward the peak. At first she thought it must be an animal, an antelope or chamois, but its movements were too slow, and as she adjusted the lens and her vision became clearer, she realized it was a man. She watched, fascinated; saw him rest and then start on again until he reached the top. For one second he stood silhouetted against the sky; then he disappeared over the other side.

It was still very early morning. Whoever it was who made that climb must have started long before daybreak. The railway station was several hours away by car; there were no other houses near the queer combination chalet-château where she was visiting. The only explanation for the presence of that figure on the mountain was that he was an employee of the archduke or, like herself, a house guest.

She got back into bed, still shivering. For a while the thought of the lonely figure on the icy mountaintop kept her awake. What impulse would make a man leave a warm bed to make a climb like that? What did he hope to gain by such a uselessly heroic effort? Why wasn't it enough for some people to lift up their eyes to the mountains? Certainly the man she had watched had not climbed up there for the view, because he would then have remained more than a moment at the summit, instead of pausing only long enough to catch his breath before he started down the other side. She fell asleep again, thinking about him and wondering who he was.

She found out at luncheon. The substantial meal was served at a long refectory table in the entrance hall, and the guests, about twenty of them, all of whom Edith had met earlier, were showing healthy appetites appropriate to their outdoor costumes, though few had left the comfortable house all morning. At one end of the table sat the Archduke Paul, a potbellied, heavy-jowled man with the geniality of an innkeeper and the manners of a bear. He assumed a proprietary air toward every young and pretty woman present, though it was whispered by those who should know that he had never strayed an inch away from the path of domestic fidelity, for he adored his wife.

Her name was Clara, and she sat at the other end of the table beaming with hospitality. She was as big and florid as the archduke, with triple chins that gave her the appearance of a frog. She was exceedingly ugly, but her mind was subtle and quick, and beneath, there was genuine kindness. She was a romantic and sentimental woman, and at the same time witty and shrewd.

She had taken a fancy to Edith and had seated her at

her own end of the table. The archduke objected loudly, and Clara shouted back, "Do you think I would willingly place so pretty a young person within five seats of you?" Then she turned to Edith and said, "He does no real harm, only he is at that horrid age in a man that makes him unable to resist the impulse to try."

"That is libelous!" her husband protested. "I still do a lot of harm. However, my eyes are excellent, and I have already sent wicked messages to our little friend. Do you know," he went on to the table at large, "the harm that can be done by looks? I shall tell you of one particular case . . ."

Stories of telepathy and thought transference followed, and Edith was growing tired of them when the last one was interrupted by the opening of a casement window at the far end of the hall. A tall young man stepped through and advanced quickly to the table. He bowed to his hostess and expressed a hope that he was not too late to join them at luncheon.

"You, Kurt," the archduke roared, "I expected to have to pick up your pieces! Thank God, you have saved me the annoyance. I hear you climbed the Maidenbrow this morning. One of my stewards saw you leave. You are an utter fool, but I like you. Come, sit here." He swept a place clean beside him.

"No such thing, Kurt," Clara called out. "I have saved a seat for you beside me. You must eat after so much exercise."

A butler was holding out a chair, and Kurt bowed again and sat down. Edith thought she had never seen anyone so handsome; his features were so evenly cut they might have been chiseled out of marble—or ice. His smooth hair was blonder than hers; his eyes were blue, and his cheeks glowed with health. He wore a blue shirt with a soft collar under a rough brown jacket. His hands were strong, yet sensitive.

He turned to speak to his hostess, and in turning, his gaze rested for a moment on Edith.

Clara said, "Kurt, I have not yet presented you to our charming American guest, the Princess Bonnat. You were asleep when she arrived last night. Edith, this is the Baron Kurt von Braunwitz—a charming young man, but rather a fool, as you may have already surmised. He is always doing heroic things. It is a pity you were too young for the last war, Kurt. You do not mind, Edith, that I mention that mistaken and horrible war? All that is bygones, isn't it? Today we are friends and will always remain so . . . Sophie, did you bring your music to sing for us tonight?" She addressed her conversation to others, and Edith was relieved.

She noticed that the young man had not looked at her again and had not spoken. He ate sparingly and drank only water. She noticed too what she had not seen at first—a scar that ran along one cheek, but did not disfigure him. He was really more German than Austrian in appearance, which, she learned afterwards, was not strange since his mother was German. His cheekbones were perhaps too prominent and high, and there was a sullen turn to his mouth that made her wonder if he were cruel or merely unhappy.

She was surprised at her own interest. Since her divorce from Robert, although she had met attractive men, she had been indifferent to them. Now for the first time in nearly a year she was aware of an attraction that must surely be physical, since she and the baron had barely exchanged a few polite words.

Later that afternoon Edith walked in the garden and met Kurt again. He was holding a flower, and when she admired it, he gave her the Austrian and Latin names for it.

"Did you pick any edelweiss this morning?" she asked.

"No," he said. "Though I have often seen it growing, I have never picked it. It is a love token," he added, smiling. "Are you fond of flowers, madam?"

"Oh, yes," she said. "My mother had a garden at Rockhampton and she was always fussing with it. She was president of the Garden Club. My sister and I used to help her write papers. But it was always about the common garden variety—you know, roses and dahlias and peonies."

"Tell me about America," he said, strolling along beside her. "It is a country I know very little about, though I spent a year at school in England. I did not know they had princesses in America."

She was embarrassed. "I married a Frenchman," she said. "But we were divorced last year."

"I beg your pardon," he said stiffly; "I did not mean to ask so much." He added, "And now, if you will excuse me, madam, I have some letters to write before dinner."

He left her, and she sat down on a bench and thought: Well, that is over before it started. I don't think he approves of divorced women. But the happiness with which the day had begun suddenly left her, and she wished she were back in Bandol. She decided that she liked the French people better than any others except Americans. The Germans and Austrians, she decided, were too much like water taps that were marked "Hot" or "Cold," and when you turned them

on, they either scalded you with profuseness or chilled you with ice. Besides, they were too self-satisfied. So were the French, for that matter, but at least they had the good manners not to flaunt it at you. And another thing, the French took their virtues lightly, and if you were young and pretty, they didn't treat you as if you were ready to be laid on the shelf because you had been married!

She went into the house and dressed carefully for dinner. Clara had seated Kurt next to her at table, and they talked politely. When dinner was over, she expected him to leave her. Instead, he moved away from the table with her, brought her coffee and talked to her as though to keep her attention from the center of the room, where the archduke was entertaining his guests with ribald stories.

Edith was wearing a green wool evening dress with a long-sleeved purple jacket. Her short fair hair was brushed back over her ears and fell into a soft cluster of curls at her neck. She wore for jewelry only the square-cut blue diamond that had been Oliver's engagement ring. The other women glittered like Christmas trees, and she looked like a young sapling, straight and slim and tall.

Kurt, in formal evening dress, stood beside her at the casement window, holding the heavy curtains aside so that they could look out at the mountains. There were fires blazing in the big fireplaces, and in a corner of the room, a woman was singing in German to a loud accompaniment.

"I watched you climb this morning," Edith said.

He seemed surprised. "That was a very early hour for you, wasn't it?" he asked.

"I wondered why you did it," she said.

He thought for a moment; then he said, "A mountain peak is a challenge. It is something to conquer. I had long ago promised that one to myself." He went on, "A man, you see, is always trying to conquer something—first himself; then nature; then—others. It has always been so."

"Don't you ever do anything just for pleasure? You could have climbed the Maidenbrow because you liked climbing," she said, smiling.

He stared at her and said seriously, "There is no time to do things just for pleasure."

The singer finished an aria from "Carmen," and there was a patter of applause.

"If I get you a wrap," Kurt said to Edith, "would you like to step outdoors for a few minutes? There is less noise."

They were outside for only a little while. It was cold but incredibly beautiful. They walked around the garden, and for a brief moment Edith experienced again the ecstasy she had felt on the balcony at dawn.

"It will be hard to keep," Kurt said. Edith was startled. "This sense of beauty and of peace," he explained. "It could be always like this if men had not made themselves so dirty and vile. If they had not come swarming into cities, spreading corruption, looking down always at their feet, at the yellow trail they leave behind them."

"You sound bitter," Edith said, "yet life seems to have been good to you."

"Must one think always of oneself?" he asked her angrily. "I am thinking of the world."

"It seems a pretty good world to me," Edith answered.

"That is because you know nothing," he said. "You are an American. You have not even begun to learn what we are born knowing." He added, because she had drawn away from him, "Your mother's milk was sweet; ours was curdled."

"I think I'll go inside now," Edith said.

He put out his hand. "Please, please forgive me. I had not meant to talk to you this way. I don't know what came over me. I meant only to tell you"—she saw a smile on his lips for the first time—"how beautiful you are."

"That is much better," she said. "Good night." She made her excuses to Clara and went up to her room.

Obviously, she decided, the archduke had not been joking. Kurt was a little touched, a little crazy. But as she undressed she wished she had stayed out in the garden longer with him.

She sat facing herself in the dressing-table mirror. I am going to fall in love with him, she thought, and it was frightening, because she was almost sure he had never been in love with a woman, and never would be.

The night on the Beringsholm, as it lay against the pier guarded by soldiers and members of the FBI, was fantastically like a night out of Dante—disappointment and uncertainty raised to the *n*th degree. The weather was warm, yet steam was on inside the ship. The portholes of the staterooms were fastened, and Edith, unable to sleep and stifling from the heat, rang for her steward and asked that hers be opened.

He told her that orders were to keep them shut. He offered

to try to find an electric fan for her, but came back announcing his failure to find one. "I've brought you some ice water and a bowl of extra ice and a plate of sandwiches," he said. "Sometimes if you eat, you can sleep better."

Edith thanked him. Then she asked what all the passengers were asking their stewards, "How much longer do you suppose it will be before we're permitted to go ashore?"

"Wish I knew myself, Mrs. Kenyon," he said. "But they're not giving away answers. You needn't worry, though. You're an American, aren't you?"

"Yes," Edith said.

"Me too," the steward said. "And you know, the funny part of it is, I don't mind being kept here tonight. There's been too much funny business going on. I'm glad we're getting smart enough to use a sieve before we let foreigners in. We're up against a lot of double-crossing sons of—excuse me, Mrs. Kenyon. Is there anything else I can get you?"

"No, thanks," she said. Through the open doorway came the sound of a baby wailing.

"You ought to be glad you haven't any children with you," the steward said. "There's four and six in pretty nearly every stateroom but this one. Ring if you want anything."

He went away, after shutting the door. It was cooler with the door open, but the sounds in the corridor were unbearable. Edith tried reading. She put some ice in a towel and wound it around her head. She felt feverish and longed desperately for morning. The morning might bring some questioning, although she couldn't see what else they would want to ask her. She had no information to give them about Kurt, if that was what they wanted. It was more than a year since she had heard from him. More than a year that she had struggled with the shameful longing to see him again, to be held in his arms, to feel the coolness of his lips. "Never, never, never again," she had repeated to herself until she had almost believed it.

She asked herself why the FBI seemed so anxious to locate Kurt. They had known that her income came from the Rumanian oilfields, and that it was frozen, and they had not cared. They had not seemed particularly interested in her marriage to Prince Bonnat, who was now helping the Nazis tighten their stranglehold on his own beloved France. They had taken her word for it that she knew nothing about Robert. But they had obviously been dissatisfied with her answers about Kurt. It was for this that they were keeping her on the ship—in order to make her give his present whereabouts. They had not believed she would tell them if she knew. Well, would she?

She sat on her berth and asked herself the question.

Kurt was an Austrian, not a German. But Austria was part of the Reich now, and America was at war. Therefore, Kurt was an enemy alien. If he was in America—and in her heart she knew he was—then he should have registered as an enemy alien, and his whereabouts would be known.

She took the towel from her head impatiently. The ice had melted. She stood up. A dozen incidents came back to her; a dozen times since 1933, when she should have known what was in Kurt's heart. But she did not know. She hadn't really asked herself, not deeply. After all, she had been too confused by her own emotions, which had nothing to do with world politics. Of course she had belonged to a set that criticized, but it criticized almost everything. She hadn't thought deeply about any of it—not until recently. She had thought only of Kurt, and had been blinded and deafened to the world about her by her love for the clean, beautiful, aloof husband who was her first and only real love.

Even now, after all that had happened, she could not believe that the man who had shared her villa in Bandol, her third husband, but really her first—who had talked of little intimate things sometimes, who had nursed her through a long illness and whose shirts she had helped select—could have been plotting things that seemed doubly monstrous to her now; could have remained loyal to a country driven by a fiend responsible for more bloodshed and misery than Genghis Khan. She remembered the starving people of France that she had seen, and the tales of those she had not seen. Kurt could not defend such crimes, not for any idealism. Not unless . . .

She had to have air. The narrow walls of the cabin were closing in on her. She pulled a dress over her head, and still in her bedroom mules and bare legs, she stumbled out of the room along the dim corridor. At last she found a door to the deck and pushed it open. She climbed some stairs to the top deck, where there was open sky and clearer air. But a man in uniform stopped her at the head of the stairs. He looked like a soldier. "Sorry, lady," he said. "No passengers allowed up here."

"Please," she said, "just for a breath of air. I'll sit here on the stairs just long enough to smoke a cigarette. I'm Mrs. Kenyon. I know you have to obey orders, but I promise not to budge from here. It's terribly hot down below."

"I'll bet it's hot down there," he agreed. "It's pretty tough on all of you, isn't it? Sure you won't leave that step, now? There's a little breeze. Comes from Jersey, I think. I'll do a turn around the deck. Go ahead, cool off and smoke your cigarette. Got a light?"

"Yes, thanks," she said. He was sweet, but she was glad when he moved on. There was something she had to think out carefully—something to do with Kurt—and her head ached.

She had remained several months in Vienna, and during that time she saw the Baron Kurt von Braunwitz perhaps half a dozen times. She met him at the houses of mutual acquaintances; once he took her to a theater, once to a concert, and once they dined and drove around Vienna while he pointed out places of interest. He sent a book and a box of chocolates from Sacher's to the train when she left for France.

She returned to Bandol in the early spring. The warmth of the south country and the people made her happy for a while. She began making friends in the neighborhood: a French artist and his wife; a married couple who had lived many years in the French colonies; a naval officer who was stationed at Toulon and his social wife who held what she called a "Thursday salon," to which she invited everyone of any interest in the vicinity. They were intelligent people with modern ideas, congenial and friendly and intensely hospitable. They were generous and helpful. They were not like the French Edith had known when she was married to Robert. They were more like the Americans she and her sister Rose had lived among in America—laughter-loving, amusing, kind and not intellectual. They all had a talent for living well on little money.

She learned to play *plafond,* their contract bridge, for a few centimes a point. She learned how to buy wines of the country. Above all, she learned from them how to make real friends.

And then, in 1932, refugees began to infiltrate the neighborhood—those Germans with famous names who left their own country because it had become, or threatened to become, intolerable for them and their ideas. They left, many of them, as a protest.

At first their arrival caused a flutter of excitement in Bandol and Sanary, the next village. Edith and her friends were interested and somewhat thrilled. The men who arrived had written famous books. The wife of the naval Commandant decided she must give a reception for them, and she searched for someone who could speak German. Edith knew a little, not much, but she was happy to attend the reception. Even if they had not been famous people, she would have wanted to meet them and try to make them comfortable in Bandol. The villagers were proud to receive the illustrious arrivals who had chosen their little port out of all France for freedom in which to think and write.

Edith gave a tea for them in her garden and exchanged recipes for making jelly with the wife of the most illustrious of them all. It was on this afternoon that she was called into the house to answer a telephone call—which was from Kurt.

He had engaged a room at the Grand Hôtel, between Bandol and Sanary, on the shore road. He asked if he might call.

"Oh, yes, please come right over," Edith said, trying to sound calm, though her heart missed a beat with the excitement of knowing he was near. "I'm entertaining a few people at tea. Germans—refugees. You must know them." She mentioned a few names proudly.

There was silence at the other end of the wire.

"I am trying to talk German to them, Kurt. They must be having an awful time. Please hurry."

At last he said, "May I come later—after they are gone? I would like to see you, not a lot of—of people."

Disappointed, but still overjoyed, she asked him to dinner. And then she was impatient for her illustrious guests to be gone. She had to use all her will power not to speed them on their way. But at last they left, and she thought they were as relieved as she was that the party was over.

She went into the kitchen and gave a few orders to Madeleine, and then she flew upstairs to her room. She tried fixing her hair in several different ways; she put on one dress, tore it off and tried another. She was as excited and nervous as a young girl with her first male caller.

The cook and her husband were excited too, and happy. They had been looking forward to the time when Madame would entertain a "gentleman," and now it had come.

Dinner was to be at eight, and at seven-thirty Edith, dressed in a flowered chiffon, started to descend the stairs when she noticed a commotion in the guestroom. She went back and found Emil singing *"Le Général Cadorna, il mange le bif-tek-a"* as he started to put clean sheets on the bed.

Edith said, "Emil, I didn't tell you I was having an overnight guest. I said a guest for dinner."

He stared at her. "Oh," he said, "it was my wife, that *vache,* who told me—she misunderstood. However, it does no harm to make a bed ready." He grinned, and Edith turned away. His song went on, *"Zoom, zoom, zoom, polenta macaroni."*

Kurt arrived a few minutes before eight. Tall, handsome, as she remembered him, only there was something different—a strained look. Something of the look the celebrated refugees had had; something that seemed to be a concern not for what was going on at the moment, but beyond it. She told herself that he, like those others, had suffered a shock, and she felt sorry for him.

Because of this, she didn't ask him how he happened to appear so suddenly in the south of France or how long he planned to stay. She put out both hands and said, "How lovely to see you again, Kurt." And then she did everything she could to make him feel comfortable and welcome.

(She had almost never asked Kurt questions. From the moment of seeing him in her house in Bandol, on through the years they were together, she kept from asking questions, perhaps from fear of annoying him, perhaps from fear of the answers.)

His stay in Bandol this time was a short one, but he dined with her each night at the villa. He seemed not to wish to meet any of her neighbors and friends. And so, for the few days, they were alone as they hadn't been in Vienna.

SHE and Madeleine went to great pains about those dinners, but they might have spared themselves the trouble. It was evident that Kurt was no gourmet. He ate neatly, sparingly and quickly, as though it were something done for the need of one's body. He drank only a little white wine and that because he expressed a fear that the water was not pure.

The servants were disappointed, but resigned. They were happy because at last Madame showed some interest in a man, and if he was one who evidently had no taste or sensibilities, *tant pis*—still, he was a man.

It was Kurt who asked questions of her. "You have a family across the ocean?" he asked, the first night he came to dinner.

"I have a married sister and an aunt and a few assorted cousins," she said.

"But you prefer it here in Europe. I can understand."

"Oh, but it's not like that," she said quickly. "I am here because I came with Oliver, and I just stayed on and on. My own country is as beautiful as this, and I am very fond of what family I have left."

Kurt seemed puzzled. They were having coffee on the terrace overlooking the sea, and she had just poured his third cup.

"They do not approve of you, perhaps," he decided.

Edith laughed. "They never approve or disapprove of me," she said. "I belong to them. Ergo, I can do no wrong. But they would like to see me, I guess, as I would like to see them. I shall be going home soon, for a visit."

"Very soon?" he asked, with dismay.

"No," she said happily, "not very soon."

He left at eleven o'clock.

And then he was gone from Bandol almost as suddenly as he had come. During the months that followed she received post cards from Vienna, from Linz, from Berlin, and then from Vienna again. She told herself it was wishful thinking to imagine he had come all the way to Bandol just to be with her for a few days, yet she was puzzled by the short visit and by the fact that he had returned at once to Austria.

She was fairly happy that summer. In the fall she went to Paris to order clothes. She wrote Kurt she was going and that she would stop at the Hôtel Meurice. When she arrived she found her suite filled with flowers ordered by Kurt, and a wire saying he expected to be in Paris shortly.

She spent a week shopping. She saw a few old friends, avoiding Suzanne de Manville and her group. Each time she returned to her hotel she expected to find a message from Kurt. But it was not until the third week, just as she had decided to go back to Bandol, that a telephone call came from him. He asked her to dine with him that night.

She stayed in Paris two weeks longer, and she saw Kurt every day and evening. And then one afternoon he appeared in her hotel suite, looking pale. He was wearing a cutaway and striped trousers, and there was a flower in his buttonhole.

She ordered tea and tried to be entertaining, because he looked as though he needed cheering up. He listened gravely to her funniest anecdote, and then he broke into it as if he had not been listening at all.

He began by giving a genealogical account of the von Braunwitz family, up to and including the present members, which consisted only of himself and a sister who was living in Italy. His father had been a general in the last war and was killed in battle. The family fortune was still considerable, he told her gravely. He had received a good education. He had gone to Heidelberg and had spent a year at Oxford. He had inherited a large estate at Linz, which he had leased to

BOOK 4 THE COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

a rich Viennese family. But the affairs of his estate gave him his main occupation. Had his father lived, he would probably have become an officer in the army, although he did not feel he was suited to a military career.

"My grandmother," he went on, in the astonishing monologue, "was a lady in waiting to the Empress Elizabeth, and my father was a favorite of the Emperor Franz Joseph. We have always been distinguished as a family by our loyalty and our patriotism," Kurt said, and Edith, touched by his earnestness, wondered why he had chosen this afternoon to tell her these things. "Edith"—he put down his cup and rose—"I am very much in love with you." His face reddened, and he looked like a schoolboy confessing something with heroic effort. "I am madly, terribly in love. Will you marry me?"

Edith said quietly, "Sit down beside me, Kurt. Please." When he was beside her on the sofa she took one of his hands and held it against her cheek. "I've been in love with you for a long time," she said. "Ever since I was a little girl and read Hans Christian Andersen."

The breeze, as the soldier had said, came from New Jersey. It was heavy with smells she remembered were supposed to come from glue factories. The night was dark; the usual city lights dimmed. The glow of Edith's cigarette seemed as large as a flashlight.

Below in the ship, hundreds of passengers were moving about, tossing on their berths or walking in the corridors. Tomorrow they might be permitted to land. Tomorrow, tomorrow . . .

But tonight, Edith felt she must go back over the past and put it in order. There were facts that had to be sorted, a time sequence established—perhaps conclusions drawn from them. She must be prepared for the next interview. She must sound intelligent and convincing. She had to force herself to remove the gauze her emotions had laid over the wounds of the past and to probe for something that would give clues to the truth.

In November of 1933 she had married Kurt, in Vienna. The home she had created out of her loneliness now became the setting for the first real happiness she had known in her adult life. Kurt as lover and husband was perfect. She loved, admired and respected him, and he was good for her. She was proud of him and of herself, because in some subtle way he persuaded her to think of herself as a superior human being, able to do almost anything and to do it well.

If Kurt sometimes carried this attitude of superiority too far, Edith did not let it disturb her. If occasionally Kurt went to market with her in the sunny square, and pausing to examine a melon, treated the woman who cried her fruit merely as a seller of melons instead of a gossipy friend (as Edith did), the old woman seemed just as pleased and charged no more for the fruit. It was simply, Edith learned, that people Kurt considered beneath him were not personalities to him, as they were to her.

The friends she had made in Bandol—the Toulon officer and his wife, and the retired Colonial who had lived in Morocco—he seemed to like. He enjoyed their bridge games, even their conversation. But the intellectuals from Germany he refused to meet. "They would bore me," he explained to Edith. "These professors—I could not stand them when I had to. They obstruct the sun in the south here with their clouds of gloom."

"They have reason enough for their gloom," Edith protested.

"PERHAPS it is because of it they are here." Kurt said sharply, and Edith changed the subject. There was no reason to make it an issue between them. She herself had found the intellectuals a bit oppressive. Besides, she was now too busy with domestic details to spend any time thinking in generalities. She wanted her home to run smoothly for Kurt; she wanted to see him happy and contented. If Kurt seemed to take this for granted, it was because he, for his part, was considerate of her welfare and comfort.

The population of Bandol was increasing rapidly, and it was losing a little of its quaint charm. All the houses along the way to the village and on the isthmus where Edith's villa was located had been leased. And where she used to bathe in solitude, there were now little groups bobbing up and down in the blue water.

In June of that year Hitler began to proscribe all political parties in Germany except the National Socialist German Labor Party—the Nazis. And at the same time he commenced his campaign to eliminate all "non-Aryans" from government positions, from industry and from the professions. Some of the unwanted went to Zurich, Switzerland, but the majority came to the south of France, perhaps because living

was comparatively cheap there and their means of livelihood had been curtailed. Those who now came were the little people, the white-collared class of the ejected. There were a few professional men and their families; but mostly they were clerks who had held civil-service jobs or worked in publishing houses that had been shut down. They could not disguise their personal griefs as easily as the great men could.

Whenever she saw them, Edith felt intensely sorry for them and almost ashamed of her own happiness and sense of security. But as for Kurt, the sight of them made him angry.

"Why can't they spread themselves out?" he said. "Why must they all cling together, to make a chorus of their complaints? With a whole wide world to wander in, why must they choose this particular spot to sun their unlovely bodies?"

It was an early morning, and as usual, Edith and Kurt had put on their swimming suits and sandals and walked down to the water for a sun and a sea bath. They had become used to having the beach all to themselves, and for Edith, it had been a daily joy to see Kurt, his handsome body burned a golden-brown, wearing brief trunks, stretch himself on the sand beside her for an hour or so before he plunged into the water and swam out with strong measured strokes. The young men of ancient Greece, she had thought, were no more beautiful than Kurt.

But this morning they had to pick their way among little groups under umbrellas. They had to go far up the beach to a place where there were sharp rocks under foot instead of sand.

Edith accepted the change stoically. "After all, I don't own this beach," she said. "And it isn't their fault they are so far from home."

Kurt faced her in anger, opened his lips and then stopped whatever words had been coming to the surface. He left her abruptly and plunged into the water.

Edith spread his bathrobe and hers on the rocks. She watched him swimming for a while, and then she lay down staring up into the sky. Perhaps, she thought, it's time for us to take a trip somewhere. To Austria, maybe, or to Germany. She had no desire to travel any more. She wished she could spend the rest of her life in Bandol, with her husband and her contentment.

"Verweile doch, du bist so schön," she had learned from Kurt in one of her first German lessons.

But it was Kurt who had to leave. He received a letter in July which upset him. He didn't show it to her or discuss it with her. He asked her only if she would care very much if he left her for a few weeks. He was gone a month. She had two letters from him—one from Berlin and one from Linz.

He seemed extremely nervous when he returned. He was glad to be back; his love for her seemed deeper than before, and fiercer. He would hold her close all night long, and when he fell asleep, she knew he had troubled dreams.

Once when she suggested that if anything worried him she would like to share it, he said, "It is nothing you can help about, *Liebling*. It isn't for myself I am troubled, but for my country. Austria has been growing softer and more decadent; there are changes going on that point to disaster. I see it, and I am suffering because of that. We have had no true leader since our Emperor's death—nothing but soft weaklings or half-baked liberals who see no further than their noses. My country needs a strong hand to lead it, but like spoiled children, it will bite that hand, or try to, when it comes."

And at the time she had been merely relieved that his troubles were no more personal than that!

In September, when the grapes were being gathered, Edith discovered she was going to have a child. Kurt's joy was as great as her own. He was more considerate than ever before, more tender, and in a queer way, almost worshipful.

Events of stupendous importance were shaping in the world, but Edith was unaware of them. She lived in an aura of expectancy and happiness. There was nothing she could have done for Kurt more wonderful than this. Her child would carry on Kurt's name and be part of that long family line of which he was so proud. Like her sister Rose, Edith was doing a normal, right thing at last. She would be continuing a family line, as her mother and grandmother had done. She had never felt so well, or so important.

In January Kurt, who had been with her constantly, announced that he would have to make a visit to Austria. He had been writing and receiving many letters which Edith supposed had to do with his estates in Linz.

"Kurt," Edith said, "wouldn't you like the baby to be born in Linz? I'll go with you and stay in Austria until he comes."

She had expected Kurt to be pleased, but the suggestion appeared to disturb him.

"No," he said emphatically, "you must remain here. You have the servants to take care of you; a good doctor near by. It is best for you here in this quiet little corner of the world. I shall not be gone long, I think."

"But at Linz," she insisted, "I would have good doctors too. And maybe we could find your old nurse. She could look after our baby. Wouldn't you like that, Kurt?"

For the first time his voice was raised in anger against her. "I have said no." And that settled it.

After he had left, she realized he had not seemed normal, and she wondered if he had been feverish. His face had been flushed and had felt hot when he kissed her good-by.

Several weeks passed before she had a letter from him, postmarked Berlin, saying he might be away longer than he had thought. She tried to keep herself occupied. She took gentle exercises and went regularly to the doctor in Bandol. She began to sew, although she had already ordered a complete layette for the baby. Early in February she received a long letter from Kurt in Linz. He sounded almost jubilant, and if she had not known better, she would have thought him drunk when he wrote it. He promised to be with her soon; he implored her to keep well and happy. He closed with devotion and love. But he gave no real news at all: nothing about what he was doing or what kept him away so long.

On February fifteenth she heard over the radio from Basle about an abortive Social Democrat uprising in Vienna, Linz and other places in Austria, that had cost a hundred lives and wounded more than three hundred. The uprising had been successfully put down, but it had left great bitterness among the Austrians and had marked a division of public feeling.

She could not sleep that night. She realized that Kurt had known there was to be trouble in Austria. She wondered how he had known it. She believed he was there to protect his estates. He had not wanted to bother her with his private worries. And if he knew there was to be trouble, naturally, he would want to keep her away from it.

She tried reading, but put the book aside. It was queer that for all their love and physical closeness she and Kurt had never indulged in any of the usual intimacies between married people. For example, in the matter of finances, there had been almost a tacit understanding. Kurt paid the running expenses of their establishment now, and Edith spent her own income as she pleased—on herself and on the house. Kurt had never shown much interest in her money; the bank in Paris continued to handle her financial affairs. As for him, she imagined it took most of his own income to keep up his property in Austria. She suspected he had difficulties at times, perhaps with his tenants, and it was for this reason she imagined the trips to Linz were necessary.

She and Kurt had never quarreled. They were always polite to each other. She realized she didn't know Kurt as she had known her sister Rose. And yet she loved him more than anyone in the world, and she was convinced he loved her as passionately and deeply. The child that moved now inside her was a symbol of their physical closeness—and yet, in spite of this, they were in some respects almost strangers still. She determined to find some way to break down the wall between them. She wanted their love to be a complete thing.

She had a sudden terrible longing for Kurt—a need to have him beside her, to assure her by his presence that the oneness, the completeness existed, and that tonight she was merely being morbid. When she was with him, she had none of these foolish thoughts.

And then she heard the sounds of a car entering the courtyard of the villa. It was late—nearly three in the morning. She got out of bed and looked down from her window. She could see the red taillights of a car entering the garage.

"Kurt!" she said aloud. Overjoyed, she put on a bathrobe and slid her feet into the high-heeled mules beneath her bed. She was still struggling with an arm of the robe as she reached the head of the stairs. All was dark below and on the landing. In her impatience, she didn't wait to find the light switch. She started to run down the steps, and her heel caught on the matting. The slipper flew off, and Edith lost her balance and felt herself going down and down into oblivion.

Her first thought, later, in the Toulon hospital when slowly and painfully consciousness came back, was the horror that night had been for Kurt. He had traveled from Austria without stopping except for gas and meals. He must have been exhausted when he reached the house in Bandol, exhausted and looking forward to a hot bath and a long sleep.

Instead, he had been confronted by his wife's unconscious form at the bottom of the stairs. He had had to summon the doctor from the village and stand by while the doctor got her ready for the trip to Toulon. He was there when they brought her from the operating room. She saw him standing beside the nurse, Sister Sainte Amélie, when she opened her eyes.

"Kurt," she whispered, "I'm so terribly sorry."

He bent over her and said, "Don't. Nothing matters except that you are all right." And he sat beside her bed all that long afternoon, while the nun folded bandages. After he left,

she cried, not for herself, or even for the baby who wouldn't be born, but for Kurt and his disappointment.

He was kindness itself during the slow convalescence. He looked as if he too had gone through a siege of illness. His face was thin and drawn; there were circles under his eyes. She tried to prove to him that she was ready to take up life again as a normal human being, and she forced herself to act cheerful. She hoped that now he had come back to stay with her for always.

But when spring came, and she was really well again and able to work in the garden—Kurt went away.

She heard from him occasionally, but he gave no information nor any suggestion when he might return. She followed news of Austria and Germany in the newspapers and over the radio. One June thirtieth she read of the plot by Nazi leaders and Storm Troopers to overthrow the regime of Chancellor Adolf Hitler; and of the executions and suicides that followed, including the shooting of General von Schleicher and his wife. Kurt's last letter had come from Berlin, and Edith wished he would write her and assure her that he was all right. She made no connection between Kurt's presence in Germany and the events she read about. She did remember once that Kurt had mentioned von Schleicher's name, but she couldn't remember in what connection.

In France, there was much talk of the Gestapo and secret agents, and because she was married to an Austrian, the refugees no longer invited Edith to their dull tea parties and picnics. She saw only the artist and his wife, and the retired Colonial. The naval officer's wife had taken an apartment nearer Toulon.

Edith didn't care that they left her alone. Kurt was on her mind too much for her to make the effort to entertain others. She tried growing new flowers and shrubs. She had a cat now, a Siamese that Kurt had given her when she returned from the hospital—a handsome strange animal with eyes a little like Kurt's, only a paler blue. The cat had a weird almost human cry that amused her, and in addition, he was beautiful to look at, and his attachment to her was flattering. He followed her through the house, and when she was sad, he became playful and made her laugh.

She tried to keep busy, tried desperately not to worry or to feel she was losing Kurt—losing him to something mysterious that she couldn't even name. Every day she expected to hear that he was returning.

On a sultry Saturday in July she heard the shocking news over the radio that Chancellor Dollfuss of Austria had been shot in the Chancellery by Nazi-directed Austrian rebels. They had entered the building and murdered the little chancellor in his private cabinet. Two bullets from a traitor's gun found their way to his heart. As he lay dying, he was ordered to sign a statement that Dr. Anton Rintelen, Austrian pro-Nazi, should succeed him. Dollfuss refused to sign and was permitted to die without a doctor or a priest.

All that day there were contradictory reports over the radio, but before midnight it was announced authentically that the carefully prepared plans of the pro-Nazis had miscarried. The Chancellery was quickly surrounded by strong police squads who broke into the building and killed one of the conspirators and arrested thirteen others. One escaped.

The Viennese populace, who had been expected to rise against their government and go over to the Nazis, refused to do so. Dr. Rintelen was made prisoner, and Dr. Kurt Schuschnigg was instructed to form a new Cabinet. But the good little man Dollfuss was dead—and there were traitors in the country.

Edith remained by her radio all day and evening. Then, after midnight, she put through a telephone call to Kurt first at Linz, then at Vienna, to the addresses he had given her. Both calls were unanswered, though she kept the operators busy until seven in the morning trying to locate him.

A week later he arrived in Bandol.

She was on the terrace arranging flowers in bowls for the house. There was a long trestle table at which she worked. She was holding a long-stemmed rose in her hand when the car entered the courtyard and stopped with a careless grinding of brakes.

She remained where she was, the table between them as he came up to the terrace. A thorn had entered the flesh of her thumb, and she was staring at it when he reached her. He leaned over the table and kissed her cheek, but she didn't move. She heard, rather than saw him walk to one of the low wicker chairs and throw himself down in it.

"You are not overjoyed to see me," he said stiffly, and she knew he had planned to wait for her to say the first word.

"You haven't thought much about me, Kurt," she said slowly, "or you would have written. You have been gone nearly two months, and I have had two letters."

"I have been busy," he said. "I had no time to write. Nothing to say."

She placed the rose in a crystal vase. She could hardly trust her voice, but when she spoke it was as cold as his.

"I should have been interested in anything you chose to say

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—even about the weather in Linz—if only you had written." She took a handkerchief from the pocket of her apron and applied it to her thumb where the thorn had entered. She raised her head and looked at him. "Didn't you imagine I would be concerned when the news of Dollfuss' assassination came over the radio? Didn't you think I would worry about you, there in Vienna where things were happening so fast? You were there, weren't you?"

He looked at her, and again she was struck by the resemblance between his eyes and those of the Siamese cat, except that Kurt's eyes were even more opaque now—more like ice on distant mountains. "I was in Vienna when it happened," he said. "What of it?"

She came around the table and stood in front of him. She said, "I tried to reach you by telephone that night. Why couldn't you have telephoned me to reassure me, tell me that you were all right? I am your wife, Kurt."

"You are behaving stupidly," he said. "I hate scenes of this sort. If you don't mind, I'll go for a swim. I'm hot and tired from a long journey." He rose, stretched his arms above his head and let them fall again. It was a gesture that might have accompanied a yawn.

A BITTERNESS came into Edith's throat with the taste of gall. She said, "I suppose you will stay here for a few days or weeks until you are rested—then you will go away again?"

"Perhaps," he said. "As a matter of fact, my dear, I am going away very shortly. I have a diplomatic errand to perform for my country. I cannot tell you about it. I cannot even tell you how long I shall be away."

"Kurt!" The cry was from Edith's heart, not her mind this time. "Please take me with you."

He took her hands. "I can't take you. It is impossible."

She withdrew her hands. "Then," she said slowly, "you must tell me what you are doing, Kurt. Otherwise, what is there to our marriage? Either you trust me and share your worries with me, or I am nothing to you—a mistress, a convenience, not a wife, Kurt. I can't go through more months like the last. I'd almost rather we broke everything off." She knew she was becoming hysterical, but she couldn't stop.

Kurt placed his hand against her mouth. "Hush, Edith," he said sternly. "There is no time or need for this nonsense. One must save oneself for more important things these days. I am sorry I can't confide in you, but I will not listen to such talk from your lips. You will stay here where you are safe and comfortable—for the time being, at any rate. Later, if you like, we will discuss your grievances. But why can't you understand that I love you? You are beautiful. You do me honor. And I have not deceived you." He went into the house.

A few days later she helped him pack.

"Take good care of yourself," he said. "I am really concerned for your welfare and safety. Please believe that. I'm sorry if I make you unhappy, but it can't be helped."

She didn't answer.

He was gone. She had no idea where he was going or how long he would be away. She told herself over and over that he was fleeing from the Nazis and didn't want to involve her. It was the only explanation she could live by.

He didn't return, and she had no news—not during the years she waited in Bandol and watched France fall; not while she clung to the hope of his returning and kept the villa open for him. But at last she had had to accept Rose's help to get back to America. Her income was frozen; there was no way to feed Emil and Madeleine and herself, or even the cat. There was nothing to do but go home.

The arc lights on the new highway over West Street went out one by one, and a gray light came into the sky. Edith stood up stiffly.

How can I tell all this to the official tomorrow, when he questions me again? she thought wearily. He will only take a fact here and there and shuffle them like a fortuneteller with a pack of cards, making them read what he wants.

The soldier came past and stopped. "Guess you ought to be cooled off by now. Why don't you try to sleep?"

"I will, thank you," she said. Perhaps they would not question her any more, but would let her go. She wanted to be with people who knew her and loved her. It was so awful to feel forlorn and abandoned this way, as if she had lost her own identity.

As she went slowly down the stairs to the lower deck a thought came to her. What if they didn't believe her story? What then would they believe? And what would they do to her if they thought she lied?

"They can't deport me," she said to reassure herself, "because after all, I'm home." But she was far from reassured.

Edith lifted her handbag, a book and magazine from the

seat beside her to make room for the stout woman who had got on the Long Island train just before it pulled out of New York. The rack over the seat was filled with her own baggage, and the woman shoved a suitcase along the floor between their seat and the forward one.

"Hope this suitcase doesn't make you too uncomfortable," she said, "but what else can I do with it? The trains never used to be so crowded. Now, it's worth your life to get a seat at all, what with the soldiers and people going back and forth to factory jobs. People like us ought to stay at home."

She smiled in a friendly way, and Edith smiled politely and opened a magazine.

"The buses are worse," the voice went on, and Edith looked up. Her neighbor was a middle-aged matron, dowdily dressed, with a flushed face and streaked brown hair. "I've just been visiting my daughter-in-law upstate, and I traveled to New York on one of those big buses. My son's in the Army. He was at Corregidor. We haven't heard from him since it fell, so I thought I'd cheer up his wife with a visit. She's got a job during the day, but the nights are lonely. I'll be glad to get back to my own house. You know how it is, visiting even your son's wife, you never feel as comfortable as with your own things. Besides, there's my husband . . ."

She was kind and sociable. Edith, who felt a rising irritation, told herself she was a snob not to reciprocate with at least a show of friendliness.

"I hope you hear from your son soon," she murmured.

The woman sighed. "Tell you the truth," she said in a confidential tone, "we don't expect much more than to hear he's a prisoner of the Japs. And that isn't much to hope for, is it? . . . I see you're going to Rockhampton. That's a pretty place."

Edith waited a moment and then picked up her magazine again. She didn't feel like talking, especially to a stranger. She'd forgotten the ease with which travelers talked in America. She realized sharply how long she had been living among people who distrusted one another on sight—people who now had cause enough to be afraid of one another.

The train was going through a flat countryside that should have a few remembered landmarks. Edith looked up from her magazine and watched for them. It was hard to realize she was safely off the Beringsholm at last. Early this morning the purser had told her that she could leave the ship. There had been no more questioning, but she had been detained for nearly a week—a week she wanted to forget forever.

She had telephoned her sister from the pier and had taken the first train she could get. She wanted to get to Rose as quickly as possible; to feel herself safe in harbor for a little while, at least.

She smoothed her skirt and wondered how long her suit would last. She had brought too few things with her. At the end, like everyone else, she had become panicky. There was so little money now to buy new clothes. She was not sure how her American investments were standing up, but she felt pessimistic about them. At any rate, she was not returning, like so many others, penniless. She was very fortunate—very. It was sheer ingratitude to feel depressed. A new life was beginning for her if she had the courage to realize it, instead of trailing the past after her.

If only she knew what to do about Kurt. Until she heard from him, how could she even cut off that thread completely? She could deal with her heart later.

"Are those your bags up there with the foreign labels on them?" The woman beside her was talking again.

"Yes, those are my bags," Edith said, trying to smile.

She felt the gray eyes focused on her for a moment, taking in her hat, her suit, her rings, even her shoes.

"Oh," the woman said. "Been around quite a lot, haven't you?" And after that she made no more conversation.

Edith looked out of the window again. But the terrain was strange, as though she had never passed that way before. And suddenly the heat of the train became almost unbearable.

"Nonsense!" she told herself sharply. "You either adapt yourself or you shuffle out. Things are going to be different. There is to be no more traveling on the Blue Train de luxe, with soft upholstery and clever washstands in private compartments. Privacy was a luxury then, and now it's impossible. One is lucky to be able to get a place at all. Luckier still," she added to herself, "to have some place to go to."

She settled down to endure the ride and see what she could from the train window.

At first there were only the rears of houses, with grayish wash hung up on lines, a few brave flowers, fire escapes used as porches. Sections around the railroads in most towns all over the world were dreary. And then the stations became prettier and fancier, with landscaped shrubbery, and at these, cars were waiting and station wagons and a few attractive people in summer clothes. And between stations were glimpses of neater houses and greenery and trees.

Pretty soon I'll see something familiar, she thought. But it was all strange, and she began to read again. She was engrossed in a story when a nudge aroused her.

"Next station is Rockhampton," the voice beside her said.

Edith said thanks and with the help of a soldier in the seat ahead managed to get her bags down from the rack. The train drew slowly to a stop.

The platform was filled with people, and in the sunny square behind them were all manner of vehicles—roadsters, sedans, station wagons, bicycles and a pony cart. Edith stood beside her bags and looked anxiously about her. Suppose after all these years she shouldn't recognize her sister and her niece or they her?

Then she heard a voice cry, "Edith!" and she saw a pink gingham dress, a round face with a blond aureole of hair and bright blue eyes; a plump little matron who still looked like a girl.

"Rose!" she cried. "Here I am, at last."

Rose came running and threw her arms around her sister and kissed her. "Oh, I'm so glad," she said. "I can't tell you how glad, Edith darling."

Then Edith looked for her little niece and saw a tall slender young girl of eighteen, Jo Ann. She had honey-colored hair to her shoulders; fine features, brown eyes and smooth tanned skin. She wore blue denim slacks with a narrow red belt and a white blouse. Her feet were bare in sandals. She looked smart, really beautiful and nice. Edith thought: I'm going to like her.

"Hello, Jo Ann," she said, putting out her hand. "I was looking for a child in a pinafore. You've grown up."

"One does, in fifteen years," Jo Ann said. "Let me carry those things to the car, Aunt Edith." She picked up the heaviest bags and led the way to a battered station wagon.

Rose began talking and kept it up while Jo Ann stowed Edith's luggage away in the back of the wagon, along with cartons of groceries, a case of beer, a new garden rake and a secondhand bicycle. Then they seated themselves in the front seat, Jo Ann at the wheel, Edith on the outside and Rose between. The sun was hot, but there was a light breeze with a trace of the sea in it, a breeze that evoked faint memories.

The village main street had changed completely. There was a modern drugstore on the corner, new beauty shops, dress shops, several serve-yourself stores. Rockhampton had become a little metropolis.

"Do you stay on here throughout the winter now?" Edith asked, swallowing a lump in her throat, because she had looked forward to this return to her home town, and the home town was no longer here or anywhere.

"I don't know whether we'll be able to this winter," Rose said, "because of fuel and the gas and rubber and all that. But I can't imagine living anywhere except in the old house. Still, it will be pretty dull for Jo Ann."

"Mother's up to her neck in civilian-protection work. She practically runs it for Rockhampton. You can't throw up a job like that."

Jo Ann drove on past the village, and the roads became sandy. Summer houses appeared with their neat hedges and flower gardens.

Rose asked questions about Edith's detention on the Beringsholm and told how hard she and Stacey had worked to enable Edith to land. "I can understand why they had to be careful, but how they could think of suspecting you!"

"Her husband is an Austrian, Mama," Jo Ann said. "I told you that explained it."

Edith expected them to ask her about Kurt, but Rose changed the subject immediately and began telling about old friends. Edith was grateful for the stream of chatter that made it unnecessary for her to talk.

She was beginning to recognize landmarks at last—and suddenly there was the field of wild flowers where she had played when she was a child—clover, buttercups, black-eyed Susans, devil's paintbrush, Queen Anne's lace.

"Remember Mrs. Morton and her little boy? Well, he is in the Marines, and the other day his picture was in the New York papers, with an article telling what a hero he was. Alice Robbin's eldest son was killed, but she's very brave about it. You know, it's strange how heroic even the most ordinary woman becomes in times like these. I used to think Alice a dreadfully tiresome woman, but now I don't. She behaved so well when she got the news of her son's death. Came to the Red Cross workrooms just the same and folded more gauze bandages that day than any of us. Oh, here we are, Edith. Does it look the same?"

The station wagon entered a driveway and came to a stop. Jo Ann slid out first. "Don't bother about your bags, Aunt Edith," she said. "I'll bring them along later. I want to look over this bicycle I just bought secondhand."

They were so casual one might have thought Edith was merely a week-end guest, yet as Rose slid her hand into her sister's and walked along beside her, Edith felt all the emo-

tion between them that had not been expressed. She had lived so long among Latins she had forgotten how deeply Americans keep their emotions buried, and how ashamed they are of exposing them. So when at last she looked upon the house of her childhood Edith managed to keep her eyes dry.

The house was even bigger and more rambling than she had remembered, though usually things telescope with time. It was still a weathered gray. The roof had a thatched effect, like farmhouses in England. It might have looked gloomy except for the roses that clambered over its sides, the flowering shrubs around it and the doors and windows rimmed in white.

EDITH LOVED it so much, suddenly, that she felt her knees tremble, and she squeezed Rose's hand.

"It must be wonderful, coming back to it after so long," Rose said quietly. "I can almost imagine how you feel, Edith. It's just the same, or almost. Stacey and I have made some repairs—we don't have to rush around with buckets any more when it rains. Oh, and we've added a guestroom on the ground floor and a bathroom for it. But otherwise, everything's pretty much the same."

They had turned a corner of the house. "This is changed," Edith said, "and how much better it is." Instead of the screened-in porch on the side that faced the ocean but didn't look upon it, since the ocean was nearly a mile away, there was an open porch and a flagged terrace with comfortable garden chairs. Edith sank into one of them and dropped her hat and handbag on the grass beside her.

Rose hesitated a moment and then said, "I knew you would love it, Edith; you couldn't help it. But I'm afraid you're going to find us dull. We don't do anything very exciting, and the friends we have are the same sort of people we are. After the life you've led and the fascinating people you've known, we'll be an awful contrast."

Edith leaned forward. "Rose, don't talk that way. You must know how happy I am to be home with you and my own people. It's—it's like getting to heaven at last."

Rose sat down on the grass. "Darling," she said, "I worried about you all the time—not just when the war broke out, but even at the beginning, after Oliver died, and you became so grand. I used to say proudly, 'My sister the princess,' but all the time I had a secret feeling you were unhappy. I went from princess to 'my sister, the Baroness von Braunwitz.' But it just seemed silly to me, Edith. I kept thinking of the days when we used to dress up and play we were Lady Vere de Vere. Did it ever seem any realer to you than that?"

She spoke earnestly, and so Edith said after a moment's thought, "Some of it seemed real. The good parts did."

"I suppose so," Rose said. "When you were first married to Kurt, your letters began to sound real and happy. For the first time they made the kind of sense I could understand. It must have been awful losing that baby. Edith," she asked abruptly, "where is Kurt now?"

"I think he is in America," Edith said, "but I'm not sure."

"You are not divorced?"

Edith shook her head. "But I'm not sure I'll ever see him again."

"Do you want to?" Rose asked.

"I don't think so," Edith said. And even if that was a lie, she told herself, it was a lie she was going to repeat until she believed it and it became the truth.

"You stay here," Rose said, jumping up. "I've got to talk to the cook. Jo Ann is bringing you a drink. Later I'll show you your room. Unless you want to wash up first? . . . No? Then relax and enjoy yourself. I'll be back in a few minutes."

It wasn't as easy to relax as it should have been. Edith leaned back in her chair and closed her eyes, but the earth rocked under her as if she were still on a ship. And always there was a queer contraction of her heart as though she were still afraid of something.

"I didn't give you your old room," Rose said later, as they entered the house. "Jo Ann thought you would be more comfortable in the new guest wing, with your own bath."

They had entered the house by the door to the living room, and the contrasting shade after the sunlit terrace was pleasant. The atmosphere of the room had not changed; there was the same antiquated yet clean smell of wood fires and long-cold ashes, of leather bindings on old books. There were faded chintz curtains and chair covers, and a wicker chair whose back spread out like a peacock's tail; dull paintings in gilt frames and familiar ornaments.

They went down a step and along a short corridor. "This is the guest wing," Rose said, opening a door. "I know you'll be comfortable. See, here is your own bathroom. Nice, isn't it? And isn't the dressing table cute? Jo Ann made those dotted-swiss skirts for it when she heard you were coming."

"It's very elegant," Edith said. It was a stranger's room, new, impersonal. Perhaps it was just as well she was not to sleep in her old room under the eaves. She started to open her bags.

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Rose said, "Unless you want me to help you unpack, I'll leave you. I've a number of things to do. We only have one maid, Minnie, who has been with us ten years. We all help a little. I know you won't mind making your own bed. Shall I run the water for your bath? You'd better not run the cold until you see how far the hot water lasts."

"I'll take a cold shower," Edith said.

"Maybe we'll have time to go swimming tomorrow," Rose said. "The Coast Guard only lets us use the beach during certain hours. Oh, you'll find a lot of changes like that, Edith, but you'll soon get used to it. We all did. Come out on the terrace when you're ready. We'll have cocktails there before dinner. People sometimes drop in."

"Fine," Edith said. She wanted desperately to be alone.

Rose stood at the door and said, "You're thinner, Edith. Otherwise, you haven't changed much. Jo Ann told me she thought you were beautiful. She doesn't often give compliments."

Edith smiled. Rose closed the door, and her footsteps receded down the hall. Then there was silence, and Edith buried her face in her hands and sat that way for a few minutes.

She had no right to feel disappointed and let down, since she was not sure exactly what she had expected. But it was obvious that Rose and Jo Ann felt some constraint. Of course, they were busy with their own affairs; and these were days when the personal was subordinated to larger issues. Perhaps they felt unsure of her.

She forced herself to stir and unpack some of her things. She hung up her suit and blouse and put on a kimono. Then she arranged her toilet articles on the dressing table: her tortoise-shell comb and brush with the inlaid crest of the Baron von Braunwitz; the crystal bottles with lotions; the gold and enamel boxes, also crested. Once they were arranged on the table top, she felt integrated again.

Later, refreshed by a cold shower and dressed in a cool summer frock, Edith went out to the terrace, where she found Rose and Jo Ann serving cocktails and iced tea to a number of callers. There were some she knew, old neighbors, some new faces, a few young men in uniform and two small children.

ROSE BEGAN introducing her to pleasant people, friendly, glad to see her. She went the rounds, smiling, being her most charming self, but with an inner feeling akin to stage fright. She realized she wanted them to like her, to feel that she was still one of them. She had never worked so hard before at being friendly. It worried her, until she realized her uncertainty of their feelings toward her was due to the absence of gushiness on their part. What she at first mistook for disapproval, she knew later was probably merely shyness.

Before the afternoon was over, Edith was chatting comfortably, and a self she had almost forgotten came to the surface. She had never belonged to Suzanne de Manville's crowd, nor had she belonged to Kurt's friends and family. But these were her own kind of people. They knew how to laugh and how to be sympathetic, and they had no axes to grind. What had seemed coldness at first was merely caution. They were waiting to see if because of her two titled marriages Edith Andrews Kenyon Bonnat von Braunwitz was going to "put on airs"! When they found she called herself Edith Kenyon, and was still just Rose's younger sister, who had probably gone-through-a-hell-of-a-time-poor-thing, they thawed.

The two children belonged to Tom Stewart, a tall, rather awkward man around Edith's age. He wore a shabby tweed jacket and gray flannel slacks that bulged at the knees.

"You've lost your freckles at last, Edith," he said, as he walked toward her. That was more like it; that made her feel natural and ridiculously pleased.

"Whose children are those?" she asked him.

"Mine," he said. "The taller one is Piggy; the runt is Pete. I'm bringing them up myself; that's why they are so funny." The little girl of seven with taffy hair in pigtails tied with blue ribbons and her smaller brother came and stood beside their father, regarding Edith solemnly.

Then Edith remembered that Rose had written about the death of Tom Stewart's wife. She felt sorry for him and drew the child Pete toward her while she talked to Tom.

Jo Ann came up with cocktails. "It's a nuisance, so many droppers-in today," she whispered. "Mother and I had hoped to have you to ourselves, but they were all curious to meet you, I suppose. Tom doesn't matter; he's part of the family." She handed him a cocktail, gave Piggy and Pete each a cracker, and moved on.

Edith heard talk of air-raid-warden duties; of the last blackout; talk of first-aid classes, and news of sons or husbands in the armed forces. Jo Ann had finished serving the cocktails and was talking with two young Army officers.

Rose was busy, flushed and authoritative. She was mistress of the house, and an important woman now in civic affairs. She belonged to her environment perfectly. Edith admired and envied her. And when Stacey Hutchinson, Rose's husband, arrived and bent to kiss his wife affectionately—an attention Rose accepted as naturally as it was given—Edith thought: This is the way life is lived among nice people. These are the *bourgeoisie* Robert despised, and Kurt knows nothing about. And I have forgotten.

People started leaving, coming up to her to say good-by and inviting her to visit them. Sometime soon they would arrange a luncheon, a dinner, a game of bridge. "So nice to have met you, baroness." "So nice to have you with us again, Edith."

"Well," Rose said, when they were all gone, "if anyone wants to wash up, now's the time to do it. Minnie will serve dinner in a few minutes. Stacey, you go on patrol duty tonight at eight. Jo Ann, will you be home? . . . Good . . . Edith, I didn't make any plans. I thought you might be tired and want to go to bed early . . . All right, Minnie, we're ready."

Stacey treated Edith as if she were an honored guest. He asked her questions about conditions in France before she had left and expressed his opinion of Laval and Pétain. He spoke of a second front, and of America and England freeing France again. There was in his voice none of the doubt she had heard during her voyage home. It gave her courage to hear the assurance of victory he expressed by taking it for granted. It was obvious that Rose and Jo Ann thought as he did. They expected a long, hard war; they expected to make sacrifices; but in their *"when the war is over"* there was no speculation as to the outcome, only a question as to the best way of treating the defeated Germans and Japanese so as to prevent a recurrence of war after peace was declared.

EDITH SAID little. But as they talked more and more freely among themselves, she began to feel comforted, as a person shivering with cold feels when a warm blanket is placed around him. Pretty soon she would be believing as they did, and she would begin to understand the security they knew; that made them think and believe as they did. But as she listened, she wondered where Kurt was tonight and what sort of talk he was listening to.

She looked at Rose's husband, at the head of the table, and she saw a stocky, blond, middle-aged American wearing eyeglasses. And she thought of the tallness of Kurt, and the way he held his head, and the beauty of his features and the perfection of his manners. And because she longed to see him again, to hear his voice, to be near him, she despised herself.

Edith borrowed one of her niece's bathing suits the next morning and was driven to the beach by Rose, who left her there and went on to the Office of Civilian Defense where she had a few duties and to the shops on some errands.

"You won't mind going swimming alone?" Rose asked Edith. "Jo Ann goes to a nurse's aide course on her bicycle, and I can make one trip in the car and drop you without using much extra gas. I'll pick you up around twelve on my way home."

"I don't mind," Edith said. "If you're sure it won't make an extra trip? It must be wonderful, Rose, to be so busy."

But when she was alone, Edith realized that what she had wanted more than anything else was to see the beach again, where she had spent so much time as a child and as a romantic girl. No other sands had ever meant so much to her, not the sands at Nice or Cannes—whiter than these, with bluer water; not Juan-les-Pins, or even the Lido.

It was a beautiful summer morning, warm with a light breeze blowing. Edith made herself a nest in the sand and then, looking around, found that she was the only bather on the beach. Other summers, at this hour of the morning, there would have been young men and girls, mothers and nursemaids, and children playing with pails and shovels. These were all absent, making the place strange and new.

There were a few gulls flying over the water, a boat that lay offshore, and farther down the beach a solitary figure walked up and down—a member of the Coast Patrol.

She put on the sun glasses Jo Ann had lent her and covered her skin with protective oil; then she lay down, leaning on an elbow, so she could see the gentle surf, the white puffs of clouds and an occasional plane flying overhead.

She had not slept well the night before. The habit of not sleeping had become too strong. Worry, like the crazy beat of swing music, pounded in her brain and woke her when she dozed off. She told herself each time she awakened that she had nothing to worry about; that she was safe in harbor. But she had not been able to sleep on the reassurance.

Now, as she stretched out under the sun, she began to relax slowly, with a sensation that was almost painful. Her mind was tired, more so than her body, with the emotions of the past months and the pressure of her own and other people's unhappiness and uncertainties. But she must forget all that and live only for the day—a day in which those who took no active part were lost. Soon she would find what she was capable of doing, but here was the present, offering her rest and peace. She closed her eyes and gave herself up to the precious moment.

But into the peace came the roar of a plane overhead. A chorus of sea gulls seeking land and screaming their rage followed. And then, piercing her ears, came the loud blast of a siren. Edith sat up and scanned the sea for a ship responsible for the sound, but she saw only a few small boats scurrying along. The siren continued blasting her ear-drums.

Figures in black slickers and hats began leaping over the dunes from the shore side, running down the beach to a small hutlike structure she had not noticed before.

Bewildered, she stood up. It was an air raid, of course. How stupid to be caught in it on a beach in a bathing suit.

A large plane zoomed over her head now, and frightened, Edith gathered the odds and ends she had strewn on the sand and ran to the nearest dune. There was an overhanging tuft of tall yellow grass, and she felt safe under it. The siren had stopped; there were no more planes, and the sound she waited for, the sound of bombs falling, was strangely absent.

She saw several of the men in slickers patrolling the beach near by. One of these she recognized as Tom Stewart. Involuntarily, she called his name.

He turned, and seeing her, his face broke into a smile. "Just a test raid!" he shouted. She saw him walk on, and sitting down now, in comfort, she lighted a cigarette and waited.

To occupy herself, she thought of Tom Stewart and his two children, and the bits she remembered hearing about his wife, who had been much too young and happy to die. She wondered if he were very lonely. Tom was a good man, conscientious, reliable, kind. Why had she never fallen in love with a man of that sort? Why had it always been men who in one way or another were doomed to make her or any other woman unhappy? She knew now that Oliver, had he lived, would always have remained a stranger. Robert she had never truly loved—and Kurt, whom she had loved deeply, had made her most unhappy of all. The fault, no doubt, began with herself. But did it end there? Hadn't she given to each of her husbands as much as other, happier women gave to theirs? Had she?

"The answer is probably that I have never thought of anyone but myself," she told herself bitterly. The all-clear siren was blowing, and the Coast Guards were returning to the hut. "Even in an air raid, I think only about myself. This one is a false alarm. But if a real one should come, what good will I be to anyone?"

She looked at her watch. It was nearly twelve, and she hadn't yet gone for a swim. She tucked her blond curls under a rubber cap and ran down into the surf. The cold startled her, but she kept on until the water was deep enough to plunge in and swim. She kept going with a strong crawl stroke, and when at last she swung around, the shore was far away. The sky above was bright blue and cloudless, the world beautiful again, and she felt infinitely better. Nonsense to have been so forlorn. Why, there were a hundred ways to keep busy, and with Rose's help, she would soon be as active and useful as anybody.

TOM STEWART was walking along the beach toward her when she returned. When he came up he said, "Were you scared? You looked like a little rabbit."

"I am ashamed," she said, with humility. "But it was so unexpected. Sit down and tell me all about yourself, Tom. It's been ages since we used to go swimming here—you and I and Rose and a whole crowd. Sitting here alone this morning made me as melancholy as a baboon. Where is everybody, and why did we all have to grow up?"

Obligingly, he talked about this one and that. She began to feel much better. Strange, how just talking to a man again made her feel more attractive; gave her an impetus to please and be charming. She opened a bag and took out a lipstick and made up her lips. In the small compact she saw her oval face, golden in tone, with her large eyes still bright, her brows thin and arched, her skin smooth as it had ever been.

Tom stopped talking and watched her. Then he said, "Has being beautiful brought you all you wanted, Edith? I hope so."

"Of course not," she said. "I've made an unholy mess of things, I guess. But it's not important, is it? I belong to a period that's over and done with. I'll adapt myself, of course. Maybe if I can't patrol a beach and shoo off submarines I can find something else to do. Rose promised to find out this morning what volunteer group might use me."

He grew thoughtful. After a moment he said, "Guess everybody will have to help. You feel sort of foolish, doing things like this in a test raid, but it's got its uses, and it's better than nothing. Still, hell, I wish I could really get into the scrap. I gave my boat last year. What I'd like would be to enlist in the Coast Guard—the real thing. But I just can't, that's all."

"Because of the children?" Edith asked.

Tom nodded. "Can't afford anybody competent to look afte-

them, and somebody's got to. They're nice kids. Well, I'd better be getting back. Mrs. Whoosis, the current lady-of-all-work, has the afternoon off. Rose calling for you? Tell her we'll be around today sometime. So long, Edith. It's grand having you back among us. You'll keep us from forgetting our manners."

Rose came a little later. "Sorry to be late," she said, as Edith got into the car. "I was held up by the test raid."

Then she lapsed into an unnatural silence. Edith, knowing her sister well, asked, "What happened, Rose? You look mad."

"It's those women," Rose exploded. "I may as well tell you, because I never can keep anything to myself. I told them at headquarters that you wanted to volunteer your services in any capacity where you were needed."

Edith nodded. She felt happy about that. "What did they say?" she asked, because Rose was silent again.

"I don't know how you'll take it, Edith. But they declined. That's right. Mrs. Twynem—remember her? She is sort of boss at the O.C.D., and she said, waggling her eyebrows at me, 'It is very kind of the Baroness von Braunwitz. But—well, her husband is an Austrian, isn't he? And that *does* make him an enemy alien, *doesn't* it, dear Rose? And we have orders to be so very careful. I know you will understand. Not that I suggest your sister is any less loyal than the rest of us, or less patriotic, but the fact remains . . .' I was furious and had a good mind to resign, but the work is too important for petty personal friction. It's too ridiculous, Edith. Is Kurt a Nazi? That's what they were implying, of course. Edith, if he is, why haven't you done something about it? You could get a divorce."

Edith took a deep breath. She stiffened. The impudence of stupid women such as Mrs. Twynem concerning themselves with her private life was irritating, but not much more. She said slowly, "I really don't know where Kurt is at present. I'm sure he's not an enemy, or anything for them to be afraid of."

"If you don't know where he is, and you haven't heard from him," Rose persisted, "then how do you know what he believes now? After all, why did they detain you on that ship? Not for anything you have done or said. What good does it do you, darling, to be the Baroness von Braunwitz now? Why don't you throw all that over and be one of us again, as you are in your heart? You haven't changed—well, perhaps; but only in little ways that don't count. You're neither fish, flesh nor what-you-may-call-it going on like this, can't you see?"

"I am still married to Kurt," Edith said. "I am still his wife. And I still love him. I am sure he is all right." She said it proudly, but in her heart, she was miserable.

ROSE'S CHEEKS flushed. "If you found he was not—all right, would you still love him?"

"It wouldn't change my love for Kurt," Edith answered; "it would only make me sorry for him. Because whatever he believes in, he would die for. He is not a sneak; he is not a coward. He is an idealist."

"You've been away too long," Rose said. "You don't know how important it is to think right. No matter what his idealism may be, if it's for crushing out innocent nations, starving innocent people and destroying liberty, you should hate him, Edith. There are some things more important than the love of a woman for one man. Well, here we are home—and Minnie will be awfully cross. It's her afternoon off."

Jo Ann was waiting for luncheon on the terrace. She was still wearing her nurse's-aide uniform with the wide peasant apron. Her silky blond hair was pulled back severely from her face and braided behind her head. She looked like a strangely sophisticated child.

"I'm starved," she said, sitting down. She buttered a muffin and ate it. "Cold ham and salad. Help yourself, Aunt Edith. No time to change, unless you want to eat alone. I know Mother—she's got luncheon peeled down to twenty minutes, and then she'll be off somewhere."

Edith drew her robe around her and sat down. The swim had given her an appetite, and she was glad to eat.

"We had a good morning," Jo Ann said. "I learned how to prepare a corpse."

"Why, Jo Ann!" Rose gasped.

"Very interesting. They brought up a body from the hospital morgue. We washed it and wrapped it up. Good thing to know, I suppose."

"Are all the nurse's aides about your age, Jo Ann?" Edith asked.

Jo Ann thought a moment and said, "I don't think it's up your alley, Aunt Edith."

The telephone rang inside the house, and Jo Ann ran across to answer it.

"Probably for her," Rose said. "She's been as popular as you were, Edith. Only there aren't so many beaux around any more, poor child. All the boys her age are going away."

Jo Ann came back and sat down. She helped herself to a peach from the bowl of fruit in the center of the table. "That was Lieutenant Bates," she said. "He was the tall dark handsome one who was here yesterday, Aunt Edith. He called to say good-by. His company is leaving—he won't have time to come around. We were going to a tennis match this afternoon." She peeled her peach neatly.

Edith said, "Poor boy."

Jo Ann frowned. "They're glad when they finally hear they are going. It's the inaction around the camps that gets them down. Don't feel sorry for them. They want to go. They're raring for action. Wish I were one of them. Mom, do you realize there won't be anyone left at Rockhampton but the kids, and older men like Dad and Tom? Oh, well, it's probably worse in Germany. Any cake left from last night? I might as well eat and get fat."

THAT AFTERNOON Jo Ann went off to her tennis match on the old bicycle. Rose had some household chores, and Edith went to her room. She wrote letters for an hour or two—some to France, one to her agent in Bandol who had promised to look after her villa; and a letter to the couple who had worked for her there and who had gone back to their own farm. She told them she had arrived safely in America and hoped they were getting along all right. She asked about her cat, Matelot, and enclosed a thousand-franc note which she had not exchanged on the ship. She sealed the letter with a prayer that it would reach them.

And then because there was one letter she longed to write, but couldn't because she had no address, she stopped writing and put down her pen. "Lord," she whispered, "if I can't see him again, at least, please let me hate him—or forget him."

She read until it was time to dress and appear on the terrace again. As she passed the living room, she saw Rose engaged in conversation with a strange man, and she walked on without speaking, wandering among the flowers.

When Rose came out, Edith was reading in one of the wicker chairs. Rose sat near her and took out her knitting from a bag hanging over the arm of the chair.

"Did you have a caller?" Edith asked, though she wasn't really interested.

Rose said, "Yes. It was a man from the F B I, Edith, asking me questions about you."

"What did you tell him?" Edith asked quietly.

"Well, it turned out to be just Joe Brown from Sag Harbor. You remember him, don't you? I told him that you were my sister and that if anyone suspected your loyalty they might just as well suspect Stacey and me. Would you like some iced tea, Edith? It won't take me a minute to get some."

"I'll get it myself," Edith said.

There came a time when, with all her determination to economize, Edith felt it necessary to replenish her stock of clothes. The few dresses she had brought from France had begun to wear out. She attributed a fit of depression to the fact that she felt shabby.

She was not unhappy living with her sister, for the days, after all, managed to fill themselves with little chores she took over, with walks to the beach for a morning swim, with helping to amuse and care for Tom Stewart's children when he had to leave them with Rose, with friends who dropped over in the afternoons for a cool drink on the terrace.

It was a new way of life, almost a new language, and she was genuinely anxious to adapt herself and belong. But clothes had always been important to Edith. And when she opened her closet door one morning and found nothing that did not look worn, she decided to do something about it.

She took the next train to New York on a shopping expedition. The prospect made her spirits brighter than they had been for days. She had money—not so much as before, of course, but still, there was no need to consider herself a pauper. And there was nobody to look out for but herself.

She had a good time all that day. At one shop she found several ready-made dresses which were perfect fits. She bought two hats in another shop, new shoes, blouses, underwear and stockings.

Pleased with herself, she walked along one of the side streets from Madison to Park Avenue, feeling gayer than she had in a long time. As she turned the corner of Park, a voice hailed her and she stopped. Two women she had known in Paris greeted her effusively and insisted that she join them for tea at a restaurant. She went with them gladly, since she had not taken time to lunch.

The luxuriant surroundings, the soft lights, the smartly dressed women, a cocktail, gossip about people she knew in France—it would be wrong to say she had missed all this, but somehow today they fitted her mood. Others joined them at the round table, men and women. She had another cocktail and a bite of food. She listened to flattery and returned it. She heard herself making amusing comments. She saw admiration in the eyes of the polite men, and she liked it.

She had a second of wondering whether she had not really been rather bored at Rockhampton. This was the environment for which the last fifteen years of her life had fitted her. Perhaps she should take an apartment in town and see her friends again. These were witty and charming people, and one would be ashamed to be unhappy in their midst—ashamed of heartache and a Griselda love affair. And they were doing things too. From their conversation she gathered they were all busy getting up benefits for this or that war relief. Most of them had really suffered by the war—those who had had homes abroad had lost them and a great part of their fortunes. Their lives had been infinitely more changed than the lives of Rose and the Mrs. Twynems. And they were much better informed. They *knew* what was happening behind the scenes in Europe; they had relatives and friends over there.

She listened as someone said, "Ah, yes. I heard from her the other day. Indirectly, of course, because Suzanne doesn't write. She said the French she knew were getting along very well with the Germans. And why not? The couturiers are as busy as ever; the big hotels and restaurants have not dropped their high standards. It is possible to live almost as before, and it is absurd for us to waste any sympathy."

"Suzanne—Suzanne de Manville?" Edith asked. She lifted her cocktail, but now she put it down without drinking it.

"And have you heard Cocteau on the short wave?" someone asked in a low voice. "It is no longer necessary to weep for him; he has all he needs. And Robert Bonnat spoke a few nights ago." There was an uncomfortable silence, and a few eyes turned toward Edith.

"What did Robert have to say?" she asked calmly, although she felt suddenly cold. "Did he also say that the common run of French people had plenty to eat, or that they did not mind starving? Of course, he wouldn't know. But did he say a Frenchman, any Frenchman, could enjoy breathing if he was not free?"

She saw several exchanged glances and heard a nervous laugh. Someone at the other end of the table said, "Robert wrote he did not mind a war that was going to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. Rather bad taste, of course, but witty, as usual."

Edith rose. "I'm sorry," she said. "I must catch a train to Long Island. So nice seeing you again."

She tried not to think as she sat in the cab that was taking her to Pennsylvania Station. But when she took out her compact and lipstick her hand shook. "They were *not* amusing," she told herself fiercely. "They are fools."

The weather was changing. September provided sweltering days followed by cold, and the family in the Rockhampton house dined indoors and spent the evenings before the fire in the living room instead of on the terrace.

Edith, who had taken the Stewart babies for an afternoon on the beach, had found the water bitingly cold. She invented games for Piggy and Pete afterwards, so that they could run about. She delivered them, on foot, to the shabby Stewart house and walked back home.

She stood for a moment facing the front of the house and read a sticker that someone had evidently just placed on the door that afternoon. It read:

THIS IS A V HOME

We in this home are fighting. We know this war will be easy to lose and hard to win. We mean to win it. Therefore we solemnly pledge all our energies and all our resources to the fight for freedom and against Fascism.

Underneath were enumerated the ways in which this home was co-operating.

"This home," Edith told herself, as she walked around to the side door which the family used, "is my home now."

She saw Rose in the garden trimming the rosebushes, and she found a pair of flower clippers and joined her.

"There was actually a frost last night," Rose said. "Never remember its getting so cold in the middle of September. Must be the seasons are changing." Then she laughed. "That's a sign we are getting old, Edith. Remember grandmother saying the seasons were changing? Take that bush over there and start down that row. How was it on the beach?"

Edith wished she had put on gloves. The first bush she trimmed was awfully thorny. "We had fun," she said. "Tom's children are very sweet. They didn't scare me a bit. They just took me for granted."

Rose sighed. "I wish Tom could find somebody to look after them properly. He is dying to get into the Coast Guard. Maybe if he could find a wife—housekeepers are so unsatisfactory."

"Why can't we look after them?" Edith asked.

"You mean have them stay with us? I had thought of it, but Minnie has so much to do and I've got more than I can handle and it isn't fair to tie Jo Ann down. You don't know how much attention children that age need."

Edith stood up and stretched. "It would be something I could do," she said quietly. "Evidently they don't need me, or shall I say, want me, in the Civilian Defense outfit. And I have a lot of time, Rose."

Rose got up on one knee. "What do you mean, Edith? That if we brought Tom's children over here you'd look after them? Lord knows, I don't mind the food they'd eat, and there are plenty of beds. But children that age need a lot of attention, and we just haven't time to give it to them."

"I have time," Edith said.

"You'd look after washing and dressing them and keeping them busy and happy and out of mischief? It's a full-time job, darling."

"I need a full-time job," Edith said.

Rose drew a long breath. "It's an idea," she said. "I'll speak to Tom about it. He'll probably drop by tonight to pick up Stacey. They're both on duty from midnight to four."

They went back to clipping the bushes again. Edith thought: I can get over being shy with them if I try hard. I can read books about bringing up children, and they did like the stories I told them today.

They finished their bushes simultaneously, and as Rose went for the small wheelbarrow to carry off the branches, she said suddenly, "Oh, I forgot to tell you, Edith. I stopped at the post office this afternoon and picked up some mail for you. I left it on the desk in the living room."

Edith started for the house. She wasn't much interested in the letters. They consisted, probably, of bills for the clothes she'd bought on that day in New York or announcements of new fall fashions at the shops. She was elated with the proposal she had made to her sister. Piggy and Pete could have the nursery on the top floor, and she could move back to her old room upstairs and be near them. She would make them her special charge; she would look after their health and their clothes and keep them amused.

It was a queer kind of war work, but it was perhaps as good as going to the Red Cross rooms, where Rose told her she would be welcome, and where she would fold gauze bandages. There were so many women to do that; but this was her own bright idea—her own contribution. If she looked after Piggy and Pete, their father would be free to join the Coast Guard. It was simple to think out—perhaps harder to carry out, though. But she was sure she could do it successfully. She thought of the pretty clothes she could buy the children—never again would she let Piggy wear a dark brown machine-made sweater or Pete overalls torn in the seat!

She picked up the letters addressed to her and went to her own room. She lighted a cigarette and began slitting the envelopes, putting bills aside and throwing announcements in the wastebasket. But the last letter was not from a shop. It was on hotel stationery. She stared at the handwriting and opened it slowly.

That fine, careful, foreign script—how long she had waited for it, and now that it had come, she was reluctant to read it.

Dear Edith:

I have heard that you are in America and living on Long Island with your sister. I am delighted that you have arrived in this country and are well and comfortable.

I was not sure before this of your whereabouts, and believe me, it is with great relief that I hear it now.

I shall come to see you at once if that is all right? I shall be happy to make the acquaintance of your family. Please convey to them my highest regard and respects.

You can reach me at this hotel under the name Eric Streger.

I embrace you tenderly, dear Edith.

Ever your Kurt

The conflicting reactions made her dizzy. How long had he been in New York, and how was it that he had not learned before this that she was back in America with her family? She wondered which of the persons present at the restaurant that day in town had known Kurt and told him about her.

Most astonishing of all was her reaction of wishing he had not written, and that she did not have to decide whether she would see him again or not.

She heard a voice calling her, and then her door was opened and her niece came in. "Am I disturbing you?" Jo Ann said, as she sat down on the bed. "Mother just told me what you thought of doing for Piggy and Pete, and I think it's swell."

"Maybe Tom ought to be consulted," Edith said. She had replaced Kurt's letter in its envelope, but she still held it.

"Oh, Tom will be tickled pink," Jo Ann said. "Ever since Adelaide died, he's been floundering along like a rooster with chicks. It's not dignified for a man, is it? Besides, he can be lots more useful patrolling the coast on a boat. He's awfully good at boats, and we need men like that. We'll break the news tonight. Mother and I have been looking the nursery over, and it doesn't need much done to it." She added, "I

think they will be good for you, Aunt Edith. Kids are terrible realists."

"You think I'm not?" Edith asked.

Jo Ann looked at her critically. "Well, I don't know. But the life you've led and all, it doesn't make much real sense, does it? Sort of like an old-fashioned novel or a drawing by Charles Dana Gibson. Everything's so different nowadays."

"I'm not so ancient," Edith said.

"That's not what I mean. I bet there are girls my age living the way you've been doing, though not many of them. What I mean is, Aunt Edith, there just isn't going to be much room for lilies of the field any more. If you've got a lot of money, it's going to be used for you if you don't know how to use it yourself. I don't mean Communism or 'Come the Red Dawn' sort of thing either. Just common sense about spreading out the comforts and the necessities a little more. You can't have limousines in a world at war; you can't even have personal maids when the factories are crying for munition workers. It all evens out naturally."

"That's good," Edith said. "I'd like to think everything will work out naturally, as you say. It's having to make decisions that worries me most."

Jo Ann went to Edith's dressing table and examined one of the small boxes with the crest on it. "When are you going to get all that straightened out, Aunt Edith?" she asked. "If you don't mind my blundering into your personal affairs."

"Pretty soon, I guess," Edith said. She fingered the letter from Kurt. "I've just heard from—my husband."

Jo Ann looked surprisingly embarrassed. With all her straightforwardness, she had her mother's trick of blushing when she was moved or embarrassed.

"I know it," she said. "I saw the envelope. I wanted to tell you that it's all right with us if you invite him out here. Mother feels the same way. Father might be a bit stuffy, because from what I gather he hasn't a high opinion of that husband of yours, any more than he had of Prince Bonnat. Please don't be offended, Aunt Edith. Father's awfully nice, but a bit narrow about some things. He hasn't traveled much, like you, or read much either. But if he thought Baron von Braunwitz made you happy, he'd get to like him. Father's awfully loyal about the family. Look, Aunt Edith, why don't you just ask Kurt out for an afternoon? Talk to him again; see what he's like. That will leave Father out of it—and Mother and I will make ourselves scarce."

"And let things—'work out naturally'?" Edith asked.

Jo Ann nodded and looked extremely serious.

"Very well," Edith said. "Thank you for the good advice."

Jo Ann walked to the door. "Aunt Edith," she said, "I just have a hunch he's going to turn out to be more of a stranger to you than you can imagine. But I do want to say this: if he's a refugee who is broke and in trouble, this is a big house, and it's yours, you know, as well as ours, and there's plenty of room for us all. Mother wanted me to be sure to tell you that."

"Thanks, Jo Ann," Edith said slowly.

THREE DAYS later the front doorbell rang, and Edith, her face pale in spite of careful touches of rouge, opened it.

She saw, through the glass, Kurt's tall, well-groomed figure stooping to read the V placard. She noticed the single monocle in his right eye. And as she opened the door, she saw him straighten, and the eyeglass fall on its ribbon. He was still handsome, still more than that, although he was thinner, and the high cheekbones were more accentuated.

They said nothing at first. He picked up her hand, kissed it, and then stepped into the house. She led him into the living room, where she had lighted a fire. They sat opposite each other on the worn chairs, and still neither spoke. She thought: He is well dressed. I needn't feel sorry for him. And she was glad of that. What else she felt she was fighting against.

"How well you are looking, Edith," he said. "I had forgotten you were so beautiful."

"The time has been long enough for you to have forgotten lots of things, Kurt." She spoke softly, because she was afraid that any one word might unloose a floodgate of reproaches; might bring back the old emotions and start the useless suffering again. She was trying to keep herself detached, as though she were a third person at this meeting: a new Edith, critical of the old.

"It has not seemed so long," Kurt said. "At least for me, time has had no existence. But for you, Edith, my dear, I know there has been only time. I could tell you how sorry I am for my neglect, but such apologies are stupid. Let us not make them. I have tried to find you. I knew that sooner or later you would come back here, but it was only a few days ago that I was given the information."

"You had only to write to me in Bandol. All these years, Kurt, I waited for you. I knew you weren't to be judged as other men; I even told myself that you might still love me. That was at first. But now I know a love like that is no good

—it gives nothing. Tell me, what made you look me up at last? What do you want from me?"

He rose and walked about the room, stopping to look at the paintings, the books. He paused before the fire and stared into it. Then he faced Edith and said, "I would like to know your family. Is that unnatural? I have been in America for some time, but this is my first visit to an American home. It is very comfortable, very nice. I had no right to expect a warmer reception from you. Still, I had dared to hope."

Minnie came in with the tea tray and set it on the table before Edith. She walked heavily and panted. This was ironing day, and she was not supposed to do extras such as serving tea. She stared with disapproval at Kurt and walked out.

"Lemon, Kurt, or milk?"

"It does not matter," he said. "As you like." And then she remembered he had always detested tea.

He took the cup from her and helped himself to a small cake. "What a pity," he said, "that we were born in times such as these." He was looking at her with the rare smile she had seen once or twice, a smile with tenderness behind it. "I could have loved you so well, beloved, so deeply and well."

"Stop!" she said, and it was as if she had dug down to her heart and silenced it. "It's too late for you to talk that way; too late for me to listen. I want to ask you a few questions, and I insist on your answering them before we have anything more to say to each other. Who and what are you, Kurt? Why did you disappear? What are you doing in America? And why are you traveling under the name of Eric Streger?"

Kurt lighted a cigarette, and as he threw the match into the fireplace Edith thought: This is melodramatic. I should not have done it this way. It sounds so false—not like me. This is Kurt, my husband, the man I have slept with and lived with; this is only Kurt with the blue eyes, whom I fell in love with one morning on the mountaintop. I am talking as I imagine Jo Ann or Rose would expect me to talk. Oh, Kurt, my darling, if we could wake up from the nightmare and find ourselves awake in the large bed, looking out of the windows that faced the blue sea.

And then she noticed that though he had not yet spoken his hand that held the cigarette was trembling.

"I am sorry," he said, at last. "I am your country's enemy. I was foolish to expect a welcome here. But at least——" He sat down on the divan beside her and spoke eagerly. "I do not want to stay, understand? I wish to return to Austria. But I do not want to be herded back. I wish to go with dignity. Your brother-in-law, he could perhaps arrange that? He could state merely that I have been a member of his family; that he could vouch for me, yes? I wish to go to South America, and from there home. But I wish to go as a gentleman. Could you arrange for him to help me with this?"

Edith pushed the tea table aside and moved a little distance from him. Then she said coldly, "You haven't answered my questions. Until I know those answers, I will not ask my brother-in-law to do anything for you. Why are you here, Kurt? What have you been doing?"

"I have been—traveling," he said.

"But not as the Baron Kurt von Braunwitz. Why?" Edith leaned toward him. She couldn't make any of this sound or seem as important as it really was, because of the heart inside her that was longing for peace and friendliness; her heart that wanted to know why he looked so thin, and what hell he had been through, and how she could get him into her arms.

Kurt looked at Edith over the brim of his cup. Then he drank the tea and carefully put the cup down.

"What if I gave you your answers?" he said. "You wouldn't understand." He walked again about the room, but this time he looked at nothing until he came back to her. "Austria is my country," he said. "Why should I betray it, or swear allegiance to another? I—I am only visiting, and someday I shall go back home. Like you," he added.

"Why are you traveling under the name of Streger?" Edith said. Somehow, she had decided this question was the important one, and she repeated it.

"Streger," he said impatiently, "is a family name. It is mine, too. Often the men in my family have used it—for their convenience." Then he grew angry. "What nonsense is this?" he asked. "I didn't come here to be categorized like a child. You know me, Edith, or should know me. I am not a criminal, a sneak thief, nor am I entirely a stranger to you. Circumstances have kept us apart for a while, but you knew that I should come for you when I could. If you were a woman of intelligence, you would understand."

"It is not only you and I," Edith said. "If it were, Kurt, I should be yours forever. But this is what I want to tell you: if you have come to this country to do harm to my people—for no matter what noble motives of your own—I shall hate you and betray you if I can." She heard his heels click, and it made her realize how foreign he was. She stood up. "Come,"

she said, "I'll show you the garden. My mother's famous rose garden that I told you about."

They went out on the terrace and then to the grounds about the house. There was an iron bench, all lacy and painted white, a Victorian piece. They sat down on it.

"There is one thing I really have to know," Edith said. "You were in Vienna that July day when Dollfuss was assassinated. Did you have anything to do with that?" He was silent. She went on, trying to keep her voice cool and calm, but feeling it betray her, "I remember that day when you returned to me in France, you had too little to say about it all. When I mentioned the traitors in your country, you didn't seem to feel as I think you should have felt about it. Kurt, I believe you were a member of that pro-Nazi party in Austria. That is why you had so little to say about it to me. That is why you were so busy in Berlin and Vienna after your country's fall. What have you been doing in my country? Tell me that. Or don't you dare?"

The words had come out in a rush, once the floodgates were opened. She felt a sense of release; felt herself being carried along by the flow of her words. She noticed, almost with indifference, that his face had grown pale and that his hands were clenched so that the white skin barely covered his knuckles.

But when he spoke there was a smile on his lips, and not the gentle smile. "So you have been thinking, my dear, at last," he said.

"Yes," she said, "and now that I have begun to think I see too many horrible things. Kurt, were you one of that band of so-called patriots who killed the little Chancellor? There was one who escaped—one of the murderers. Was that you?"

"I am a patriot, dear Edith," he said, "not a murderer. I wished perhaps to see the Austria that my father respected returned to its proper state in the world. Under that little Chancellor—that sentimental, but perhaps good little man—my country was going to its death. No, I did not weep when he was extinguished, any more than one would weep at the death of a moth that destroys good wool that others have use for. I—I may have wept at the time, but for other reasons."

Edith stood up. "I must see about getting a taxi to take you to the station," she said politely. "I think you will be able to catch the five-twenty-five. Excuse me a moment."

She called the taxi company in the village and was promised one immediately. She put down the receiver slowly and sat with her face in her hands for a few minutes, thinking. Then she picked up the local telephone directory, found Sag Harbor and looked for Joe Brown. The number was there—391. She closed the book and let it slip from her hands. Then for a second or so more she stared at the dial.

"I can't," she whispered. "God will have to make me. I can't do it by myself."

She found Kurt in the garden again, and she went to him smiling. "The taxi will be here in a few minutes."

"Thank you," he said. "Then I shall say good-by." He took her hand and raised it to his lips.

She thought: I mustn't look into his eyes or I'll be lost again. She drew her hand away.

"This is our last good-by," she said. And then, because she couldn't keep it back, she said, "I have loved you for so long—and waited. But now I won't love you any more, or wait. This is the end of you and me, and," she added, as her eyes filled, "the worst of it is, I can't even wish you luck."

"Edith," he said, "if you have loved me, for that love you can do one more thing for me. It is not much: merely to help me get safely back to my own country. Then you can forget me, as perhaps you should. So, my dear, if you decide yes, after you have thought it over, you can reach me for a few days longer at the hotel, under the name of Eric Streger."

They walked slowly toward the gate. "You are the only woman I have ever allowed myself to love, Edith," he said. "It should never have been permitted to happen. I should have run from you when I first met you, but the attraction was too strong. You were so beautiful and gentle and feminine, and I had been starving for such beauty. I knew at the very beginning that I should have to cause you unhappiness. Can you believe how sorry I am—and that I only wish you well?"

Edith was crying; as she walked beside him, her chin high, the tears just fell softly and she made no effort to stop them.

"It doesn't matter," she said. "Nothing like that matters any more. Only life and death matter. Only the lives and deaths of millions of brave young men. Oh, Kurt, why did you have to come from a breed of monsters? Why couldn't you have been born down the road here?"

He looked puzzled, and a frown appeared between his strange blue eyes. "It is when you talk like that, my dear," he said, "that I realize what strangers we have always been. I do not like being called a monster."

Edith drew a deep breath; then she said, "I know it, darling, but I must think of you that way. A cold, relentless, destructive monster. Here comes the taxi. Good-by . . . good-by, Kurt."

If she went back to the house, she would have to call the FBI at once and give them the information she had. Oh, there was no doubt about it any more; no weighing things this way or that. She had asked direction of God, and the still small voice told her what she must do. She would do it. She would call the number at Sag Harbor as soon as she entered the house. But before that she must have a little time, a little time alone with her heart before she betrayed it.

She walked down the road toward the sea, past the fields of dusty goldenrod and rusty sumach; past the houses of neighbors who were busy as Rose and Jo Ann were busy, folding bandages for the Red Cross, selling War Bonds. She almost ran until she reached the dunes and the sea.

The beach was deserted. Farther along was the Coast Guard hut. She found a hollow in the sand underneath a dune, and she crouched down in it, remembering a time when as a little girl she had come to this very spot to nurse some childish hurt.

". . . they came to a place which was named Gethsemane . . ."

And Edith prayed.

As she returned through the gate, she saw the family sitting on the terrace in the sunset. Tom was with them, and his two children. They had probably come to talk over her proposal to look after Piggy and Pete. She could not talk to them now; she had something she must do first. She went through the kitchen entrance to the telephone in the hall.

She called the Sag Harbor number, and she got Joe Brown. She told him what she had to say. Then he broke in:

"Thank you, Mrs. Kenyon. I have just talked to your sister Rose. You see, we have been on the trail of the baron for some time. We knew about Eric Streger, and we knew we could get him when we wanted him. But we waited, because we wanted to get a line on some others he was tied up with. But we've got them now—and one of my men was at the station when the baron's cab drew up a little while ago . . . Yes. He was taken into custody . . . No, I can't tell you what will happen, but he won't be able to work for his Fuehrer any more; not in this war. Thanks just the same for calling."

Edith put the phone down slowly. She stood before the hall mirror and smoothed down her hair that the wind had tousled. She looked into her own reflection and whispered, "That is the past. Henceforth there must be a new life. Make it a good one—and never, never, never look back."

She went out to join the family on the terrace.

THE END

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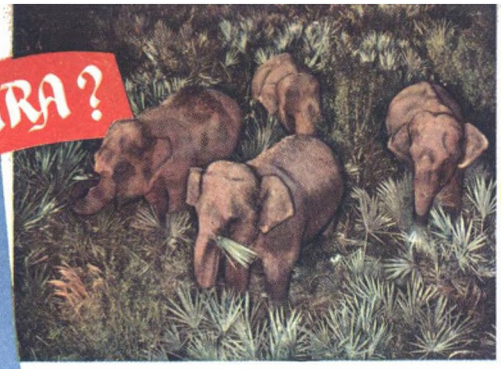
ROUNDUP IN RATNAPURA?



Not at all—this is at Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

1. "*I've hunted India* for animal shots," writes a cameraman, "from Ratnapura to Tibet . . . often where the going was so rough we had to leave even the Canadian Club behind. And then found the *best* shots here in the U.S.A. . . . at Ft. Lauderdale's amazing Jungle Zoo, winter training quarters for Clyde Beatty's Circus. Elephants, for instance, in a compound that's a dead-ringer for their natural habitat . . .

2. "*Not in all Bengal* did I get within telephoto distance of a tiger to match this baby for handsomeness and fierceness. Man, but those bars between us were a comfort!

3. "*Double trouble.* Don't let the gravity of these lion cubs fool you. They're just wearing that having-our-picture-taken look. Actually they're more mischievous than Siamese kittens.

4. "*Low comedy.* These are African chimps, said to be the smartest of the whole monkey world . . . and most like humans. But so camera-shy I missed the funniest of their clowning.

5. "*Speaking of clowning*—I never saw anyone more serious than this slapstick artist putting on his makeup. Just a few moments after I snapped this, he had his audience in stitches.

6. "*At the lion cage,* I met a newspaper reporter covering the show. 'Mind if I quote you,' he asked later, over a drink . . .

7. " 'How's *this for a headline—Expert Finds All India's Thrills Here, Plus the World's Most Distinctive Whisky,*' glancing at the bottle between us. 'Easy, there!' I said. 'Even the Indian rajahs I met offered me Canadian Club!' "

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