STORY

NOVEMBER 1936

• A COPY 25 CENTS •

END PAGES

END PAGES

by

Martha Foley

THE regular End Pager being away in his native Mormon haunts of Salt Lake City, a humble substitute must take his place with all due apologies to his readers.

And while he has been wandering in the canyons, his substitute has been reading with interest in May Cameron's book column in the New York *Evening Post* the debate between Ishbel Ross, author of "Ladies of the Press," and Walter Lister, city editor of the *Post,* over the merits of newspaperwomen. And cheering loudly in the Ross sector.

Years ago, when I first started newspaper work, I had principles. One of them was equal rights. And life on a New York newspaper was made pretty miserable for me by a red-headed copyreader who not only cut my copy (as copyreaders have a habit of doing to all young reporters' copy) but of expressing at the same time his very frank opinion of girls cluttering up a city room. He always wound up his tirade with "Ever see a dame could hold down a job on a copy desk?"

After a time it got me. One of the most exciting of our arguments ended with my betting him five dollars that I could get a job on a copy desk. Which led to my quitting a perfectly good job as a reporter to join the staff of that fabulous newspaper of New Jersey, the Newark *Ledger.*

Getting any kind of a job on the *Ledger* was a simple—and simple-minded—business. All one had to do was walk in and ask for one. I could probably have been a managing editor if I had thought of it. The *Ledger* had the largest labor turnover of any paper in the country. It had twenty-three managing editors in five years. And several thousand copyreaders, none of whom could stand the wilful ways of its publisher. How wilful those ways were, the Newspaper Guild discovered some years later when it picketed him.

The managing editor, at the time I was on the *Ledger,* was out on parole as an alleged embezzler of the funds of an upstate town of which he had been treasurer, and he was in the custody of the Salvation Army. The Army used to hold its meetings right outside our offices. Every time the band started tooting, the M. E. jumped to attention.

From the Newark *Ledger* I went to San Francisco. Although jobs were more plentiful in those days than they are now, I made the rounds of every city room in the town from that of Fremont

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STORY

DEVOTED SOLELY TO THE SHORT STORY

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C O N T E N T S

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E N D P A G E S

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Older on the *Call* to that of the Scripps *Daily News* without finding an opening until I reached the office of the San Francisco *Journal* which called itself "The New York *Times* of the Pacific Coast." Too bad, the managing editor there said, that I wasn't a man. He needed a copyreader. Ah, but I was a copyreader. From the great Newark *Ledger*. Just the copyreader he needed! He was very thoughtful for a few minutes and then he reluctantly led me out to the city room and introduced me to the man in the slot.

I went to work on the *Journal* copy desk that evening. It was not a very busy night and about ten o'clock there was a lull in the amount of copy coming across. A blond young man around on the other side of the desk looked at me and I looked back at him. The *Smart Set,* then edited by Mencken and Nathan, was mentioned. He wrote short stories for it. I told him what I thought of Mencken. He told me what he thought of Mencken. We didn't agree about Mencken at all. We argued. And we've been arguing ever since, only we don't know any more whether it is a family argument or an editorial conference. The blond young man was Whit Burnett, your errant End Pager.

I LOST my job, though, on the *Journal*. The owner of the paper came into the city room one night and saw me there. Hell broke loose. Hadn't he given explicit instructions, he demanded, never to put a woman on the copy desk? Look at what had happened the last time they had a woman copyreader. Hadn't a man on the desk fallen in love with her? And hadn't her husband come in and turned the place upside-down, beating up his copy-editing rival? No more women were to tempt any susceptible copyreaders on the *Journal*. Out I went.

My next job was as feature editor of the Los Angeles *News,* a new paper Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., later the author of "Farewell to Fifth Avenue," had just started in Los Angeles. "Neely" was very young and very, very enthusiastic. The day the new paper started he had pictures of himself taken successively as publisher, assistant to the publisher, managing editor, city editor, copyreader, feature editor, reporter, proof-reader, cameraman, linotyper, engraver, press man and as a newsboy out on the street in white canvas cap and apron selling the paper. He was also photographed in the barber shop (to which he had imported his favorite barber from New York) giving a reporter a haircut. All the pictures were published.

Neely wanted to live down his grandfather's motto, "The Public Be Damned." He ran on the masthead of his front page in bold, black italics "The Public Be S e r v e d,"—Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr. "Sure," a rival paper, the *Record,* commented, "Sure the Public Be Served—Applesauce!"

PART of my job as feature editor on the *News* was handling the editorial page. Your Publisher, as Vanderbilt always called himself, wrote the editorials.

One such editorial was Thoughts on New Year's Day. It was telegraphed from New York, a city he was at the moment leaving. It began, "As the New Year crept in, the express train crept out of the station and Your Publisher crept into his berth."

Another was about a beautiful sunset Mr. Vanderbilt saw in Canada and the editorial concluded, "The shadows deepen, Your Publisher is ready for Dreamland, what of the Morrow?"

But the one that really upset the City of The Angels was written on the occasion of his wedding anniversary. Your Publisher told how busy he had been all day with his various newspaper duties. "And Your Publisher's Wife," he asked, "what was she doing? She was remaining quietly at home all day, preparing a

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F I R S T S

by

Horace Gregory

Green Margins by E. P. O'Connell. *Houghton Mifflin Co.* $2.50. Oct. 2.
Catalogue by George Milburn. *Harcourt, Brace and Co.* $2. Sept. 10.
Brief Kingdom by Gerald Breckenridge. *Doubleday, Doran and Co.* $2. Sept. 11.
Divide The Desolation by Kathryn Jean MacFarlane. *Simon & Schuster.* $2.50. Sept. 16.

OF the three first books before me I select E. P. O'Donnell's "Green Margins" as the one most likely to reach the public for whom it was written. Mr. O'Donnell has received the *Houghton-Mifflin* literary fellowship award, and as I read the first fifty pages of his book, I could understand why his sponsors had good cause for more than usual satisfaction in discovering the work of a new writer. In these opening chapters there is the visible sensation of rediscovering a forgotten landscape, the Mississippi Delta country which lies ninety miles south of New Orleans. The scene is lush and tropical, a paradise of orange groves and oyster camps, and everywhere within it rich, rapidly climbing vegetation rises through the smouldering heat of the noon-day sun. Mr. O'Donnell has populated his "Green Margins" with idyllic primitives, a mixed breed of Slavic and Arcadian blood, and with them, living at close quarters, are those whose Creole heritage is infused with the blood of the purer African Negro.

Mr. O'Donnell's imagination is visual and descriptive: he seems to see things clearly and as the early pages of his book advance, we are introduced to what promises to be a remarkable family circle, the Kalaviches: Sister is its heroine; Tony, her father, its disconsolate widower and invalid; her grandfather, its hero; her brother, its example of tropic sloth and greed. At first glance it would seem that Sister were a Cajin Slavonian goddess, more beautiful, more serene and (as I soon suspected) more mindless than any heroine I had encountered in the last ten years of reading current fiction. Through the medium of Mr. O'Donnell's firm, resonant prose, I at first found her not unattractive, but as the book progressed, her continuous beauty, unrelieved by flaws, her excessive good health, her tactile, animal grace began to pall; I began to see her as the embodiment of some ideal creation, somewhat too good to be true and less than interesting.

I began to suspect that Mr. O'Donnell was hovering near the moment of suddenly providing us a formula for an ideal existence, such an existence which brought Sister and her grandfather far above the level of their friends and neighbors, and which (to say the least) was not a convincing argument for human superiority. One had to be too healthy to compete with Sister and her grandfather in a life of outdoor energy and indoor simplicity; I found it very difficult to believe in Sister's great pride in bearing an illegitimate child: the pride was admirable enough, the child was strong and handsome, but again I felt that Mr. O'Donnell's visual imagination had attempted to overcome whatever lapses there were in his knowledge of human psychology, and again I felt, as labor troubles began to touch the edges of the Delta, that neither verbal resonance nor visionary skill could begin to solve the complications that Mr. O'Donnell had introduced as an obligation to bring his novel to a dramatic ending. In short, "Green Margins" does not live up to the expectations aroused in its opening pages, and we leave it with the conviction that Mr. O'Donnell's ability as a novelist remains a considerably lesser talent than the gift to phrase short passages of descriptive prose.

PERHAPS Mr. Breckenridge has an advantage in seeming completely unpretentious, boyish, slight and immature; one does not expect "Brief Kingdom" to

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require more than one short hour of lightest reading: and the book is light and swiftly paced. The story itself is of no great importance, and as I read it, I found it easy to assume that this casual recital of a summer spent in a rural Virginia newspaper office might well have had its parallel in fact. A young man attempts to test his energy and endurance in running a small town newspaper; he has the mere start of a romantic love affair, which is cut short by the girl's death; his business fails—and that is all. We need not enlarge upon the details of the story; but I think we can accept the possibility of Mr. Breckenridge's further development. The evidence before me is of small bulk, but its merits are those of honest reporting raised several degrees upward to honest prose.

IT would be gratifying to report that Miss MacFarlane's revival of the Brontë legend in "Divide The Desolation" were better than it is. As a first novel it contains all those virtues, which when assembled, are faintly praised to death. The book is orderly, well-balanced, and, though written with enthusiasm, seems uninspired. Miss MacFarlane has evidently read most of the more recent biographies of the Brontë household and inclines to the theory that Bramwell collaborated with Emily in the writing of "Wuthering Heights." Miss MacFarlane's actual difficulty—and this despite the best of good intentions and modest claims—is the inevitable contrast of her book with the work written by the Brontë sisters. Her problem is one of the historical novelist unwillingly competing with the work of a genuine poetic imagination. Miss MacFarlane's book cannot withstand that test, and since we must again refer the actual story back to the imaginative sources in "Villette" in "Jane Eyre" and in "Wuthering Heights," her book emerges as a *tour de force* that does not quite come off. It is only fair

to Miss MacFarlane to remind ourselves that her book, though carefully planned, was not written for a Ph.D. thesis; it is a work of fiction—and again, in deference to what she has set out to do, extended criticism of her scholarship seems irrelevant.

THIS department has agreed to notice an occasional first novel that is not a first book, that is not, in the strictest sense of the word, the discovery of a new writer. The case of George Milburn's book "Catalogue" raises at least two beautifully attenuated technicalities: the first is that the book is the third and best of George Milburn's books; the second is the recurrent suspicion that it is not a novel at all. Mr. Milburn uses the attractive device of linking a number of Oklahoma sketches together by the delivery of mail order catalogues into the post office of a small town. Each chapter heading is marked by quotations from "Monkey Ward" and "Sears Sawbuck," a disarming trick that never quite deceives the reader. I believe George Milburn to be one of the most accomplished of our younger writers in America, but I have only to reread his books to know that most of the sketches in "Oklahoma Town," "No More Trumpets" and even in his last book were not what they should be, that they glided briskly over the surface of what he meant to say, that they utilized stock devices of the smoking-car story, that they introduced stock characters from vaudeville stages (now long outmoded)—and last, but frankly, some were downright bad. I have not retreated from my original conviction, but what now seems evident is the conclusion that George Milburn is a fragmentary writer, who, like Erskine Caldwell, is a half of one per cent excellent technician, one who lacks a critical faculty in guiding his own work and who has a valuable, if not distinguished, idiom. The total of his excellence is not merely small but scattered. A phrase, an observation, or an incident, must be unearthed from sur-

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FIRSTS

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rounding rubbish, and then at last the rare, almost perfect story, such as "The Student Of Economics" and in this book the episodes which embody the career of a small boy, Waldo Leadbetter, the editor's son who plotted against his father as well as half the town, in his effort to buy a bicycle from a mail order house. The complications of Waldo's plot to buy the bicycle is of the same character as the one that endeared the midnight schemes of Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer to a million readers. Here Mr. Milburn has tapped that curious stream of Emersonian idealism as it merges with astringent wit and small town shrewdness, and which to me is the only possible definition of our native humor. Its incongruity seems to be the only one of the few incongruities that Americans may claim as an authentic growth from our once pioneer society; the tall stories of the West are first cousins to its fantasy, and like the phoenix it seems to rise perpetually from its own ashes.

George Milburn, though consistently erratic to the very end of his new book, has reached some few of those sources that release inward laughter, and like most Americans who have learned the art, he holds his stance with his face covered by the grave mask of realism. Throughout "Catalogue" he reveals flashes of insight into the economic structure of small town life, but his creation of the grim landlord-banker of the community is almost as false as the straw men of capital and labor that stalk the pages of Upton Sinclair's novels. These flaws, however obvious, however small, cannot outweigh that decisive though physically minute tipping of the scale in Mr. Milburn's favor. Meanwhile I advise the reading of this, his first novel.

CHECK LIST

I Am The Fox by Winifred Van Etten: The Atlantic Monthly $10,000 Prize Novel. An adventure in supersensitivity, a shade too much to be read a year from now. *Little, Brown and Co.* $2.50.

Ward Eight by Joseph P. Dinneen: A first "serious" novel by a political journalist whose articles have gained considerable attention in *Harpers*. Should be read by young writers who are interested in solving the problem of how to write "social" novels. As an experiment the book has stolid merits, as a novel for general reading its merits are too slight for the effort required in reading it. *Harper & Bros.* $2.50.

Harvard Has A Homicide by Timothy Fuller: a very boyish detective story by a Harvard undergraduate. Fresh, bright, amusing. *Little, Brown and Company.* $2.00

A PASSENGER TO BALI

by

Ellis St. Joseph

PERHAPS the writing of this story will serve to expel from my mind my last lingering glimpse of Walkes as I left him, a vision that appears more real in retrospect than it did at the time. It has grown real in the fourteen years that have passed. Mind you, I accept no more responsibility for the man's end (if it was an end) than I did for the beginning of our peregrinations together. It was what some men call chance, and others destiny, that linked our lives on the dock at Shanghai and alike disrupted them two hundred miles out at sea. I merely accepted him as a passenger on the *Roundabout*—a tramp steamer flying the British flag, carrying a crew of three white officers and twenty Kanaka boys—which I owned, and put to trade in the Southern Pacific.

It was a dark, moonless night. A cold fog lay heavily upon the swirling yellow river water. We were already loaded and ready to sail and the long line of Chinese women, balancing baskets of coal upon their heads, was coming to an end. The medley of Oriental dock noises, exploring the scale between the screech of a pulley and the thunder of a falling bale, lingered in the soupy air, both pleasing and irritating, harmonious and discordant, striking the Western ear like Eastern music. The boat was tugging gently at its ropes as though eager to get under way.

I was about to mount the bridge when a large figure emerged from the fog and loomed before and above me. If the man's height had not been enough to command attention—for he towered five inches over my own six feet—his very bulk encountered at such close quarters would have obscured the view. He spoke in a booming voice.

"Have I the honor of addressing Captain Jan English of the *Roundabout?*" he shouted.

"I am Captain English."

"Allow me to introduce myself, Captain *English.*" He placed a bold emphasis upon my name that would have been ironic had he any reason for being so. "I am the Rev. Dr. Raube Walkes, a Dutch missionary, bound for Bali, to distribute Bibles and spread the word of God and Jesus Christ, His Son, our Saviour!"

So saying, he turned his attention to an inside pocket of his enormous greatcoat, a bell-like garment that swelled out all around him. I seized this occasion to study him. Ever since my childhood I have felt shy in the presence of clergymen, and even now their presence is enough to make me feel like a child. Everything about his face seemed to turn up: his mouth at the corners, his blond eyebrows, his faintly broken nose, and finally, as he looked up and caught my stare, his frank blue eyes themselves rolled heavenward. Their gaze embarrassed me.

"So you're looking at this thing men call my face!" said he, smiling. "Have you seen it before?"

"No," I answered.

"So much the better, Captain *English,*" he declared. "We can start from scratch. I am not given to wasting my words in mundane affairs. Most ministers pile up their words as a monument to their own eloquence. Not I! I save my breath. You will see how brief, how very brief, I can be—"

"Yes, yes, Dr. Walkes," I interrupted. "But come to your point. We're about to sail."

"Captain *English,*" he boomed, accenting my name as though it had some special significance for him, "I am told your boat puts in at Buelelong, the Port of Bali. Is that correct?"

I nodded; whereat he drew a huge pin seal folder from an inside pocket and handed it to me. "Here you will find a passport, several papers for identification—mostly clerical—and about four hundred in American dollars. Be good enough to examine these. If the papers, the money and myself meet with your approval—I shall sail with you tonight."

His inventory proved correct: the passport seemed in good order; the money was good as gold.

"Name your price!" he shouted.

It was not easy to make up my mind about him. My first im-

pression of this spiritual agent was entirely physical. Big men have an advantage over their smaller brothers at the start, for they stun the analytical brain by their very bigness.

"So you're a Dutchman," I said, still debating the question. "You haven't much of an accent . . . ."

"Captain *English*"—I definitely disliked the manner in which he pronounced my name—"God speaks in many tongues!"

"It's odd that you should have waited until the last moment, Dr. Walkes."

"God's work knows no time other than the present!"

The fog swirled around and between us and drew a veil over his face. The coal-women were departing, half-seen forms melting into an outer rim of darkness. Mr. Stagg, the first mate, was calling my name.

I spoke quickly: "Of course, this is very irregular, you understand. Accepting at the last moment—without proper investigation—a stranger—"

"A stranger?" thundered the missionary, orotund in voice. "A minister of the Lord!"

The offer was tempting; funds were low. I accepted. Two wooden packing cases (Bibles) and a trunk, waiting in a nearby cart, were brought on board. One of the crew, in lifting the luggage, lost his hold and roundly cursed the fog. Attempting to gloss over the uncouth speech, such profanity in the presence of a clergyman, I committed an unpardonable blunder.

"This fog is as thick as a Dutchman," I said.

The Rev. Dr. Raube Walkes looked at me with half-closed eyes and a mocking smile. "I thought it natural," he commented, "for *Englishmen* to feel at home in a fog."

Then he threw back his head and bellowed with mirth. Most men laugh as if their belts are too tight; Walkes laughed as though he had no clothes on him at all. It was the richest and most pagan laughter I ever heard and he laughed with all his body. I can still hear it ringing in my ears.

And I can still see him, as we unobtrusively slipped out of port, standing in the prow of the vessel, facing a cold breeze that blew in from the sea, an ominous figure, blacker than the night, his greatcoat flapping behind him like the wings of a gigantic bat . . . .

The days that followed were shuffled together like a deck of cards. I find it impossible to conjure for the reader one particular card and force it forward from the rest of the pack. The days faded into each other and blurred into weeks. First it was cold, then it became hot. I remember little other than that we sailed from Shanghai with Bali our third port, and nothing disturbed the ordered routine but the presence of a passenger on board. In time even the Rev. Mr. Walkes merged into the background and became one with the boat, the sky and the water. Hour upon hour his massive black figure occupied the prow, the white collar gleaming, the leonine head turned upward, the face, crowned by its tawny mane, burned by the sun a fiery red. He looked to us, up in the bridge, as he rose and fell with the undulating swell, like a bold figurehead hewn from the ship's own timber.

I had little occasion to speak with him except at mealtimes and even then the conversation was scant. For one thing, his appetite was amazing, and food monopolized his mouth; a silent grace before and after dining was the only limit to his complete disregard for table manners. He would glut and guzzle and shove more food in his boiler than would keep five big men going under full steam for a whole day. When he rested between exertions he occasionally spoke, but then it was never more than a remark about the weather. "It's hot enough to boil an egg in your pocket," he might say, mopping his brow. But even this was rare. It was more likely that he would sit tight, breathing audibly, and look up and down the square table, a smug smile of piety on his lips and a bright glint of irony in his eyes. For fear of offending him by my blunt idiom or profane thought, I furtively snubbed him; the officers did likewise; we believed the Dutchman behaved in kind.

Only once did he enter our conversation.

Mr. Stagg, the first mate, a lanky and prematurely bald American, had commented upon our good fortune in quitting the Yangtse-Kiang River without suffering from the ungodly Chinese pirates who prey upon both large and small craft. We had escaped, he asserted, because the miscreants knew by espionage that we were both well-armed and well-manned. Still, Mr. Stagg could not but deplore that an archaism like piracy should thrive within a few miles of the modern and cosmopolitan city of Shanghai.

The Rev. Mr. Raube Walkes laid down his knife and fork to

command the table's attention, which he held by an eloquent eye until he had swallowed his mouthful of food. Then, addressing us all and Mr. Stagg in particular, he said:

"Your discussion of pirates, gentlemen, brings to mind an anecdote I read in a very old book. It seems that a captive pirate was being questioned by Alexander the Great as to what right he had to infest the seven seas. 'The same that thou hast to infest the universe,' the pirate answered, 'but because I do this in a small ship, I am called robber; and because thou actest the same part with a great fleet thou art entitled a conqueror!' The same situation exists today between the little pirate and the great industrial Alexanders of Shanghai. Small wonder that they flourish coëvally! Both are the same thing . . . . "

Walkes had not mentioned the Lord's name once. He left it to the first mate to do that.

"Good God!" exclaimed Mr. Stagg, whose bald head grew red as an Easter egg. "You never read that in the Bible, sir!"

"No," said the Dutchman, "I read it in another old book. A book on pirates."

"It sounds more as if it came from a book on communism," Mr. Stagg snorted.

"On anarchy," corrected the second mate, Mr. Bailey, who never passed an opportunity to patronize his superior officer.

"Well, communism or anarchy, it comes to the same thing. There are those that make the laws and those that break 'em. I don't have to tell you that, Bailey." Having loosed his indignation on the second mate, Mr. Stagg addressed himself to the cause of it. "I'm amazed at you, sir, a man of the cloth, criticizing civilization that way—"

Rolling his eyes to the ceiling, Walkes's full sensual lips intoned in sing-song: "To *every thing* there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven."

"Not to destroy, Dr. Walkes!" interjected Mr. Stagg.

"A time," the Dutchman continued, without lowering his eyes to the mate's level, "to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that which is* planted."

"You're talking treason," cried the first mate.

"Revolution," corrected Mr. Bailey.

The Rev. Mr. Walkes paused for a second to cock his head in Mr. Stagg's direction, while, with a half-closed eye that was almost a

wink, he threw him the following aside: "Ecclesiastes III-3." Then quickly back in character, sang on, "A time to kill, a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up. . . . "

Lo and behold, our missionary was turned prophet! He was obviously talking at cross-purposes with my governmental-minded officers. With considerable relief, I entered the conversation as a peacemaker, piloting our conversation away from political reefs.

"Both you gentleman misunderstand Dr. Walkes. He speaks from the pulpit, not from the street corner. If I am not mistaken, he advocates righteousness in the cities as well as in the wilderness. A brotherhood of love, isn't that so, sir?"

The Dutchman wiped his oily red face with his napkin, which he began to fold, while apparently formulating a reply. "Yes, Captain *English,*" he said at last, "*you* might call it that." This unfortunate habit of accenting certain words, which peppered his speech with a stinging irony, was probably occasioned by his unfamiliarity with a foreign tongue. Nevertheless, it burned a man to hear it. "And why not? Shanghai could survive piracy no longer than piracy could survive Shanghai . . . Lord bless us!"

By which he meant that both he and the dinner were concluded. In total confusion, we had not found the words to express our outrage before he had escaped us, hiding his humorous eyes and smiling lips behind a silent grace. There was nothing for us to do but follow his example. We lowered our eyes in emulation. While we sat, itching with impatience and bursting to speak, Walkes pushed his chair back and stalked out of the room.

I could not help pondering upon the character of our passenger to Bali. It is impossible to imagine an imagination greater than our own, or measure a mind larger than ours, but we can recognize them if we are not blinded by egotism. Whereas both Mr. Stagg and Mr. Bailey were intellectual Lilliputians who could see no higher than their highest in command, I held the strategic position between them and Walkes, and knew myself, as compared with this Brobdingnagian minister, a mere man. Nevertheless, because the evil together with the divine are magnified by a larger growth, I wondered whether our giant might not turn out to be a Cyclops. His company oppressed me. By the alacrity of their attack upon him, both mates showed a similar reaction. And then—oh, well; he was too big for his clothes; the clerical collar

choked him; his sleeves ended at the wrist bone. My mind provides me with these details though the suit's image has mantled in my memory. Now I see only the vast blot of darkness his black vestments made as, outlined against the Southern Cross, he stood up in the prow of the boat and cast a substantial shadow over the ship's length.

I began to count the days to Bali. We lay over at the Philippines; then we stopped at Surabaya. Meanwhile our piratical missionary consorted with the crew, a companionship I did not discourage, for by relieving us of his presence it minimized the danger of a second dispute. Morevover, there was an epidemic of surreptitious drinking upon this particular trip, difficult to cope with, and the Kanaka boys, I felt, could only benefit by associating with a man of God. He got on very well with them. He understood their language, and what is more important, their sense of humor. Night after night his rich laughter mingled with theirs; often he joined them in native song. To hear them, one forgot the ringed horizon and fancied oneself in a forest clearing, sitting with savages around a bonfire that cast red lights and black shadows upon the tropical growth. I decided that Raube Walkes was the very modern sort of clergyman, the kind that plays cricket back home, and in practice prides himself like a dentist upon being painless. Yet I could no more picture him batting balls than being in England, or for that matter, in any other place, Holland included. Peculiarly he had made the ship his home.

The night before we arrived at the Port of Bali, our missionary mounted the bridge and broke in upon me. Huge drops of perspiration blistered his red face; his blue eyes shone brighter than usual. He stared at me, blinking as though blinded by the light, and swaying stupidly. I thought he was about to faint. A blood-warm, airless night, a heavy black suit, and a tight collarband were evidently more than even he could bear.

"Captain *English,*" he roared, with an elaborate irony that was a caricature of himself, "I am a man of God!"

"Are you well, sir?"

"Captain *English,* I would like—the—inestimable privilege—of your help—going ashore—"

"Dr. Walkes, shall I send for water?"

"The Balinese—very ungodly—don't want men of God—worship the Karooga bird—an *eeeevil* spirit—"

"Dr. Walkes!"

"I shall *freee* them!" he boomed, and fell on his face. As I bent over him, I recognized a familiar odor. The man was drunk.

The next morning we lay off the shallow water of Buelelong.

Indolently leaning across the deck's railing, I gazed at the long low coastline. High, slender palms bent beneath the prevailing wind and reflected themselves partly in water and partly on the shining white coral-sands they overcast. A few red Dutch-tiled roofs showed between the green leaves and the blue sky.

There are men who, by contrasting impersonal nature with subjective man, contrive to prove nature cruel and inhuman. Witness how the volcanic force which casts one island above the water's surface will submerge another with all the people and creatures on it. Where now is Atlantis? Whence comes this new uncharted rock? But nature, which is incomprehensible to us, must find us equally incomprehensible. We do by batting an eye what nature can do only by bursting the earth's crust. Who heard of Bali a century ago? Were our grandfathers cognizant of its dark-brown women toiling with bare breasts beneath a burning sun, or its effeminate lounging men who chew the soporific betelnut, spitting its bloody juice upon the white sands, bestowing toothless smiles upon each other with the blackened stumps and black-red gums the betelnut begets? In those days, when Macassar was famed for its hair oil and Victorian dandies spotted their upholstered chairs with Macassar Pomade, England's queen, like the good housewife she was, placed lace doilies where the stains were most prevalent and started a fashion by calling them anti-macassars. Today Macassar is submerged in a hyphenated word, and Bali is the tourists' Mecca. Man, impatient with nature, has proven himself as cruel and ruthless, and in showing his power has made himself her peer.

These reflections were interrupted by a tap on my shoulder. I glanced backward into the Dutchman's face. An impersonal smile buttered his lips; and I fancied that his eyes looked upon me as my eyes had looked on Bali. Instantly I felt that our passenger was responsible for the unwonted course of my thoughts. I waited for him to speak.

"Captain *English,*" he began in his full round voice, "I am a miserable and repentant sinner. The devil has used me for his own

ends. If you can find it in your heart to forgive—and *forget?*—I am sure we can come to an equitable arrangement."

"Your conduct is no concern of mine, Dr. Walkes."

"Precisely. You weren't paid to watch me. But if you are agreeable I shall now like to make my—er—welfare your *business.*"

So saying, he produced his pin seal wallet and from it drew two hundred dollars, which he placed in my hand.

"What is this for?"

"I am hiring a lifeboat for the brief period of a half hour. To get ashore. . . ."

Evidently the Rev. Mr. Raube Walkes was still drunk. His words made no sense whatever. I decided to stow away his money until such time as he should be a master of it.

Pocketing the bills I replied, "Very well, sir, as soon as the port authorities have come on board—"

"Immediately!"

"I'm afraid that's impossible."

"Good God, man, that's what I'm paying you for! If you think I want to wait on your deck until my papers are inspected—"

His red face purpled, and the smile jellied on his lips. He trembled with vehemence.

"Must I explain?" he shouted.

"I understand you well enough, sir," I answered, and handed the money back to him. "I prefer not to know the details. I'm as anxious as you to have you off my ship. But if you doubled the bribe, I wouldn't lower a line to save you."

"Must I *swim* for it?"

I pointed to the government launch which was at that moment coming alongside; and left him without a word.

After a cursory examination of the vessel, Herr Van Matsys of the Port Police, together with the quarantine officer, entered my cabin. Van Matsys was a desiccated individual whose thin little body was a mere string holding his balloon-like head to the earth. His voice had the hollow precision of a phonograph; his abrupt gestures all seemed controlled by invisible wires. He was the perfect sergeant, the ideal echo for an order.

"Captain, you are saying here iss a passenger. Vhat iss diss passenger doing?" he inquired in his squeaky voice.

"A missionary, Herr Van Matsys. Will you examine his papers?"

"A missionary? Ach, so?"

"I'll call him."

"But here iss not the possibility for a missionary at Bali. Ve are not having vun here for many years. Dey are causing too much trouble vid de natives. All de vorld knows diss!"

"I did not know it, sir. I would not have carried him if I had."

"Ach! Perhaps ve can see him?"

The Rev. Mr. Raube Walkes was summoned. His case was not clear. Obviously he was an unbalanced fanatic who had rebelled against the Dutch legal restrictions. The bribe seemed no longer sinister, but fantastic. I began to fear that I must carry him on to a further port.

The missionary's enormous bulk blocked the doorway and darkened the cabin. His passport was in hand. The mischievous light of one who delights in naughtiness and its attendant confusion twinkled in his eyes. He viewed us with vast entertainment.

A malicious smile inserted the thin end of a wedge between Van Matsys' lips.

"Ach, it iss *you!*" he said.

The following ten minutes was a nightmare. Raube Walkes and Van Matsys leered at each other, each deriving pleasure from the other's discomfort. Van Matsys declared the passport to be a forgery—"ach, and so clever!" Walkes thanked him with a mock modesty and confessed that it was his own creation and shamelessly requested that it be returned to him for future use. Van Matsys declared dryly that it would be received only in hell, and gave it back. When the little Dutchman had his fill of cat-and-mouse humor, he turned to me and said:

"Diss gentleman iss not a missionary. But still ve are not vanting him. So!"

"But what is he?"

"Here iss an international figure, Captain. You haff a famous man on your boat. He iss making trouble first in de vest and now in de east. An *agent provocateur*—vhat you call an agitator in politics. A propagandist! Ve haff been varned about his presence in de wicinity."

"But I don't understand, sir. What does he do? What has he done?"

"A dangerous revolutionary, Captain! Maybe he iss an anarchist, maybe—Gott iss knowing vhat! But he iss haffing a power over de natiffs. Five t'ounsand coolies vere following him from de cotton mills in Wuzih, not two hours from Shanghai, last year. And in Cebu, he vass leading de Filipinos, in a strike vhat vass closing de port. Now he iss hoping here in Bali—but ve are being too smart for him—!"

"Then you refuse to accept him?"

"Ach, it iss sad, but so. He iss very amusing, diss dangerous man."

"But what is his name? What is his country? What am I to do with him?"

"He has many names, he has no country! De Dutch East Indies are closed to him. No doubt all udder possessions haff likevise been varned, and like deir countries are on de lookout for him. I do not know vhere iss not closed to such a man. I doubt vedder you will lose him!"

"But to whom does he belong, Herr Van Matsys? I refuse to be burdened with him."

"You haff no choice. Here he iss on diss ship, he belongs to you." The little Dutchman coughed up some dry laughter. "No vun will haff what is your own responsibility!"

Walkes drowned him out with thunderous laughter.

He roared: "Would you turn me into a Flying Dutchman, sir?"

"Dat iss a good vun! Ha, ha! You vill sail, ha, ha, from now—until—eternity! *Ein Fliegende Hollander!*"

I was aghast at the situation. On my own responsibility I had accepted a man I knew nothing about, who had said he was a missionary, but was some agitator intent upon starting an uprising among the natives of Bali; and who, if Van Matsys was to be believed, had been outlawed by every country on the face of the earth. The forces of law and order, which he disregarded, had shunned him. His character was now clear in the light of his identity. For a moment I almost wished the boat and all on board it at the bottom of the sea.

"But Herr Van Matsys," I said, "is there nothing that can be done with him?"

"I belief our friendt iss being vanted by de Shanghai police. Dere

you picked him up and dere you must put him down. It iss your vun chance."

Walkes and Van Matsys stared at each other pleasantly enough; each understood the other—they represented the opposing forces of law and anarchy. Behind the diminutive inspector stood the whole world of policedom and officialdom and the four billion people it protects. Raube Walkes stood isolated, self-dependent and impregnable, a natural law unto himself. Here if ever was a collision between the immovable body and the unarrestable force. As such, each respected the other and employed this short truce for a mutual inspection.

"Oh, you are a so clever man," cried Van Matsys. "How iss it possible you are coming as a clergyman to Bali? It vas wrong."

"I had no time for shopping, my dear sir. This was the only suit that would fit me."

Van Matsys smiled sadly.

"Dey are not making clothes big enough to fit you. No, nor countries eider," he said. Then he shrugged his shoulders, neatly replaced his papers in their portfolio, and departed.

Walkes answered my questioning stare by sitting down in my cabin and filling his pipe with a patient care. He made himself at home.

We left Bali the same day.

That night I called Mr. Stagg and Mr. Bailey into my cabin and held counsel upon what plan would be best to pursue. We stood up, supporting ourselves without the help of furniture or walls, for the heat was so heavy that when you put your hand on a table it was wet when you picked it up. Both mates were furious at the unjustifiable imposition that had been laid upon us. For once they agreed. Raube Walkes was the most unprincipled of villains, unbearable and unpardonable, a jinx, a hoodoo, a veritable Jonah who should be thrown to the whales. Yet Mr. Stagg would be *damned,* and Mr. Bailey (just to be different) would be *blessed,* if either one knew what to do. We finally decided that, considering the poor state of the ship's finances, we would not alter our course, but continue trading, and endeavor meanwhile to part with our unwelcome passenger at every port. If we found this impossible, then willy-nilly we would carry the beggar back with us to Shanghai where he would meet with his proper fate.

Shanghai was six thousand miles off by the *Roundabout's* route, about three months sailing. For the rest we would steer by the compass and hope by the stars.

The first seven days were a week of Doomsdays. Then a second port refused our passenger; and a third, a fourth and a fifth followed precedent. Our ship was received at dock with derisive smiles and sardonic laughter; the story flew like a screaming gull before our mast; one official thanked us with an open sarcasm for ridding the world of a dangerous revolutionary, the most undesirable of its inhabitants. *Der Fliegende Hollander*—The Flying Dutchman—was a label fit to catch the public fancy, and it was enthusiastically employed by the white and brown population who clamored to see him. As for Raube Walkes, when we were within sight of land he neither hid nor exhibited himself, but conspicuous in his clerical black—and—white, paced the deck with a lively step and a curiosity as vivacious as that of the sight-seekers.

He never attempted to escape, although God knows, we gave him every opportunity! I think he enjoyed being in the world's eye and probably hoped that in time he would become a *cause celèbre.* Perhaps that had been his purpose from the first: I have not the faintest, foggiest notion. One may associate with a man without knowing him. It is one thing to sound a man's character, another—more difficult—to fathom his thoughts. Our Mr. Walkes seemed that paradox, a profound actor.

It is impossible to say when or how, but slowly, imperceptibly, our passenger came to take possession of the ship and all its crew. The Kanaka boys, with whom he continued to mix exclusively, were the first to fall under his spell. They loved him with an almost female devotion and treated him, not as a brown man treats a white one, but as one of them, yet their superior. The nearest English equivalent for the name they gave him in their ungodly language is *Captain.* Also, inevitably, as he filled the officers' minds, he ousted all their other thoughts until he possessed them by their very hatred of him. Certainly every port for which I headed (and Shanghai at the end) was a destination, not so much for the crew and cargo, as for our bogus Dutchman. We felt the restrictions of our forced association far more than he; we were his prisoners, not he ours. When, at Mr. Stagg's suggestion, a concerted plan was attempted to put Walkes into coventry at

dinner time, Walkes—without opening his mouth except to eat, or closing it except to smile—silenced the entire table. He all but emptied our cupboard with his Gargantuan appetite. And it was for him the Kanaka boys sang at their work, and I stood at the wheel, and our native cook concocted his most succulent mess.

Meanwhile Walkes never changed his costume. His white collar was wilted and smudged; his black serge was ruined by spots as diversified as soup and oil. Coat buttons were missing here and there. But he continued to play the clergyman. He read. He smoked. He paced the deck as though it were his own property. Even when he stood for hours in the prow of the boat, time did not hang heavy on his hands, but seemed to pass through him for his own special use. The nights he spent in company with the crew, singing with them in his rich voice, amusing them by feats of strength and jokes at which his pagan laughter rang out louder than the rest. There was considerable drinking, the source of which we were unable to discover. Undoubtedly the deck hands treated him out of their hidden store. In any case, Raube Walkes was as blasphemous a picture as anyone could see, liquored every night and a demoralizing influence in the bargain.

Mr. Stagg advised me to put our man in solitary confinement. He declared that the engineer had spied Walkes playing at certain animalistic practices with the Kanaka boys. The engineer later denied it, and I was given no proof, for which I was grateful. I was not blinded to the possibilities of what might happen if I jailed him. I wanted no Samson in chains.

It occurred to me, as I lay in my cabin one sultry morning, to examine the two packing cases which our passenger had brought with him on board, claiming that they contained Bibles for distribution in Bali. They were brought up on deck and opened. One was filled with anarchistic pamphlets. The other, now half empty, held enough whiskey to float a launch. Here was the fountain and origin of dissipation which had puzzled us for two months. I threw the bottles over the stern one by one. Then I dumped the papers after them; but an inopportune breeze caught these up and carried them high in the air, flapping like wild snowy birds; many were blown backward and either alighted in the rigging or were distributed about the deck. Walkes, far from being angered, laughed boisterously as we ran after

the pamphlets. These had to be gathered again and disposed of for good.

After that first week of awful impatience we grew resigned—you get used to hanging if you hang long enough—and each day became its own eternity. This can happen at sea, where the circular horizon moves in with the ship, and no thing stands to mark its passing. Time remains static where no greater confusion of people is possible, no change in physical properties is permitted. Day follows night. The sun that rises in the east sets in the west. The north wind blows south, the south north, the east west, and the west east; so it is all around the compass. And the *Roundabout,* an infinitesimally tiny speck creeping over the earth's wet circumference, turned north to China.

The days grew colder.

Mr. Walkes again appeared on deck in his greatcoat. Clouds of pipe smoke blew over his shoulder and trailed behind him. When the wind became stronger he covered the burning bowl with an asbestos hand. He clung to his pipe even after it refused to fire and the bluish smoke that followed him was his own frozen breath.

The constellations changed. The Southern Cross sank as the Northern Cross ascended.

The water turned from blue to green and finally to yellow as we touched the Yangtse-Kiang.

We kept a constant look-out for river pirates, but no unpleasant event interfered with the placidity of our course. Our spirits buoyed as the boat approached its port. I think we felt that the very ship would rise ten feet once relieved of its passenger's weight.

Only Raube Walkes, patiently trodding the deck as if we were ten miles from nowhere, took no part in the prevalent high spirits.

Breaking the silence of weeks I said with an ill-concealed triumph: "Mr. Walkes! Do you realize that we cast anchor in an hour? Are you packed and ready?"

"No. I'm not packed," he said, scrutinizing me with his clear blue eyes. They would have been diabolic had they not been surrounded by benevolent wrinkles.

"There won't be much time, you know. You'll be getting off here.

Don't look for any difficulties with the authorities in Shanghai. They'll be glad to see you."

"Will they come, do you think?"

"I'm sure of it!"

Now that our trip together was at an end, I started to laugh from sheer relief, and he laughed with me. I had no idea about what he was laughing, but his very laughter made me laugh all the more. I almost forgot my antipathy for him in our mutual mirth!

But, two hours later, the Shanghai port police had denied Raube Walkes permission to enter the country. Apparently advised by radio of his approach, they possessed the particulars of his peculiar case: and though Shanghai wanted him, China did not. Yes, he would be imprisoned if he put foot on land, but he was not to be given the opportunity. This saved the government a complicated legal procedure that might prove embarrassing, and likewise dispensed with the nuisance of providing for him. In prison or out the man was undesirable. They commiserated with me upon my misfortune, but could suggest no other course than application to the British consul for help. In any case, so long as the *Roundabout* lingered in port, Raube Walkes must be confined to chains.

So Mr. Stagg was gratified at last. But I am sure he realized, as he turned the key upon our captive with his own fingers, the futility of his plan. No wonder the culprit succumbed to imprisonment with such smug complacence! If he was at one end of the chain, we were at the other. The lock was his safeguard.

I left the ship in charge of her officers and set out at once for the British consulate. Mr. Herbert Chisholm, then consul, whose advice I had sought upon two or three past occasions, was occupied. Would I mind waiting? Each minute that passed, instead of composing me, saw my excitement increase. An hour later I entered the consul's office as flustered as if I had run to keep my appointment.

Mr. Chisholm greeted me affably and rose to give me his hand. He was a tall, bony man with a long aquiline nose and a black mustache: a grave countenance that now and again was contradicted by his quick boyish grin. One might call him middle-aged if that nondescript term did not imply being either ridiculously young or pathetically old. Mr. Herbert Chisholm was neither.

Without more ado I told him my story.

When I had finished he rubbed his nose with a long big-knuckled finger and chuckled to himself.

"I know the man well, Captain," he murmured, "I'm afraid that your famous passenger is a man without a country. There isn't much we can do for him. There isn't anything."

"But is there nothing to be done for me, Mr. Chisholm? Am I expected to sail him around the world all the rest of my days?"

"It looks that way, doesn't it?"

"By God, sir, I'd scuttle the ship first!"

"Not a bad idea," he said, his gravity transformed into a grin.

"I had hoped that at least you, Mr. Chisholm—at least *you*—"

"Remember this, Captain. The man you have on your ship carries no passport and is claimed by no country. Legally he doesn't exist. He's a myth. As such, no flag protects him. He has no rights. If he were suddenly to disappear, no questions would be asked. Do you follow me?"

I nodded. Mr. Herbert Chisholm stood up and looked at me down one side of his long nose.

"Even if he were to die. . . ."

What was he saying? His hand was upon my shoulder, his lips near my ear.

"If I were in your shoes, Captain," he was whispering, "I'd go for a walk with him on some dark night—around the deck—and talk, you know, talk—keep on talking to him—until you come to the railing's end—and then—"

I turned my head to face him. His eyes were as close to mine as yours are to this page. I could no more believe my eyes than you can yours.

"But that's murder!"

"I fail to see how you can murder a man who doesn't exist."

"He does exist! That's what none of you seem to realize! He's a man the same as you and I!"

"He might commit *suicide,* you know." The grin that suddenly illuminated his grave features filled me with fear. It came like a beacon flash, cutting through darkness, indicating the proximity of a perilous reef and as suddenly it had disappeared.

"It might be regarded as your patriotic duty. . . . "

The interview was at an end.

by Ellis St. Joseph

When the *Roundabout* again weighed anchor, a second time bound for Bali, Raube Walkes was still on board. Mr. Stagg, Mr. Bailey, the engineer and myself went about our tasks sullenly, silently, as though this were the ship's last trip. We moved down the river without mishap. Our prisoner was put at liberty, which meant he could walk a hundred paces back and forth. In his clergyman's suit and flapping greatcoat he occupied the prow; and we never could look ahead but we saw his figure looming before us. Thus we passed with the river out to sea.

That night the boat began to roll.

Crouched amid the brown-skin boys in the forecastle, Raube Walkes crooned with them, accompanied by the steady beat of bare palms on the floorboards. Their monotone, climbing and falling as it carried, now muffled and now clear, came and went with the wind. It was upsetting that a white man should join in such mumbo-jumbo. Their song had an ominous note that belonged to the threatening ocean and I wondered over its meaning. If they were seeking to pacify the elements they certainly sang in a language the sea could understand; they sounded as hostile and savage as the night itself.

The barometer fell.

Realizing that we were in for a blow, we headed the boat out to sea; it was near the end of the typhoon season and we were taking no chances. A wise fisherman knows that the shark's tail is more dangerous than his head.

Mr. Stagg, leaving the wheel in charge of Mr. Bailey, made a brief call in my cabin.

"That's an ungodly noise they're making up there," he said, pointing with his crooked thumb to the forecastle.

"I know. Walkes is in it."

"He would be, wouldn't he?" said the American. He scratched his bald head as though it had hair on it. "Tell me, sir, what's to be done with him?"

I threw up my hands.

"I've been thinking a good bit about it," he went on, "these last few days. I've got an idea—"

"What is it?"

"Well, I don't know how to say it . . . Hell, why not? What's to keep us from giving him a lifeboat and some food and setting him adrift?"

"He'd starve to death."

"But we wouldn't be there to see it, would we?"

"No, that's impossible. It's inhuman."

"I suppose you'd sooner see him drown. Kinder, eh?" Hatred counterfeited humor in his eye.

"Drown?"

"Why not, sir? It's a dark night, isn't it? If a man fell overboard tonight—"

Was the continual whisper in my ear so loud then that another could hear it? Four days now Mr. Chisholm's voice had blown like a foghorn through my brain. It was so easy. Who would know? Who could blame me? There was nothing cruel about it. It was not like cutting him adrift, sending him to a death of thirst, seeing him die with dry lips and sunken eyes. There would be water, plenty of it. A quick push—

Outside the waves were scrapping together like a menagerie let loose, to which the wind lent a hue and cry.

"Well," Mr. Stagg was saying, "we can't carry him from now until the Day of Judgment. If he were on land, the law would do it for us. You're the law at sea—"

"It's out of the question."

"You couldn't' call it *murder,* Captain—"

"I refuse to discuss it."

"Think of him, sir. Do you think it will be pleasant for him to spend the rest of his life at sea? Never put his foot on land? Have you thought of that?"

"I've thought of it. I don't want to think of it."

I have no desire to excuse or explain my final decision. Constructing a sound case for myself, it would be only too easy to say: that it had twice been recommended to me as the logical course; it was my patriotic duty; the law approved; my patience had consumed itself; I was temporarily deranged by the prospect of a never-ending sentence, etc. If killing is justifiable, then I was justified. But then as now, I considered it murder, and there is no excuse for that. Nor will I attempt to describe the mental processes which predicate such mad be-

havior. They belong to those states of indescribable pain so dreadful, that our minds are forced to bury them in oblivion. I do not remember, and I cannot now imagine, the condition of mind that makes murder plausible. All I can do is set down the facts as they occurred.

Once out on the deck, surrounded by darkness and sprayed by a cold, wet wind, I collided with the engineer.

"Hullo, there!" he cried. "It's a black night—!"

It seemed as though the whole world, man and nature, had conspired to make the crime possible and was coaxing me to it. The night's darkness was concentrated on our ship. Beneath a turbulent mass of black clouds which blotted out the moon, the sea surged like boiling pitch. Waves leapt hungrily up to the deck.

I walked to the railing and looked down into the water; when I turned around, Raube Walkes was standing by my side.

Even *he* seemed to urge me on . . . .

"What do you want?" I asked him. My voice was hoarse.

The odor of whiskey met me before he opened his mouth. "Captain *English,*" he began, couching the words in his inevitable smile, "I want to speak with you."

I stared at his lion-like head with disbelief. His square chin was sunk in his coat-collar; the mane of tawny hair was flying wild; his blue eyes gleamed in the darkness as though phosphorescent.

"I don't want to talk to you!" I cried.

"But I insist," he answered smoothly, linking his arm in mine. "Shall we take a turn about the deck?"

He started off and I went with him, hypnotized into obedience, drawn forward as in a dream of wish-fulfillment, lured by my victim to his own destruction. After we had promenaded for a time—I ran to keep pace with him—he paused.

In the oratorical voice which doubtless he considered the ideal vehicle for irony, he boomed: "Captain *English,* I am a very sensitive man. Though you have done your best to conceal a certain animosity which you—perhaps not unnaturally—bear toward me, my allergic perceptivity has made me conscious of it. Will you oblige me, sir, by informing me what has occasioned this feeling of conflict and hostility in your breast?"

His flowery speech nauseated me. The hypocrisy could not even be condoned by deception. It was guying, not guile. My gorge rose.

"You tricked me into accepting you on this boat, knowing very well what would happen if you were apprehended!"

"But the animosity began long before you knew me for the consummate villain I am."

"You've had a demoralizing influence on the whole crew. Your drunkenness, your liquor!"

"Before that, sir! It began before that!"

"Your ideas!"

"Captain *English,* think back. Certainly it began even before I attempted to corrupt you with my—er—ideas?"

"It began—"

"Yes?"

"The night I picked you up off the wharf, sir! I suffered a physical revulsion the moment I laid eyes on you. I found my reasons later. That night, Mr. Walkes, I disliked you without cause."

"Thank you!" The thunder subsided from his voice; it became soft and insinuating. "You disliked me before you knew anything about me. Then you must have disliked me for some reason within yourself. Perhaps you do right to blame me for making you conscious of it."

My eyes drifted away from him, seeking some object to focus upon, anything to occupy my mind and divert it from the course of his speech. Then I saw that he had stopped at the railing's end and only this solitary figure of Walkes was between myself and the sea! Oddly, this seemed not the reality, but another rehearsal of the plotting imagination, different from a hundred scenes like it which had already filled my mind, only in that this was the more dreamlike: it was *he* who had suggested our walk, *he* who had paused at its destination, and *he* who talked—went on talking—while it was *I* who listened to him!

"You hold me responsible for the undesired linking of our lives. It is you who are to blame, Captain *English,* you and the world you stand for. If man were free and a law unto himself, such a situation as this could never have arisen. It is the world of laws and orders—your world—that has occasioned it. For two thousand years the strong have been sacrified to the weak, and with what result? To imprison the strong, the weak have imprisoned themselves. They have constructed a great cage of government and jurisdiction and everyone, giants and

pygmies alike, have been incarcerated in it. And there are cages within cages! If one man is strong enough to escape from that labyrinth of bars and locks and view imprisoned mankind like animals in a zoo, it is more than they can bear. A great howl is set up. They will spare neither effort nor expense to recapture the truant and if possible, destroy him. And do you know why, Captain *English?* Because he has destroyed their illusion of freedom within limits, he has broken the bounds and betrayed them to themselves. Captain *English,* that is why you abominate me. Because I know none of your hampering traditions, your congenital fears, your inherited weakness! Because your *God* is not mine, and my *nature* is not yours! Realize what you mean when you call me primitive and yourself civilized! This boat is your world, Captain *English*—"

The waves were now leaping on the deck itself. The wind was rising. Walkes shouted to be heard.

"The difference between us is that I break laws as naturally as you obey them," he went on. "If our positions were transposed, do you think I would hesitate for a minute? I would do what you are contemplating! I would act!"

Which I was suddenly about to do, putting my hand forward clumsily like a blind man seeking light, wanting to push my way to freedom. Over he must go, that was it. Over—

Raube Walkes grasped my wrist with his left hand and such was his strength that he flung me down on my knees at his feet. My arm went numb. I felt only the cold water running on the deck; and I floundered in it as if I were at the bottom of the sea.

"Coward!" he roared. "You were not strong enough! This ship is mine! *I'll never leave it!*"

Laughing uproariously, he threw my arm back at me.

"I give you back your life. It would die with your conscience. You would never have survived me."

Suddenly it seemed that the four winds had converged upon the ship. Creaking and screaming, it rose like the roof of a house in a hurricane. Then we fell endlessly. Tons of black water poured in over us. The storm had started.

"We're in for it!" howled Walkes.

His cry released my locked joints and restored me to a semblance of life and activity. I stood on my feet. I took command. I was away

from Walkes and everywhere at once. There was a boat at sea, laboring through a bursting ocean, and I was captain of it. There are times when only the fear of losing his life is sufficient to save a man from losing his mind. The natural course of events that calls for a disaster can be diverted only by the accidental occurrence of a catastrophe. As such, the storm proved my salvation.

The wind blew so ferociously that it ceased to be air and became solid. It attacked the ship's flanks with a battering ram, twisted the iron spars, broke the chains of the deck cargo, collapsed the lifeboats as if they were sea shells; it shrieked like a bat being murdered, and bellowed like a mad bull, gave voice to every cry that the brain can receive between life and death. This was no longer the gentle air of which we are so confident, which we breathe and becomes a part of us—this was the wind that gave voice to Walkes. It annihilated the ocean's surface; wind and water mingled. We vomited the salt water from our lungs. There were times when, whether we floated or whether we had sunk, we could not tell. Down we would go, slowly down, the water moiling before our eyes, our heartbeats muffled in our ears, our breath gone; down as a minute flowed by and more. Then the ship would groan in labor, shivering with strain, and the engines would burst out as though the ship's very groin were ruptured. And up—up! Out of the boiling water we flew, followed by an ear-splitting noise, heart-rending, a screaming mechanical grind that went through us like a dentist's drill, as our propeller cleared the surface and whirred in the air. We would feel the sound in our teeth. And then down again.

The ship rolled on her side, all the way over, until we thought she had turned upside down. A mute conflict ensued between the boat and the sea, each pulling, the ship holding this incredible position with calamity in the balance. Each time I thought would be her last. But slowly she would right herself and swing ponderously to the other side. The planks groaned with the shuddering of her frame. Once she stood up on end. We clung to ropes, bars and timbers, swinging in space, until the fury had spent its erection and ejected us back into the sea.

But the most unforgettable moment of that hideous night occurred when the black clouds quietly parted overhead and from between them emerged a full moon placidly sailing in the sky. It cast a pallid light on the hellish turbulence below, the colliding mountains of water and the impending peril of each dark precipice that rose up before us.

By revealing the storm in its nakedness it proved our imaginations stunted, for our worst fears had pictured no panorama so vast and horrifying as the actuality. Cool and impersonal, the moon soared high above, mocking us with its aloof serenity. There was no sound in heaven; on earth the wind and fury. It was the most ironical sight I ever beheld.

Walkes was standing beside me. I had forgotten him in the confusion and danger, and started when I realized who he was. Was I never to lose him? Had he followed me about, I wondered, shadowing me even in darkness? His face was streaming with water and his wet hair plastered his wide forehead like a wig. The cold mocking light of the moon illumined the sardonic smile on his lips. Then he shouted something to me which I could not hear.

An attempt to shout down the wind could be invoked only by words of vast importance, something upon which our immediate salvation depended. I knew that, no matter how, I must hear him. But although I bent toward him as far as I could without releasing my hold on the cabin door, and struggled to catch his meaning, I was unable to capture a fragment of what he said.

He was shouting. I could tell that from the way the veins swelled on his forehead and stood out from his throat. His open mouth was running with sea water, but the wind blew his words back and all but choked him. I could hear nothing . . . only the screaming gale and the roaring water . . . .

That, and then a world of water crashed down upon our heads and we sank under with the ship. When it rolled off, Walkes was gone.

Somehow I managed to mount the bridge.

Mr. Bailey was holding the wheel with all his might, but every ounce of his strength could not restrain it from swinging, now to the left and now right, nearly breaking his wrist with each revolution. Fatigued as I was, I fell upon the handle bars and added my own puny efforts to his. The wheel remained stationary for a moment, and then, despite the weight and combined bracing of our bodies, it again began to turn. We were forced to climb the bars hand over hand like monkeys in a revolving cage. For all that we could do, the rudder was turning the wheel, the sea navigating the boat.

I saw Mr. Bailey's lips frame the single word:

"Rope!"

If the wheel were not lashed the ship would go spinning like a match in a maelstrom. But there was no rope. And if either of us released his restraining hold, the other would be killed by the sudden resultant revolution. All we could do was to grip the bars grimly, the hold of a mongoose on a cobra's throat, held by the wheel as fast as we held it.

A sudden calm ensued, and the ocean became miraculously quiet. Neither sound nor movement betrayed a breath left in the storm. Beguiled by the false tranquillity, we relaxed our feverish tension and balanced the wheel with the weight of our limp bodies.

With a crash like thunder, the wind, having redoubled its fury, burst upon the ship. The wheel spun, flung us up into the air, up and away. I struck the cabin wall and fell unconscious. And now I was dreaming about a storm at sea, the wind and the waves, and an overwhelming wheel spinning madly . . . . My eyes opened and after a minute's wrestling with reality I awoke. Mr. Bailey's body, crumpled in unnatural angles, lay huddled in a corner. The indomitable wheel spun around, this way and that, death to approach.

I started down to the deck, shouting: "The wheel! . . . . The wheel!"

No one heard me. The *Roundabout* was shrieking in a death agony, turned and tortured by the waves. Her life was a matter of minutes. With an uncontrollable rudder she would drive herself down into the deep.

A sudden convulsion of the boat catapulted me into Mr. Stagg and two native boys crouching beside him. The four of us went sprawling. At last I managed to make them hear.

"She'll capsize!" I screamed. They nodded to me. They understood.

They struggled back with me up the steep steps to the bridge, and viewed the maniacal wheel with eyes aghast. It whirled at such a rate that we beheld only its blurred outline. For an instant it would stop and then spin back in the other direction. It had a diabolic mind of its own, intent upon our destruction, and we danced about it like idiots.

A great wave smote the walls and broke in the door and descended upon us. As the ship raised her shoulders above the sea, and the water washed out, we saw looming in the doorway an immense man. With the salt water running down him, dripping from his face

and fingers, Raube Walkes might have risen from the sea itself. In an instant his quick eyes had encompassed the unpossessed wheel, those who pranced impotently about it and the crumpled figure of Mr. Bailey on the floor.

"Out of the way!" he bellowed.

We obeyed his order and retreated to the walls. He cast himself forward, turning about as he went, and charged the wheel with his back. There was a crash and a cracking sound: the wooden spokes had splintered. Like Axion with a wheel upon his back, Raube Walkes caught the ship in its course. He bent beneath the terrific force. Slowly the wheel, with the ocean's weight behind it, ground him down. The bones showed through his red face in white blotches. He sank upon one knee heavily.

He raised his head with difficulty and his bloodshot eyes sought mine. I shall never forget his expression then. Effort entrenched itself in deep lines there as it fought with pain. His lips twitched as they were pulled now by courage and again by despair. The skin grew white as death. And then a sudden and incredible smile—like lightning in winter—flashed across his face. It unclosed a row of clenched teeth, but it was a smile and his very eyes shone with it.

"My . . . collar . . . ." he grunted.

I understood. When I had ripped off the clerical band that was choking him and bared his bullish throat, the cords and tendons of which stood out like a ship's rigging, he sighed with relief and rewarded me with such a smile as Christ must have given for a drink of water.

We joined him in his effort, but our strength was no more than an emanation of his. It was a half hour before the wheel could be lashed, and by then the storm had spent its fury. And such had been Herculean strength of his determined will, that—because neither the man nor the ocean would give, but each grimly held out against the other—the rudder broke beneath the strain.

Next morning we took toll of the havoc.

Through heaving silvery water and swirling fog, the *Roundabout* drifted aimlessly. Listing thirty degrees to starboard, the ship was wrecked and mangled beyond recognition, a corpse floating face upward. All but two lifeboats were stoved in or gone. Four Kanaka boys

had been washed overboard; others had broken limbs; none was without a bruise of one kind or another. Mr. Bailey was dead. I took our bearings. We were barely two hundred miles off the coast of China.

After a brief consultation with Mr. Stagg, I decided that—considering we had no wireless, since a crew of under thirty does not legally require one, through which to effect our rescue, and the *Roundabout* past control or repair, might sink before she was sighted by another vessel—it was best to abandon ship; and I gave orders for the lifeboats to be lowered. At that, one of them leaked badly, but with bailing it would do—it would have to do. Good navigation should pull us through the shoppy swell without too great peril.

Once again, and for the last time, I was faced with the problem of my *Doppelgänger,* Mr. Walkes. Since the preceding night, when our lives had been saved by his heroic intervention, any disposal of him was further complicated by the gratitude I felt, or knew that I should have felt, for what he had done. *Now* what was I to do? Carry him along with us or desert him on a sinking ship? The world's opinion, weighted by my own distaste, advised me to abandon him: he was a social leper, depraved beyond redemption, dangerous whether at loose or imprisoned in a penal colony. Duty, dictated by justice, was clear. But the other alternative, bolstered by my guilt in lacking gratitude, committed me to saving his life regardless of the cost. However, even the punishment was equivocal. The ship might drift her way to safety and the lifeboats founder; both might disappear in her hazardous course; both might find a destination.

If only I did not hate him so! Inversely, I tried to substantiate my hatred rather than establish a reasonable basis for friendliness. Why had he brought help to men he despised? Because he could not preserve his own life without saving ours, that was obvious, simple. So might a soldier, under fire, crouch and protect the body lice which infested him, rescue them from a common death, only to destroy them when the danger was past.

The first mate was awaiting my decision.

"Mr. Stagg, I'm going to take your advice after all," I told him. "Mr. Walkes will be given a boat, some food, and be set adrift."

Mr. Stagg returned my wry smile with a sullen stare. I marvelled to see how easily he hated our passenger, hated him beyond question or consideration, no less this morning than he had prior to the storm.

That passionate loathing which blinds us more than love and is even more lasting, had made a permanent home within him.

"But," I added, "there was one thing you didn't foresee last night. The boat we're giving him is the one we're on. The *Roundabout.* We're taking to the lifeboats without him!"

"That ought to hold him, sir. The ship wasn't big enough with him and the rest of us on board." The American coughed up some wry laughter and spat on the slanting deck. "It ought to hold him for a while—anyway—" He winked at me and walked away.

Suddenly, feeling fled before fact, and the whole situation became irresistibly funny. A captain and his crew, saddled with an undesirable passenger, after having endeavored by every possible means to rid themselves of this human parasite, turn the tables on him, and leave him alone on the boat they have been unable to make him leave. It was magnificent! I could see the comedy being enacted ten minutes before the curtain arose. Mr. Walkes's fallen mouth and wide eyes would spell the disappointment of a baby Gargantua, huge proportions making his impotence appear all the more helpless; while the Kanaka boys, his only friends on board, would be scrambling over the railing and down the ropes like monkeys—no, like rats deserting a doomed vessel. Then, when we had pushed off, Mr. Walkes would bellow and shake his fist at us, no longer terrible, but mildly grotesque like a giant in a fairy tale. I only hoped that he would not spoil the scene by stepping out of character, by breaking down at the end, to plead, to snivel, to beg . . . .

I went to my cabin for the last time. Oddly, I felt no sorrow in leaving it forever. The wreck was a bad business, of course; but the ship was insured, and I stood to lose little in a financial way. Sentimental regrets, such as saying good-bye to four walls that had housed me so long, a bed which had given me sleep, a table at which I had worked, were annihilated by the state of destruction wreaked by the wash and blow of wave and wind. The room looked strange and hostile. I felt as though I had never lived in it. For some minutes I hesitated amid the wreckage, wondering what to salvage, what I would require during the journey and what I would desire to keep after that. Then I made a bundle of my account book, the log, a few instruments, a chart or two, what money I possessed, and finally—God knows why! —a Bible. Inexplicably, it occurred to me that I should carry a change

of shirt, but I dismissed the idea as ludicrous. I was half way through the door before I returned for my revolver. At least, that was practicable. It was impossible to foretell what our reception would be on shore, where many of the coast villages were buzzing pirate hives, and a loaded pistol was as necessary as bread and water.

The boats were already being filled when I came out of the cabin. Seven boys, besides the first mate and the engineer, were in the better boat. Five were bailing the leaking one. The four remaining Kanakas, who would come with me, still lingered on deck, gazing about them with a calm aimless disinterest which not even disaster could direct or organize. As I approached, they stared now at me, then at Walkes, their idle curiosity expressive of unconcern and amusement.

"Mr. Walkes!" I said.

"At your service, sir," he replied with elaborate affectation of courtesy.

"I have some unpleasant news for you," I began.

As the big man looked down at me, his blue eyes, vibrant in the gray mist, showed the same serene indulgence apparent in the natives' gaze. I suddenly understood why judges used to put their heads in a black hood before they condemn a man to death. Words would not come while he continued to look at me. This, the hour of my triumph, was harder to bear than all my long days of defeat and frustration. In an effort to realize a sense of personal victory, I forced myself to remember the many humiliations to which he had subjected me, his brazen deceptions, his trouble-making, his delight in my helplessness, the ruthlessness with which he had thrown me down on my own deck.

"This boat is yours," I said, "and I'm afraid you'll never leave it." The words were out of my mouth before I recognized them as his; and Mr. Walkes, hearing them, burst into a belly-laugh which blew them up to the sky. Was triumph his as well as defeat? I stood small before him in my victory.

"Splendid, Captain *English!*" he roared. "I didn't think you could do it! So the *Roundabout's* mine, is it? Thank you, sir! Thank you."

"You're welcome to her, Mr. Walkes," I said rapidly, hoping to conclude the business as soon as possible and put an end to his unbelievable effrontery. "I think you'll be safe here—for a while. And there'll be food enough—even for you. We can't take more than our

boats will hold. You're welcome to anything you find, anything. I wish you a very pleasant journey—wherever you're going—"

"The same to you, sir!" he broke in, chuckling.

"I think that should be all. Goodbye, Mr. Walkes." I turned away without offering him my hand. Then, to the Kanakas who dawdled about like children while their parents talk, I said: "Into the boat."

A hurried colloquy in whispers took place among them. Impatient to push off, not that I feared the ship would sink under us, but because I was anxious to put the sea between Walkes and myself, I repeated my order more sharply than at first. I was not in the mood for trifling. One of the boys stepped away from the others, and addressed Walkes with two or three syllables in a foreign tongue; Walkes nodded his head abruptly.

"Well?" I shouted. "Are you coming or do you want me to leave you?"

"Yes. That's it," said our passenger. "They want you to leave them." He spoke with a genial gusto, a simplicity and lack of ostentation which was strange to his lips. I paid no attention to him.

"Is it true?" I asked the four boys.

One of them nodded. Despite their refusal to obey me, they continued to show in their eyes a docility and friendly amusement that, considering their pig-headed obstinacy maddened me.

"You fools!" I cried. "Do you want to drown?"

"They want to stay with me," said Walkes.

"Stay with you!" I echoed. Stay with him? His statement meant nothing to me, so incomprehensible was the thought it implied. Slowly, the truth measured itself in my mind. Not content with having bested me physically and mentally, but now spiritually, without lifting his voice or raising a hand, he was throwing me again, wresting from me in the presence of my crew what little victory I had won.

"I'll be damned if they do!" I was yelling. In an instant I had my revolver out, and covered the five of them. "Stand back, Mr. Walkes!" My hand trembled so that I nearly shot him while ordering him out of the line of fire. He made no move. "Mr. Walkes, stand back!" I repeated. He remained as still as a statue; instead, the boys moved, grouped themselves around him, their half-naked, glistening bodies

leaning toward the heroic central figure, oddly, in their silence and composure, like a sculpture of some pagan diety and his followers.

"Very well, Mr. Walkes. Stay where you are and take the consequences. I have no intention of leaving these men at your disposal. If they disobey me again, I'll shoot," I said.

"Why?"

"There's no need to explain the duty of a captain in case of mutiny—"

"Mutiny, d'you call this? You're wrong, Captain *English*; it's suicide!"

"Into the boat!" I ordered.

No sound answered me except the splashing of the sea. A cold wind blew through my hair. I felt isolated, alone on the ocean, bound to solitude by the horizon around us. Then I saw Raube Walkes's lips slowly widen and expand—where had I seen that smile? Suddenly I remembered it. It was the smile which had burst like lightning from under the unendurable wheel . . . . For the first time since that night on the dock at Shanghai, I grew embarrassed, as I always do in a clergyman's presence; and I blushed like a child: once again his gaze overpowered me.

As I pocketed the revolver, I realized that our struggle had been destined to end as it did, beyond either victory or defeat, life or death. There was nothing I could do, nothing I would not do—

"I would move heaven and earth—" I began.

"Heaven and earth will stay where they are, sir," the big man cut in. "And so will I."

Mr. Stagg was calling me.

Raube Walkes looked over the railing at our frail leaking craft, still smiling, watching us, as he buttoned his incredibly soiled, bell-shaped clerical coat.

It occurred to me, while climbing down into the boat, that he would require some instrument to determine his bearings. Consequently, I held out the sextant which I carried beneath my arm, and said: "You'll need this, Mr. Walkes."

"Not I, Captain!" he shouted down at us. "Keep it yourself! I'll shoot the sun and stars with more than a sextant before *I* die! . . . Get along, sir! We'll be meeting again soon enough."

We pushed off with no other sound than the movement of our

oars. Walkes followed us around on the deck and finally lifted his hand and waved. We moved apart. As the loom of the great hull grew shadowy, only a little heavier and darker than the enveloping whiteness, Walkes's colossal figure surrounded by his crouching Kanakas—like a ghostly apparition—appeared to dwarf the vessel. The *Roundabout* rose gradually out of the black-and-silver water, a demon ship, and heaved to in mid-air as though awaiting a message. Then the spectral hulk dilated in the fog and faded on the horizon like sea-mist in the morning sun.

We could see nothing but our own strained faces dimly in the milky light.

THAT DANGEROUS YOUNG MAN

by

Samuel Rogers

THE discipline committee of Bolton College (on the shore of Lake Michigan, a hundred miles north of Chicago) sat behind a table in Professor Hawley's office. Professor Hawley, chairman of the committee, was a little man with a square face and a steel-gray pompadour; his lips were pursed as if he were sucking a piece of hard candy. At his right sat Miss Maxon, the Dean of Women. She was larger and softer than Professor Hawley; her white shirtwaist billowed as she leaned forward, with one elbow resting on the table; her rosy unlined face and her parted white hair suggested the chromo of a "Mother" on a calendar or an advertisement. The third member of the committee, Professor Briggs, a dark young man, fingered the package of cigarettes in his waistcoat pocket and longed to smoke. He looked at the empty chair on the other side of the table and wondered what unfortunate boy or girl would presently be sitting there, looked at the filing cabinets along the opposite walls, crammed no doubt with reports on erring students, looked at the large photograph of the Winged Victory above the desk (a photograph which worried him because being taken from below the statue appeared to be falling over backward), looked out of the window at the snowflakes blurring the spiralled branches of the elms.

"I suppose we're ready for the next one," said Professor Hawley in a businesslike voice. "John Bogart: What is it? Cheating?"

Dean Maxon's bosom stirred as if from a suppressed sigh. "No," she said. "Worse than that. It"s most distressing. It involves a girl."

"A student?" asked Professor Hawley. "Have you seen her?"

"I've talked with her," Dean Maxon said. "She has gone home—

left college of her own accord. Under the circumstances I think it was the wisest thing."

"Hmm," Professor Hawley said. "Was it . . . ? Was she . . . ?"

Professor Briggs smiled to himself: he knew that Professor Hawley wondered if the girl was pregnant and did not quite know how to put the question in a form suitable for the chaste ears of the Dean. She seemed to have withdrawn from the room, to have wrapped herself in some snowy cloud from whose pure depths she could observe, herself immaculate, the orgiastic carnival of modern youth.

"The only thing the girl confessed—" Dean Maxon's voice lingered softly on the word—"the only thing that can be *proved* from the girl's story, is drunkenness, but perhaps if we question this young man . . . . " From her cloud she sorrowfully hinted at the obscenities that judicious questioning might reveal.

"I see." Professor Hawley gave his colleagues a long shrewd look. "Mr. Briggs, perhaps if you would . . . . "

Professor Briggs went to the door and glanced into the waiting-room. "You can come in now," he said to the back of a young man who was gazing out of the window. It was not until he had returned to his chair and the student was seated opposite the committee, with the wintry daylight full on his face, that Professor Briggs recognized him as having been in his freshman history class two or three years ago. He was a well set-up young man, blond and ruddy. He seemed quite self-possessed, and had the air, in his shabby neat clothes, of having made his own way with few illusions but without bitterness. Noticing Professor Briggs, he smiled very faintly, as if doubtful whether he would be recognized; then, reassured, his smile broadened and Professor Briggs received, for an instant, a confidential half-humorous look which recalled to him at once how much he had liked Bogart as a freshman. He was not brilliant in class, but sensible, mature, and responsive. He came from a farm upstate and was working his way through college.

"Well, Mr. Bogart," the chairman asked abruptly, "what have you got to say for yourself?"

"I think I should tell you," the Dean said in a gentle, careful voice, "that I have talked with Miss Calder. She has told me—everything." The word "everything" seemed to sink slowly through the

table, through the floor of the room, borne down by the vast weight of its implications.

John Bogart looked interested. "What did she tell you, Ma'am?" he asked.

"Never you mind that," Professor Hawley said. "We want to hear the story from *you.*"

For the first time John Bogart appeared uncomfortable. "I don't think I should talk," he said at last, "until I've seen Miss Calder."

The chairman and the Dean exchanged glances.

"Perhaps you are not aware," Dean Maxon said, "that Miss Calder has withdrawn from college."

Professor Hawley studied a paper on the table before him. Suddenly he raised his head and glared at John Bogart. "Mr. Bogart," he said, "I observe that you're a senior. You were planning to enter the Medical School next year. Do you feel proud of this escapade in which you've involved a young woman—a freshman?"

John Bogart hesitated as if wondering how he did feel. "I'm sorry it happened," he said after a moment, "but I don't see why I should be ashamed."

"No?" Professor Hawley gave him an acid smile. "Then *I* don't see why you should not describe to us this evening—of which you're not ashamed."

"You'd better tell what happened," Professor Briggs said in a tone which he tried to make encouraging. "Miss Calder has left college, and don't you see if you won't be frank some people may assume that much more happened than really did? It's only fair to you both. If there were trouble about your degree, you couldn't enter Medical School, at least here in the state, and I imagine you might find it hard to meet the expense anywhere else."

"Hard's no word for it!" John Bogart exclaimed. "That would mean good-bye to medicine, as far as I'm concerned. I guess you're right, sir. Thanks."

Then, as nobody spoke, he began talking slowly, easily, without self-consciousness.

"Mary's family lived near our farm," he said. "I've known her since she was a kid, but we've never been what you'd call intimate friends. After she came to college this fall I took her once or twice to the movies. I didn't go out with her much because I couldn't afford

it, and besides I'm too busy. I've got a stiff program and I'm working four hours five days a week at a restaurant. But I guess I'm the only fellow that ever did take her out. You could see she wasn't happy here in town; she didn't know many people and I think she was sort of scared. At first she was shocked, too, at all the things that went on. She hadn't suspected anything like that, I guess, when she left home.

"Well, one day I met her coming from class and she asked me if I'd do her a favor. I told her I wouldn't promise until I knew what it was—naturally I wouldn't—and then she said she wanted me to to take her out somewhere Saturday night and help her get drunk.

"You could have knocked me over, I was so surprised. I asked her what was the idea and she said most of the girls in her rooming-house made fun of her because she was so innocent and inexperienced. She said they treated her as if she was a child and wouldn't take her seriously. Of course I just laughed at her. She kept urging me until I thought she was going to cry but I still said 'nothing doing.'

"Well, about a week later, she called me up at the house and asked if I'd go for a walk. As soon as I saw her she began it all over again, only this time she said that if I wouldn't take her out she knew someone who would. She mentioned a guy that I knew who'd have been pleased enough to do it—too darn pleased; that was the trouble. I told her he wasn't the kind of fellow she ought to go around with, especially if there was going to be any drinking and her not used to it, but this time she was the one that laughed and said it was either him or me; so I said all right then, I would. I'd borrow my roommate's Ford, we'd go to the Chantecleer for some dancing and I'd bring her back when the other girls would be coming home from their dates: they could see she was a little tight and she could tell them she'd been with a man to a roadhouse. That was the idea. You don't have to tell me it was childish and crazy; I told her that a dozen times, but you couldn't knock it out of her head.

"Well, I got the car, and a little gin—not much, I wasn't going to let her take much—and a couple of bottles of ginger ale. We went to a movie first and about half past nine we started for the Chantecleer. We parked on the way and had a drink but it didn't seem to give her much of a kick, so before we reached the Chantecleer we stopped again and had another drink. That's all she had: two drinks, and they weren't very stiff ones at that.

"The Chantecleer was pretty quiet—just a few students; it's mostly students that go there—and suddenly Mary began to laugh. I was embarrassed because I couldn't stop her and the folks were beginning to stare. I wanted to leave right off but she wouldn't hear of that and before I knew it she was crying and said she was afraid. She said she knew she was drunk and she was scared to drive back in a car alone with a fellow. I told her there was nothing to be scared of; she could trust me; we could dance a bit if she felt like it and then I'd drive her straight home, and that would be all."

"Excuse me," Dean Maxon interrupted, very gently, very remotely. "I don't quite understand."

"I beg pardon," John Bogart said.

"I don't quite understand what you told Miss Calder."

"I told her she didn't have to worry. I wouldn't try to—well, I wouldn't do anything to her."

"Do anything?" repeated Dean Maxon. "What kind of thing?"

John Bogart's face grew suddenly pink; he looked as if for help at Professor Briggs.

"Well, I meant there wouldn't be anything . . . the kind of thing that might get her into trouble . . . that she might be sorry for the next day."

"And you mean to tell me," said Dean Maxon, "that you spoke in this way to a young woman, a student in this college?"

John Bogart glanced at the Dean in surprise. "Sure. I knew how she felt. She knew she was drunk and she'd heard stories about girls in automobiles."

"And you mean that you told this young girl in so many words that it was not your intention . . . to seduce her?"

John Bogart, for one instant, looked amused.

"Not in *those* words," he said.

"But that was in your mind?"

"It was in my mind that I wasn't going to, yes; and that's what I wanted to get into hers."

"You wanted to turn her mind into those channels?"

John Bogart seemed baffled; he shook his head and drew a long breath. "I didn't want to turn her mind into any channels," he said. "I just didn't want her to be scared. That was all."

"And so you suggested to her what might happen in the car between you and her?"

As John Bogart did not answer, Dean Maxon drew back from the table and smoothed the white silk folds over her breast. "You may continue," she said.

"There's not much else." John Bogart sounded discouraged. "When we started to dance, she was sick. I've never seen anyone so sick. I guess it was the hot room after the cold outside, and perhaps the excitement; and I don't think she'd ever tasted liquor before. I had to carry her out and when we reached her rooming-house and I was handing her over to a couple of girls, she was sick again, worse than before. I hung around until they got her upstairs to bed—they took her up the backstairs so the chaperone wouldn't find out—and then I came away."

John Bogart looked across the table at the committee. He reminded Professor Briggs just then of a good-natured, rather puzzled dog, awaiting a command.

"So that's all," the chairman said dryly. "Step into the other room, please. We may want you again."

As John Bogart closed the door behind him, Professor Hawley turned toward the Dean. "Does this story agree with the girl's?" he asked.

"Yes," she sighed, "in most particulars it does, but one hardly knows what to believe of a young man with such . . . with such an unclean mind. How could he have spoken that way to a young girl? How could he?"

"I suppose it's leaked out," said Professor Hawley. "I suppose it's campus gossip by this time."

"I'm afraid so," Dean Maxon said. "Numbers of girls saw her come into the house and I heard indirectly, after I'd made inquiries, that they had been recognized as students in an intoxicated condition —the girl at any rate—by some townspeople at that resort. The girl who brought the affair to my attention, a most trustworthy girl who has helped me before, obviously believes that things went much further in the car than the boy confesses."

"Not much doubt of that, I guess," Professor Hawley said.

"Is there any proof?" Professor Briggs asked quickly. "Is there the least reason to suppose . . . ?"

"It would naturally be difficult to obtain proof of . . . of such a thing," Dean Maxon murmured. "Perhaps I should tell you that the car was not a roadster: there was a back seat. I've been informed that the Calder girl's hair was somewhat disordered, and we have heard from this young man of what their conversation consisted before he took her to the car."

"It's a clear case," Professor Hawley said briskly. "I don't see how he can remain in college. He'll lose his degree! Too bad, but it can't be helped."

"No," said the Dean, "I don't see how we can keep him. I really do not think it would be fair to the girls we have in our charge."

Her voice seemed to caress the words, as if she were quoting a line from a favorite poem; and when Professor Briggs, in the darkening room, argued, repeated himself with a kind of unbelieving desperation, she merely withdrew once more into her cloud and through narrowed lids peered down, over the slopes of her breast, as if into the lustful mind of that impure young man.

MY MOTHER'S UNCLE HAL

by

William Polk

MY father used to get us all in the parlor some nights after supper and try to read to us. He was a good reader, too. But he never could make any headway with us. By the time he had read a couple of paragraphs of "Martin Chuzzlewit" or "Kenilworth"—which we were disappointed to learn was not a dog story—or something of the kind, my sister Helen would walk over to the mirror to see whether her hair was fixed right, my Aunt Maria would poke her head in at the door and ask in a stage whisper whether we had finished with the morning paper, my mother would suddenly remember that she had forgotten to feed the cat and would go out in the hall calling, "Kitty, kitty, kitty!" and my brother Harry, who had been snickering behind my father's back, would explode with laughter and his handkerchief, that he had stuffed in his mouth, would fly out like wadding from a gun. Then my father would slam the book down on the table and stalk out of the room.

But when it came to telling stories, it was a different matter. We listened to him then. He had been brought up in the wild Reconstruction times in North Carolina after the Civil War when people had to amuse each other to keep from thinking or remembering, and when almost everybody was likely to be a *character.* His stories grew out of each other, as good stories do. The story of Uncle Hal's death, which I always liked, usually grew out of the story of Major Rob's bravery, though they had no connection with each other.

My father always wanted us to be brave and patriotic (though my mother didn't think so much of that sort of thing), and sometimes at dinner he would tell us about Major Rob.

"He was the bravest man in the Confederate Army, Major Rob

Arrington, my father's own brother and the closest kin you've got," my father would say, helping himself to butter beans or something. My mother's mouth would turn down at the corners. "Yes, he had grit in his craw, let me tell you. Do you know what he did at the battle of Shiloh?"

"I do," my brother Harry would say, but not loud enough for my father to hear him.

"I'll tell you," my father would continue. "The Confederates had dug themselves in. They had trenches in that war too. The Yankees were bombarding them, and bullets and cannon balls and canister were zooming around them thick as hops. All of a sudden the old Stars and Bars, planted on the breastworks, reeled and tottered and fell, its staff broken by a shot. It fell in the trench near your Uncle Rob. He snatched it up in a second and leaped up on the breastworks. He brandished it in the face of the enemy and planted it again on the rampart to wave defiance to the Yankees before he fell, wounded in a dozen places. Now that was one of the bravest deeds—"

"I don't think that was bravery," my mother would say calmly. "It was nothing in the world but nervousness."

"Nervousness!" My father brandished his fork. "If it was one of your people you wouldn't call it nervousness."

"My people weren't nervous."

"Well, they made other people mighty nervous," my father would say, looking around at us. "Take your Uncle Hal, your own father's brother, descendant of Abigail what's her name, the barefoot pioneer girl . . . ."

"You're very much mistaken there," my mother would say. "She was an heiress and a direct descendant of Robert Bruce, and besides, all my people wore shoes."

"All *right!*" said my father. "Anyway, it was your Uncle Hal I was talking about, one of the most wild, wicked and desperate men I ever knew, not to be a pirate. Did you ever hear tell of the time he came to die?"

This rhetorical question was addressed to us. "No," we said, partly because we liked the story and partly to tease our mother.

"Well, there was your Uncle Hal stretched out on his last bed. Old Doctor Kearney straightened up and put his stethoscope in his pocket and said, solemn but businesslike, 'Mr. Warren, it's my duty to

tell you, you'd better prepare to cross over the river and rest in the shade of the trees.'

" 'River, hell!' said Hal, 'I ain't got no business in Virginia.'

" 'It's not the Roanoke, it's the Jordan you've got to cross,' said Doctor Kearney, a good man but prissy, 'and you'd better prepare yourself. It's your heart. If you take a step or a drink, it's all up with you. You'd better not even take a deep breath. I'll send Parson Moss out to see you.'

" 'Wait!' said Hal. 'What good do you think an infernal preacher would do me?'

" 'On second thought,' said Doctor Kearney, 'I don't think he would do you any good. I reckon it would strain the saving power of Jesus Christ to raise you up to the common level of human depravity. Good-bye, sir!' And out he went.

"But he had your Uncle Hal worried. It's a serious thing for almost anybody to die, but for your Uncle Hal it was what you might call a calamity approaching a holocaust. He lay there with his pink bald head propped up on the pillows, and his great red nose looking sort of peaked, and his bushy black beard with some gray in it rolling out over his white nightshirt. The more he thought of his sins, the paler he got around the gills. All of a sudden he reached out one arm and yelled, 'Hants! Hants!'

" 'Right here, Marse Hal,' said a tall light brown Negro coming to the head of the bed. This was Hans—pronounced Hants, short for Hanson—Nunnery, who had been Hal's slave before the War, given to him by his father when they were boys. Hants worshipped him.

" 'Hants,' said Hal, 'did you hear that Rooster Foster has got religion?'

" 'Yes, sir, I hyeered it, but I didn't take much stock in it.'

" 'Well, Hants, you go find him and tell him I say to come here and pray for me.'

"Hants didn't bat an eye or show a sign of surprise or even say, 'Good God, Marse Hal!' He just went out to find Rooster. That nigger had more poise than anybody—white, black, yellow or spotted—that ever I saw. They say he was the only man that could be more polite than General Ransom.

"When he told Rooster what he wanted, Rooster looked mighty dubious. He had been tangled up with Hal in more kinds of devil-

ment than you can shake a stick at. When he got religion, Preacher Moss had warned him that if he ever associated with Hal again he might as well give up his hope of salvation. Still, Rooster thought the world and all of Hal, and finally Hants convinced him that it was his Christian duty to do what he could to save Hal's soul and gain a star in his crown at the same time.

"Rooster Foster was a short, wiry fellow with reddish gray hair standing up like a comb, a squint eye that nearly got gouged out in a fight once, a thin face, a hooked nose, and a rolling walk like a sailor in a heavy sea.

" 'Come in, Rooster,' Hal said, not moving his head. 'I hear you've got religion.'

" 'Yes, Brother Warren,' said Rooster, looking sanctimonious, 'I'm a saved lamb, praise the Lord!'

" 'Well,' said Hal, grunting and looking at Rooster out of his black eyes, 'they tell me I'm a goner. I want you to pray for me. If *you're* a saved lamb, I reckon there's some hope for me.'

"Rooster had a feeling that he hadn't been in the society of the saved long enough to introduce such a soiled spirit as Hal's without danger of being kicked out himself. 'I'm mighty scared I can't do you any good, Hal,' he said.

" 'Oh, yes, you can, Rooster. Go on and pray. Here, have a drink. Hal reached under the bed and pulled out a half gallon fruit jar of corn liquor, clear as water. The exertion was too much for him. He had a heart attack, and fell back on the pillows and couldn't speak for a minute. When he came to, 'It's good,' he whispered, 'straight from the still.'

"Rooster held up his hands. 'Hal,' he said, 'you know I can't touch it. I'm done with it.'

" 'Look at that bead on it, Rooster. I bet it's a hundred and fifty proof.'

" 'I wouldn't touch a drop of it, Hal, if I was standing with one foot in the grave and I knew it would pull me out.'

"Hal put the jar on the floor beside the bed. 'Maybe you have got religion after all,' he said wonderingly, as if he had been testing him. Rooster was staring at the fruit jar like a mesmerized chicken. Hal raised his head off the pillow, 'All right, Rooster, goddam it, go on and pray! I ain't got all day here.'

"Rooster dropped on his knees by the bed. 'Our Father,' he began, and stopped.

" 'Go on,' said Hal.

" 'I can't. I've forgotten what comes next.'

" 'Well, just say the first words that come to you, Rooster, whatever the Lord puts in your mouth.'

"Rooster opened his mouth but no words came forth.

" 'Your tongue's dry, you need a drink—'

" 'Oh, no, I couldn't—'

" 'So you'd let me die and go to hell all because you won't loosen the tip of your tongue with a drop of good liquor. It's good. Just take a smell of it.' Hal unscrewed the top and held the jar under Rooster's nose.

"Rooster took a deep breath of it and tears came to his eyes. 'I won't drink it,' he said, 'but I believe I will just roll a drop around on my tongue to loosen it up a little.' He tilted the jar till the rim hit the bridge of his nose and he got a good mouthful.

" 'The trouble with most liquor,' said Hal, 'is that folks put it in a keg and get all the fusel oil out of it. Hey, Rooster!'

" 'What?'

" 'You didn't swallow that drink, did you?'

" 'By Jesus,' said Rooster, 'it slipped down my throat when I said "what?" '

" 'Well, gargle another and let's get going.'

"Rooster took another monstrous mouthful and gargled it a while. Then his Adam's apple bobbed up and down like a cork. 'I would of spit it out,' he said, 'only I couldn't find no spittoon.'

" 'I think I'll take one too,' said Hal. Rooster put it to Hal's lips and he took a swig.

"Then the spirit moved Rooster and he knelt down and began to pray. 'O, Lord,' he chanted with the incense from the fruit jar rising to his nose, 'this is Hal Warren—he has led a sinful life, Lord, and has got me to appear for him before the Judgment Bar. I ain't much at praying, Lord, but I ask you to forgive him his sins. I can't remember 'em all, Lord, and I haven't got time to name 'em all, but I can run over a few of 'em and give you—'

" 'Don't get to them sins so quick,' Hal whispered, 'lead up to 'em kind of gradual.'

" '—and give you a general idea of them, Lord. Liquor was the cause of a lot of 'em, good old corn liquor, Lord. There was the time he got drunk and crawled in Ben Edwards' carriage standing by itself on the top of Ridgeway Street—and went to sleep—and it started rolling down the street—and rolled a couple of blocks till it ran slunchways into old man Hyman's store window and busted all to pieces—and we found Hal lying there on the sidewalk and picked him up tenderly and somebody said, "He's killed," and Hal raised up and hiccupped and said, "The maiden is not dead but sleepeth."

" 'Forgive him those words, Lord. And forgive him the time he rocked the Baptist Church because he said it was the cradle of Christianity.'

" 'Forgive him the times he used to ride through the streets of Warrenton and shoot around till he cleared the crowds off them. It was all in fun. Forgive the time he rode his horse through the Methodist camp meeting at Spring Green. He was riding after his pack of hounds and they were hot on the trail of a fox."

" 'Forgive—'

" 'God Amighty, Rooster,' said Hal, 'see if you can't think of some good deeds I done.'

" 'Oh, yes, Lord, and forgive him for cutting Tom Higgins' throat—because if he hadn't Tom would of stroked mine with that blue steel razor he had in his hand.'

" 'Forgive him, Lord, for all his fights, and particularly that free-for-all the night of the square dance at Ransom's Bridge where the three counties join—you may have heard of it, Lord—when he knocked Jim Hendrick from Warren County clear through Franklin County into Nash County.'

" 'Forgive him for tying Vergil Eaton onto a horse's tail and swimming him through Fishing Creek in a freshet. Forgive him for the time I found him that early morning outside Archie Jackson's bar and asked him why he stood there idle and he told me he was waiting for the vineyard to open.'

" 'Forgive him for the time he broke Luke Fleming's jaw—they was three to one against him—they started fighting on a sand pile and fit it as level as the palm of your hand, Lord—and forgive him the time he mighty nigh bit the foot off of Henry Taylor's bulldog—it was a fair fight, Hal threw away his pistol and razor before it started and

fought him fair and square on all fours—and he was a mighty mean bulldog.'

"Hal's eyes were glazing and his head slumped down sideways. 'He's goin',' said Hants, the tears rolling down his face.

" 'And forgive him, Lord, for all those women, white, brown and black—and—well, that's all, Lord.' He stopped, and wiped the sweat off his face with his hand. 'By God, that's the best I can do!'

"Hal's eyes fluttered open and he smiled and reached out his hand with a mighty effort and put it on Rooster's shoulder. 'Well, Rooster,' he gasped, 'if that's—the best—that you can do—I'm damned—if—we —both ain't lost!' And in ten minutes he was dead."

"There's not a word of truth in it," said my mother.

LITTLE BOY LIVES IN A MINING CAMP

by

Ernestine Magagna

THE room was damp and cold when Pio got up and slid into his clothes. And it was still dark. He was quiet so as not to disturb Roberto with whom he slept in the great bed, or little Nina who slept in a cradle bed in the corner. Pulling his trousers on with one hand, he reached around for his shirt with the other. The stockings were next. Carelessly he pulled them up over his knees; they would be hanging down around his ankles even by the time he got to the hill. But, *Santa Maria,* who worried about stockings! Rubbing his hands together, he looked longingly toward the corner where the coat hung that was only for Sundays. It would be good and warm to wear now: Mamà had the old red jacket that he wore for everyday all ripped apart to put new sleeves in because of the holes in the elbows.

From the door Pio looked again toward the corner, then he rubbed his hands once more and went on into the kitchen. Very quietly he stopped to listen. *Si,* the *madre* was getting up: he could hear the creakings of the bed. The kitchen would be warm when he came back, and the sun would be at the windows. And they would have *caffe con latte* and toast, and for his Papà there would be egg and maybe *patata arrostite* or a *torta.* He skipped, hopped lightly, and then ran out to the grayness outside: it was getting late.

Goddamn, he thought, goddamn—this air sure was cold. As he ran up the hill the Town lay below him covered by a thin white mist that was lifting gradually to an escape in the sky. And in back of him were the ugly little red houses, dozens of them: little oblong, one-story houses; some of them with fences; some plain. Some had a few vines around them, but for the most part they were bare, surrounded by un-

painted shacks used as coal sheds and wash shanties. But Pio did not look back at the little red houses as he ran up the hill, and he cast only a casual glance at the Town.

The section of company houses in which the miners lived out here at the edge of town was Number Six. Across the town on the other edge was Number Four. And scattered amongst the hills, not far distant from the Town were Number One, Number Two, Number Three, and Number Five. They were almost all the same except for the colors of the houses. Pio reached the top of the hill just in time: the miners were coming out from the tunnel. Some few of them went off toward Town, but most of them were coming up to the hill to go home to Number Six; they came running toward the hill with the little lights on their belts and hats still lit.

The sky was beginning to lose its grayness and filling with a million red and gold colors as the men slowed their steps in climbing. By now they had all put out their lights—all except one of them: that was Papà. Pio sat down on the rock. Papà was first to come up the hill; he always was. He was walking with Garibaldi and Beppo, but he left them and came toward Pio on the rock. By now the hills had become proud—their bare brownness glowing with rose and gold sunlight. And the lift of Pio's head, as he sat waiting for his father, had the same gladness and pride as the lift of the hills against the morning sky.

"What, you ain't home yet?" Papà asked.

Pio laughed with delight. It was their game. Sometimes it was that he, Pio, was a little boy Papà did not know, and Papà would ask him to come home and have some *colazione* with them; sometimes it was that Pio was a messenger come a long distance from home to bring news of big importance, but best of all was this game where Papà played Pio had been out all night and was just coming home.

"What will Mamà say to you? By golly, will she be mad!" said Papà turning off the light at his belt, and taking the miner's cap from his own head to place it on Pio's.

They both laughed then. And Pio took Papà's hand and carried his lunch bucket; they went walking together down the hill while the sky losing its dawn's colors became blue and clear, and the hills losing their gold brightness became brown and stern in their stillness.

Pio and Papà stopped at the bath house: all the men stopped at the

bath house when they came home from work, because there were no bathtubs in the red company houses and the miners were black and dirty with coal dust, and sweat. Pio went in with his Papà to the showers. He liked to go in under the showers: his brown eyes in his dusky chubby face would shine with pleasure as the water poured down over his head and plastered down the curly brown hair. It was with a great deal of laughing that he would rub the soap all over his body. When they came out from under the water his Papà would rub him with the big rough towel, and then Pio would start to dress listening to and watching the men as they dressed.

"*Jesu Cristo!*" Beppo was saying in his booming voice, "*Jesu Cristo.* What they think we are? They want us to dig in that old tunnel that ain't been worked for years. The timber in them holes is rotten. I know what they think. They think we are goddamn fools."

Beppo was always good to listen to. He talked so loud and strong. But this morning Pio's attention was caught by tall, red-headed Angelo:

"By golly, you know," he was saying. "My Beppina, she is going to have a *bambino. Si,* a *bambino.*"

Pio's interest in the conversation of the group that gathered around Angelo was cut short, for Papà was ready to go.

The kitchen was warm and smelled of food with a smell that was good to Pio and Papà as they left the morning freshness and walked into the fifth red house in the second row. On the back porch, washing his face and ears with a good deal of noise and splashing, was Roberto. Little Nina, still in her sleeping clothes, was in the baby chair that had been first Roberto's and then the dead sister, Louisa's, and then Pio's, pounding with her little spoon, smiling and happy to see Papà. Mamà was shuffling from stove to table bringing the *caffe* and *torta* and the toasted bread. Roberto came in and sat down with Pio and Papà.

"There will be no night shift tonight, or tomorrow," Papà said cheerfully.

Mamà looked at him anxiously and Pio felt a pang at the sad inquiring look in the *madre's* eyes. The fewer shifts the less money.

Only half listening, Roberto, who had the second day shift, from one to ten, said, "I wish I had no work these next days so I could finish the house." Roberto was to be married on Sunday to Yolanda,

who lived two houses down in the red row of houses in back. For three months now the wedding had been planned. Yolanda was to be seen sitting out on the steps every day sewing, and crocheting; while for two weeks Roberto had been painting the inside of one of the red houses and building a fence around it, and planting vines by the doorstep.

Papà helped himself to another *torta* before answering.

"I tell you," he said, "today I will sleep and you work and tomorrow I will work in your place."

"Aw, no, Pop. You don't hafta do that," Roberto said, his face getting red.

"*Ma, si,*" said Papà. "*Ma, si.* And tonight," he said smiling at Pio, and reaching over to straighten the slant of little Nina's' spoon, "we will get out the accordino and play. *Si?*" He raised his eyebrows at Pio, and Pio spread his face in a wide smile to show his pleasure to Papà.

"*Si,* Maria?" Papà asked of Mamà who gave him a slow silent, half-sad smile.

"*Si,* Carlo, *Si,*" she answered.

The music was good that night.

Many of the neighbor women and some of the men who were not working the night shift in the mine came to listen while Papà played. Pio, sitting at his side, sometimes gazing curiously at Yolanda, who was sitting in the doorway with sewing in her hands, and sometimes gazing at the people who had gathered around the house in the darkness, felt a proud thrill to know that the man who was playing the music was his Papà. Sometimes, too, he just gazed off toward the stars and let his heart go with the sweetness of the melody—the music that was so happy, and sad, too. Gradually the people who were gathered began to sing, sing the happy-sad songs of Italy . . .

Placido e l'onda e prospero il vento,
Su marinari, Venite via! they sang
Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia.

Pio felt a tenseness in his throat and pressed hard against Papà's side. Between the songs, Papà slipped his hand over the soft curls of Pio's head.

The music was good, and the evening was all too short.

Though Pio awoke early the next day he did not get up, but

turned over to sleep some more; not until one o'clock did he walk up the hill, and then it was not to meet Papà, who was taking Roberto's shift, but to accompany him that he went. He sat on the flat rock and watched Papà go with the other men toward the mine. Then, lying back on the rock, letting the sun fall on his face, he stayed a while longer until the men who had just been replaced came trooping out of the tunnel. Getting up, he walked slowly toward the red houses: it would be time to go to the store for the *madre.* After that he would go and play with little Giovanni and Joe. They were going to show that Earl Hamilton who called them dagos. *Jesu Cristo,* they sure would show that goddamn sonofabitch.

It was just toward dark, while Pio was still out with little Giovanni and Joe, that the big noise came. It was a muffled noise, but still it was very clearly heard. In accompaniment the ground under the red houses trembled briefly. Then there was a stillness . . . dead quiet at Number Six for one minute. But the alarm spread quickly, and suddenly the people of Number Six went wild. Shouting men went rushing up the hill, and many shrieking, frightened women and bewildered, excited children and barking, joyful dogs followed close behind them.

Pio and his companions were quick to be a part of the crowd.

By the time they reached the mine entrance, many cars filled with people from the town were already there; more were arriving. Men were shouting to one another. The words "explosion" and "cave-in" became common to the tongues and ears of everyone. Orders were shouted; mine whistles blasted signals; in a few minutes groups of organized men began going down into the mine.

The women of Number Six stood grouped around the shack where mine officials were busy at the wire trying to get messages from the mine interior. But the men were silent to all the women's inquiries.

Darkness closed in on the crowded little valley. In the light of the quivering flames of the torches which were set up, the crowd around the mine entrance remained, silent and watchful; then, occasionally, an undercurrent of muttering voices would sweep through it like a wave and break into a loud rush of angry frightened sounding questions leaving the crowd in an angry turmoil.

"Madre di Dio!" Pio muttered as his attention wandered from

thoughts of his Papà down there in the mine to the excitement here at hand, "*Madre di Dio!* But this is something!"

It was many hours before they brought the men out of the mine, some of them excited but unhurt, some of them with broken bones and bruises, and many of them dying or dead. And it was almost morning before they brought Papà out on one of the stretchers with a blanket pulled up over him: falling timber pillars and caved-in earth had crushed out his life. But by that hour Pio had been in bed asleep for many hours.

In the darkness he had at last tired of running with the other boys from group to group. And as time went on and the crowd of interested onlookers, relief workers, and the smaller pitiful group of miners' wives grew quieter, his interest in the excitement died down; and Papà's predicament became more real to him. He had finally gone over to cling to the silently weeping Mamà's skirts. Beppina and Yolanda were at her side. Yolanda had laid a careful, tender hand on his head. And with a suddenness he, too, began to weep . . . to sob. Yolanda picked him up and with his head on her shoulder he had soon ceased his sobbing and fallen asleep. Leaving the valley Yolanda had then, with other women who were carrying sleeping, exhausted children, walked over the hill to the little red house and put him in the great bed to sleep.

So Pio had not been at the mine when the burning torches cast light on the day shift men who were brought out in the stretchers; he hadn't seen the wild grief of the women of Number Six when, as the stretchers were borne out, the name of the dead became known. And the next morning when he awoke to a clear windless day there were only the dead and the debris at the mine to make the previous night real; the grotesqueness and the horror had disappeared, with the extinguishing of the flaming torches, into the memories of those people who had kept the all-night vigil.

On awaking he reflected a moment on the sound of movement in the kitchen, and then he got up, and pattered noiselessly out to where the silent Yolanda was fixing breakfast. Casting one swift look at her he rushed into the open bedroom where Mamà was lying on the bed. He pulled at her arm. *Santa Maria,* Papà! he thought as he called her:

"Mamà! Mamà! Is Papà all right? Is he all right?"

He watched the *madre* raise weary eyes to him, and start to sob.

"*Si,*" she whispered. "*Si,* Pio. He is all right. He is with the *buon Dio.*" And she pulled him to her.

A quick shudder shook Pio as the *madre* pulled him close. Papà, his Papà was dead. *Madre di Dio,* no! His Papà! Last year, little Joe's papà had died. He had been killed by a falling boulder in the mine. But his Papà—his, Pio's Papà . . . .

He was warm in the *madre's* arms; she was crying, and holding him: he cried too.

The next few days went quickly; they were filled with varied happenings. Black crape ribbons hung from many of the red houses; there was much rushing back and forth; many contributions of food were brought into the houses where the crape ribbons hung. But despite the varied daily schedule there was a quietness at Number Six. Children were somber-eyed; men gathered in groups and talked, but they talked about the dead and conditions at the mine sullenly, in quiet voices. On the second day the dead were brought to the houses in which they lived; and on the third they were carried in the procession to the church at the Town's edge for burial service, and then on to the cemetery.

Pio wandered through these days in a kind of wonder: sometimes he would go in the bedroom and weep over the dead Papà who lay there looking so queer and still in the casket; sometimes he would wander from little red house to little red house with Giovanni and little Joe and some of the others to look at the dead; sometimes he would weep with the visitors who came to the house and spoke words of pity; and sometimes he would sit in his own room and think about the queer thing it was to be dead . . . *Santa Lucia benedetta,* it sure was a funny thing. Once or twice he went outside to play and quite completely forgot the whole affair for several hours.

After the funeral when Pio, and Mamà, and Roberto and Yolanda came home many people came to the house; many women came in to talk to the weeping Mamà. It grew dark. They ate some of the food that had been brought in by neighbor women. Some people still came while many went away. And the Mamà, red-eyed, and red-faced, grew silent as the evening passed. They all sat in the kitchen.

Sitting in the corner, Pio watched them silently . . . Papà was dead; many other men were dead, too. Everyone was very sad and Pio was

sad, too. Sometimes tears would come to Pio's eyes, and he would rub them away from his hot cheeks. Little Nina was put to bed. Yolanda did that. Roberto sat close to the *madre.* When she cried Roberto put his arms around her and said, "Mamà, Mamà." And people kissed Mamà. Sometimes, other women whose men were dead would run in crying loudly, "Oh, Maria, Maria," and Mamà, getting up, would throw her arms about them and say, "Oh, Beppina, Beppina," or, "Oh, Louisa, Louisa." Then, for awhile, they would cry together.

Pio, sitting in the corner of the lighted room, felt his eyelids grow heavy and thick. It was getting very late when Roberto came over and picked him up and carried him to the bedroom, and helped him to undress and get to bed. The tears came again into his eyes and ran down his cheeks as he was falling to sleep. "*Madre di Dio,*" he whispered. "*Madre di Dio*—Papà."

In two days readjustment was well started; the mine was working as before . . . meals in the little red houses were cooked as before, buckets were packed as before . . . children played as before. During those days while the people of Number Six were busy with their grief, their problem of the living, the Townspeople shuddered briefly at the thought of what had happened and said, "How awful! Something should be done to make the mines more safe." And mine officials wondered about the investigation they were going to be subjected to, and considered the best ways of hushing up the accident; and some of them squirmed in their conscience, turning more vigorously to their pleasure. After all, they reasoned, they did try to keep the mines pretty safe; things like this were accidents, unforeseen.

It was the third day after the mass funeral.

The room was damp and cold when a still sleepy Pio awoke. He got up and slid into his clothes. It was still dark. Pulling his trousers on with one hand he reached around for his shirt with the other. The stockings were next. He pulled them up quickly over his knees; they would be hanging down around his ankles even by the time he got to the hill . . . to the hill! Pio stopped; *Madre di Dio,* why was he going to the hill? He sat back on the bed. Papà . . . . He would not be coming up the hill this morning. Pio felt the tears again. He threw a shoe at the wall. Glancing for a minute out of the window at the still dark sky, he went over and picked the shoe up again and put it on. Rubbing his hands together he looked longingly toward the coat that was only

for Sundays. The red jacket for everyday was still in the basket, bundled together with material for the sleeves. From the door Pio looked again toward the corner, then he rubbed his hands once more and went on into the kitchen. Extra chairs filled the kitchen and there were cups and plates in the sink, there was an odor of cold coffee. Very quietly Pio stopped to listen . . . the *madre* was still asleep; he could hear nothing. Walking slowly he went out to the grayness outside. It was getting late. *Santa Lucia,* he thought, *Santa Lucia,* why was he going up to the hill?

As he walked, the Town lay below him covered by a thin gray mist that was lifting gradually to an escape in the sky. In back of him were the little red houses. But Pio did not look back at the little red houses as he walked up the hill. And he cast only a casual glance at the Town. He reached the top of the hill just in time to see the night shift coming out of the tunnel where they had been working to clear up the damage done by the explosion. Some few of them went off toward Town, but most of them were coming up to the hill to go home to Number Six; they came running toward the hill with the little lights on their belts and hats still lit.

The sky was beginning to lose its grayness and it was filling with red and gold as Pio sat watching the men. By now they had put out their lights . . . all of them were out. Sitting down on the rock Pio kicked his feet against it. As the night shift men began to pass by Pio recognized them. They were all there, all the night shift men except Papà; but Papà had taken Roberto's place in the day shift. The hills had become proud—their bare brownness glowing with rose and gold sunlight as Beppo and Garibaldi, quick to see Pio sitting on the rock that was a little removed from the path the miners took, made their way toward him; and the tilt of Pio's head as he sat there seemed particularly helpless against the strong line of hills lifted up against the morning sky.

"Hullo—hullo, there, Pio," they yelled. Pio lifted an arm. They came close. "Don't you want to come and walk home with us? Me and Garibaldi?"

"Sure, sure," said Garibaldi. "Come on and walk with us. Come on down to the bath house."

Pio shook his head sullenly.

Silently he watched the men go off to the bath house at the side

of the group of red houses. He looked off toward the Town. And he looked toward the mine entrance at the foot of the hill. Then, lying back on the rock, he closed his lids over his eyes that felt so hot. And he thought: "*Santa Lucia,* there is tomorrow, too." And he thought of the tomorrows. He had never thought of tomorrows before, but he saw them now . . . morning after morning with no Papà to meet, evening after evening with no Papà to sit by, no music . . . He hated the little Town so quiet down there in the valley, and for the first time, he hated all the dull red houses. And he hated the mine . . . the goddamn mine . . . and the explosion. And *Madre di Dio,* he hated the days, the days of tomorrows with no Papà.

"Oh, *Jesu Cristo!*" he whispered with the tears hot under his lids. "*Jesu Cristo,*" he said with a heavy sigh. "Oh, *Papà, Papà mio.*" . . . . and he rolled over on the rock, burying his head in his arms, trying to close out the world . . . the Town . . . the sky . . . the hills . . . the houses . . . the mine . . . and the thought of the days.

"*Papà mio,*" he whispered. "*Papà mio.*"

For a long while he lay there while the day grew warm . . . while the sky lost its dawn colors and became blue and clear.

Then he got up and walked slowly down to the ugly red houses; to the oblong, one-story houses; some with fences; some of them plain; some of them with vines around them, but most of them bare, surrounded by unpainted shacks used as coal sheds and wash shanties . . . . Down to mining camp Number Six that lay at the edge of town; the *madre* would have the *colazione* ready; and, too, today she would fix the old red jacket that was for every day.

WHEN WE WERE YOUNG

by

Thomas Bell

A BRISK wind had chilled the air and cleared it so that from the bridge they could see, far to the south, the mid-town towers shorn of their usual haze, a cluster of small lights and pinnacles with a glow in the sky above them marking Broadway, the theatrical district. The bridge spanned darkness. Beyond its other end the Bronx sprawled across the earth, houses and streets and people without end. Toward it a trolley scuttered and, less clamorously, several cars, like toys along a shelf; even so, the great bridge seemed empty, a clean, lamplit roadway in windy space.

They had come out of the theatre and stood for a moment under its canopy, filling their lungs with fresh air. Men, yelping, waved pink tabloids at them and taxis edged hopefully to the curb.

"Do we walk or do we take the bus?"

"Let's walk; it's stopped raining."

He held her arm as they crossed Broadway and went along 181st Street, past its shops and restaurants, through its traffic and—mostly Irish-American—people, under its blinking electric signs, the street darkening, the crowds thinning, as they approached the bridge. A traffic light's disc burned bright green for them as they crossed the flat vacancy of Amsterdam Avenue, then the city fell back.

They walked for a while in silence. Then: "I was thinking," Susan said, "how dreadful it must be to be old."

There had been nothing about the horrors of old age in the picture they had seen, so Peter asked, "What on earth made you think of that?"

"Oh, I don't know. I just happened to think of it. Now you take that shower last night; Anna was so excited and happy and I thought

about the shower Martha gave me and I felt awful old. And most of the girls were single. I'd almost forgotten the way single girls talked and acted when they got together, especially at a shower."

"And how do they talk and act?"

"Oh, I don't know. They're still worrying about things and wondering about getting married. Or they're still living at home and having to do what their mothers say."

"So it made you feel old."

"Well, you know how it is."

"But you had a good time, didn't you?"

"Oh, I had a good time, all right. Did I tell you three of the girls brought incense burners just for the joke? They said for Bernie to light one any time Anna got too rambunctious or wouldn't do what he said."

There was a pause, as they walked.

"It was funny last night," she began again, "she didn't know about the shower, of course, and she wanted to stay home and wash and iron some clothes, and Bernie had an awful time getting her out of the house. She didn't want to go to the movies or visit anybody. Finally she said she'd go for a walk just to get rid of him. I don't know how he ever got her on the car to go to Ant'nette's house. And when she got there and found out she began to cry. It was the last thing in the world she'd expected. She hadn't even dressed up much because she thought she was just going for a walk."

"Did she get lots of stuff?"

"Uh-huh. She knows so many girls and they all like her. That's why they think she's making a mistake, Bernie's not her kind at all. But of course they don't say anything."

"I suppose you felt very married and superior."

"I had a nice time. After it was over Ant'nette kept me awake talking, she was too excited to sleep."

"What did you talk about?"

"Oh, about Anna and Bernie and getting married and falling in love. Ant'nette has a new boy friend."

"You don't mean to tell me."

"She doesn't care much for him but as she says at least he takes her out and maybe she'll meet somebody she likes better. It's a sure thing she won't meet anybody staying home."

"You've got to give the gal credit for trying."

"Mmm."

"Remember your shower? You had suspicions, didn't you?"

"I knew something was up but I couldn't guess what. That was your fault; you can't lie at all, I can always tell when you're keeping something from me."

Cars rushed past them and shrank visibly. From the Bronx shore an illuminated billboard advertised coal and made a red blotch on the water. High Bridge, though near, was almost invisible, a dark shape against darkness. "So you don't want to get old," he said.

"Well, I guess this shower and hearing the girls talking made me think how lucky I was and how much fun it was to be young and have you."

"It's more fun to be young and have you."

"Oh, no."

"Oh, yes. It's easily proven. Give me a plain answer to a simple question: would I or would I not look like merry hell in a black chiffon nightgown?"

Susan laughed.

"Whereas you look like a fallen angel."

"That's what I mean," she said. "That's why I don't want to get old. How will you be able to love me when I'm old? What has an old woman got a man can love?"

"Memories, maybe."

"I'll hate myself. I'll be wrinkled and ugly and old." She watched wide-eyed as Peter thrust back the cuff of her glove and touched her wrist's smooth flesh. "And you're like that all over." he said.

She did not return his smile. "Peter, I'd rather die."

"You think so now but when you get old, you won't. Besides," he said, "I'll be old too and I'll still love you, you'll still look to me like the girl I married."

"But you'll have those pictures you've made of me, and you'll look at them and then at me—Peter, if you ever stop loving me you'll tell me right away, won't you? Before you tell anybody else?"

"I'll never stop loving you."

"But when I get old and ugly—"

"Will you stop talking such nonsense! You may get old but you'll

never be ugly, and I'll always love you. That's final. And if you don't stop talking such nonsense I'll bust you one."

The threat did not appear to frighten her. "Just the same," she said, "I'm glad I'm young."

"That's better. Stop worrying about what may happen years from now. I think," he said thoughtfully, "that as you get old you get used to it."

"I never will," Susan insisted. "I've never been able to imagine myself old. I used to think I'd die when I was thirty but of course I was practically a child, then. Now I don't see how I could live after I'm forty."

"Just for that," Peter promised, "I'll make it a point on your fortieth birthday to break down your bedroom door and wreak my will upon you as heretofore."

Susan looked thoughtful. "Do you think people still have fun that way after they're forty?"

"I think so."

"But it seems so—it seems so indecent. I mean that most men and women that age aren't—well, they're not pretty to look at, are they? They haven't nice bodies, you know they haven't. And somehow you can't imagine it being beautiful and gay if the man's bald and pot-bellied and the woman's all flabby and loose. Oh, you know what I mean, Peter; why don't you say it for me?"

"You're young and cruel."

By the river, colored lights winked importantly above steel rails; in the farther darkness, beyond High Bridge, a car crawled slowly along Sedgwick Avenue, two wavering headlights and nothing else.

"When you're old," he said, "I imagine you don't mind—much. It's not as though your mind stayed young but your body got old. You change inside, too. I mean the things that seem so important to you now won't interest you at all. If I get bald and acquire a stomach—"

"You won't. You're the kind that gets leaner and leaner. When you're old you'll be a lean, bony man, small and neat and distinguished looking."

"Thank you. Either way, you're the one that's going to suffer."

"Me?"

"Yes. People will say, Well, Miss Susan, your gran'pappy is a spry old gentleman for such a dodderin' old fool, ain't he? And you'll

have to tell them, See here, he's not my grandfather, he's my husband. So then they'll think you married me for my money, and if you tell them how old you really are they'll take you for a witch."

Susan looked up at him, laughing, the wind spraying wisps of hair around her eyes. Peter smiled back. The wind was a purr in his ears, then it shifted. "What I've always wished," he said, "was there ought to be some way you could put away a day you've lived and come back to it afterward. Now for instance, this is what it was really like when we were young, tonight, this minute. But how much of it will we remember when we're old? We'll talk about the days when we were young but it won't be anything like what actually was. You see what I mean. It was like this, this minute. Eleven-thirty of a Friday in late April, a cold and windy night. It's the movie we've just seen, the style of the cars that pass us, the clothes you're wearing. It's your clear skin and firm body and my good teeth and the steak digesting in our insides. All that's a part of now, this moment. If you could weave some kind of spell—"

His hand moved through the air, closed on it. "Catch and hold," he chanted, "dark sky, cold earth, winter wind; this heartbeat of the life of this man and this woman and no other. Catch and hold, and when we are old there it will be—"

His hand opened and lay cupped, as though holding in itself miniatures of the bridge, the scurrying cars, themselves. "Everything: the wind, the click of your heels on the sidewalk, warmth in your mouth, laughter in your throat. No job, the rent due next week, the Bronx waiting to swallow us. A car sounding its horn and right after that—you hear?—a locomotive's shriek. There—it's gone already."

They heard the small rattle of the train and then saw the train itself, tiny windows alight, slide down the valley toward the city, Grand Central. Susan said, "You'll have your memories."

Peter shook his head. "It's memories I distrust. You forget too much, you forget what it was really like. Pictures help. A picture of this empty bridge, the darkness, might help; but there's so much you couldn't put in, that isn't lines and shadows—"

The wind tugged at his hat and Peter jerked around, clutching at it, then faced forward again, imprinted on his eyes the world back of them, the empty drive—the wind had cleared the streets as well as the air—and on the bluff above it the old water tower; and back of the

water tower's slim serenity the apartment houses of Washington Heights, in daylight a thin crust of masonry atop the bluff's earth and vegetation, at night an uneven wall only slightly more solid than the dark sky beyond it.

He realized that Susan had begun speaking again, in that slow, pleasant voice that so perfectly matched her quiet eyes:

"—and long afterward you relived it, you were back in tonight again, it might not be what you think. If I were to say some night, Peter, do you remember when we were first married and lived in High Bridge and how we used to go to the movies, walking across 181st Street bridge? And you'd say, Yes, and then we did whatever it was we had to do and we found ourselves on the bridge here, watching the Young Us walking home. You'd probably say, Oh, well, we weren't so badly off. We were poor, of course, but we were young and in love—"

"Yes, but—"

"Don't interrupt me. I'd look at myself and think, What funny clothes I wore then but I did have a cute figure, didn't I? Peter, you'll still love me when I'm straight up and down from my shoulders to my knees, won't you? I'll still love you if you get bald."

"Nothing could be fairer."

"Then I'd look at you, the Young You, and say, Whatever was I thinking of to let Peter get so thin, and there's a button missing off his overcoat, too; and will you look at his shoes. But we wouldn't know we were being watched; we'd walk along, talking, maybe talking of when we'd be old— Gosh, Peter, don't look around; they may be there now. . . . "

They were approaching the Bronx end of the bridge, which sloped slightly to a tangle of traffic signs and converging streets, University, Ogden, Boscobel. "And I'd look after us," Susan continued, "until I couldn't see us any more, until the Bronx had swallowed us up, thinking of the old days and not knowing whether to laugh or cry. Then you'd say, Come along, my dear, and I'd take your arm and we'd go back to where our car was waiting. We could have him park on Amsterdam Avenue; they allow parking there, don't they? And we'd get in, sighing and creaking the way old people do, and the chauffeur would drive us home. I imagine we'd be sad and quiet for the rest of the evening, don't you? So," Susan said, looking up at him, "maybe it's just as well you can't recapture it."

A LEANER

by

Len Zinberg

WHENEVER I get a few beers in me I begin to think of such things as life and a man's character, and how funny it is the way a single deed can change a whole neighborhood's opinion of a guy. I mean a guy can be a bum for years, then in two seconds he does something that wipes out those years that he was a bum. Or something like that. So right now I'm wondering if Big Tim will move or if he'll have guts enough to stick around and stand the kidding, and what a funny guy Murphy is and how you can never tell about a guy. I mean about a guy like Murphy.

Murphy is a short, wiry, old Irishman and has been living in our house for the last ten years. You see, in our tenement there are about ten families, all told; all of us about the same, a little wild and noisy at times, but good, hard-working, decent people. But Murphy and his old woman were different. Different because she was much older than he was and different because they never said a word to anybody in the house. Never a sound out of their place. Maybe Murphy would nod to the other men as he left the house each morning for work, neat and trim-looking, his lunch box under his arm and his old pipe going full blast.

He spoke to me once in a while because we lived on the same floor and shared the same toilet. There are two flats to a floor and one toilet in the hall. You could always hear somebody in the house shouting: "Say, when are you going to get out of there?" Big Tim Collins was especially noisy, and impatient. But that never happened on our floor. Lots of times I would come out and see Murphy there waiting, standing there patiently, his pipe smoking slowly. If you said: "Nice day, Murphy," he would answer in his odd brogue: "Aye, it is indeed

a fine day," and that would end the conversation. Sometimes I would pass his own door as he was going out and would see his rooms, neat as a pin, and his thin gray-haired, wrinkled wife handing him his lunch box.

Most of the people in the house had no use for Murphy. It made them mad that he was never drunk, that he never beat his wife, that he lived in peace with the old woman, and that we never heard them fighting or laughing.

On the other hand we all liked Big Tim, who was a huge man and always ready to knock your block off, because we all knew that he was just a good-natured slob despite his big talk. Although once, when he was drunk, he had cleaned out a saloon. Or there was O'Hara, who every payday would come staggering in and sit in the hallway, singing sorrowful Irish ballads in his clear sweet voice. Then his wife would come down and try to take him upstairs and there would be a great deal of screaming and shouting and finally laughter and they would go up. But payday, Sunday, or weekday, Murphy was always the same quiet Murphy.

Along about five or six years ago we men in the house began to lose our jobs. None of us understood the economic forces that had disinherited us. We would sit around the stoop, grave and a little embarrassed at first and maybe a bit ashamed, and then finally after holding out as long as was possible, we went on relief. The relief kept us thin, but at least we were eating and we became more or less used to doing nothing or finding odd jobs now and then that gave us cigarette money. But Murphy still had his job.

Each morning right on the dot, Murphy left as usual, with his pipe and lunch box, and it got so we stayed in the house until after he had gone. Some of the men in the house disliked him more than ever now, for their nagging wives would point to little Murphy as an example of a man who still worked. Several of them said he had to work because staying around the house with an old woman was a waste of time anyway, and they made up jokes about his old wife and himself. Big Tim talked about "busting that little shrimp right into the middle of next week," and "cracking him one just for the hell of it." But Murphy paid no attention to us and went about as if he knew nothing of what we were saying about him, though he couldn't help but hear.

Well, about six months ago, it happened, word spread through the house that Murphy had lost his job and the next day he was sitting on the stoop, smoking and watching the people pass. Big Tim grinned and said: "I'll be damned. So the angel got fired."

"Aye, I got the sack. 'Tis bad times." And that was all he ever said.

He would sit there day after day with the rest of us, looking for work was a useless task, and we would talk and joke, but he would never join in with us. But sometimes he would nod his head if he agreed with a speaker. In a way I admired him. He was so cool and calm, never raised his voice, never got excited. Big Tim would try and rag him, and Murphy would just sit and smoke and be quiet, and it seemed to give him a certain dignity.

There is a playground across the street, and a few weeks ago they put in a couple of spikes and started horseshoe-pitching games for the men. We went at it with great relish and soon there were hot arguments and teams and champions and we even bet pennies on the games. Once in awhile one of us would think how funny it was that a bricklayer should be pitching horseshoes in the middle of the morning, or what was a pick and shovel man playing in the park in the afternoon for, and it made us gloomy, but soon the excitement of the game would take our minds off such dark subjects.

Big Tim Collins was by far the best player. He could score ringers almost at will and he could even make what we called "leaners" easily. A "leaner" is where the shoe leans upright against the spike.

Murphy would stand and watch and smoke, and then, one day, Murphy came down with a set of his own shoes—fine, heavy horseshoes. He started to throw them, and it was plain to see that he was an expert at the game. He had a knack of sending the shoe through the air, turning over and over and always making the right turn to just fall around the spike. It was just a matter of time till Murphy and Big Tim had it out, but for a while Big Tim wouldn't play with him because Murphy refused to play for pennies and Big Tim considered it a waste of time to play an important game for nothing.

Yesterday, after much coaxing, Big Tim agreed to play him, and after we had gathered all the men to watch them, they started the game. It was a close game, but Murphy was the master of Big Tim, and Big Tim became angry and started to talk Murphy out of the game.

This was a favorite tactic of Big Tim's, whereby he got his opponent so rattled and mad, that he would win with ease. Big Tim said: "Now wait a minute, shrimp." Or "What do you mean you had me there, you undersized half-pint?" And he called Murphy a lot of names and Murphy just smoked and kept on winning and once he said: "Man, you babble too much. Did ye come here to play or to talk?"

Soon Murphy's calmness got Big Tim rattled, and then Tim began to push him around, making it appear like an accident. Like swinging his hand back for a throw and giving Murphy a hard shove and yelling: "Why the hell don't you look out? Or is it your game to hold me back?" But little Murphy never became flustered, and he won the game handily. Big Tim was always a poor loser and he demanded that Murphy play him another game. But Murphy took out his watch and shook his head. He had to go in for lunch, he said, and picked up his shoes. Big Tim said: "Ah, yellow."

"Man, my woman is waiting for me," Murphy said.

"Hell, I'd let an old hag like that wait!" Big Tim said and laughed and started to walk away. Murphy's face changed color and became red and then pale and I thought he was going to go for Big Tim and I stepped in to grab him, because he was no match for Tim. Before I could reach him, Murphy's hand went back and one of those heavy horseshoes went skimming through the air and just grazed Big Tim's head. Tim's hat went flying and Tim himself sort of spun around for a second before he hit the ground.

Tim lay on the ground for a bit, as if dead, and then he sat up and rubbed the top of his head and for a moment we didn't realize that a direct hit would have killed him and that Murphy had deliberately hit him so that he was only stunned. It was an amazingly expert shot.

Murphy stood there, another shoe ready to throw, and as cool as ever, his pipe faintly smoking. Big Tim suddenly let out a roar and scrambled to his feet and came toward Murphy, shouting: "You damn fool, you near killed me!"

Murphy began to swing the other shoe and Big Tim stopped and yelled: "Somebody stop that murdering fool!" Murphy stopped swinging and said slowly: "Man, I told you you talk too much. I didn't try to kill you. That was only a leaner. If I wanted to, I could have made a ringer, like this." He swung his arm and the shoe went twisting

through the air and with a sharp loud clank struck the spike, a perfect ringer. A hit like that would have opened a man's head.

We were all silent and Murphy walked over to the spike and picked up his shoe and then he went over to Big Tim and picked up the other shoe and then he lit his pipe, standing within a foot of Big Tim, looking ridiculously small along side of Tim's giant body, and then he calmly walked out of the park and across the street to the house.

THE INTRIGUE OF MR. S. YAMAMOTO

by

R. H. Linn

MR. S. YAMAMOTO, Japanese gentleman of stamp, sat on thick green plush with wide rump and watch pretty little tracery on window made by imagery of trees and flowers outside trotting at gallop. Mr. S. Yamamoto very wide also in stomach, and also foreward, all embraced by watch chain about middle.

Black cigar with burning end have itself in Mr. Yamamoto mouth. His face open and smile like flower in morning when sun gets up and smoke comes out very fast like engine of train. Puff, puff, puff. When car jiggle up and down Mr. Yamamoto stomach jiggle up and down also in very happy manner. (This not important).

In next moment or two down aisle has to come porter who is dark skin and speak bad English perhaps just come over from Africa. Porter say, Pardon suh, sign say no smoking not allowed.

Ah-yes-yes-yes-yes-yes, say Mr. S. Yamamoto in best Japanese manner and he lean out in aisle to look at sign, hissing in polite Oriental way.

Sign say, Not Smoking in these parts.

Mr. Yamamoto take cigar and put out against sole of foot in shoe. Mr. S. Yamamoto believe when in Roman to do as Mussolini. He thank porter in very nice fashion for information as to custom to be observed in Pullman.

Thank you, Porter. And he gave porter extra cigar; new, unsmoked.

Porter say thank you too, and feel best of friends.

Mr. Yamamoto very kind man in circumspect manner. Sometime soon a sadness creep over Mr. S. Yamamoto as he look at family across

aisle of car. Little boy does not mind his father. Father say keep quiet; little boy scream. Father say speak to lady and thank her for candy and little boy make faces to lady. Thus Mr. Yamamoto have sadness feeling. Mayhaps this is custom on Pullman cars. Americans very fun people. Americans very jump-hurry-fast people but when having time, very nice, he say. Very certain Americans got funny faces and all look very much same person to be sure, making difficult for Japanese man to tell apart. All very simple. American got efficiency from tip of head to top of toes. Japanese business man pretend to be like American; American pretend to be like Englishman; Englishman pretend to be like God. This what Mr. S. Yamamoto say to himself thinking.

Little boy across aisle say, Who is queer man with funny eyes, mama?

Mr. Yamamoto pretend not to hear.

Little boy mama whisper in ear. Little boy say very loud. What is Chinaman, mama?

Mr. Yamamoto go on to read magazine and feel very sorry for papa of such a little boy.

American man much like Japanese man. Some have kind twinkle in eye and some have not. Example of kind man is to come.

Soon it happen Mr. Yamamoto wish to powder his nose as Americans say and he get up and go to end of car. When he return he see through window that train pass strange white field which stretch to distance like plain in Northern part of Japan. Mr. Yamamoto stop and bow to old man in compartment next to his own.

Old man have glasses on nose with gold edge. He bow politely back to Mr. Yamamoto.

Pardon slight interruption, Mr. Yamamoto say, but you could give me a little information please?

Certainly, man say. Won't you sit down with us please? This is my daughter.

Old man point to beautiful girl in seat opposite and Mr. Yamamoto bow and introduce self. Name of old man Mr. Jackson and name of beautiful girl Celia. Mr. Yamamoto remember this carefully because of what happen later.

Where is snow come from in such hot weather? Mr. Yamamoto ask and point to strange white field out of window.

Now old man and beautiful girl know that Mr. Yamamoto make funny mistake but they do not laugh.

Mr. Jackson say, That you see is salt and we are soon to come to Great Salt Lake.

Oh thank you very much, Mr. Yamamoto say. He see that they are very polite and do not laugh.

I see that you are very polite and do not laugh at mistake, he say. I see that you are both gentlemen.

Mr. Jackson and his daughter smile with modesty at Mr. Yamamoto kind words. They talk for while about strange appearance of salt and tell Mr. Yamamoto they have to go to Chicago because beautiful girl a little sick and should see specialist doctor.

Mr. Yamamoto very sorry for beautiful girl. He tell them all about his little boy Takashi and his little girl Asako that he have left back in Japan. He take out shot-snaps.

This Takashi and this Asako in Japanese park at Tokyo, he say.

Aren't they sweet, beautiful girl say. Old man like them too, and Mr. Yamamoto very proud father.

When porter say dinner ready, Mr. Yamamoto say good-bye and go to wash hands and face. He wish for nice hot Japanese bath to be all clean and comfortable but rolling train does not provide such.

After dinner, Mr. Yamamoto go to observation car to write cards to Takashi and Asako. To Takashi he send picture of large bear in zoo, and to Asako he send picture of American movie actress because Asako wish to be movie actress when she grow up.

When he finish to write cards he go to seat and find porter making bed where seats were. He watch very carefully to tell children about strange process.

Finally berth made up and Mr. Yamamoto decide to go in bed and read Japanese magazine till sleep. First he undress with great difficulty for no room in such small space for both man and stomach; then he look out black window and see little firefly-lights go by like sparks from engine. After while he turn on little light and read sport magazine about Japanese baseball heroes. In middle of reading Mr. Yamamoto fall asleep and sleep for long long time. Little lights go by and train sing rumbling song in steel throat. Mr. Yamamoto smile in sleep, dreaming of big Suki-Yaki banquet with much saki.

All at once Mr. Yamamoto wide awake. He realize somebody has

begin to pull back curtains of berth. Then curtains open and Mr. Yamamoto too surprised to speak. Beautiful girl in blue silk kimono is inside curtains. She take off kimono and climb into berth beside Mr. Yamamoto. Even if eyes open Mr. Yamamoto realize she is Mr. Jackson daughter and walk in sleep and he put out hand to wake her then stop. Her eyes do not see him and she give tired sign and close them still sound of sleep. Mr. Yamamoto cannot help to see beautiful white skin like lotus petal above lace of night dress. Skin of breast flutter like poppy petal in breeze over where heart beat. Her face very quiet and peaceful with breath even and slow.

Mr. Yamamoto remember oriental proverb: When in doubt to do nothing. He lie quietly and think what to do. He think to wake girl with very gentle touch, but then he fear she scream very loud to see face of strange man and people come to see what trouble cause by foreign Japanese man to beautiful white girl.

He wonder about getting out of berth to find Mr. Jackson and come and get daughter but man with stomach also have impossible time to get out of berth without wake up beautiful girl.

Mr. Yamamoto think a long time. He think about his honorable ancestors. He think what his wise grandfather would do in berth with beautiful girl to scream at any moment.

Engine up ahead in distance whistle gently and train go through small town with many lights without stopping. Outside of berth in aisle, someone go by and bump against curtains. Mr. Yamamoto think about all of people asleep in car and about Mr. Jackson who is very kind man. He look again at beautiful girl and face remind him of lovely geisha girl with white skin and long lash on eyes in cafe in Tokyo. Outside of berth, person pass again bumping on curtain and giving cough from throat. Beautiful girl beside Mr. Yamamoto stir in sleep and turn head. She look very sad and say something soft with red lips moving. Mr. Yamamoto feel strange feeling along spine but stay very quiet for fear of wake her. Since death of faithful wife several years ago, Mr. Yamamoto very lonely man. He watch face of beautiful girl for some time. She sleep very peacefully. Train whistle again in distance with mournful sound.

After thinking carefully, Mr. Yamamoto turn over with face toward window and go to sleep without disturbing beautiful girl.

Lights fly past window and train sing rumbling song and poppy

petals flutter over heart and Mr. Yamamoto snore contented snore in sleep.

Next when he wake up he see waving grass outside window and golden shine of sun. He turn his head around and see that beautiful girl is gone. Mr. Yamamoto turn head again and look out of window and smile. He see the shadow of train rush along like swiftly shot arrow while wind blow grass and he keep eyes in distance thinking of old Japanese saying his father tell him when little boy. In the shadow of arrow there are birds flying.

FATHER PATKO

by

Jerome Bahr

THE church was on the edge of the cliff and could be seen from all points in the town. It was a large building of new red brick with steeple and cross, and its lawns and sidewalks ran right to the very edge of the drop where a hedge of young trees grew out over a low green fence. There had once been a hill but men had chiseled so industriously for sandstone that now there was a cliff. Looking up from the valley and the railroad tracks you would find the cliff very bare and brown and ugly; but off to one side where the men had not yet worked it was still a green hill without a baked snout. The grass was kept short by the unconcerned nibbling of the sheep and there were tall trees rising above the top and a path that climbed steeply up to the back of the church.

Not far from the church was another building of new red brick, the priest home, and alongside that was the combination school and sister house. All three buildings looked down sideways into the valley as though they were keeping one eye on Hillon and the other on their parishioners who lived in the Polish settlement back on the hill and farther out on the large fertile farms.

Father Patko, a plump bald-headed man of sixty with a round red face, stood smoking his pipe in the quiet twilight of the young trees. Some of his parishioners called him a stern old priest, but that day he was just a short man in a black suit who looked very lost and undressed with his Roman collar removed. The town below him was off to one side and pieced together in a single long street that stretched lazily from the river up to the hill and then curved in the direction of the church. Sprawling directly below were generous fenced-off pastures interlaced with patches of marshland; and often when people

were in a hurry they left the street and cut across the pastures and climbed up the steep path.

Knocking his pipe ashes against the tree, Father Patko waited for the woman who strode so swiftly and confidently through the valley. He knew what was coming and disliked the thought of the meeting. Mrs. Sobanski had no respect for a priest. She had always given him trouble. She had started the very first day by moving into the valley with the Germans and Norwegians instead of living back on the hill with the Polish. That wasn't so bad because there were others in his parish who did the same. But she had done other things. When he preached against Bannon's and other Sunday-night barn dances, she dragged her husband to all of them. When he urged his people to quit making moonshine, she was the first to get drunk the next night in Dubinski's tavern. She was headstrong and emotional, fond of making scenes, and Father Patko could do nothing with her.

But she was a splendid organist, the best the church ever had. Her husband, who conducted the choir, was talented too. Two years ago at the district Holy Name rally the bishop had been warm with compliments for them both. Father Patko, proud of his flock, never forgot that day.

Perhaps that was one of the reasons he was so reluctant to let them go, in spite of the harm the Sobanskis had done. For some time the parish had been unable to afford their services. The couple had been hired in good times and they refused to take a cut. But the old priest had kept them on. He loved good music and continued to believe that soon the depression would lift.

But times did not get better. Wisconsin was as hard hit as any of the states and the farmers' cream checks dwindled almost to nothing. Father Patko had inherited considerable wealth from his grandparents in Poland so he himself took little for his services. He even helped to pay the Sobanskis. But when he told the woman she would have to leave there was a scene. It happened in church after a rehearsal. She talked out loud, slammed her music on the bench, and flatly refused to resign. He tried to reason with her but she accused him of being prejudiced against her because she had no children.

For weeks Father Patko had been carrying on a strong fight against birth control, and among certain persons Mrs. Sobanski's re-

marks were listened to. Poverty had increased in Hillon the past few years and there were some who resented the priest's insistence that they continue to raise children. Also, there was a new doctor in the town who openly advocated control of birth. He was modern, the people said. It was all very disagreeable for Father Patko. Sometimes he became furious just talking about it.

Mrs. Sobanski made other remarks. She called him a pigheaded Dutchman who had lived too long among the Germans in Poland to have any sense. She accused him of being ashamed of being half Polish. She pointed out how much he spoke German.

Father Patko was not ashamed of being Polish. He had disliked the Germans in Poland very much. They were all Jews and atheists. But the few Germans with whom he associated in Hillon were different. They were educated and pleasant and he liked being with them. Most of his parishioners, on the other hand, were poor Polish peasants and it was necessary he rule them with an iron hand. If at times he became gruff and impatient, it was only because he was so close to them. He did not mind being called a pigheaded Dutchman. They called Father Engel the Black Hawk. But Mrs. Sobanski's talk about birth control was different.

Father Patko met Mrs. Sobanski at the top of the path. She had been walking very fast and was winded from climbing the hill. She stopped and caught her breath. She was a tall thin woman with a narrow face, straight black hair, and sharp black eyes.

"*Dobry wieczór,*" Father Patko greeted her in Polish, making an effort to be pleasant.

"*Guten Abend,*" she answered mockingly in German. She stared at him for a moment, nervously fingering her dress, and then in a hard voice said: "This is the last time I'll discuss it."

"Please sit down," the priest said.

"I prefer to stand."

"I was looking down into the valley. I never tire of these lands."

"I am not interested in landscape."

Father Patko coughed. He saw that Mrs. Sobanski was not going to be reasonable. He said calmly: "I have not changed my mind. Mrs. Kiela will take your place at the organ next Sunday."

"You can't do that."

"It will be done."

"Why, I'll drive you out of this parish."

Father Patko gripped his pipe. "This is no way to talk to a priest," he said, trying to shame her as he might a child. "You'll be punished. There are older sins too."

"I'm not afraid of your persecution," said Mrs. Sobanski in a raised voice. "You'll have enough to answer yourself. The way you talked to me about Vincent Kirsch. Trying to make me a Mary Magdalene."

"You don't know what you're saying," the priest stepped back. "Don't you understand whom you're speaking to?"

"God Almighty," laughed Mrs. Sobanski. "God Almighty Patko."

"Stop it, Mrs. Sobanski! I command you to stop."

Mrs. Sobanski moved forward, and bent close to the priest. "I'm going to fool you. I have been in the family way for two months. I have a child here right now. Right here," she added, tapping her stomach.

"You are insane," the priest backed away. "I refuse to listen to you any longer."

Mrs. Sobanski stepped quickly after him, catching hold of his shoulder. She whispered: "I'm going to sit at that organ Sunday no matter what you or God or anyone says."

At once the grave priest made the sign of the cross. His lips moved in silent prayer. He did not say anything. He looked at her. Mrs. Sobanski laughed, changed her mind, for the moment became confused. She mumbled something, turned abruptly, ran down the hill. Father Patko started after her, called, stopped, made another sign of the cross. He watched her hurry through the valley, her arms moving briskly at her sides, her head shaking.

When she was out of sight Father Patko turned and went slowly on up the path, entering the priest house the back way. The housekeeper was in the kitchen reading the paper. She jumped up when the priest entered.

"What's wrong, Father?" she said. "You look sick."

"Fix me a little brandy. I feel faint."

She took the bottle from the cupboard and poured him a small drink. "This will make you feel better."

"Dziekuje," he said and went into the study. Father Jarkowski, his

assistant, was seated at the table bending over a book. He was a gaunt morose-looking young man. He rose and gave the older priest a chair.

"Schmidt was here from Baumandee to see about his school," said the assistant. "I didn't know you were around."

"Father Schmidt?"

"He wanted to find out about our desks. Schmidt is quite excited these days."

"Father Schmidt, you mean?"

The younger priest did not say anything. It sometimes nettled him that the old man could not get used to calling priests by their last names. He pursed his lips and stared down at his book.

Father Patko waited and then said: "I was talking with Mrs. Sobanski. She refuses to resign. She talked about birth control again. *Ona jest wsciekla.*"

"You ought to have the lawyer notify her."

"No, I'll take care of it."

"She's a mean old bitch."

"I wish you wouldn't use that word."

"It's just between ourselves."

"Still, it isn't right."

"What did she say?"

"She said she was in the family way."

"As if that would help her."

"She doesn't like my sermons. She's telling everyone I'm prejudiced."

"She's crazy, of course. But there has been a lot of grumbling lately."

Father Patko frowned. "We have our duties," he said.

"Of course. Of course. But people are pretty poor these days."

"Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."

The younger priest stirred under Father Patko's stare. "There isn't much coming in. There are a lot of bills due."

"Are you asking me to quit preaching against birth control?" the old priest asked bluntly.

"No, of course not," said the assistant carefully. "But you've talked on the subject the past few months."

"We have duties, Father Jarkowski. Be not like the actors."

"Yes," said the assistant, stroking his forehead. "I was merely making a suggestion."

Father Patko rose and departed unceremoniously for his room. Feeling tired he lay on the bed. Oh, for the life of Fra Angelico and his monastic cell. He did not want to think about what Father Jarkowski had said. Almost all the young priests were the same. The town was changing too. Sometimes it all made him feel lonely, as though everyone were against him.

Mrs. Sobanski spent the next three days running from one house to another. She told everyone Father Patko was making the depression worse by compelling the people to raise more children. Some of the more ignorant parishioners did not know what birth control meant, but Mrs. Sobanski quickly explained.

"They're doing it all over," she said excitedly. "Only here in Hillon are we so stupid."

"You mean they stop having babies?"

"Yes. And then there are not so many mouths to feed."

"*Tem lepiej.* It's funny idea but I think I like. Maybe I look pretty then. Not so many kids."

"You have nicer shape, too," laughed Mrs. Sobanski.

Mrs. Sobanski was not loved by the parishioners but she commanded a certain respect. She was the only person who had dared to defy openly the old priest. Furthermore, they were afraid of her temper. Her frequent tantrums had made gossip in Hillon for eight years. And her affair with Vincent Kirsch was still talked about.

Why she ever married John Sobanski no one could understand. He was a docile wisp of a man with very little attraction for any woman. He had left the village one winter day and returned with a wife. That was all. No one ever found out much more about her. Father Patko knew a little through her birth certificate but he did not gossip. She immediately began to get into the thick of things and within a month of her arrival she became the church organist.

The church was crowded for high mass the next Sunday. Word had got about that something was going to happen and no one went fishing that day. Mrs. Kiela was at the organ sorting out her music when Mrs. Sobanski arrived. It was shortly before the services were to

begin. The balcony was filled with school children and there were a few sisters and the members of the choir. The organ was set far back in the balcony, but the people downstairs kept looking up. There was a large mirror above the organ so the organist could see the altar without turning around. Mrs. Kiela fastened her eyes in the mirror and nervously watched the servers light the candles. She was a simple, good natured woman and did not enjoy the thought of opposing Mrs. Sobanski. She had consented to play only because of Father Patko's insistence.

Standing in the doorway, Mrs. Sobanski leaned over and whispered to her husband. He looked quickly about and then urged her once more not to go through with it. His lustreless saucer eyes were filled with worry. He wanted her to give up the wild notion of fighting the priest in church, but she only laughed at him and called him a coward. He did not like being called a coward so he went and sat down as she told him to. With terrified eyes he watched her march over to Mrs. Kiela. Everyone in the balcony watched her, the sisters without moving their heads. She tapped Mrs. Kiela on the shoulder and said, in a low voice:

"What are you doing here?"

"I don't know nothing," said Mrs. Kiela looking straight ahead.

"Who told you to sit here?"

"Father Patko. I don't know nothing."

"Are you going to listen to me or him?"

"I don't know nothing," said Mrs. Kiela a third time. Not once did she take her eyes off the mirror. Mrs. Sobanski leaned close and whispered something in her ear. The choir members stretched their necks. Mrs. Kiela became very pale and at once jumped off the bench. Smiling, Mrs. Sobanski took her place at the organ and began to rearrange the music. Her husband rose timidly and carried his directing stand to the front. Nods were exchanged among the choir members. The sisters pretended not to have seen. Some of the school children giggled. Mrs. Kiela quickly gathered up her things and slipped away downstairs. Czaplinski, a trustee, watched everything. He left immediately to tell Father Patko what had happened. He did not like Mrs. Sobanski. Mrs. Sobanski began to play softly on the organ while the members of the choir went to their places.

The two priests and four acolytes were in the sacristy when Czaplinski rushed in. Father Patko was about to put on his vestments. Father Jarkowski frowned when he saw the bigboned farmer. Quickly he sent the acolytes to the other side. Czaplinski was excited and could not get the words fast enough out of his mouth. He cursed several times as he related what had happened.

"Don't curse so much," Father Patko said.

"I can't help it. She makes me so mad. *Jestem w zlym humorze.*"

"Remember you are in the house of God."

After Czaplinski departed the assistant said gloomily: "It would be best to ignore her."

"I shall take care of it. I am not half-way in my faith, I am not a Nicodemus."

"A lawyer would do it much better."

"No," said Father Patko. "Matters of the spirit are not for the lawyers."

The assistant looked perplexedly at the older priest. "That isn't what I'd do," he murmured, and went into the sanctuary.

With aging eyes Father Patko turned away to his vestments. Carefully he placed the white linen amice over his shoulders. Blindfolded Saviour. Helm of salvation. Ignorant and easily influenced they were, his parishioners. Waiting to be shown. Fail now and who knew what would happen. Every day the depression grew worse. Grumbling. Anything could happen. Like Russia. Farm strikes and mill strikes. Strike against God. No respect for law and order. City men started it. Ran away from town during prosperity to work in factories. Ten dollars a day. Now nothing. Godless. Moneyless. Back from Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee. Bringing queer notions and unrest. Atheism and Communism. And parishioners listen. Ignorant parishioners.

Into the long white linen robe, the alb, struggled Father Patko. Purity of heart. Purity of youth. Flocking to barn dances, committing sin upon sin. Big bellies and mixed marriages. Peter Swirski and his new saloon. Missed mass to tell dirty stories. And Herod clothed our Lord Jesus to revile him as a fool. And Joseph Cassidy returned to flaunt his atheist marriage with Rosie Carp. And Mrs. Sobanski said he was prejudiced. Mockers.

Praying, Father Patko took the girdle to bind the alb round his waist. His eyes dropped to the maniple, fruit of good works. Duty to

fear neither suffering nor labor. No, he could not evade the issue as Father Jarkowski had suggested. It was a deeper issue.

Turning, Father Patko looked to the acolyte. The cloaklike cope, concealing its diminutive bearer, was brought to him. Quickly the two taller acolytes stood to attention, the one with his hand on the bell rope. The priest stopped a moment to straighten the acolyte's surplice. Then the signal was given and the bell was rung. Down through the altar gates the old priest walked, sprinkling holy water as the choir sang: *"Asperges me, Domine, hyssopo, et mundabor; lavabis me, et super niven dealbabor."*

That Sunday morning there was a strange tension throughout the church as Father Patko said the mass. He sensed it immediately when he said *Oremus* and reascended to the altar. From the beginning the servers stumbled through their Latin prayers, and even the excellent choir later seemed to suggest a subtle hesitancy in its *Kyrie, eleison.* Father Patko strove to ignore it. Standing at the middle of the altar, bowing slightly, he cleared his voice to say the *Gloria in excelsis.* Then later, after he had again sung *Oremus,* the servers went to their chairs and he ascended the pulpit to read the Epistle of the day. With his eyes to his book he avoided looking at any of the faces below him. Quietness came as he labored through the Epistle and Gospel, reading first in English and then in Polish.

"He's afraid of her," whispered the bartender, Dubinski, to his wife. "Listen to his shaky voice. She'll fix the old Kaiser."

At the finish of the Gospel, Father Patko closed his book, stopped for a moment to cough, and then looked up out over his congregation. Not a head was turned from him. He looked up into the balcony. Mrs. Sobanski sat with her husband in the first row near the end. Czaplinski stood watching in the back by the door. At the altar sat Father Jarkowski with his head down, frowning.

What foolish move is he going to make now? thought the assistant.

For the moment fear came to Father Patko. He felt very old with everyone against him, feeble, like an old dam futilely trying to prevail against a swirling spring flood. A desire to drop everything, to pass the work to the assistant and lawyer, stole to him, offering its relief

for the aged; but when he saw the heretic sitting in the House of God he knew he had to go through with it.

"I am going to spare you from unnecessary sordidness," he began to his congregation, in a tired, strained voice. "You all know what has taken place without my going further into the details. It has been unfortunate from the very start. Some of you, I am sorry to say, have been on her side. Why? Perhaps I can understand, when in these troubled times the very gates of Hell open so boldly with their temptations. But I am an old man who has seen much, and there is one thing I must make clear to you before I speak directly to her. It is no longer a question of whether you are able to afford her services as an organist. Or whether it is a personal battle as so many of you seem to presume. But it is now a question of whether you are going to tolerate a heretic!"

Father Patko paused to see what effect he had made. There was a hush and then people began to whisper. Heads were jerked back to see whether Mrs. Sobanski was still there. Father Jarkowski continued to stare down at the floor, as though he had no part in the affair.

The old priest waited till the whispering had subsided. "This is all I am going to say to you," he said and then turned to the balcony. "Mrs. Sobanski, I ask you, as a heretic, to leave the House of God at once."

Once more heads were jerked to the balcony. Someone dropped a rosary, and in the stillness it sounded like heavy chains falling to the floor. John Sobanski, terrified by the sudden attention, nudged his wife frantically to get up and leave. Members of the choir sitting nearby stirred uneasily and lowered their heads. The nuns buried their noses in prayerbooks but kept looking furtively. The school children were all eyes and open mouths.

A sudden feeling of guilt shot through Mrs. Sobanski. She grappled with the word heretic. She had always thought of Father Patko as a man, a person like herself, and now he was accusing her of being a heretic. The same word he used for such devils as Rousseau and Voltaire. What was she doing? Baffled, she looked down into the upturned faces. She stared at them and they were like herself. She turned toward Father Patko and he too was like herself. Everyone was like herself. Even the floors and benches and windows in the church had been made by people like herself. Slowly she rose to her feet.

"I refuse to go," she answered firmly. "I have not been treated fair."

Again the heads jerked in unison, this time to Father Patko. He had not been expecting this. People did not talk out loud in the House of God.

"I order you to leave," he said, raising his voice.

"No one can make me go!" she shouted back with frenzy. "I refuse to leave! I defy you!"

For the moment everyone was nonplussed. The old priest gasped, at a loss. The nuns made the sign of the cross. Then it all happened. Father Patko lost his temper and shouted, "Trustees, remove the heretic!" Czaplinski, biting his lips, was waiting for this. Mrs. Sobanski had once called him a dumb clodhopper. He rushed up to her and grabbed her arm.

"C'mon, you she-devil," he pulled at her. "You're going outside."

"Don't touch me." She slapped him full in the face. People downstairs jumped up and began to talk loudly. *"Co za wstyd!"* squealed a hooded grandmother. The assistant priest rose quickly and thundered out "Silence!" from the altar. Father Patko clung to the pulpit rail helplessly watching everything, his round fat face as red as a dying sun. There was a general hysterical babbling in Polish. Czaplinski stood stiff, stupidly trying to wipe the sting of the slap off his face. He kept looking to the others for encouragement. No one upstairs made a move. Mrs. Sobanski, taking advantage of the farmer's bewilderment, tried to hit him again.

"Don't you put your hands on me," she shouted. "You clodhopper!"

That was too much for Czaplinski. Church or no church. He grabbed the woman by the waist and jerked her out of the pew. She wrestled with him, beating her fists on his head. He began to drag her toward the door. She broke loose and fell to the floor and lay there sobbing. John Sobanski rushed at Czaplinski but he was pushed into a row of school children. The congregation was thrown into an uproar. Czaplinski picked up the woman and now carried her protesting out the door. John Sobanski ran after him begging him to stop. The two priests knelt down and in unison began to pray out loud. The parishioners did the same. In a moment all were on their knees. Father Patko was leading the prayers from the pulpit, when suddenly he slumped

out of sight. The congregation jumped to its feet. A woman screamed. The assistant turned round to see what had happened. Immediately he rushed over to the pulpit. With another man he picked up the limp body and carried it into the sacristy. A doctor was summoned. The assistant returned to the sanctuary and announced there would be no services.

At once the people began to leave. They filed out slowly and lingered in groups outside the church. Czaplinski and the Sobanskis were not in sight.

In the sacristy they put holy water on Father Patko's face. When he came to, he went to pieces and began to babble like a child. They led him into the priest's house and put him to bed.

For two days the doctor allowed no one to see Father Patko. There were many rumors in the village. Mrs. Kling's group said that he was dying and another group felt that he had gone crazy. The scene in the church was recreated a thousand times. The Sobanskis disappeared the same day and later sent a man from Lisbia to pack up their belongings. Everyone tried to learn about Father Patko's condition. But the doctor would not talk, the assistant refused to be approached, and of course the housekeeper knew nothing.

The assistant was the first to make a regular visit to the priest's room. He entered the bedroom the third day, after Father Patko had finished his lunch in bed.

"I see you are better," said the assistant, drawing up a chair. "*Czy dobrze spales?*"

"Yes, I slept well."

"Good. It won't be long now before you are up and about."

Father Patko looked around the room. "Where is she?" he whispered.

"Where is who?"

"Mrs. Sobanski."

"They've left."

"Left town? For good?"

"Yes, I think so."

Father Patko made the sign of the cross and mumbled a prayer to himself. The assistant scrutinized him.

"Is there much talk?" whispered Father Patko.

"No, there is nothing said.

"Don't they say anything at all?"

"Nothing."

Father Patko leaned toward the assistant.

"Don't they thank me for driving out the devil, the murderer of unborn infants?"

Father Jarkowski did not answer. He was watching the older priest.

"I have saved lives," said Father Patko, his voice lifting. "The image of God shall not be destroyed. There will be no birth control in my parish now. I have driven her out, the devil. How happy I am."

Again Father Jarkowski was silent.

"Why don't you say something?" asked Father Patko.

"There is nothing much to say. We should not get happiness from our enemies' suffering. We are not Sullas." The assistant looked at his watch. "*Musze isc.* I have to hear a confession."

Father Patko took hold of the bed post and pulled himself up. He clutched the assistant's arm. "It was my duty. I am not a Sulla."

"No," said the assistant. "You are not a Sulla. You are a Christian, a forgiver." Father Patko slipped back in his bed, smiling contentedly, and Father Jarkowski stood up to leave.

"You must be careful not to excite yourself," he said, leaving the room.

Father Patko remained in bed two weeks. The second day after he was up and about he received a letter from the Bishop. It arrived with the morning mail and Father Jarkowski handed it to him after lunch.

"It looks important," said the assistant, waiting for him to open it.

"It's probably nothing," shrugged Father Patko and hurriedly took it up to his room. He locked the door, pulled down the shades, and ripped open the letter. It was a severe reprimand. It called him to task for allowing such a scene to be made in the church. It urged him to be more diplomatic in the future.

"Pontius Pilate," Father Patko said, as he tore the letter in bits and hid them in an old coat. He walked dejectedly over to the bed and

lay down. He would not say anything to Father Jarkowski about the letter. The assistant was not open with him any more. He was working against him. The assistant had insisted on taking over all Father Patko's duties—just because he wanted to preach on the simple love of mankind.

"We must make our parishioners love God, not fear him" Father Patko had said. "They go to church only out of fear." The assistant had done nothing but shake his head and look at him. As though he felt sorry for him.

Father Patko was not even allowed to attend mass. Whenever he asked the assistant if he were still opposing the birth control doctor, the younger priest would answer curtly, "I am taking care of it." Father Patko was afraid of this unchristian-like secrecy. He felt the way to Christian action was being blocked by corrupt habits. Once he called Father Jarkowski a Pharisee, but the assistant pretended he did not hear what had been said.

The letter from the Bishop bothered Father Patko considerably and he did not make much headway toward recovery of his health. The doctor ordered him to stay away from people and take short walks in the country. He enjoyed going down the steep path from the church into the green pastures below the cliff. It was pleasant there those summer evenings. Often when the wind fanned the treetops the odor of the meadows was fresh and soothing. He would sit alone on a small mound and smoke his pipe and look up at the beautiful church he had built. He was very proud of what he had made, and when his thoughts turned to the woman, he was happy he had driven her away. But some evenings when the wind was heavy and the fine new buildings were not very clear in the low, hanging clouds, he was afraid she would return some day and do harm to his church.

His parishioners he did not see very often. Like Christ he wanted to walk among them, as though he were one of them, relieving them in distress and teaching them to love each other; but whenever he tried to talk to them they always stared at him in such a strange manner. When he told them he did not want to see their piety change into melancholy slavery, they became alarmed and ran to Father Jarkowski and told him what he had said. Then Father Jarkowski forbade him to speak to people.

"Don't talk such rubbish," he said sharply.

So Father Patko went his way and did not bother the parishioners anymore. Anyway, they were never happy to see him and even went out of their way to escape having to answer his questions. Whenever he did happen to meet them they were always afraid.

"*Jak sie masz?*" Father Patko would say. "And how are the little children today?"

"Fine, thanks," they would answer and away they'd go. Father Patko would watch them hurry off and think how many infants he had saved.

One evening he saw Mrs. Manikowski taking the short-cut through the valley. She was a pleasant woman and he had always liked her. She did not see him at first and was frightened when he called to her from behind the mound where he was sitting and smoking his pipe.

"*Dobry wieczór,*" he called.

"Oh Father, it's you," she exclaimed.

"Yes, it's me," he smiled.

"You look much better, Father."

"Yes, but you know how it is. They don't like me any more. The Pharisees."

"Oh no, Father," said Mrs. Manikowski. "Don't feel bad. It isn't that way."

"It's so funny," said Father Patko, shrugging his shoulders. "But I forgive them for they know not what they do." He paused and puffed contentedly at his pipe. "Were you going to the priest house?" he added.

"Yes. I came to tell you Mrs. Sobanski is back in town."

"In town now?" the old priest asked excitedly.

"Yes. I saw her go past this afternoon in a car."

"I knew it! I knew it!" cried the old priest. "I knew she'd come back. Where is she? Tell me where she is."

"I just saw her. I don't know anything more."

In his excitement Father Patko took hold of Mrs. Manikowski's arm. "Tell me where she is," he repeated. The woman backed away and mumbled nervously about having an appointment.

"I don't dare be late. Be sure to tell Father Jarkowski," she added and quickly took leave.

"I'll tell him," Father Patko said, watching her hurry away

through the valley. But alone he smiled to himself. He, not Father Jarkowski, would go in search of the fallen. Like the good shepherd he would leave without hesitation the ninety-nine sheep to seek the hundredth that was lost. Mrs. Sobanski was back in town. She would see him that night. Making sure Mrs. Manikowski was out of sight, he started up the hill for his spot under the young trees.

It must have been a long time that he stood there waiting. Darkness blanketed the pastures and lights flicked on in the town and twice the housekeeper stuck her head out the door and called him. He stood still behind a bush and kept looking down into the valley and finally when his eyes had become strained from watching he saw the woman coming toward him. She was walking fast and not looking up. Father Patko stepped back from the rim of the cliff and waited for her behind a tree at the top of the path. When she came up and passed him, he stepped out from hiding and called to her. She stopped and turned abruptly. He went up to her with outstretched arm.

"It's me," he whispered. "I was waiting for you."

"How did you know I was coming?"

"I knew."

"You knew?"

"Yes," Father Patko whispered, nodding his head. "You have come to repent. I welcome you."

"Nonsense," said Mrs. Sobanski. "I've come to tell you something."

"Tell me what?" Father Patko asked, tense.

Mrs. Sobanski studied the priest. He had aged considerably in her absence. She listened to his heavy asthmatic wheezing.

"Tell me what?" asked Father Patko again.

"I've come to tell you what you've done."

"What? What?"

Mrs. Sobanski spoke slowly, in a low voice. "You called me a murderer. You said I was the destroyer of human beings, the destroyer of the image of God. Well, I have come to tell you that you are the murderer."

"I, the murderer?"

"Yes, you the murderer."

"No!"

The woman bent close to him. "You killed my baby. I lost it when I was knocked down in the balcony. The doctor said so. And you are responsible. You ordered that Czaplinski to attack me."

"No! No!" cried Father Patko. "I didn't do anything." His breathing was difficult and suddenly he was shaking all over. Mrs. Sobanski stood by coolly allowing him to go to pieces. When he tried finally to pull himself together she resumed her whispering.

"You killed it," she continued slowly. "You alone are responsible. You are the murderer."

"I am innocent," was all he was able to say.

Mrs. Sobanski took him by the shoulder. "I've one more thing," she said quickly. "Tonight you'll be punished."

With that she was gone. She left the old priest groping his way to the house. He entered the back way and gained his room without meeting anyone. Feebly he turned the door lock and knelt down to pray. The assistant, reading in the next room, heard him and jumped up to see what was wrong. He rapped sharply on the door but the old priest would not answer. The assistant shrugged his shoulders and went back to his reading. Father Patko prayed till he could no longer kneel. Then he dragged himself over to the bed and lay with his face deep in the pillow. Oh, for the ancients' Cocytus. How easy it might have been to lead a useful life, teaching men everywhere, setting an example of high aims and thought. But now a murderer. He, lover of the race in the individual. Twisting with anguish, he lay there knowing not what to do.

In his bed near the open window lay Father Jarkowski listening to the pillow-muffled sobbing of the old priest. Father Patko's breathing was so troubled that for a time the assistant feared he might get another asthma attack. He thought of getting up again but then decided it would do no good. Each day Father Patko's condition was growing worse and there was nothing to do but to pray.

Downstairs the hounds suddenly began to bark. The assistant stirred uneasily as he listened to them, each time their voices louder. There would be long low growls and then suddenly a series of staccato barks and then a plaintive sort of whining. The assistant loved his hounds, they were superb hunters, but if they started to sound out like this every night he would have to move them.

He endured as long as he could and then got up to shut the window. He stretched himself and took a deep breath and was about to pull the window down when he heard a sharp low, "Shut-up!" come up to him from the yard outside. What the devil was that? He wondered if someone were trying to get at the dogs. They were barking and howling with rage now. The assistant stuck his head out of the window. He looked down toward the kennels but it was so dark he could see nothing. He stood there for a time and then left the open window and lay down on the bed listening. He could hear the scratching noise the dogs made as they clawed the wire netting.

He must have dozed off then because the next time he stretched and looked out the window he saw a light in the church cellar. What's going on there at this hour? he said, and bounded out of bed. He stuck his head far out the window and watched. At first he could see only a dull reflected light and then he noticed the shadow of flames licking the black wall. He slipped on his clothes, took his hat, and rushed out of the house.

When he reached the church he saw immediately the fire had a strong start. It was below the altar where the old school desks were stored, in the storage room next to the servers' room. In his hurry to get at the fire, he knocked through the cellar window with his fist and was driven back by the sudden smoke. The fire flared up when it caught the air and in the reflected light Father Jarkowski noticed he had cut his thumb. He dashed back into the house, telephoned Central to notify the powerhouse and the fire department, woke the housekeeper and told her to tell the sisters, and then knocked on Father Patko's door.

"The church is on fire," said the assistant through the door, keeping the excitement out of his voice. There was no sound and then a sharp cry and a scuffling noise from the bed. The lock turned and the old priest staggered out of the room. He was haggard and fully dressed. The assistant looked past him and saw the bed had not been slept in.

"Come quick," urged the assistant. "The church is on fire."

"My church! My church!" the old priest suddenly cried, as though he first realized what was happening. He broke away from the assistant and ran down the corridor shouting, "My church! My church!" The assistant caught hold of him and shook him back to his senses.

"Control yourself," he said, gripping the old priest. "This is no night for foolishness."

By the time they got downstairs and outside they could hear the whine of the village siren. The sisters were running out of their house bringing pails of water. Neighbors arrived first and then the fire truck. The Hillon fire department was volunteer and the men followed the truck in their own cars. Those who did not own cars took the short-cut and came panting up the steep path. The whole village was aroused and came flocking to the scene. The nearest hydrant was two blocks away and by the time the hoses were connected the fire was eating its way through the sanctuary floor. Everyone seemed very quiet and afraid, and there were no noises but the sound of the water on the crackling fire and the occasional quick commands of the firemen. Even the cries of the dogs had died down to a whimper as they watched, standing on their hind legs against the wire fence.

The firemen worked fast. They had one stream shooting through the cellar window and for a moment it looked as if they had checked the blaze. But then it flared up in another spot and someone shouted, "The church is going! It can't be saved!"

The assistant labored frantically helping to connect the second hose. When he finished he thought of Father Patko. In the tumult he had completely forgotten him. He ran from one group to another asking if they had seen him. Then for the first time he became aware the church bell was being rung.

"What fool is doing that," he said and rushed to the front door of the church. Tying a wet handkerchief over his nose he dashed into the smoked-filled vestibule. Father Patko was clinging to the bell-rope, swaying and pulling and shouting, "Save my church! Save my church!" Father Jarkowski seized him round the waist and dragged him outside to the lawn. People quickly gathered round but the assistant waved them off. They backed away and watched from a distance.

"What's wrong with you?" said Father Jarkowski fiercely, holding fast to the old priest's wrists.

"Save my church!" wailed Father Patko.

"Stop it," the assistant commanded.

Then the old priest saw the flames coming from the sanctuary. He went suddenly wild and began to fight the assistant.

"The tabernacle!" he shouted. "Christ's home will burn. The Sacred Host. The Ciborium. Christ is burning!"

The assistant clamped his hand over Father Patko's mouth.

"Be quiet," he whispered, fiercely. "Don't talk such nonsense. They'll hear you. Christ isn't there. Are you forgetting everything? Christ couldn't burn anyway."

"Christ is burning," wailed the old priest, fighting wildly to break loose. People began to move closer but again the angered assistant waved them off.

"Let me loose," Father Patko started anew. "I've destroyed, now I'm going to save. I shall gather in the lost cynics of these terrible times. Let at least one of us be virtuous so they have someone to believe in."

"Stop that nonsense," commanded Father Jarkowski. "Stop it at once." Two parishioners left the watching group and started toward the priests. Father Jarkowski turned abruptly and ordered them to step back in the name of the Lord. While his attention was diverted Father Patko broke and ran for the front door of the burning church shouting, "If the ideal be noble enough it can raise the whole human race!"

"Catch him!" shouted Father Jarkowski. A fireman reached but missed. They tried to knock him down with the stream but it was too late. The old man made the door before the water reached him.

"Rescue Christ—Crusaders!" were the last words they heard.

Someone said, "He'll run right straight into the fire." Father Jarkowski hesitated and then a second time wet his handkerchiaf and tied it over his face.

"You can't go in there," said several.

"Don't worry, I'll find him. I'll be careful enough."

They tried, for a moment, to hold him back but he ordered them away in the name of the Lord. He dashed across the lawn and entered the building. He felt his way slowly through the vestibule. The smoke was bad but he did not have much trouble. When he pushed the swinging door that opened to the main part of the church he stumbled across Father Patko's body. The old priest had not even come close to the fire. Father Jarkowski picked him up and carried him outside. A cry broke when they saw him. They spread a coat on the grass and laid the old priest down. The doctor came and after a time he shook his head. The men doffed their hats and the women began to pray.

Dubinski came up and reported they were getting the fire under control. They carried the body of the old priest into the house.

The next day the wake began. There was a constant drone in the priest house as people came from all the countryside to pray over Father Patko's body. The assistant pastor met everyone at the door, bowing gravely, conducting the wake with pious decorum. Long into the night he labored with holy zeal and not till late the second day did he find time to slip over to the church to dicker with the contractor over the repair job. All the Catholics in Hillon prayed for Father Patko. And when it became known that Father Jarkowski did not want them to start a church scandal over the Sobanskis they obediently remained silent. Only in the saloons were the Sobanskis discussed. Old Finkel, the town's free thinker, drank himself into a stew in Barnum's bar the day before the funeral and began a spiel that Father Jarkowski was more interested in collecting the insurance than in helping justice; but no one paid much attention to the old infidel. The *Lisbia Times* carried a lengthy first-page account of the tragedy and commented in a special editorial on the unselfish bravery of the old priest. Near the end it gave a brief description of the three monumental edifices he had erected. He was a great builder, both material and spiritual, the editorial stated.

Funeral services were conducted in Father Engel's German church. Long before the beginning of the mass the church was crowded with praying people. A special officer of the law, Jake O'Neil, was sent by the county board to direct the traffic. It was an event of major importance to the community. And the church rose magnificently to the solemn occasion. Services began with a sumptuous flourish: the bell bonged with a rich bong, the organ sent forth peals of wondrous sorrowful music, and from the sacristy emerged pairs of portly priests. To the many parishioners kneeling in crowded rows below the altar gate there came at once an elegant awe. Even the burly bewhiskered peasant, who stood jammed in a back corner blinking up at the varicolored ornamental windows, felt above him the outstretched arm giving succor for these troublous times in this vast foreign land.

Everything was carried through with dignified grandeur. The impressive sermon, a stirring eulogy of the heroic priest, was delivered by the most distinguished speaker of the diocese. The myriad flowers,

breathing a subtle sacramental perfume, gradually were triumphant over the stifling odors of the crowd. And even the very day itself, unfolding its charms with the pagan splendor of a lost age, seemed to bow in harmony as the twenty-three priests, the monseigneur, and the bishop, left the church to form the funeral procession. Moving slowly in a stately line, their large new motor cars glistening in the sunlight, they led the procession to the graveyard. And behind them, jammed indiscriminately in the various vehicles, but none the less enthusiastic, followed the people. It was a touching spectacle, and, to a man, its participants were fired with the love to perpetuate the honor and glory of their God.

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pleasant surprise for Your Publisher in the evening."

But, although I tell these stories at Mr. Vanderbilt's expense, he really wasn't so bad. For as a publisher he was extremely decent to his staff and meant awfully well. At a time when newspaper publishers in Los Angeles were taking advantage of the fact that many of the newspapermen in that city were there because either they themselves or some of their family had tuberculosis, and would work for nearly nothing to remain in the climate, Vanderbilt was willing to pay fair salaries. At times, however, perhaps, because he was so very young, he was very funny.

I remember there the most intellectual managing editor I ever worked for, Douglas Turney, a strange, bitter man with a thwarted talent for writing, whose life ended tragically in suicide a short time ago, saying, "Well we might as well make the best of this, Martha, for we'll never see another paper like this again."

It was a strange staff. Havemeyers and Marshall Fields floated around the city room getting a thrill "out of the game." Their life was not made any too happy for them at times by a jolly round balloon of a man named Douglas Churchill, now Hollywood correspondent for the New York *Times* but then assistant to Vanderbilt.

One earnest young millionaire, for instance, was instructed by Churchill to keep in touch with the city desk at all times. Even if he just went around the corner or across the street. "A big story might break at any minute," said Churchill, "and they'd need you."

The city desk phone rang constantly with the affluent young reporter declaring, "Here I am, need me yet?" until the city editor forgetting the honor of having a wealthy blueblood on his staff blew up and told him with profanity plus never to call in on any occasion, not even if Aimee Semple MacPherson's Four Square Temple collapsed.

Churchill, I have always believed, must have been back of another young reporter's frenzy one day. The boy rushed into the city room shouting, "Quick, quick! Give me a couple of cameramen! I've got an airplane waiting."

The slow-spoken city editor drawled his words more than ever when he asked, "But why two cameramen? And the plane? Has something happened?"

"Sure, something's happened. I've got a scoop! A scoop! The Ladies' Aid of the First Christian Church is having a picnic at Bear Lake and they told me I'm the only reporter who knows it. It's a scoop!"

But there were some rational people on the Los Angeles *News*. One of them was Eleanor Barnes, one of the best newspaperwomen I have ever known and to whom I hope Ishbel Ross has given her due.

NOT that there ever has been a really rational city room. Least of all on a New York tabloid. In the days when I worked on tabloids in New York City, Phil Payne, the managing editor who was the genius of tabloid journalism, was still alive. He later died when he fell into the Atlantic trying to fly an airplane from New York to Rome. A tabloid death. But Payne was like that. Every girl who was in a scandal really was beautiful to him. Every rich man was a multi-millionaire. He even married the beauty queen, Miss New York.

The papers Phil edited went to press to the rhythm of "Yessir, She's My Baby." It was the only tune that Phil, who was half-deaf, knew; and he hummed it over and over from the moment he got to the office till the time he left. In those days there were three tabloids in New York. The infamous third was Bernarr Macfadden's *Graphic* of the famous Honk! Honk! The Bonk! composograph which showed a wealthy real estate man cavorting on his knees

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before the wife he was suing for divorce. The *Graphic* was so terrible that we on the *News* and the *Mirror* considered ourselves in the upper reaches of journalism. Now, alas, there is no newspaper for the *News* and *Mirror* boys and girls to look down upon.

Eugene Jolas, founder and editor of *Transition,* was a copyreader on the New York *Daily News* when I was there. It may be a surprise to some of those who say they are baffled by the pieces in *Transition* to know that its editor is among the most competent and practical of newspapermen. He knows how to handle the language in its more commonplace daily aspects as well as in the phases of the "night mind."

Gene is a swell guy and I was sorry that Bravig Imbs did not give him his due in "Confessions of Another Young Man." Bravig made Elliot Paul seem much more important in the early days of *Transition* in Paris than he really was. *Transition,* which has just published its first American issue, was started by Gene and his wife, Maria Jolas, and carried through by them with Elliot participating for a short time in a desultory way.

ELLIOT PAUL, though no editor, is the world's best accordion player. His virtuosity on the accordion led him a few years ago, at the height of a party in Paris, to march out the door of the house followed by everyone at the party singing "Christofer Colombo" to the accompaniment of his lively strains. When half-way down the block, the party was halted by the police, one of the celebrants protested, "But don't you know what day this is? Don't you hear the song we're singing? It is Columbus Day! The anniversary of the Great Discoverer of America! You French people dance in the streets on your national holiday, don't you? Well, in America we sing in the streets too!"

The police were profuse with their apologies.

Bravig Imbs is indebted to Elliot Paul for advice on that delightful book, "The Professor's Wife," published several years ago. Bravig had written several good short stories but was appalled at the prospect of a whole book. Elliot suggested he forget all about the theory, structure, technique, etc. of a novel and sit down and write every day a letter to Elliot in which he would tell part of the story he wanted to tell in his book. So Bravig did. When he was through with the letters, all the "dear Elliots," "yours as ever," etc. were deleted and a novel was the result.

The device was a success because, although "The Professor's Wife" was about Dartmouth where Bravig had studied, he received letters from Northwestern, Leland Stanford and Rice Institute among other colleges, saying, "Tell me when you were here, I recognize all the characters and situations in your book."

AS I said, some of the tabloids had principles in those days. The word "bed" was forbidden in the *Daily Mirror.* It was a word occurring quite frequently in the news at the time, particularly when the Kip Rhinelander annulment suit was being tried. Orders on the *Mirror* were that when that terrible three-letter word occurred, an asterisk was to be substituted. One morning a part of the testimony in the Rhinelander suit, a quotation from a letter, when published in the *Mirror,* read, "He chased her around the asterisk."

There were other mistakes. One day the first edition of the *Mirror* carried a caption under a picture reading, "Oh, boys and girls, just see who's come to town! Dear old Santa with his smiling face and sack full of toys." Above was a very solemn picture, in full ecclesiastical regalia, of Cardinal Hayes.

And the very same day, the *Daily News* carried in its sports section a picture with caption reading, "Good old John L. Sullivan! In his day he

never would have stood for such tactics as were displayed by Blah-Blah Willie in the fight last night." But where the battle-scarred countenance of John L. should have stood out, there was a picture of His Holiness, Pope Pius XI.

IT is too bad that Phil Payne did not live. The tabloids might be more interesting today. Phil sensationalized facts in the news but he never sensationalized untruths.

Payne, like that other ex-tabloider, Jolas, was an experimenter. He would print a picture upside down if necessary for effect. And achieve it. Once, when a tug full of working men sank in the Hudson river, he took a rather flat picture of the bodies lying in a row on the shore, stood it on end the full length of the front page and the result was an overwhelming study of a catastrophe.

Or when, in the Passaic textile strike, the Passaic police ran all the New York reporters out of town because of *Daily Mirror* captions calling the police "Cossacks," Payne insisted on going right back in and telling the police what he thought of them. The *Mirror* cameramen had just been equipped with a new type of Graflex camera which enabled them to take action shots such as a newspaper had never been able to obtain before and they came back from Passaic with vivid photos of police clubbing women and spilling babies out of carriages, firemen playing hose on workers and private detectives levelling revolvers at a picket line. Payne, apart from any social conscience he might have had, realized those pictures for what they were worth, as sensational news shots, and played them for six whole pages of the paper. The police were furious and drew a deadline around the town which they forbade reporters and cameramen to cross.

That evening, Andy Freeman, author of "Brown Women and White," who had just returned from Bangkok where he had edited a newspaper in English for the

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E N D P A G E S

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King of Siam and who had taken a job as press agent for an armored car company; Henry Paynter, a beloved *fantoche* among New York newspapermen, and I were having dinner at the home of George Buchanan. George was one of the editors of the *Mirror* and his wife, Mary Elizabeth Buchanan, is the managing editor of *Parents' Magazine.*

In the talk around the table, it was decided it would be a swell idea to thwart those Passaic cops by sending reporters into their town in armored cars. Henry got Payne on the phone and he excitedly agreed. Armored cars! A hell of a good idea!

Great canvas banners were painted over night with the words "The *Daily Mirror* Always Gets the News" to deck the armored cars and the next morning Eddie Doherty, star rewrite man on the *Mirror* then but nowadays detective story writer, and I crawled into a low caterpillar tank while several cameramen piled into an armored limousine with bullet-proof windows large enough to allow them to take pictures, and off we went to Passaic. The police were baffled. The strikers enthusiastic. And the nearest our competitor, the *Daily News,* could get to the scene was to send an airplane soaring over it.

After several hours in the impregnable tank in Passaic, I was trundled over to the Paterson railway station. It would have been too dangerous to have left it at Passaic. I took a train to New York while the others went back for a final tour of Passaic. When I entered the city room, there was a sudden great silence.

"The others? Where are they?" screamed Payne.

"Why, in Passaic. I left them in Paterson and they went back to Passaic."

"Are you sure? We got a flash you all had been killed."

Something had happened. A clearer story was received a few minutes later. The police, whom we thought we had so successfully outwitted with our armored cars, had rolled an empty truck down a hill to crash into the armored cars as they were passing a canal. The car containing the cameramen was hurled into the water and they were taken to a hospital badly hurt.

THE recent End Pages on Graebisch University has brought this communication from Dean Travis Hoke.

"Dear Dean Burnett: I feel sure that I speak for all members of Graebisch *in sita* or *in absentia* when I say that your thesis on our beloved institution is by far the most scholarly and/or most exhaustive it has been our privilege to read in the last two days. While you've not got many things right, you've got everything—which is Graebischian to the very bone.

"But how could you omit mention of the hymn, *'Dunc Graebischus'* and the project to see if any readers of the *Times Book Review* section could supply missing verses of same?

"I am sure you will not take this as anything but a criticism in the true spirit of scholarship and that you will want to make the addition for the Variorum Edition to be published by the University Press. Anyhow, *max vobiscum,* as Simon says to Schuster."

Yrs., etc.

Travis Hoke
St. Gustav H. Vitus
WPA-on-the-Brink,
Mussex,
Wussex, Hurts.

AND now, Mr. Burnett, if you have looked long enough at your native hills, will you please come home and do your own end-paging before I forget myself and talk about newspaper woes in Europe? Manuscripts await me. One especially. It begins: "Overhead the sun was an omelet broiling in an ocean of clear blue butter."

CONTRIBUTORS

ELLIS ST. JOSEPH, who makes his first appearance in STORY with "A Passenger to Bali," writes us: "I was born on All Fools' Day, 1911, in New York City. Began writing at ten when I fell in love with my composition teacher. Alas, she died at a ripe old age before I sold my first short story to *Harper's Magazine* three years ago. Since then, I have acted; directed; written plays, short stories and one novel soon to be published by *Little, Brown and Company.* The material for 'A Passenger to Bali' was gathered during a trip on a freighter in the Pacific. Though all the characters in the story are imaginary, the hurricane and a number of the incidents actually took place; it was the freighter's last voyage and I thought it would be mine, too. This story is about the only thing I salvaged. . . . I would like to be permitted the privilege of dedicating it to a man whose friendship is as well known to me as his distinction in playwriting is known to the general public: William Hurlbut."

Ellis St. Joseph

Samuel Rogers was born in Newport, R. I., 1894, and graduated from Brown University in 1915. He was in the American Field Service and the United States Army, 1917-1919, and since 1920 he has been a member of the French department of the University of Wisconsin. He is the author of the Atlantic prize novel for 1934, "Dusk at the Groves."

William Polk has appeared before in STORY with varying pictures of the South. He is a North Carolina lawyer and the mayor of the town in which he lives.

Jerome Bahr, who has had a varied career, modestly asks us to say that he is a young fellow living in New York.

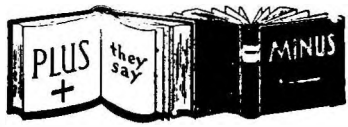
Thomas Bell is the author of "Revolution's Eve" which appeared in STORY, December, 1934, and the author of a forthcoming book, "All Brides Are Beautiful," to be published by *Little, Brown and Company.*

R. H. Linn was born on February 2, 1911, in Kenmare, N. D. He attended the College of the Pacific, Stockton, Calif., and at twenty-one left for Japan, on the *Hawaii Maru,* where he remained some years. He is now teaching English, journalism and dramatics at Lindsay High School, in California.

Ernestine Magagna, winner of the Third Annual Short Story Contest conducted by STORY among the colleges of the United States, was a student at Leland Stanford University, Calif., when her story was submitted. She is twenty-two years old and was born in Rock Springs, Wyo. She was graduated this year and plans to take up teaching.

Ernestine Magagna

Len Zinberg is twenty-five years old and has appeared in many of the little magazines. He attended the College of the City of New York, and is now working as a scenario writer.



IN AN EFFORT to assist its readers in their interest in the outstanding books of the month, STORY *is undertaking to present each issue a summarized survey and index of the reviews and criticisms from the leading New York newspapers, representative newspapers in other parts of the country, and the most prominent weeklies of the nation. Whereas publishers have quoted critics in their advertisements when the criticisms have been favorable,* STORY'S *survey will aim at complete objectivity and present very brief key phrases from the critics even when they are against a book (—) and also when they are lukewarm—(50/50) in their attitude toward it. Many of the readers of* STORY *are unable to obtain some of the periodicals summarized, very few are able to obtain all of them. For librarians and class room students we believe this feature will prove extremely useful as a reference.*

Survey of Reviews

THREE WORLDS

Carl Van Doren. 317 pp. New York: *Harper and Brothers.* $3.

\+ **N. Y. HER. TRIB. BOOKS** September 20 *Sinclair Lewis*

Van Doren . . . has preferred making American history to re-reading European history . . . he discovers it, rich and pulsing, in an Illinois cornfield or a New York penthouse. . . . He breaks entirely away from his special literary field to contemplate the recurrent comedy of youth, and the confusing miracle whereby the son, without consciousness of having changed, yet becomes the father.

\+ **NATION** S. 19 *H. L. Mencken*

Van Doren saw what was honest and significant and true . . . and, seeing it, he tried to make others see it too . . . his judgments have been equitable far beyond the common, and . . . no other critic of his generation has been less upset by loud noises, loud colors, and loud smells.

\+ **N. Y. TIMES BOOK REV.** S. 20 *Louis Kronenberger*

This is not in any deep sense a "life story"—it is rather, through Mr. Van Doren's own excellent feeling for proportion, one man's reaction to the changing color of American life, and recollection of whom he knew and what he saw. It is interesting, honest, graceful and human.

\+ **N. Y. HER. TRIB.** S. 17 *Lewis Gannett*

Other men have wandered about America, trying to understand it. Mr. Van Doren here wanders into himself and his family past; and the result is a rarely mellow, suggestive and sagacious book.

\+ **LOS ANGELES TIMES** S. 20 *Paul Jordan-Smith*

A candid, an honest book, done by a man of learning and insight who is never pontifical nor dogmatic . . . now and again the poet in him puts magic in his ink.

50/50 N. Y. TIMES S. 18 *Ralph Thompson*

. . . as negative as it is positive . . . not completely satisfying, but no intelligent and fair-minded autobiography involving the immediate past can ever be.

50/50 SAT. REV. OF LIT. S. 26 *Bernard DeVoto*

He is much better at the first of his three worlds, farm life and small-city life in Illinois. Those chapters have a reality that is never fully communicated to what follows them. They are stamped out of a profound and native experience. . . . But both his criticism and his autobiography are the poorer because he failed to make full use of the knowledge of experience when he moved from Illinois to his second world, the literary generation.

NOW THAT APRIL'S HERE

Morley Callaghan. 316 pp. New York: *Random House.* $2.

\+ **NEW MASSES** September 29 *Josephine Herbst*

This volume of short stories represents a very real contribution to an understanding of a whole class of society, little people, not yet aware what it is all about, seeking panaceas in love, in religion, in small moments. . . .

+ **NEW YORK TIMES S. 12** ***Ralph Thompson***

Filled with honest and skilful writing . . . a sensitive and compassionate collection.

+ **SAT. REV. OF LIT. S. 19** ***William Rose Benet***

Not mere entertainment, but an honest attempt to interpret human existence, sympathetically, but also with sufficient detachment.

+ **N. Y. HER. TRIB. BOOKS S. 13** ***Ferner Nuhn***

. . . offers abundant proof of the author's command of a concise and demanding form.

50/50 NATION S. 26 ***Louis Kronenberger***

When so many short stories . . . leave so unified an impression, our first thought is that we must have been given the truth; but when we find so unified an impression based upon so rigid an interpretation, we may begin to wonder whether some of the limitations the author ascribes to his characters do not belong to the author himself.

50/50 N. Y. SUN S. 19 ***Edith H. Walton***

His tone is quiet, muted, and his characters are mostly unsophisticated people whom he catches in moments of delicate, perplexing tension . . . one wishes desperately for more fiber, passion and force . . . even . . . for some intimations of humor.

A TIME TO REMEMBER

Leane Zugsmith. 352 pp. New York: *Random House.* $2.

+ **N. Y. HER. TRIB. BOOKS September 13** ***Albert Halper***

This intense, exciting novel rips the curtain aside to view the behind-the-scenes turmoil and speed-up of a modern giant department store. . . . Lives and breathes, and in its pages are caught and held the flux and fiber of an important facet of the current American scene.

+ **NATION S. 12** ***Louis Kronenberger***

. . . a vigorous story about interesting men and women . . . an understanding of their place in society; and then leads us to understand the structure of that society. . . .

+ **ST. PAUL DISPATCH S. 9** ***James Gray***

Written with simplicity and directness, there is a warm quality of humanity . . . a really memorable book.

+ **N. Y. TIMES BOOK REV. S. 13** ***Alfred Kazin***

The insight that seems so valuable in Miss Zugsmith's work, and the fervent, sharp portrayal that never stoops to exclamation, are what give the book its immediacy.

+ **NEW REPUBLIC S. 16** ***B. E. Bettinger***

. . . as easy to read and as popularly interesting as the stories printed in the middle-class magazines. . . .

75/25 N. Y. HER. TRIB. S. 11 ***Lewis Gannett***

It is not always inspired, but it is a story that holds your interest and wins your respect.

50/50 SAT. REV. OF LIT. S. 12 ***T. P. Jr.***

. . . a small group of characters closely inter-related . . . but what the book gains in human interest by telling their stories at length it loses in force and sweep as a document for the history of our times.

50/50 N. Y. SUN S. 11 ***Laura Benet***

The effect of this book is like a quick flashlight of a mass meeting in which a few faces stand out with distinction; the others are blurred by the weight of the crowd.

THE BROTHERS ASHKENAZI

I. J. Singer. 643 pp. New York: *Alfred A. Knopf.* $2.75.

+ **N. Y. TIMES BOOK REV. September 13** ***Louis Kronenberger***

This is the story of several generations of Polish Jews. . . . A very powerful story . . . seized upon by a very powerful story-teller; the result, at any rate in a contemporary sense is literature. . . . It makes one think . . . of Sholem Asch's "Three Cities." . . .

+ **N. Y. HER. TRIB. BOOKS S. 13** ***Marvin Lowenthal***

. . . not only a biography of two men or of one city, but the biography of our entire industrial civilization . . . splendid prose.

+ **SAT. REV. OF LIT. S. 12** ***Leon Crystal***

Far more than an epic of Jewish life . . . it is the saga of the birth, growth, and decay of a great industrial city as well as the story of the inception and upsurge of the class struggle that is now sweeping the world . . . in an excellent translation from the Yiddish by Maurice Samuel.

+ **N. Y. SUN S. 28** ***William McFee***

. . . swiftly and brilliantly drawn.

—*Continued on page 111*

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Survey of Reviews

—Continued from page 109

BIG BLOW

Theodore Pratt. 296 pp. Boston: *Little, Brown and Company.* $2.50.

\+ **BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB BULLETIN** September *Dorothy Canfield*

. . . vivid pictures of country life among the natives of Southern Florida. . . . Its characters are odd, touching, attractive, repulsive, always interesting and living.

\+ **N. Y. HER. TRIB. BOOKS S. 13** *William Soskin*

A thick slice of juicy American Life steaming with the lush heat of Florida and swept with its storms.

\+ **BALTIMORE EVE. SUN S. 12** *Vernon Sherwin*

What makes Mr. Pratt's book worth reading is the successful effort he has made to note down the folk ways, the prejudices and the practices of his backwoods people.

\+ **BOSTON EVE. TRANS. S. 19** *Harold P. Berger*

. . . a first novel of solid construction, packed with scenes and characters that will linger in the memory.

\+ **N. Y. TIMES BOOK REV. S. 13** *Alfred Satterthwaite*

. . . straightforward narrative of a man's conflict with nature, both the human and external varieties.

THREE BAGS FULL

Roger Burlingame. 639 pp. New York: *Harcourt, Brace and Company.* $3.

\+ **N. Y. HER. TRIB. September 11** *Lewis Gannett*

A long, lusty, dynastic saga, beginning with a hard-drinking, hard-swearing, hard-working Dutchman who established for his family an almost feudal domain; tracing the strange strains which broke out in his descendants; ending with the modernizing of the sleepy town he had founded. Four generations dream, and the reality turns out quite other than their dreams.

\+ **N. Y. HER. TRIB. BOOKS S. 13** *Carl Carmer*

. . . his wealth of true and characteristic detail, obviously acquired both by study and keen observation, make this book an important document and often a compelling tale.

\+ **N. Y. SUN S. 11** *Frank Graham*

The language of the book is as lusty as the characters it describes. Mr. Burlingame never is at a loss for words and some of them would knock your Aunt Minnie's hat off.

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The editors of STORY suggest the following procedure in the selection of stories to represent any institution: The English department may officially conduct the contest, extending throughout the school year, or calling for entries that may be judged in time to have the selected two stories sent to STORY by April 1, 1937. The English department in such cases may select judges for the campus contest. Or, if the English department does not wish to engage in the matter officially, a contest may be arranged through the application of some member of the faculty, or of the campus literary periodical, or of a campus literary group or association. In the latter case faculty members should be represented on the Board of Judges.

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