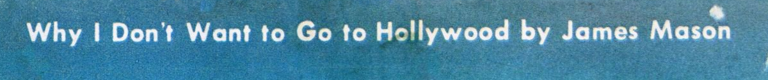

Hearst's International Combined with

Cosmopolitan

February 35¢

Another LIDA story by CZENZI ORMONDE

George Bradshaw William E. Barrett
Philip Wylie Alec Rackowe
Adela Rogers St. Johns

SUNNY SAYS:

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that Sunny Morning Flavor's grand!

Only SCHENLEY gives you SUNNY MORNING FLAVOR!

Take America's word for it—there's just *nothing* else like that sunny-smooth, mellow Schenley quality. Join the parade yourself—and *taste* why Schenley Reserve is an outstanding favorite!

FOR SUNNY MORNING FLAVOR

Now available in the distinguished pre-war decanter, as well as the familiar round bottle. In both—traditional Schenley quality... from the world's greatest treasure of whiskey reserves.

A Schenley Mark of Merit Whiskey

PRE-WAR QUALITY BLENDED WHISKEY 86 PROOF. 65% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS. © 1948, SCHENLEY DISTILLERS CORP., N. Y. C.

Polar expedition? Five-year-old Amanda and three-year-old "Bobo" are dressed warmly enough for one! "Model" mother Frances is no less careful in protecting her children's teeth and gums. Sensitive gums often herald their warning with a tinge of "pink" on your tooth brush—a sign to *see your dentist*. Let *him* decide whether yours is a case for "the helpful stimulation of Ipana and gentle gum massage."

How would <u>you</u> type this Model Mother?

Follow your dentist's advice about gum massage. Correct massage is important to the health of your gums and the beauty of your smile—so important, in fact, that 9 out of 10 dentists recommend it regularly or in special cases, according to a recent national survey! *Help your dentist guard your smile of beauty.*

Photographers see Frances Nalle's natural charm, sparkling smile, call her the ideal "Young Mother"

NEW YORK'S modeling circles know Mrs. Frances Nalle Crider as the perfect "Young Mother" type of model. And she is: she has two adorable youngsters of her own. She has the dazzling smile that's so important to *any* kind of modeling job . . . *naturally*.

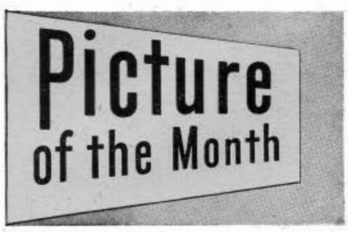
"Model" mother that she is, lovely, green-eyed Mrs. Crider has taught Amanda and "Bobo" to safeguard *their* smiles by following her own prized dental routine: *Regular brushing with Ipana Tooth Paste, then gentle gum massage.*

For Frances, like so many successful models, makes it her business to know what thousands of schools and dentists stress—that healthy gums are important to sparkling teeth and a radiant smile.

"Bobo" does all the work and Frances and Amanda have all the fun, judging by those two big smiles. Two big *model* smiles, for the Criders use Ipana—the tooth paste dentists recommend and use 2 to 1 over any other, as shown by a recent nationwide survey.

IPANA TOOTH PASTE for your Smile of Beauty

P. S. For correct brushing, use the DOUBLE DUTY Tooth Brush with the *twist* in the handle. 1,000 dentists helped design it!



Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer presents

SPENCER LANA ZACHARY

TRACY·TURNER·SCOTT

in **"CASS TIMBERLANE"**

Tom DRAKE · Mary ASTOR · Albert DEKKER

Screen Play by DONALD OGDEN STEWART

Adaptation by DONALD OGDEN STEWART and SONYA LEVIEN

Based on the Novel by SINCLAIR LEWIS

Directed by..................GEORGE SIDNEY

Produced by....ARTHUR HORNBLOW, Jr.

We remember "Cass Timberlane" as a provocative novel about the distinguished judge who falls in love with a beautiful girl from the other side of town. When we read Sinclair Lewis' story of that courageous and tender love affair between Cass and Jinny Marshland, we couldn't put the book down. In it we found all the familiar wit and engaging satire which have made "Main Street", "Arrowsmith", and "Dodsworth" such best-sellers, but in "Cass" Mr. Lewis tells the story of one man who could only be Cass Timberlane. We remember him as much for his faults as for his virtues, as much for his allergy to cats and his flute playing as for his personal integrity.

"Cass Timberlane", the novel and the man, are wonderfully real and convincing in M-G-M's magnificent motion picture. Spencer Tracy gives just the right mixture of strength and vulnerability to the role of Cass; Lana Turner is the perfect Jinny Marshland, a roguishly lovely girl whose marriage to Cass sets the town on its ears; and Zachary Scott is brilliantly cast as Bradd Criley, the charming friend of Judge Timberlane and the disarming admirer of Jinny. The glittering country-club set, who comprise the cream of Grand Republic's society, welcome Jinny into their midst with snow-capped condescension. It is not strange that Jinny soon finds herself confused and restless.

"Cass Timberlane" received the spirited direction of George Sidney, and inspired production of Arthur Hornblow, Jr. Donald Ogden Stewart did a masterful job on the screen play of "Cass Timberlane".

For the stirring experience of seeing a great novel reborn in a memorable motion picture, we choose "Cass Timberlane" as the Picture of The Month.

FEBRUARY 1948

Hearst's International combined with

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ARTHUR GORDON
Editor

RICHARD E. BERLIN
President

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The "Bottle Bacillus" (Pityrosporum ovale)

THOSE innocent-looking flakes and scales you see on scalp, hair or dress-shoulder are a warning. They may be symptoms of infectious dandruff . . . and that is a distressing, unsightly condition that no woman wants to risk.

This is no time to fool around with smelly lotions or sticky salves that cannot kill germs. You need antiseptic action . . . and you need it quick! It's Listerine Antiseptic for you, followed with several minutes of vigorous finger-tip massage.

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When you wash your hair

If you're smart you will not wait for symptoms; you will make Listerine Antiseptic and massage a part of your regular hair-washing as countless fastidious men and women do. It's a healthful, cleanly habit and may spare you a nasty siege of trouble.

Listerine Antiseptic is the same antiseptic that has been famous for more than sixty years in the field of oral hygiene.

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What Goes On...

When Coby Whitmore said he wanted a winter coat with a really big collar for this month's cover, our fashion department took him at his word. They produced the Philip Mangone design shown in the photograph below. The collar was so big that Coby couldn't fit it on the cover. He had to redesign it with his paint brush. When we showed Mangone the Whitmore collar, the noted coat designer gave it his most enthusiastic approval. In fact, he said, he wished there was one like it in his 1948 line.

This Month's Cover Girl

The young lady who appears above the collar is a hard-working fashion model named Teddy Thurman who hails from Midville, Georgia. "It's a one-drugstore town," she explains. "It's so small that it never got around to building a movie theater until a few months ago." Teddy prefers New York, a town where they build new movie theaters every other day. She has been modeling for the past two years, but she expects to go on the stage any day now. Straight role in a musical show. She told us the name of the production, but we're not going to repeat it here. Last time we wrote about somebody going to appear in a Broadway offering, the play opened, flopped and closed several weeks before this column appeared in print. We wouldn't wish that on Teddy.

The other day we bought an illustration from a very successful painter who grumbled about taking our money. Seems that his income for the year was so big that he found himself moving up into the very high tax bracket. We extended our heartfelt sympathy and made arrangements to send our office boy around to his studio to pick up the canvas. When the office boy was departing with the package, the artist offered him a quarter for an ice-cream soda. The office boy was deeply touched. He glanced at the disorderly and rather grim studio and regarded the painter himself, who, for all his wealth, still looks as he did in his Left Bank period. "Cosmopolitan pays me a regular salary," the office boy explained as tactfully as possible. "I just can't accept money from a struggling artist like you."

You may wonder why we did not include a statement from Winston Churchill among the replies to Vishinsky from the "warmongers" (Page 36). We had Mr. Churchill in mind and asked our man in London to get something from him. Our man in London failed to produce, but you can't say he didn't try. Here's what he wrote us:

"This is an explanation of my cable of last night about 'thrice' approaching Churchill and 'thrice' getting turned down. At first we approached him direct and received a courteous but firm negative. Then we approached him at the House of Commons through his Parliamentary Private Secretary who is friendly with us. He put the question again to Churchill and also got a turndown. Yesterday afternoon I buttonholed Anthony Eden, and

The talk around the office this month seems to be pretty much concerned with something that's going to appear in next month's issue—the diary of Franklin D. Roosevelt's housekeeper

Eden promised to mention it to Churchill. Eden's secretary phoned me at five thirty, saying it was no dice. Sorry I couldn't help in this matter, but the Churchill nut is the most difficult one in town to crack these days."

We must admit that in the past year or so we have huilt up a resistance to inside stories about what really happened in the White House during the Franklin D. Roosevelt administrations. We've seen so many of them: the awful disclosures of James A. Farley, the reflections of Frances Perkins, the Father-said-to-me revelations of son Elliott, the Morgenthau documents, the Mike Reilly and the Colonel Starling as-told-to collaborations. We are waiting patiently for Fala to make a deal with a publisher one of these days.

And so it was with no great anticipation of joy that we dragged home the other night a fat manuscript called "White House Diary" by Henrietta Nesbitt, housekeeper for the Roosevelts during the twelve years they spent in the executive mansion on Pennsylvania Avenue. Good grief, we thought. As if we haven't had enough without their housekeeper letting us in on what they *ate.* After dinner, to delay the ordeal, we even helped with the dishes. Finally, around nine fifteen, we sighed and picked up the pile of typewritten pages, wondering if there wasn't an easier way to make a living.

Henrietta Nesbitt talks it over with her ex-boss.

The next time we looked at the clock we discovered with astonishment that it was twenty minutes past two. And we weren't the least bit sleepy. We put our nose right back into Mrs. Nesbitt's story and kept it there until well after three.

We may be wrong, but we don't see how this book can miss being one of the runaway best sellers of 1948. Mrs. Nesbitt does tell what the Roosevelts ate. In fact, the pages are full of recipes and menus. But she also gives you a sharp, fresh and continually fascinating picture of the hectic life in the White House between 1933 and 1945. Even the most violent anti-Roosevelt people will readily admit that the White House had more color and bounce during that period than ever before or since. Mrs. Nesbitt, the lady who opened up a department store to get the Queen of England a shower cap and who thought nothing of fixing up a drop of afternoon tea for five thousand guests, gets all that color and bounce into her story. Cosmopolitan is proud to present her "White House Diary" in serial form, beginning next month. If you want an inside tip on a good thing, don't miss it. Maybe there will be more profound studies of the Roosevelt administration written by his statesmen and lawmakers. But for real entertainment, nobody will top his housekeeper.

This is to inform the girls at Stephens College that George Aarons, our tall and slim photographer, still wants to know what became of his woolen shirt. When Aarons took

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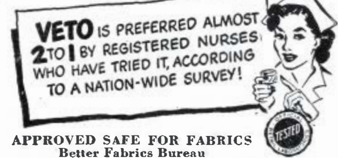

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How do *you* KNOW *you can't WRITE?*

Have you ever tried?

Have you ever attempted even the least bit of training, under competent guidance?

Or have you been sitting back, as it is so easy to do, waiting for the day to come when you will awaken, all of a sudden, to the discovery, "I *am* a writer"?

If the latter course is the one of your choosing, you probably *never will write*. Lawyers must be law clerks. Doctors must be internes. We all know that, in our time, the egg does come before the chicken.

It is seldom that anyone becomes a writer until he (or she) has been writing for some time. That is why so many authors and writers spring up out of the newspaper business. The day-to-day necessity of writing—of gathering material about which to write—develops their talent, their insight, their background and their confidence as nothing else could.

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Many people who *should* be writing become awe-struck by fabulous stories about millionaire authors, and, therefore, give little thought to the $25, $50 and $100 or more that can often be earned for material that takes little time to write—stories, articles on homemaking, fashions, travel, local and club activities, business, hobbies, children, decorating, etc.—things that can easily be turned out in leisure hours, and often on the impulse of the moment.

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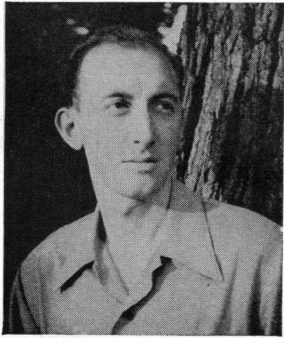
What Goes On...

the picture of that campfire scene at Stephens which appears on Pages 56 and 57, it was a cold night.

He noticed one girl who seemed to be freezing. Gallantly, he took off the shirt he was wearing and wrapped it around her. Aarons didn't get the girl's name or class and, because it was pretty dark, he didn't get a good look at her. Well, that was the last he saw of the shirt. The next day he asked several girls on the campus about it. They all seemed to know about the shirt, but they weren't talking. Evidently, the shirt has become some sort of a collector's item at Stephens. Maybe the little girl who was freezing has it on display in her dormitory.



Ralph G. Martin

Ralph G. Martin, the young man who wrote the Stephens College article for us, had no trouble finding his way from the railroad station to the campus. Martin happens to be a graduate of the University of Missouri which is located in the same town, Columbia. Unlike many Missouri men, though, he did not marry a Stephens girl. He ignored them and picked a University of Missouri coed. Martin, a Stars and Stripes and Yank writer during the Mediterranean and European wars, is the author of an interesting book on young war veterans in the United States, a factual report on how they are making out in the Battle of the Peace. Entitled "The Best Is None Too Good," it is being published this month by Farrar Straus.

Odds and Ends Department: A lot of readers have been asking us about the luxurious boudoir accessories and chaise longue that appeared in Barbara Schwinn's illustration for Faith Baldwin's "The Invisible Key" in our November issue. Everybody wants to know: Did Miss Schwinn dream them up or are they on the market? The setting was produced by Carlin Comforts, Inc., at Saks Fifth Avenue, New York. . . Mrs. Marian Krettler of San Diego has been having quite a time since her open letter to President Truman about the high cost of living appeared in the November Cosmopolitan. She has been asked to speak at several local clubs and has been flooded with mail from every state in the union. All but two of the letters so far have been messages of praise. One of them was signed by seventy-five women, who endorsed Mrs. Krettler's views. "But I couldn't weep over another letter from a lady in a New York hotel," says Mrs. Krettler. "She was complaining about the rising cost of manicures." . . . A new Pearl Buck novel in two installments begins in the March Cosmopolitan. . . We'll be interested in your reaction to "Home Is the Hero" by Knox Burger on Page 54. We are publishing this story against the better judgment of the older and more experienced editors on our staff who were all against it. But the younger people in the office were so vehemently in favor of it that we decided to take it. . .

Historical Department: Cosmopolitan sold for twenty-one cents when it was first established in 1886. In those days it carried as its slogan, "The world is my country and all mankind are my countrymen." William Dean Howells was the editor in 1891. In 1896, we were the first national magazine to use a picture on the cover, a practice that was imitated by practically everybody in the business a few years later. Cosmopolitan was also the first magazine to open its circulation books for public inspection—a practice that used to be unheard of in publishing circles. And it was the first magazine to set a standard page rate for all advertisers. Anything else you want to know about us?

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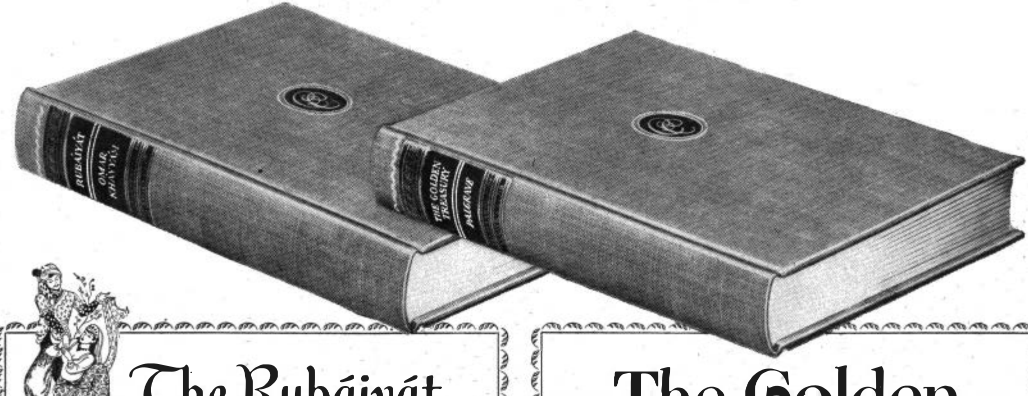

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I KNEW BABE RUTH WHEN

by Al Schacht

Al Schacht, left, now a New York restaurant keeper, pitched against Ruth when the Babe was a minor leaguer.

The first time I saw Babe Ruth, he was standing in an elevator in a Baltimore hotel. I thought he was an overgrown country boy on his first trip to the big city.

Half an hour later, I walked into the same elevator. He was still there. He stayed there the rest of the day.

"Look at the rube," somebody said to me. "He must like elevators."

That was in 1914 when I was pitching for Newark in the International League. We didn't know that the Babe, who was then eighteen, had just signed with the Orioles after spending his childhood in St. Mary's Industrial School. This was his first day in the outside world, and elevators, he thought, were wonderful.

The next day we saw him at the ball park, and the day after that he pitched for the Orioles against me and Newark. We noticed he stuck out his tongue whenever he threw a curve.

"Don't try to hit his fast ball," our manager told us. "It's like a bullet. Wait till he sticks out that tongue. Then swing at the curve."

First time I was up, the Babe threw two fast ones across for strikes. He stuck out his tongue. I got ready. I missed the ball by a foot. The curve was faster than the fast ball.

I had noticed in batting practice the Ruth swing that later became famous: the uppercut that started from his shoes. I figured I could make him pop up by aiming my pitches around his shoulders. When he came to bat, I threw the first one high. It rattled off the fence for a triple.

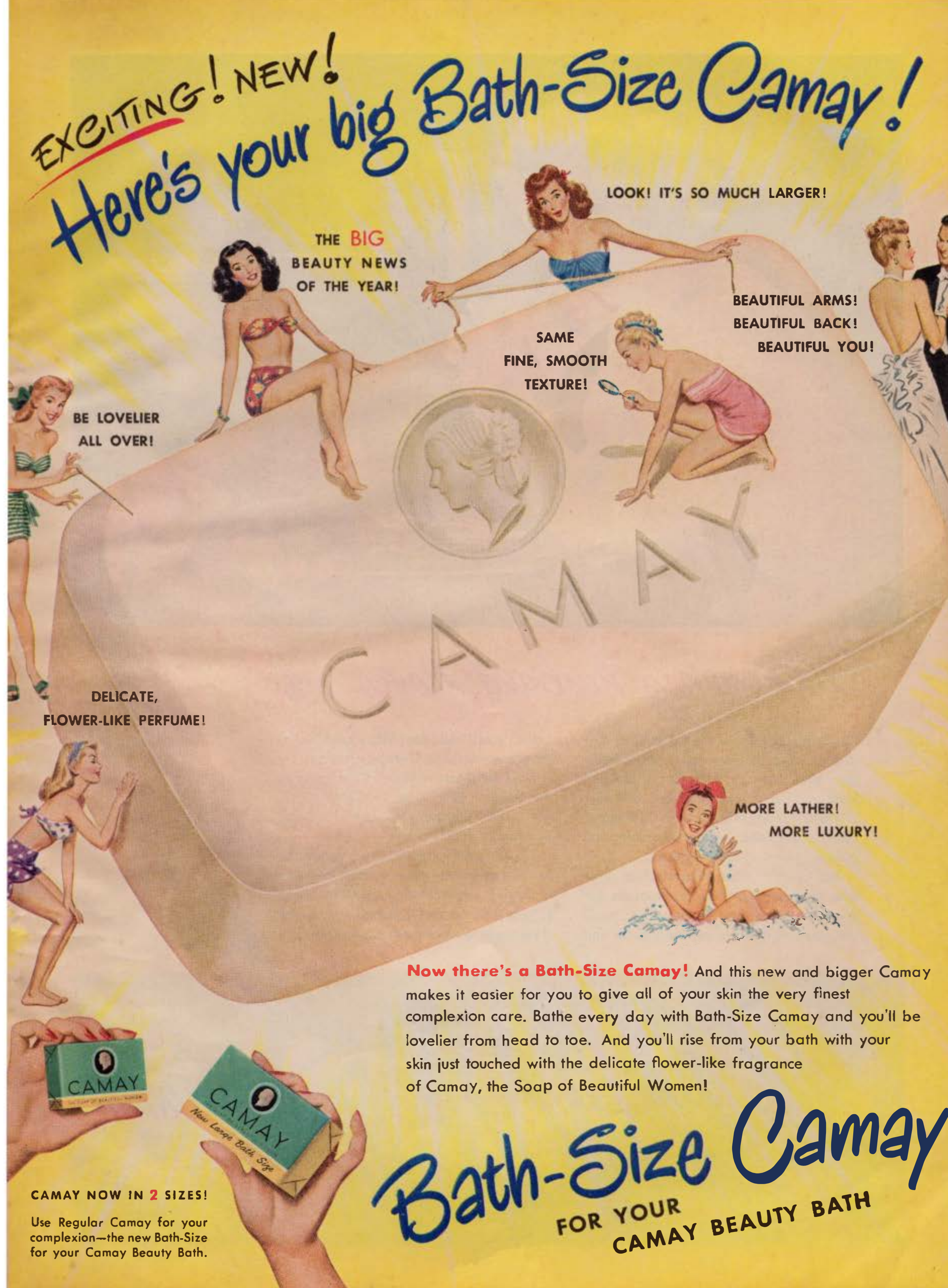
That summer there was a lady in Baltimore who lived next to the Orioles' park. She would pick out the hero in each game, bake him a cake that night and deliver it to him at the clubhouse the next day.

But early in that 1914 season, the cakes stopped coming. Nobody knew why until one day when I was knocked out of the box early. I retired to her porch which practically overlooked the diamond and mentioned that the Orioles missed her cakes. She was astounded. Her daughter had been delivering the cakes daily. Babe Ruth had been meeting the girl at the club house door and gallantly offering to present them personally to the hero of the moment.

I passed on the news to the Orioles. The next day two of them caught the Babe under the grandstand, his face deep in a chocolate cake that was intended for the Oriole shortstop who had hit a homer the previous day.

When Babe Ruth liked something, he could never get enough of it—chocolate cakes, hot dogs or silk shirts. Once, during a heat wave in St. Louis, he wore twenty-five silk shirts in three days. And left all twenty-five of them on his hotel bed when he pulled out of town.

He could never get enough of baseball, either. I remember when I watched him pitch his first world series game for Boston against Brooklyn in 1916. He won two to one. Later, I stayed at the park for a while, talking with friends. On our way into town we passed a vacant lot where two teams of neighborhood kids were playing baseball. And who was performing at shortstop on one of the teams and having the time of his life? Babe Ruth.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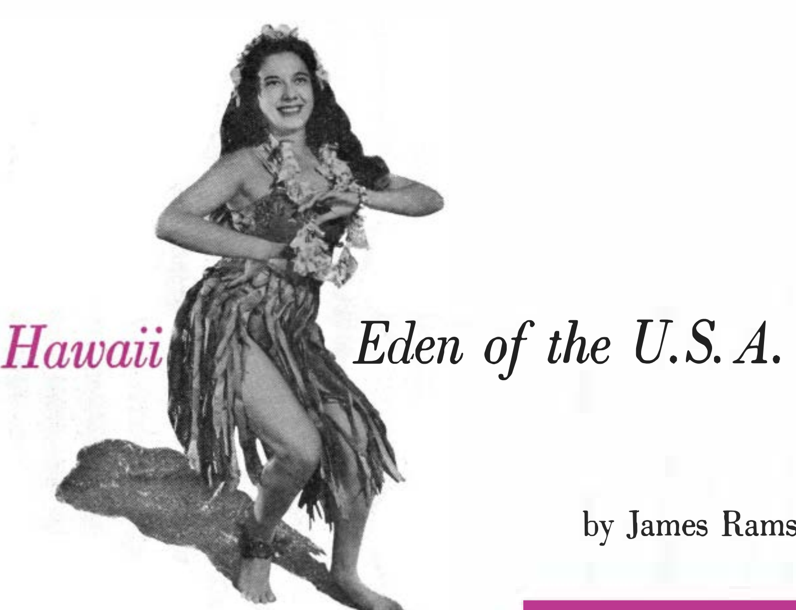
Illustrated: five of the twelve Gorham patterns



Hawaii Eden of the U.S.A.

by James Ramsey Ullman

You lie stretched on the warm pink sand, and behind you are the palms and bougainvillea, and before you the sea spreads away, pale green and then deep blue, into the sunlit miles. The world and its cares are immeasurably remote beyond those miles. This place where the war began is now a place of peace.

The peace is not an illusion. It is as real as the grinding gears of the pineapple trucks in the near-by streets of Honolulu, as the tinkling of glasses in the Queen's Surf Club bar, as the gray steel of the U.S.S. Iowa alongside the wharf at Pearl Harbor. For Hawaii is many things, all of them equally real. It is the forty-ninth state (almost). It is both a feudal domain and a hotbed of trade unionism. It is a "melting pot," a "crossroads," a "bastion of the Pacific." It is also, happily, still an Eden—if a rather hectic one.

Off Waikiki Beach the surfboards coast in on the long white combers. (They are an integral part of the scene, and not, as I had suspected, mere props of the travel-folder photographers and newsreel men.) Riding them is not as difficult as it looks, especially if one has done much skiing or skating; but paddling out to where the ride begins demands the arm power of a Samson, and the hot brew of sun and surf can quickly parboil the unwary.

The curving ribbon of sand—and the voracious sea has left *only* a ribbon—is a welter of movement and color. Here are bright rows of umbrellas and beach mats; white skins, pink skins, beige skins, mahogany skins; movie stars, beach boys, dowagers from Santa Barbara and machinists' mates off the Iowa; trunks and bras and beach robes to shame the spectrum, and enough bottles containing unpleasant oily substances to keep the beauty specialists solvent for life. There is Mrs. "Slim" Hawkes—ah! And the governor of Idaho. And Duke Kahanamoku, who is now gray and sixtyish and the sheriff of Honolulu, but who looks as if he could still swim three times around Oahu without breathing hard.

One of the beach boys is fingering a guitar and singing "Kaimana Hila." At the Royal Hawaiian bar, beyond the palm-shaded terrace, the glasses are tinkling furiously.

King for a week is a very small, very lively Brazilian monkey named Tapajoz. Tappy happens to belong to us, and among the small fry of the beach my wife and I enjoy a vicarious celebrity as "the monkey man" and "the monkey lady." In competition with Tappy, however, the bona fide, one hundred-proof celebrities don't come off so well. Frank Morgan sits with pen and smile frozen in mid-course, as a junior autograph hound yells, "Hey, look!" snatches away his book and races off in pursuit of more exotic game. Presently Frank Buck Jr. returns with a neat simian footprint on a white page, between the signatures of Gail Russell and Irving Berlin. And Mr. Morgan gallantly takes up where he had left off.

Dogs, cats and such must undergo a one-hundred-and-twenty-day quarantine before being admitted into Hawaii (where there has never been a case of rabies), but monkeys are received like visiting royalty. Or perhaps I should say our monkey, singular, for there were no others in evidence. Coconut palms and bananas notwithstanding, monkeys are not native to the islands; also there are no zoos; and Tappy's appearance, particularly in the less cosmopolitan towns and villages, had something of the effect of a small-to-middling (*Continued on page 170*)

COSMOPOLITAN'S

MOVIE CITATIONS

BY LOUELLA O. PARSONS

Motion Picture Editor, International News Service

With the Reds on the run in Hollywood, I expect to see pictures become less full of notions and more full of emotions. The hundreds of thousands of letters that have poured in on the producers from all parts of the country are having their effect.

For myself, I've known for some time that I was fed to the teeth with dramatized headlines, with projections of "world problems" that were beyond my poor power to solve, and with reflections of the seamy side of life.

I'll never know why this so-called "seamy" side of life is touted by the highbrows as more real than the smooth side. Every American certainly knows scads of people who live smoothly and happily, even though they may never have seen any palace or touched any luxury. Generally speaking, we are a nation of people who solve our own problems, and many of the problems of the rest of the world. We aren't frustrated very often. But the "fellow travelers" were mighty busy trying to prove that we were.

The four films I've picked for Cosmopolitan Citations this month certainly do not reflect life as a solid bed of roses. But they are all of them romantic in a purely American way.

They were made, of course, before the Parnell Thomas purge, but they are all so vigorous and warmly American in their settings and points of view that I regard them as omens of even finer films to come.

This month I bring you four love stories, set against various patterns of time and action—one in modern, Bohemian San Francisco; one in suburban Jackson Heights, New York; and one in New York at the turn of the twentieth century; and one on the Western plains in the 'eighties. If the Thomas committee did nothing more than make films stop being so "topical" and go back to being more typical of our own way of life and our own way of reacting, it has merited our support.

"Night Song" is my favorite production for February. There's a typical Hollywood twist behind the use of that title. When the picture was being shot, it was called "Memory of Love." Personally I wish it still were.

I believe that all women would have felt that was a perfect name for a romantic story centering around the wooing of a man who hates life by a beautiful girl who knows her love can get him over his bitterness.

The silly part of this title snarl is that "Memory of Love" seems to be one of those word combinations that just won't stick. It got killed this time in the same type of (*Continued on page 175*)

BEST PICTURE

"Night Song"

BEST MALE STAR

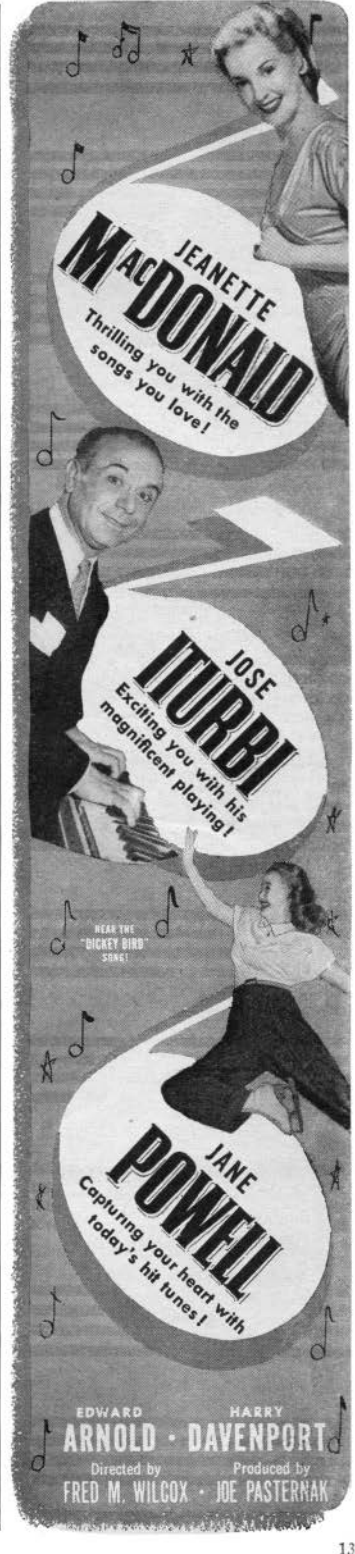
Barry Fitzgerald in "The Naked City"

BEST FEMININE STAR

Lilli Palmer in "Tisa"

BEST DIRECTION

Ray Enright for "Albuquerque"



what's new in medicine

by Lawrence Galton

Nose blowing is believed to be the most important single detrimental factor to the proper care of acute or chronic upper respiratory infections, according to a recent medical report. Blowing creates positive pressures that force back secretions which the sinuses are trying to eliminate. Such secretions are a fertile field for secondary germs leading to such complications as pneumonia, mastoiditis and arthritis. Sniffing, on the other hand, creates negative pressure, drawing the secretions out of the sinuses.

Impetigo, ringworm and other superficial skin disorders have been found to yield to preparations containing the root of algerita, a shrub of the barberry family. In powder form, it is particularly effective for inflammations in the skin folds. As a wet dressing, it helps loosen crusts in skin ulcers and works well on oozing blisters.

Speech lost after brain injuries may be restored by sodium amytal. Used on injured soldiers during the war and on some civilians since, the drug is injected into the veins and brings about sudden and dramatic improvement which, in some cases, continues long after the effects of the injection have worn off. It has worked in a case where loss of speech followed a brain operation and in another in which speech loss was caused by a blood clot.

Elderly cancer victims, contrary to popular impression, can often be helped by surgery. One eighty-year-old man with a huge stomach cancer had almost his entire stomach removed along with a big section of the intestine. The remaining stomach was joined to the remaining intestine, and the man was out of the hospital in two weeks. Some surgeons point out that because growth processes in old people are generally slowed, the cancer growth is also retarded. Consequently, cancer operations in the aged often need not be as radical as in younger people.

Sun tolerance can be increased for those who suffer stinging, itching skin eruptions upon even slight exposure. Starting with initial doses of fifty milligrams of pyribenzamine given three times daily, and gradually increased, tolerance has been built up to a point where it is two hundred times as great as it was originally and where use of the drug can be discontinued.

Superfluous hair should not be removed by X ray, women are being warned by medical authorities. A new crop of enterprises is springing up involving the use of X ray for this purpose, although the instrument is disguised under fancy names. Popular in the 'twenties, X-ray treatment has been found to result, in some cases months and even years later, in wrinkling of the skin, ulceration and cancer. Doctors also warn that dangerous skin damage may result from use of "atom-bomb" by-products to remove hair.

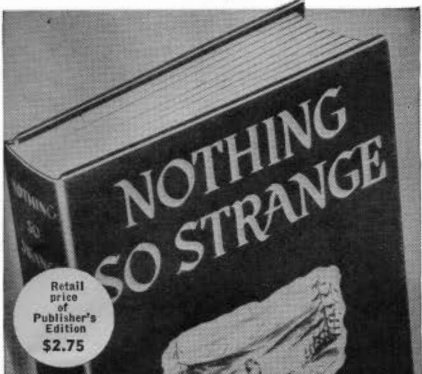
A new dust filter to protect industrial workers against poisonous and disease-producing dusts has been developed. Forty times more powerful than previous devices, the new filter holds back dusts smaller in diameter than twenty-four millionths of an inch, and it is expected to provide life-saving protection against poisonous arsenic, lead, cadmium and chromium dusts; silica dust, responsible for the frequently fatal lung disease called silicosis; and nuisance dusts produced by coal, limestone, iron ore and aluminum operations.

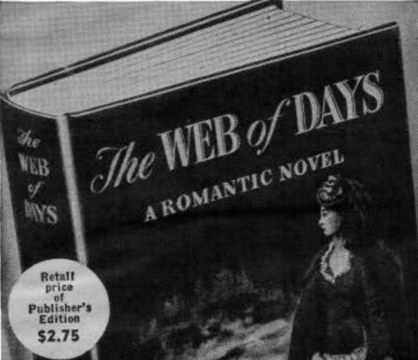
Curare is aiding surgery. Once noted as an arrow poison, the drug has won recognition after use in five hundred cases. Injected into the veins, it relaxes the patient's muscles so an operation can proceed without the deep anesthesia formerly required. Such anesthetic action has a minimum effect on the heart. In addition, recovery from the anesthesia's effects is speeded, and nausea and vomiting are minimized.

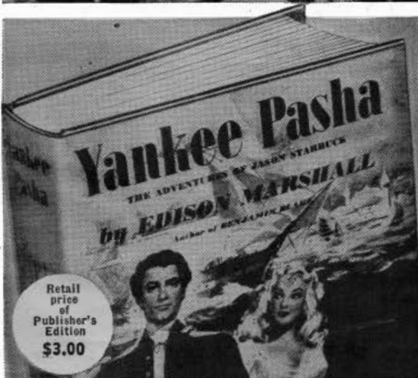
Bronchiectasis sufferers can be helped by a lung operation. More common than tuberculosis, the disease involves a dilation of the bronchial tubes and terminal air cells which may be caused by pneumonia, influenza, whooping cough or other infection. Symptoms are a chronic cough and foul-smelling sputum. For young victims and for those older people who have a severe form of the disease, an operation that removes the affected part of the lung is being recommended.

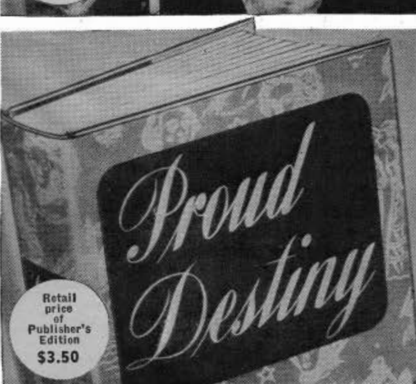
Excellent results have been obtained by adding strained meats to the formulas of bottle-fed babies beginning at the age of six weeks. Because of prejudice and the fact that in the past prepared meats have been hard to digest and unavailable in suitable form, infants rarely received them before six to nine months. In recent experiments, however, protein intake of infants was increased by twenty-five percent through adding one ounce of meat to the formula. There were no bad effects, and the general well-being of infants getting the meat was better than that of nonrecipients. The experiments also showed that the meat promoted formation of hemoglobin and red blood cells. MORE ON PAGE 16

Medicines mentioned in this column should be used only on the advice of a physician









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By Edison Marshall

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Beautiful Marie Antoinette was no match for Benjamin Franklin—and fell victim to history's most dramatic plot! One of the towering historical novels of the decade.

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WITH "NEW" DECANIUM

On the Medical Frontiers

Infantile paralysis patients whose breathing muscles are paralyzed may soon be using a new kind of bed in place of the iron lung. In tests, the bed, which automatically rocks up and down from head to foot, has been found to swing the internal organs and diaphragm so that gravity aids breathing. In addition, the rocking helps keep blood circulating to nourish the paralyzed muscles and helps eliminate body wastes.

Tight corsets may help to cause ulcer of the stomach, Dr. Andrew C. Ivy, famed physiologist and vice-president of the University of Illinois believes. He is planning a two-year experiment with forty monkeys confined in the same type of corset proposed for American women by a French couturier. In previous research on ulcers, Dr. Ivy found that up to twenty years ago women had four to five times as many gastric ulcers as men, hut now the proportion is reversed. The change dates from the period when women began to stop using the tight corsets of the Victorian era.

Meningitis cases in which penicillin and streptomycin do not work may he cured by sulfa drugs. In one recent case, penicillin was given to a man with a had skull fracture to ward off meningitis, but the disease developed nevertheless. Streptomycin was tried but had to he stopped because it produced excruciating leg pain. Sulfadiazine, strengthened with another chemical, urea, got the patient well.

Cancer researchers are studying the spleen again. This is the gland at the left side of the stomach near the heart which, for years, has been known to he peculiar in that cancer almost never develops there originally; even when the disease spreads from other organs, it rarely affects the spleen. Because of this, some scientists have long held that an extract of the spleen should have the power to prevent cancer growth. From time to time, however, other scientists have reported no results from using the extract. But recently a Canadian doctor reported two cancer cases which, after spleen-extract treatment, have survived for thirteen years. Two Philadelphia doctors reported, at the same time, that three patients regarded as hopeless have been similarly treated and show a slowing down of tumor growth and general health improvement.

Life expectancy in cases of acute leukemia, the still-incurable disease in which the blood's white corpuscles overmultiply, may be increased through a recent discovery. A solution of tyrosinase, the ferment responsible for some of the skin's pigmentation, was given to six patients, and their acute leukemia was converted into the chronic form which carries a much longer period of survival.

A new female sex hormone to prevent miscarriage has been developed and may soon he made generally available. Unlike the synthetic progesterone now in use, which must be injected, the new drug, called anhydro-hydroxy-progesterone, can he taken orally and is easily prepared from cholesterol which is abundant in many animal tissues.

Tooth decay may he eliminated under a radical proposal by Dr. L. S. Fosdick of Northwestern University Dental School. It calls for the refinery to add to all sugar a simple, tasteless chemical, so that you would be protecting yourself against toothache and dental caries every time you eat a piece of candy or put sugar in your coffee or tea. Thirty-one chemicals have been tested, and the best found to date is called glycerol aldehyde. The hope is that this chemical, or an even more effective one yet to be found, will halt decay by neutralizing the ferment which causes acid to he formed from sugar in the mouth. Other methods previously suggested for controlling decay are complex and inconvenient. Fluorine in drinking water, for example, acts to check the acid-forming ferment, but only minute amounts of fluorine can be taken since it is a poison and, even in small amounts, it may cause mottling of the teeth. The Fosdick plan has been hailed by Dr. Hamilton Robinson, editor of the Journal of Dental Research, as "the greatest hope for mass control of caries."

Medicines mentioned in this column should be used only on the advice of a physician

Trushay, the "beforehand lotion"—rich, fragrant, fabulously different from other lotions.

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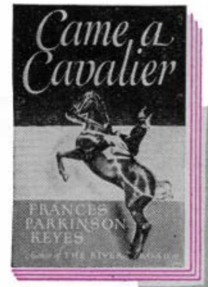

interview with a best-selling author

FRANCES PARKINSON KEYES

by Robert van Gelder

"I wrote my first novel in secret, part of it while I held a nursing baby in my left arm. The baby nursed, and I wrote. But those things are fairly well known. I'm sure you'd rather write about what I'm doing now. For example, during these years of shortages I've succeeded in remodeling five houses," said Frances Parkinson Keyes.

"Apparently you collect houses."

"I have four at present," said Mrs. Keyes, who pronounces her name "Kize."

Two are in Louisiana; two others, which she inherited, are in New England.

She also collects fans, crucifixes, costume dolls and costumes.

"Someone once suggested that I had much in common with President Roosevelt in that we both were collectors and both were physically handicapped but didn't allow our handicaps to deter us from what we wanted to do."

About twenty-five years ago, shortly after the start of her writing career, Mrs. Keyes was told that a back ailment would make her an invalid for the rest of her life.

"The prognosis was that I must live in a cagelike, supporting contraption. Well, I haven't had to live in that, but, because of my back, I do try to spare myself."

"How do you go about sparing yourself?"

"I don't do my own typing. I write about thirty pages a day—they come to five thousand words—and I read the dreadful handwriting to my secretary. I also save myself by remaining in bed each morning while I talk with my cook about the day's menus and marketing. Then my secretary comes to see me in my bedroom, and we go over the appointments for the day. But once I'm dressed I don't rest again, unless I'm really ill. I've been ill a great deal, but of course that's not at all interesting."

She said that illness rarely interferes with her writing.

"I learned long ago that I could build my world at my bedside."

And her world is constantly revitalized by her singularly enthusiastic sense of duty. When she returned from France last spring with the manuscript of what was to be her new best seller, "Came a Cavalier," not quite completed, she paused in this country only long enough to pick up the christening robes that have been in her family for five generations. Then she boarded a freighter bound for Santiago, Chile, where one of her three sons is employed.

She completed her book on the voyage to Chile. Arriving at Santiago she wrapped (*Continued on page 142*)

Evening Star

AT NIGHTFALL, there's one star that makes others seem pale by comparison . . . and there's one cocktail whose brilliant perfection is, in its own way, every bit as matchless.

So, this evening, at your favorite bar, or at home before dinner, we wish you'd try this incomparable drink — an Old Fashioned made with Four Roses.

See for yourself how its delicately *distinctive* flavor makes a cocktail that's truly magnificent.

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Hat, John Frederics
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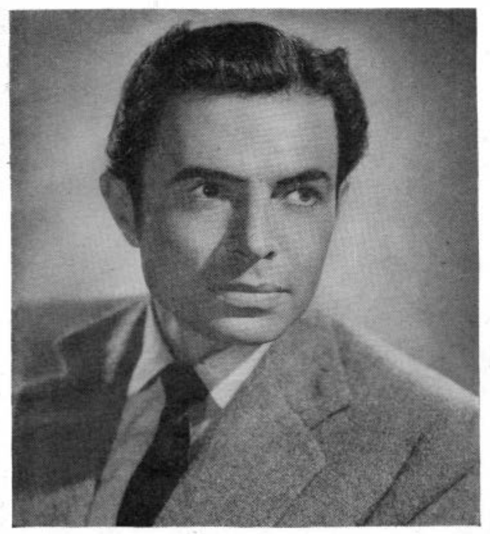


Why I Don't Want to Go to Hollywood

An internationally famous movie star who has never been there discusses a few of the more frightening aspects of our glamorous cinema capital

by James Mason

A while ago I wrote for an English magazine a belligerent little article entitled, "Why I Am Going to Hollywood." At that time I appeared to have desired Hollywood because, (a) I wanted to work in the sun, (b) I wanted to avoid staleness by not working too long in England, (c) I wanted to escape from the Rank Octopus, (d) I wanted to make films in a place where the machinery works efficiently.

I happen to know, however, that the man who wrote that article got no further than New York where, for over a year, he practiced a moody vegetation and apparently lost all interest in the activities of the movie capital. What were the reasons for this growing reluctance?

Reviewing my feelings about Hollywood now, I find that I still want to work in the sun. And the efficient workmanship still beckons. The Octopus stands not quite where it stood a year ago; its tentacles have been slightly singed. In the British movie-production field particularly, the virtual monopoly of J. Arthur Rank has been shaken by the redoubtable presence of Sir Alexander Korda and the defection of Filippo Del Giudice. Nevertheless, talent and technicians are still, to a large extent, the common property of the enormous Rank group. There is no incentive for one production unit to stand out as the most efficient, the most enterprising or the most frugal. As a result, the competitive spirit is missing and an occupational lethargy prevails.

The only item on the above list that I have come to look upon with suspicion is the one about a trip to Hollywood being a cure for artistic staleness. The thought of a British film actor going to Hollywood to have his notions freshened up now strikes me as a futile project. For there he would be surrounded by the same sort of movie types that flourish around the British studios.

Although my original motives still seem to be fairly sound, my erstwhile determination to go West is tottering dangerously. I think this is because I have recently heard so many alarming stories about the place.

I ignore half the evidence because it emanates from Hollywood rejects—the snubbed and embittered ones to whom even California orange juice is no longer palatable.

The evidence I am inclined to accept comes from those who are as well adjusted as can be to their strange livelihood, who cling bravely to their professional integrity and wage war, to the best of their ability, against the sharks and charlatans of the trade. Though these people generally admit that Hollywood sunshine and orange juice are okay, they fill me with grim forebodings about what to expect in the way of social and professional conditions.

First, let's look at the social picture. Recently two movie men from England came through New York on their way to Hollywood . . . On their way back to England the wife of one of them told us of their adventures in Hollywood society.

The latter part of one day was spent at the house of a leading executive. When they arrived a mass of guests were gathered around the swimming pool, the women on one side the men on the other. Presently everyone dressed, and the thing became a sort of cocktail party. But the strange feature was that the men all assembled in an elaborate barroom, which was built onto the house, while the women drank their Martinis in another room. Then dinner was served, and for a short spell the men patronized their women with hearty banter, lighted cigars as soon as they had finished eating, and hurried back to the barroom. Neither the hostess nor any of the local ladies took any great pains to find a common conversational meeting ground with the two English women, who sat mutely by as the others discussed their men, their clothes, their children, their clothes and their men. Finally my friend did (*Continued on page 147*)

Static-

-ticians

by Kay Wister

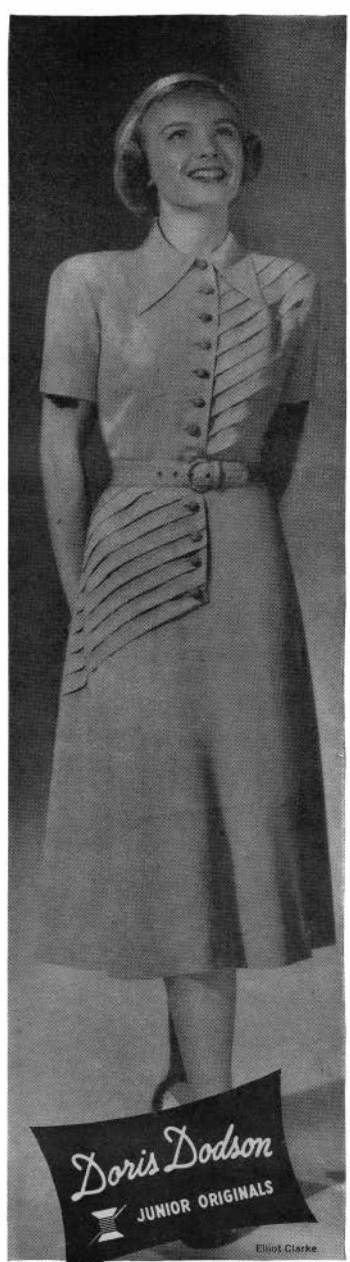
So you don't like long skirts? So you'll have every new dress shortened (leaving the material in the hem, of course)? So you're mad about this whole fashion trend which seems to be gaining momentum? And you feel most inadequate to combat it?

Do you know how many people—both men and women—feel as you do? Has anyone given you a true story about the reaction to this whole fashion trend? Well, we are going to—right now.

This venture is far from safe since we are within shooting distance of upper Fifth Avenue and Fifty-seventh Street. Both these areas are alive with aggressive exponents of the "new look." However, there is always lower Fifth Avenue and Fourteenth Street where we can take refuge until the hue and cry is over. There it is difficult to find any defenders of the long skirt.

It took more than a little Dutch courage to get us, a fashion feature, to plunge into this whirlpool of controversy. Actually it took a blast from five vociferous radio men—regular static-ticians.

These men were acting as a jury at our Male-tested Fashions party held at the Stork Club. It was their responsibility to decide on the four spring suits most attractive and suitable for the large number of women who dress to please men. No better group of judges can be found: Peter Donald, who is gagmaster on "Can You Top This?" as well as Mr. Cassidy of the Fred Allen show; Ted Malone:



"B. G."... Business Glamour for the office and you! Obviously, from the hand of the inimitable Doris Dodson... in blue, lime, or pink rayon Miami by Mallinson. Junior sizes 9 to 15. About thirteen dollars.

Write for the name of your local shop... Doris Dodson, St. Louis 1, Missouri

Male-tested Fashions *(Cont.)*

Peter Roberts and Arthur Hale, both leading newscasters; and Dick Kollmar who is "Boston Blackie" as well as the Dick of "Dorothy and Dick."

Maybe it would be best to take you back to the first time we became involved in the long-skirt controversy. It happened when the editor requested that we find a "new long dress" to be photographed and used to illustrate Philip Wylie's tirade on "What's Wrong with Women's Fashions," in the November issue of Cosmopolitan. The assignment seemed an easy one, for, after all, it was said that this new fashion was taking the New York wholesale market by storm. Storm, indeed! A wind storm! Lots of conversation, no long dresses.

But how to explain this to the editor? After all, he can read, too. A little desperate, we phoned a fashion director—one of our good friends who will always come to the rescue. Our predicament brought howls of laughter. "Why don't be silly, dear," she said. "Manufacturers aren't making those. Not yet. They can't sell them. When I need a photograph of a long skirt, I let out a hem as far as possible, then plan to retouch the photo a little!" Much wiser, we persuaded the editor to settle for a new, slightly shorter evening dress.

The next chapter of our experience came after the November Cosmopolitan reached the public. It made us heroes, bearing the standard of truth—truth in the form of Mr. Wylie's article which tore the long skirt, as well as every other phase of the fashion trend, to ribbons.

Not too long after this, manufac-

turers of dresses began showing us their new spring collections. The skirts were so long we were frantic. So we asked some of the designers if they would shorten the dresses we had selected.

"Oh, naturally," they said. "You know, we are not shipping long dresses to most of the stores. Buyers tell us they can't sell them."

Now you would think all this would be enough to keep us plugging for not-too-long skirts. But when it came time to plan our fashion showing of spring suits, we felt that the public was a little more used to long skirts. However, our jury of static-ticians wouldn't budge.

"Oh, yes," they agreed, "a little longer than last year, maybe; but these things that hog-tie women. Never! And don't think almost everyone doesn't agree with us." And then it began. Story after story of the disadvantages of long skirts. The most startling of these stories we are going to repeat just as we heard it from Ted Malone.

On one Friday-morning broadcast Mr. Malone spoke in a light vein about the new long skirts. He referred to them as "droopy dresses" and then casually said, "I think we should do something about them." The following Monday morning there were more than twelve thousand letters of praise in his morning mail. Two weeks later he did another broadcast reporting on the number of "long-skirt" letters that continued to pour in. Result of the two broadcasts: 97,432 letters! And a careful study of the letters revealed that only five of every three thousand had a

Photos by George Abbate and Paul D'Ome

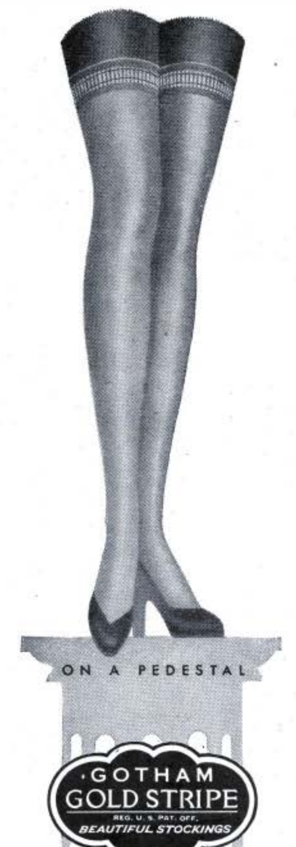
MEN ADMIRE

"that finished look"

And it begins with Twinette*, the invisible reason for chic. Designed by Venus, this wonderful new foundation molds a new you with slimmer waist and softer look.

SUIT BY NETTIE ROSENSTEIN—
FOUNDATION BY VENUS

VENUS FOUNDATION GARMENTS, INC.
Merchandise Mart • Chicago
*T.M. REG. © 1948 VENUS FOUNDATION GARMENTS, INC.



GOTHAM GOLD STRIPE NYLONS

Delightfully feminine . . . *a ring of decorative lace* below the Gold Stripe! "Friv-O-Lace*," a sheer 30 denier all nylon stocking . . . in WAFFLE, a burnished gold shade. Buy these stockings at your favorite store. If not obtainable, use coupon below.

GOTHAM HOSIERY COMPANY, INC.
200 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK 16, N. Y.
Gotham Hosiery Company of Canada, Ltd.
Dominion Square Building, Montreal

GOTHAM HOSIERY COMPANY, INC.—DEPT. C2
200 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK 16, N. Y.
I would like to buy the stockings illustrated "On A Pedestal." Please send me, through a local store, one pair Gotham Gold Stripe "Friv-O-Lace" in 30 denier nylon, WAFFLE. Style 4304, at $1.65 a pair. My size is.......... I enclose Check ....or Money Order.......... (Don't send stamps.)

NAME________________

ADDRESS________________

CITY________________STATE________

Coupon orders filled only in the U. S. A.

*TRADE MARK

Male-tested Fashions (*Cont.*)

good word for the new long skirts! The four dominant complaints were these:

1. The timing of this fashion trend is "diabolical." It forces women to buy new clothes, throwing budgets out of line when the government is asking for conservation.
2. Long skirts (and extremely full skirts, coats and jackets) call for too much fabric at a time when Europe is in tatters.
3. Long skirts, along with other style features, age women.
4. Long skirts just can't be worn by women who are chasing around after small children.

The Party

Our judges were kept in line by Louella Parsons, Hollywood reporter and film critic, who was guest of honor.

One of Ted Malone's letters contained the following comment: "Who on earth are the droopy dresses designed for? A short person looks like a gnome; a tall person looks like a skyscraper; a fat person like a tub; a thin person, like a beanpole."

Our jury of radio-men-in-the-know selected the four suits, shown on these pages, for good sound reasons—after we promised to shorten them before they were photographed. The suits are made of attractive, durable worsteds, two gabardine and two crepe. Three of the styles were selected by our jury for all-around wear, the fourth for an out-and-out cocktail suit.

The hats shown with the suits (and co-ordinated with the gloves) won tremendous acclaim because actually they all are the same hat fashion worn differently. Several hats in one! In fact, the practical features of all the fashions were checked faithfully by each of our static-ticians, and then the design came in for discussion. Here, as with all our male juries, the greatest interest was shown in a newish look combined with a not-too-unfamiliar style.

But those long skirts—uh! uh!

See Page 177 for "Where to Buy" Male-tested Fashions

"SLEEP, MY LOVE"—the Triangle Picture, released by United Artists, features Claudette Colbert looking utterly charming in this two-tone taffeta housecoat. Faithfully reproduced in Celanese Clairanese* taffeta, it has the male vote for gracious femininity. In flamingo with turquoise, turquoise with flamingo. About $22. At your favorite store, or write*
DORIAN-MACKSOUD CORP.
1 East 33rd St., New York 16, N. Y.

*REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

Philip Wylie

discusses those Americans who are always acting and thinking like sophomores

what's wrong with "Youthfulness"

The doctrine of "youthfulness" is one of the main supports of the American "way of life." It is one of the shakiest and silliest. We rely too much upon it. Listen to the way we talk:

"We are a young people, and we have a young outlook as a result. . . The 'new look' is the young look. . . Life begins at forty. . . Every man is a boy at heart. . . I'm forty years young! I've got 'young ideas'. . . You're not old until you admit it. . . A man is as old as he feels. . . I get younger every day."

Et cetera, et cetera, ad infinitum.

We have rearranged our folk myths to suit this national rule. The heroes and heroines of our fiction and our movies are young. When they pass into the forties and the fifties, our screen stars disguise themselves as youngsters, with the aid of hair pieces and poultice-thick make-up. Our stories are lopped off at the end of the first third — with the Wedding March. "They were married and lived happily ever after." That childhood evasion is a standard "must" among American grownups. We no longer even investigate the process of maturation. In our foolish legends, life's ending comes with youth's ending—and it is, perforce, a "happy ending." Precious few gray hairs appear in our advertisements and almost no beards. It is the ambition of millions of mothers to get themselves up so that they cannot be distinguished from their daughters.

Printing presses pour forth an enormous literature devoted to the cause of youthfulness. The production of artificial aids to this endeavor is a billion-dollar business. Trees are chopped down in China, miners dig in the Antipodes, and interns pore over books in Manhattan so that aging women may maintain the illusion of imperishable youth. The American woman's dressing table—or her "vanity" (never was a word more accurate!)—is a veritable alchemist's warehouse of such materials: soaps, unguents, eyewashes, paints, rouges, lipsticks, mascaras, eye shadows, spot concealers, pencils, crayons, brushes, puffs, daubers, applicators, powders, creams, jellies, pastes, deodorizers, polishes, oils, resins, glues, varnishes, shellacs, enamels, fixatives, bleaching agents, dyes, tints, juices, drops and removers. Every year a new host of these arcana are "discovered," and the purpose of all but a few of them is to make the largest possible number of women imagine that they appear younger than they are.

The waste itself is regrettable—the waste of materials and effort and time, including the time spent by the producers and the awful eons of woman-hours lost in applying and fiddling with these cosmetics and related substances. But far more regrettable, from the human and the national point of view, is the fact that almost nobody is ever deceived by these innumerable agents except the person who uses them. That person may seem more attractive and more cleanly after a session of private chemistry, but the other objective, the look of youth, is rarely attained. Think for a moment. It is part of the doctrine of juvenility to pretend to be fooled. We regularly say to Maude and Millicent and Jane, "My dear, you don't look a day over thirty!" But what we say to ourselves, even of newly met strangers, is the truth: "She'll never see forty (or fifty) again!" Indeed, over-dependence on drugstore patina inclines us to overestimate age.

Seen in this proper light, striving for youth becomes the central absurdity—and tragedy—of the lives of millions of middle-aged women. The mother who yearns to be mistaken for the sister of her own daughter might not like it so well if the same error were made about her whole personality—if, that is, she were deemed as flighty and inexperienced, as emotional and empty-headed as the youngster. But many adult women—again, many millions—aim at precisely that. For the doctrine of youthfulness insists that one must not merely *look* but *feel, act and think young.*

The same charges may be brought against men. Pop's bureau is not such an apothecary shop as Mom's dresser — although he is becoming more and more addicted to powders and tonics, pads and elastic garments. Pop is allowed to age a little, to grow gray *(Continued on page 181)*

we don't want WAR again

by Adela Rogers St. Johns

A famous American author, who lost a son and a brother in the last war and has two other sons still in the service, writes a letter to her Congressman about Universal Military Training

The Honorable Donald Jackson of California
House of Representatives
Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

With the shrewdness of his master, the devil, Hitler—remember him?—calculated his chances.

Night after night he studied the reports of his agents and his Political Bureau, hesitated, vacillated, while the scales hung in the balance.

At last they tipped for War, and Hitler marched upon Poland.

How obvious now that he took well into consideration the unpreparedness of the United States; how plain that had we possessed a trained citizen Army, a powerful Air Force, and a Navy manned to match our envied place in the seething world of 1939, he would have decided otherwise.

But no. He could afford to plunge the world into chaos and agony. The odds were in his favor. When he had conquered Europe, and England had fallen, his plans in South America and Mexico would be ripe; then he could move upon the United States, and his dream of world conquest would come true. Remember?

A fantastic dream. Granted. How close did it come to fulfillment? Who stopped it? The RAF in the Battle of Britain, the year England stood alone against this monstrous threat to humanity. Being a proud people, we do not like to admit that then the British Navy was our only line of defense. but a truly great people can with humility admit a truth and learn from it.

Who let Hitler dream that mad nightmare that engulfed the world? A United States unprepared to speak with power and with dignity for peace. At long last we destroyed him, but at what a cost you know as well as I do.

Are we letting the forces of evil in the world dream that dream again?

You and your fellow members of Congress must answer us that question now, Mr. Jackson.

For looking back, one thing stands out like a cross, a bitter cross against the stormy skies of these past eight years. If we, the United States of America, had been prepared there *could* have been no war. It was not our courage, our integrity, our honor, our ideals, our genius for production or our character which Hitler discounted. It was *(Cont. on page 182)*

YOU MIX 'EM . . . BUT "OLD THOMPSON" MAKES 'EM

Fussy about Old Fashioneds? Remember this: All your favorite mixing tricks mean little unless the whiskey is tasty . . . that is why experts pour "Thompson." It's better —it's WED • IN • THE • WOOD...Aged Glenmore whiskies are blended with choicest grain neutral spirits but, instead of being bottled immediately, "Thompson" is put back into barrels to assure perfect blending. This old-time method takes longer and costs more but it gives you the extra quality you need to really *make* any drink you serve.

Glenmore Distilleries Company • Louisville, Kentucky

OLD THOMPSON BRAND

Blended whiskey 86.8 proof. The straight whiskies in this product are five years or more old. 32½% straight whiskies—67½% grain neutral spirits.

A GLENMORE PRODUCT FROM OLD KENTUCKY

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All over America the word for style is Studebaker

ANNOUNCING
New 1948 Studebakers

TIME flies faster than most of us realize. It's just a little more than eighteen months since you first read the thrilling Studebaker announcement, "Your postwar dream car is here and in production!"

Now the 1948 version of that dream car has arrived.

New 1948 Studebakers, including glamorous new Champion and Commander convertibles, are swinging upon the scene at dealers' showrooms.

They're more than fresh 1948 interpretations of the "new look" in cars that's a Studebaker style mark. They're the dramatic encore to over a year and a half of the most sensational new-car success in motoring history.

Riding low, wide and handsome straight into the heart of discriminating America, Studebaker styling has established the design pattern for all truly modern cars.

See these latest Studebaker achievements at your first opportunity. They're superb 1948 examples of the new kind of motoring in which Studebaker so impressively and so inspiringly leads.

Siamese

BY JUNE MAC LIESH

Kodachrome by Ylla

Immaculate, aloof, they bow

To wash their silken spats,

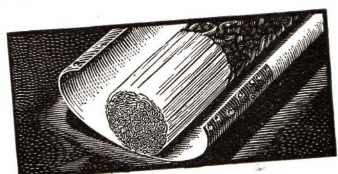
My gentian-eyed, my pansy-faced,

Slim, honey-colored cats.

38,381 DENTISTS SAY

"SMOKE VICEROYS!"

VICEROYS FILTER THE SMOKE!



The Nicotine and Tars Trapped* by the VICEROY Filter

CAN NEVER STAIN YOUR TEETH

1. Each puff of smoke passes through scores of tiny passages of this highly absorbent filter paper.

2. The nicotine and tars thus trapped cannot stain your teeth—and the smoke is cooler, cleaner.

3. No tobacco shreds or crumbs can get in your mouth.

4. This filter is *exclusive* as is Viceroy's luxurious blend of fine domestic and imported tobaccos.

Get Viceroys. You'll be glad you did.

*No filter can remove all nicotine and tars, nor does Viceroy make this claim.

Doctors Prove the Palmolive Plan brings 2 out of 3 women

Lovelier Skin in 14 days!

**Regardless of your Age—
Type of Skin—or what Beauty Care
you've used before!**

Less Oily
Smoother, Younger looking
Less Coarse-looking
Fewer Tiny Blemishes—
Less Incipient Blackheads
Fresher – Brighter, Clearer Color

YOU, TOO, may look for such skin improvements in only 14 days!

Remember! Thirty-six doctors—leading skin specialists—tested the Palmolive Plan on 1285 women of all ages—from fifteen to fifty—with all types of skin. Dry! Oily! Normal! Young! Older! And 2 out of 3 won noticeable complexion improvement in 14 days. No matter what beauty care they had used before.

PALMOLIVE

PALMOLIVE

DOCTORS PROVE PALMOLIVE'S BEAUTY RESULTS!

GOSH, EDITH— YOU'RE A WONDERFUL COOK! THE MAN WHO MARRIES YOU WILL BE LUCKY!

NOBODY'S ASKED ME, RUTH— AND NO WONDER, WITH MY DINGY, OILY COMPLEXION!

THEN I'LL GIVE YOU A RECIPE— THE PALMOLIVE PLAN —JUST 1-2-3!

1. WASH YOUR FACE WITH PALMOLIVE SOAP! 2. THEN, FOR 60 SECONDS, MASSAGE WITH PALMOLIVE'S SOFT, LOVELY LATHER. RINSE! 3. DO THIS 3 TIMES A DAY FOR 14 DAYS. THIS CLEANSING MASSAGE BRINGS YOUR SKIN PALMOLIVE'S FULL BEAUTIFYING EFFECT!

EDITH TRIES THE PLAN—*AND 14 DAYS LATER!*

IF YOU WANT TO WIN SOME FELLOW'S HEART— THE PALMOLIVE PLAN IS THE WAY TO START!

P.S. For tub! For shower! Get the new, big, thrifty Bath Size Palmolive!

Help Wanted—Male!

COME ON, NANCY— JOIN THE FUN! NO SENSE COMING TO A DANCE AND HIDING OUT ON EVERYBODY!

IT'S THE OTHER WAY 'ROUND, RUTH! EVERY MAN AT THIS SO-CALLED FROLIC IS WORKING HARD TO AVOID ME!

SOMETHING'S REALLY WRONG, RUTH! BUT I CAN'T THINK WHAT IT IS!

NANCY, I THINK YOUR DENTIST COULD HELP. BECAUSE I HAVE A HUNCH YOUR WHOLE TROUBLE IS— —IS BAD BREATH, HONEY!

POWDER ROOM

NANCY SEES HER DENTIST!

TO COMBAT BAD BREATH, I RECOMMEND **COLGATE DENTAL CREAM!** FOR SCIENTIFIC TESTS PROVE THAT IN 7 OUT OF 10 CASES, COLGATE'S ***INSTANTLY*** STOPS BAD BREATH THAT ORIGINATES IN THE MOUTH!

"**HERE'S WHY: COLGATE DENTAL CREAM** HAS AN ACTIVE *PENETRATING* FOAM THAT GETS INTO THE HIDDEN CREVICES BETWEEN TEETH— HELPS CLEAN OUT DECAYING FOOD PARTICLES— STOP STAGNANT SALIVA ODORS—REMOVE THE *CAUSE* OF MUCH BAD BREATH. AND COLGATE'S SOFT POLISHING AGENT CLEANS ENAMEL THOROUGHLY, GENTLY, *SAFELY!*"

LATER — THANKS TO COLGATE DENTAL CREAM

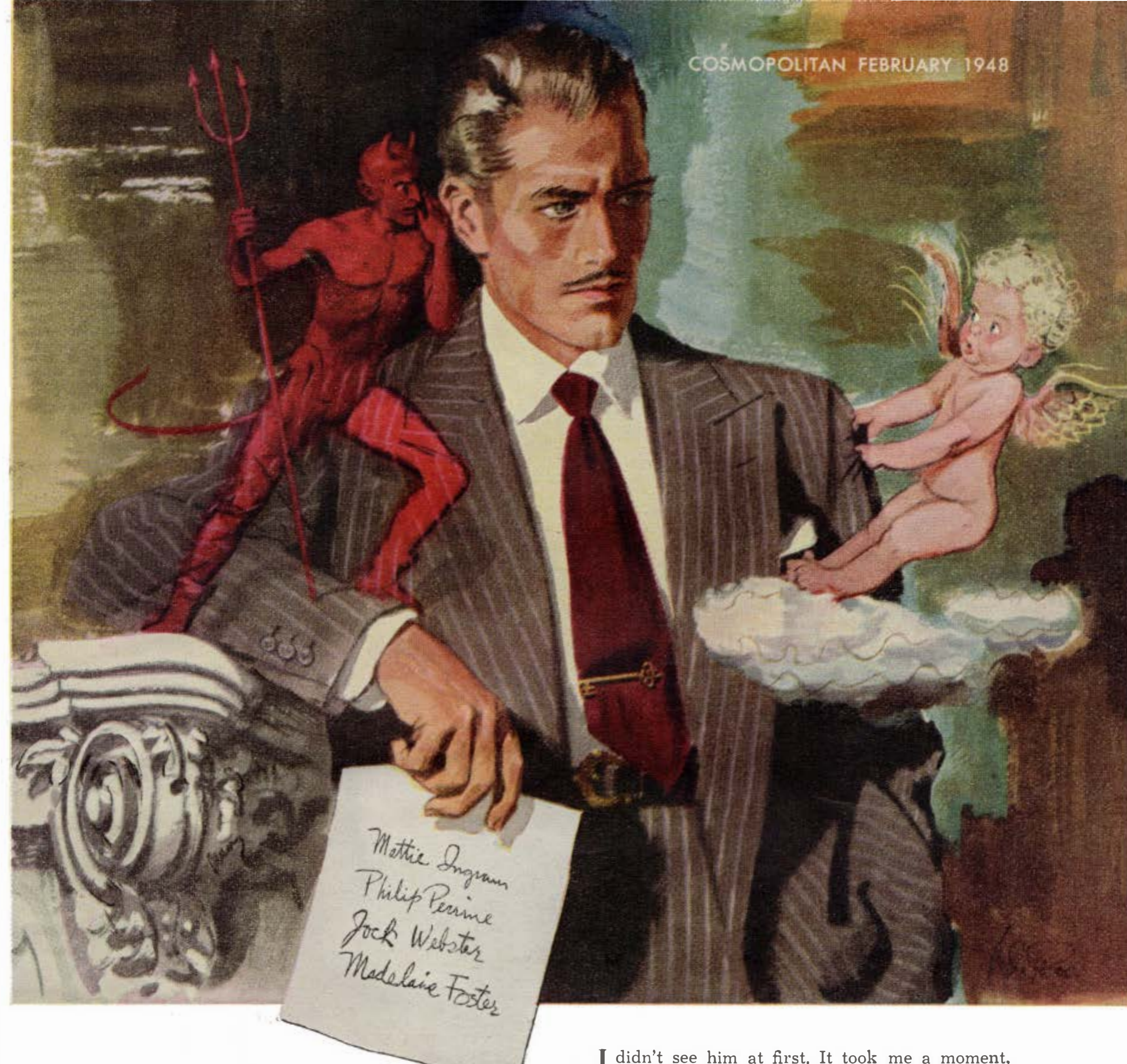
THAT TIP ON COLGATE'S SELDOM FAILS! NOW NANCY HAS A FLOCK OF MALES!

It cleans your breath while it cleans your teeth!

COLGATE RIBBON DENTAL CREAM

COLGATE

Always use **COLGATE DENTAL CREAM** *after you eat and before every date!*



# of Good and Evil

A Cosmopolitan Novelette

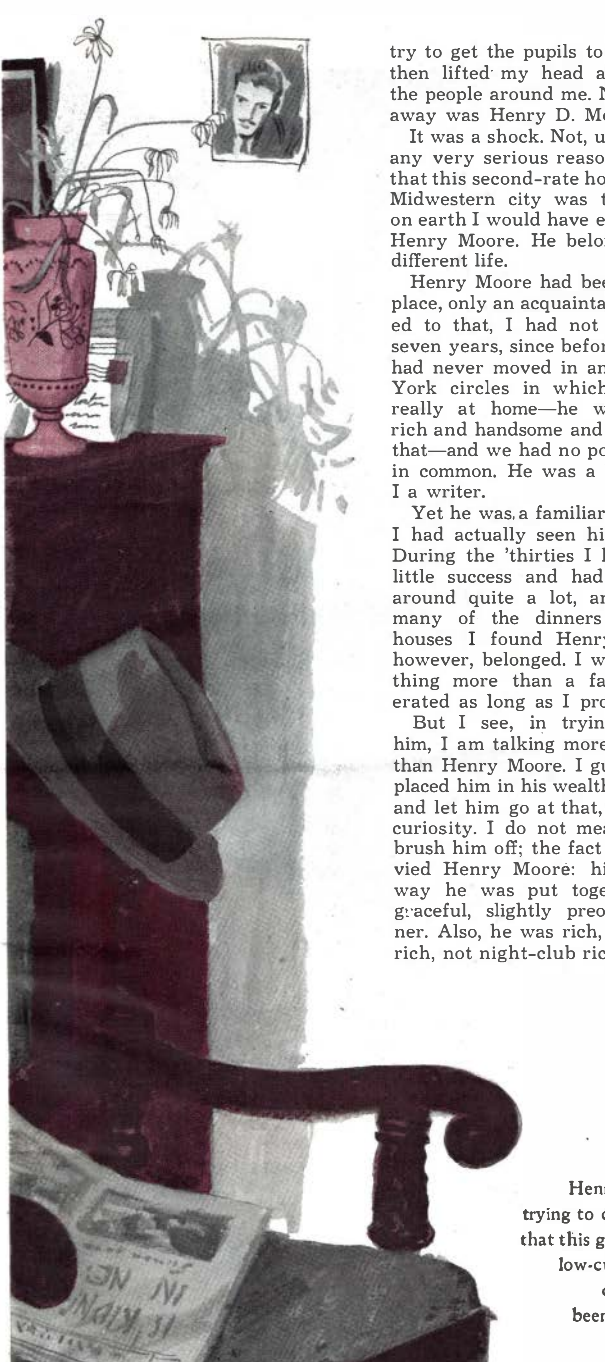
BY GEORGE BRADSHAW

Have you ever wanted to right a wrong, review your own personal history and revise it? Before you set out on any such romantic mission, you had better read what happened to Henry D. Moore

I didn't see him at first. It took me a moment, coming from the brightly lighted lobby into the darkness of the bar lounge, to adjust my eyes; in fact I had to grope to find a chair.

I dislike this fashion which seems to have swept the country: this conversion of well-illuminated barrooms into places of unreasonable gloom. You often have trouble telling a Manhattan from a Martini.

I sat down and ordered an Old-fashioned—I knew I could be sure of what I was getting by the shape of the glass—and then tried for a moment, unsuccessfully, to read a newspaper. I laid it aside, shut my eyes a couple of times to



Henry stared at her, trying to convince himself that this girl in the cheap, low-cut hostess gown could once have been his Madelaine.

ILLUSTRATED BY ALEX ROSS

try to get the pupils to open up, and then lifted my head and peered at the people around me. Not two tables away was Henry D. Moore.

It was a shock. Not, understand, for any very serious reason, it was just that this second-rate hotel bar in this Midwestern city was the last place on earth I would have expected to see Henry Moore. He belonged to a far different life.

Henry Moore had been, in the first place, only an acquaintance, and, added to that, I had not seen him for seven years, since before the war. He had never moved in any of the New York circles in which I had been really at home—he was much too rich and handsome and successful for that—and we had no point of interest in common. He was a Wall Streeter, I a writer.

Yet he was a familiar acquaintance. I had actually seen him very often. During the 'thirties I had had some little success and had been invited around quite a lot, and at a great many of the dinners and country houses I found Henry Moore. He, however, belonged. I was never anything more than a fad, to be tolerated as long as I produced.

But I see, in trying to describe him, I am talking more about myself than Henry Moore. I guess I had just placed him in his wealthy background and let him go at that, without much curiosity. I do not mean to seem to brush him off; the fact was I had envied Henry Moore: his clothes, the way he was put together, and his graceful, slightly preoccupied manner. Also, he was rich, Racquet Club rich, not night-club rich, and he was intelligent; certainly he was the best bridge player I ever sat opposite. He had only one idiosyncrasy that I remembered: he never drank.

I realize these scanty facts give a highly unsatisfactory picture, but they are really all I knew about him. I must add this, however; that, aside from the surprise I had in seeing him in this dull Middle Western city, I had also a feeling of pleasure. Henry Moore was a very attractive companion.

When my Old-fashioned arrived I picked it up and walked over to his table. He looked up at me blankly for a moment, and then his face broke into a smile of recognition. "My word!" he said. "What are you doing here? Sit down."

"Henry, how are you?" I said.

"I can't believe it," he said. "How long has it been?"

"Before the war. You look just the same," I said.

"I don't feel it," he said. "You've gotten thin."

"Married," I said. "It's harrying."

"Good," he said. "But . . . you don't by any chance live in this town?"

"No," I said. "I certainly don't." I explained that I was doing some research, dull work, which has nothing to do with this story. "Only a couple of days more." Then I said, "And you? This is an unlikely place to find you."

"I was born here," he said.

I must have looked surprised.

"Certainly," he said. "I was raised in the local orphan asylum."

I guess I showed plainly my disbelief.

"What's so strange about that?" he said. "Lots of people are raised in orphan asylums."

"Yes," I said, "but——"

"And I was one of them."

Then he called a waiter and ordered another ginger ale. I had another Old-fashioned.

I had a vague and slightly uncomfortable feeling that I was being kidded. I could think of no reason for his making fun of me, yet what he had just told me was obviously untrue.

He left the subject with no further comment and began to reminisce. We spent a half hour, I suppose, talking of old times and people that we both knew. I had a few nostalgic twinges for a life I would never lead again. Gradually, however, I became aware that Henry was speaking of that life as if it were in the past for him too.

"You still live in New York?" I said. He nodded.

"Still work (*Continued on page 154*)

Vishinsky's

Everybody knows

what Mr. Vishinsky thinks

of his "warmongers."

Here's what those "warmongers"

think of Vishinsky's charges

"Warmongers"

Andrei Y. Vishinsky, Russia's stocky, white-haired Deputy Foreign Minister, has been spearheading a concerted propaganda campaign designed to smear outstanding Americans as "warmongers." Vishinsky began the campaign when he stepped before the United Nations General Assembly and, in language of a violence never before heard from the rostrum of an international organization, excoriated as "warmongers" such diverse personalities as John Foster Dulles, Major General John Deane and Congressman Charles A. Eaton.

Calling them "liars," "forgers," "hate provokers" and "poisoners," who were guilty of "vicious slanders" and "criminal greediness," Vishinsky's accusations covered a large variety of occupations, from industry to the press. United Nations representatives agreed that he had dealt a severe blow to the future of their organization.

In subsequent speeches Vishinsky, continuing his harangue, said that there was "the threat of a new war resulting from the criminal war propaganda of a clique of magnates of the American capitalist monopolies." He named additional "warmongers": James Byrnes (slanderous fabrications), Secretary of Defense Forrestal (alarmist), Walter Winchell (should be in chains), and Winston Churchill (resembles Hitler). Although the United Nations defeated his proposal that "warmongering" in the United States be legally suppressed, Vishinsky and his Slav puppets have continued the attack. He has even gone so far as to try to pin the "warmongering" label on President Truman.

It is difficult to tell why, at this particular time, the Moscow High Command has seen fit to go all out for the warmonger-propaganda line.

On this, and on the following pages, several of Vishinsky's "war inciters" answer his charges and analyze the motives behind them. Mr. Dulles, who was accused of advocating a "tough policy" toward Russia and proposing that "all Russian villages be wiped out with atomic bombs," gives the key to the Russian strategy which prompts such obvious vilifications.

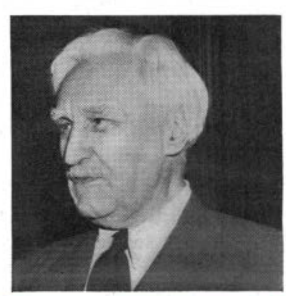
Turn page for views of additional "warmongers"

JOHN FOSTER DULLES, MEMBER OF THE U. S. DELEGATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS: "I did not make the statement which Mr. Vishinsky attributed to me. I have repeatedly said, and I again say, that another war need not be and must not be. And I have directed myself to that end. . . Soviet dictators, like all dictators, want to keep their power and to increase it. For that, they must make it appear that Soviet peace is endangered.

The men in the Kremlin are in a dilemma. Unless they can conjure up enemies, they cannot justify their power. So they see enemies under every foreign bush. The Soviet outcry about war is designed not merely to help Soviet dictators keep their power, but also to help them extend their power. So Soviet leaders try to pin a war label upon those in the free nations who would work together. They try to pin a war label upon plans like the Marshall Plan. They seek to exploit, for their own selfish purposes, the people's fear of war. It is a cruel and heartless business."

Addressing the U.N., Vishinsky accused Americans of having "criminal greediness for a new manslaughter."

CONGRESSMAN CHARLES A. EATON, CHAIRMAN, FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE: "Mr. Vishinsky's communistic cacophony of name calling is about as guileless in its intent as would be the public condemnation, by a bund of burglars, of the "warmongering" behavior of honest householders who persist in keeping loaded shotguns in their bedrooms. In the bleak and stormy dawn of a new world age, the powerful Russian government proposes to make itself—by propaganda if possible, by force of arms if necessary—the undisputed ruler. Our great and powerful American nation will defend, at any cost, freedom of government, and of life, for itself and for other peoples who will to be free. Somewhere, somehow, between these two irreconcilable philosophies of slavery and freedom, there must be found a middle ground of compromise and co-operation. Otherwise civilization is doomed to extinction, and mankind—like other predatory animals, red in tooth and claw—will return to the jungle."



WALTER WINCHELL: "Either Secretary of State George Marshall, Senator McMahon, and myself are warmongers, Mr. Vishinsky, or you are a liar. You attacked me because there is nothing in the world that you and Mr. Molotov and Mr. Gromyko and Mr. Stalin fear more than a man with a free typewriter or microphone. But it is not I or my typewriter or microphone that should be enchained, as you proposed. It is you, Mr. Vishinsky, who are in chains right now. I can speak my mind, and you cannot. Along with one hundred forty million other Americans, I am free to criticize our government; but if you, the third-ranking man in the communist dictatorship, criticized yours, you would be shot, and you know it. Your chief worry is not keeping Americans from knowing what is going on inside Russia. You and your atheist government know that one independent and honest American reporter inside Russia with a microphone is more dangerous to the Communist Party than any atomic bomb. And for once, Mr. Vishinsky, you are right."

JAMES F. O'NEIL, NATIONAL COMMANDER, AMERICAN LEGION: "Mr. Vishinsky's charge is nothing but window dressing, hopeful, at best, of lulling America into complacency, and at least, of beguiling the rest of the world. His performance stacks up as a rather juvenile attempt to screen his own master's misconduct. During the past decade, Soviet Russia has impressed eight governments and eighty-eight million people into the Russian sphere. Since V-J Day, she has succeeded through the use of the veto, intimidation and double talk, in stalling every substantial move towards world unity. Members of the American Legion share a livid hatred of war based on remembered experience. We remember that twice in our time young Americans died and our nation trembled for existence because we were unprepared for wars thrust upon us. The Legion believes that so long as the possibility of war exists, we must be militarily, industrially and scientifically prepared to fight a winning war."

Written exclusively for Cosmopolitan,

these statements from the "warmongers'

put Mr. Vishinsky straight

SENATOR C. WAYLAND BROOKS OF ILLINOIS: "I have personally seen and experienced the cruel effects of war first hand. Every authentic veteran I know wants peace. The people of the world want and need peace. The characterization of me as well as other Americans as "warmongers" can only be attributed to the fiendish and vicious present-day propaganda program of the leaders of the Soviet Union." Vishinsky accused Senator Brooks of warmongering because of a Senate speech in which, Vishinsky alleges, Brooks said that "in wartime the United States rendered assistance to the Soviet Union, while at present the United States might be compelled to wage war against the Soviet Union." "Warmonger" Brooks was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, American Navy Cross, *Croix de guerre* and Purple Heart, while serving with the Marines in World War I. He has received more military citations and decorations than any other member of the United States Senate.

JOHN R. DEANE (Major General, retired): "Mr. Vishinsky has attacked me for having written the 'slanderous' book, 'Strange Alliance.' Mr. Vishinsky objects particularly to my recommendation that the military program of the United States be designed to meet the special situation which war with the Soviet Union would entail. Mr. Vishinsky must know that a desire to be prepared for war does not mean a desire for war itself. Certainly there has been little, since the end of the war, in the attitude of Mr. Vishinsky, or of those whose messages he carries, to inspire the spirit of friendship. During my stay in the Soviet Union I gained a deep respect and real devotion for the Russian people as distinguished from their leaders. I am one of the millions of human beings who can see nothing in any future war but complete and equal disaster for the victor and the vanquished. In brief, my reply to Mr. Vishinsky is that my wish to be prepared for war with the Soviet Union is second only to my fervent hope that such a war will not occur."

SENATOR BRIEN McMAHON OF CONNECTICUT, FORMER CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE ON ATOMIC ENERGY: "Mr. Vishinsky's denomination of me as a warmonger is malicious. During the past two years I have fought for the effective international control of atomic energy. I realize that without such control there will be a third and final world war. Mr. Vishinsky has vetoed an effective American plan to do away with atomic bombs, although every other nation but his is one hundred percent for it and believes it to be fair and right. An accurate list of warmongers will include every statesman who has attempted to sabotage an effective international control of weapons of mass destruction. A reading of my speeches on the subject will give the lie to Mr. Vishinsky." Vishinsky placed Senator McMahon's name before the United Nations General Assembly as a "warmonger" because McMahon "stated in Congress that the 'United States should be the first to drop atom bombs if the atom war is inevitable.' "

This is something that happens at least once to every attractive girl. But in this case she had a good reason for accepting the invitation

Pickup

BY JOHN D. MacDONALD

Cath looked out the wide front window, saw the street distorted by the large wet flakes that melted against the glass—and something in the wet asphalt's shining, something about the yellow of the early street lights, the soggy fall of snow, called up the feeling of emptiness, of strangeness that had haunted her for over a month.

The street seemed to brood, the small houses cheerless under the brittle blackness of the elms, and she weighed and tested her own emotion, thinking back to her lab classes in college. Quantitative and qualitative analysis. What is this feeling of darkness that I get? How important is it? What should I do about it?

It was only in the winter, after the leaves were gone that she could see one corner of the tan stone school.

She glanced at her watch. Almost four. In a few minutes small Catherine, walking with little-girl directness, walking with the graceful promise of what she would one day become, would turn the corner, mittened hand holding onto Jerry's snow suit, yanking him back whenever he tried to straggle off the sidewalk.

Something about the sight of them as they turned the corner always pinched her heart. It was still an unreality that they could be her children—hers and Carl's—born of a sweetness that in itself would have been enough—almost enough. The clean freshness of a child's soft skin, the strange pathos of grubby knuckles, of questions confidently asked.

At five Carl would come. Thinking of him brought back the new dark feeling of aloneness, and she knew that it was tied up with him somehow, but there was no way for her to find out. The new feeling was something restless within her that receded as she tried to grasp it, to find its component parts, its chemical analysis.

She walked back through the silent house to the kitchen, wondering if the long hours she spent alone had anything to do with the odd change in her. There had been no time to think, to feel, when the children had been underfoot all day.

With them gone, Catherine in first grade, Jerry in kindergarten, the house looked different. She saw frayed edges where before she had seen newness and adequacy. She felt the smallness of the house; the constriction and tension building within her was like a spring, which, if released, would flatten the walls, send the roof sailing off, open the square rooms to the gray sky above.

The children arrived while she was in the kitchen; the door banged open and Catherine's abused, "Motherrr! Jerry's out in the yard in a (*Continued on page 122*)

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM LOVELL

TOM LOVELL

by alec rackowe

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE HUGHES

It was all so matter of fact, so almost cold-blooded. That was what chilled Art Royal, made the icy hand grip at his heart and his stomach. The blue-jacketed policeman whipping out his notebook, squatting on the pavement, using his knee as a support for the book. A young man, younger than Art. Clean-faced, square-jawed. Intent, efficient and impersonal. "Your name and address, Mister?"

The crowd that stood in a semicircle. A segment with a definite radius as if some unseen force kept them from coming even one inch farther. Looking down at Art, not in sympathy or concern, or in morbid curiosity. With just an interest in him as an object. As an accident, not as a man. Not as Arthur Royal.

The policeman said again, "Your name and address?"

"I'm all right." Art put one hand against the stone of the building behind him.

The policeman said, "Hold it, Mac. You better not move until the ambulance comes."

"I'm all right, I tell you." A little flicker of panic moiled in the coldness at Art's stomach. He wanted to be away from all this; from the policeman and the crowd engrossed in the focal point of an accident; from the traffic of cars and buses going up and down Madison Avenue in the soft warmth of the early June day as if nothing had happened. As if Art Royal, who was an individual and terribly important, had not narrowly escaped being killed.

He heard the clang of the ambulance bell. The crowd eddied. Another young man in a white coat and trousers, a black bag in his hand, his visored cap pushed back on his unruly hair, elbowed through the crowd and sank down beside the policeman. He seemed, if it were possible, to ignore Art as he ran his hands expertly over Art's body. "No bones broken," he said. He put his hand under Art's chin and lifted his head, peering into Art's eyes without looking at Art. "No concussion. We'd better take him along, though. He can walk."

Art said through white lips, "I'm all right. Just my knee." He pulled up the brown wool of his left trouser. "If you'll just put some iodine on it."

The intern said, "In cases like this there's always the possibility of shock." He looked at Art then. This intern was even younger than the policeman. He shrugged, opened his bag and took out a bottle and a swab.

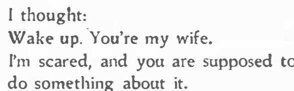
The iodine stung. Art felt the intern's fingers as he strapped the adhesive. The white of the bandage gaped through the torn wool as Art pulled down his trouser. He put his hand on the intern's arm and stood up.

He felt shaky; he felt a sort of angry shame, too. He didn't look at the crowd. The policeman said, "I've got to (*Continued on page 94*)

The world and arthur royal

He sat there half-dazed while the policeman made notes about the accident.

One way to remove false values from your life is to stand for a moment in the shadow of death. That is what Arthur Royal did, and this is what he learned



I thought:
Wake up. You're my wife.
I'm scared, and you are supposed to do something about it.

Why, after so many years, did these thoughts come back to haunt him in the night?

by Elick Moll

"I wish," my wife Ellen said, "you'd help me look through these things and throw away what you don't need."

We were getting ready to move, and she was going through some old cartons of mine.

"Wouldn't it be simpler," I said, "just to take the stuff along and put it in the attic?"

"Now don't be difficult, darling. There's no point in cluttering up our lovely new house with a lot of old junk."

She'd made a small heap of nondescript litter—moldering magazines, discarded notebooks, old newspaper clippings, letters, an ancient record player . . .

"What an assortment," she said, shaking her head. "I'll bet you haven't even looked at any of this stuff in years."

I hadn't. It's just hard for me to throw anything away. Wherever I've gone I've always lugged the past around with me like an old peddler's cart.

"Where on earth did *this* come from?" she said. She held up a jacket gray with dust. I squinted at it. For a moment it meant nothing to me. Then I remembered . . .

"What's the matter?" Ellen said.

"Why can't you let things alone?" I felt a little sick. "I don't go poking around in your belongings."

"My goodness," she said, "you don't have to bite my head off. It's just an old dinner jacket."

She put it on a hanger.

I took it from her and she snickered.

"What's so funny?"

"I'm sorry." She laughed. "It looks so *skinny* . . ."

I felt a little ashamed for it. It did look ridiculous, with its pinched-in waist and narrow, pointed lapels. I remembered how it had looked new, lying in the box, plumply folded in crisp tissue, the heavy satin facing (*Continued on page 124*)

ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY FREDMAN

The red brick building on Thirty-first Street in midtown Manhattan which houses Engine One and Hook and Ladder 24 is no place for the lazy type of fireman who dislikes the smell of smoke and holds his job only because of its financial security and his love of pinochle. The Thirty-first Street house lies in the center of what the New York Fire Department calls its High Hazard District. A fireman doesn't last long there unless he is cool-headed, quick-thinking and, above all, fast on his feet.

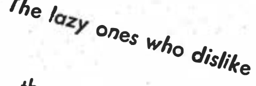
Take, for example, the warm, cloudy Saturday morning in July, 1945, when Lieutenant English of Hook and Ladder 24 was sitting at the watch desk at the front of the firehouse, talking on the telephone. He felt a tremendous concussion. Several firemen who were outside sweeping the sidewalk dropped their brooms and rushed in the door, yelling, "A plane just hit the Empire State."

Without rising from his chair, English banged the house bell, calling all men in the building to the main floor. He jiggled the receiver to notify Fire Department headquarters but hung up when he heard a box-signal alarm from Fifth Avenue and Thirtieth Street coming in by itself. He waved his men onto the hook and ladder, jumped into the front seat beside the driver and told him to drive against traffic on Thirty-third Street.

As the apparatus roared down the block, English saw the entire top of the Empire State Building enveloped in great billows of flame and noticed that the roof of the building across the street from it was burning too. When the firemen passed the south side of the Empire State Building, they had to duck big gobs of flaming gasoline that were falling into the street. The driver swung the truck around the corner into Fifth Avenue and, as he stopped in front of the main door, English jumped to the street and ran inside.

The lobby of the Empire State Building was full of dazed people, who weren't sure what had happened. Smoke and dust were pouring from one (*Continued on page 112*)

Photos by Acme and International



The lazy ones who dislike the smell of smoke don't last long at the busy station house on Thirty-first Street in the heart of New York's High Hazard District

BY EVAN WYLIE

the woods-devil

BY PAUL ANNIXTER **A story illustrating the oldest law of nature kill or be killed, eat or be eaten—the law of survival**

For three days, ever since his father's accident, it had snowed intermittently. The slate-black clouds of winter had banked up in the north and west. They were moveless, changeless; remote and mackereled like banks of corrugated metal. For two weeks the only sun the family had seen had been a yellowish filter at midday that came in the cabin window like a thin sifting of sulphur dust.

Nathan was just bringing in the night's wood, enough short logs to burn till morning and a pile of niggerheads beside the daubed-clay fireplace that would last the following day if need be. His face and ears burned from laboring in a temperature of forty below. He was dressed in brown linsey-woolsey; on his feet were shoes of heavy felt, stuffed with coarse gray socks against the cold. A cap of worn coonskin crowned his shagbark hair that had not been cut in weeks. His body had reached the long thin stage of fifteen and a half, when the joints are all loose and clumsy. His lean face was drawn and pinched, the dark eyes sullen from overwork.

His mother sat darning socks over an egg, rising now and then to stir the mush pot or turn the cooking rabbit. His father lay in the cord bunk in the corner of the cabin, his injured leg raised high beneath the blankets. His gaunt unshaven face was etched with the memory of the pain he had endured before the settlement doctor had come to set the broken bone. Worry showed in the black eyes turned up to the ceiling poles. There was little food left for the family—a bit of jerked venison in the smokehouse, a side of bacon some beans and meal. The Stemlines were true woodsys. They'd been eking along, waiting for fur season. All they ate and spent and wore came from their traps and rifles.

Nathan went out for a final log, and the door creaked behind him on its crude hinges. The snow in the clearing was almost knee-deep. The forest surrounded it on all sides, broken only at one place where a road cut a black tunnel through the balsams toward the settlement to the south.

A sudden wind rose with the darkness. Nathan could hear *(Continued on page 172)*

ILLUSTRATED BY J. GRAHAM KAYE

by murray teigh bloom

do you love someone like this?

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A PSYCHOPATHIC PERSONALITY

He has no sense of responsibility.

He is incapable of sincere love.

He shows no response to kindness.

He lies, cheats and steals for small stakes and at great risks.

He can't understand that he is doing anything wrong and can't see himself as others see him.

He is usually an attractive, alert, clever person and he doesn't suffer from irrational delusions.

Although he often threatens suicide, he hardly ever goes through with it.

He is incapable of following a planned life.

It's time society did something about its psychopathic personalities — those legally sane but mentally unbalanced people who are always doing the wrong thing, with no sense of guilt or responsibility, and always bringing misery to the ones who are close to them

On an October afternoon in 1941, a young mother from Chicago, whom we shall call Mrs. Robert Grace, was ushered into the office of a leading New York psychiatrist. Mrs. Grace was a little worried as she waited for the report on what was wrong with her ten-year-old son, Peter.

For a week her sturdy, handsome youngster had been given the most thorough physical and mental examinations. As she waited Mrs. Grace thought back on Peter's incredibly difficult adjustment to the world—of his emotional outbursts, his pointless thefts, his inability to get along with other children for more than a few minutes, the refusals of eight private schools to keep him as a student for more than a few weeks. It is probably some kind of

Photos by James Snyder

mysterious "gland trouble," Mrs. Grace was thinking.

The psychiatrist entered the office and sat down at his desk. He looked up from the file folder he held in his hands.

"Mrs. Grace," he began, "I'm going to be blunt—cruelly blunt. I want my words to become indelibly impressed on your mind.

"You have a very peculiar child. He is suffering from an ailment that we know next to nothing about. For want of a better term, psychiatrists call victims of this sickness psychopathic personalities. There is no known cure for it yet. Your son might be likened to a new car with a beautiful chassis and a fine sixteen-cylinder engine—and no brakes. He has no control over his actions. The best thing that you could do for your family would be to move from Chicago at once—and leave Peter behind. Try to forget you ever bore him and make no attempt to see him again."

He paused for a moment and looked directly at Mrs. Grace. The shock of his words made her rigid. Then he continued, "I know that in spite of what I tell you, you won't heed my advice. You will go to other expensive psychiatrists, other clinics. You will send the boy to other private schools. You will spend great amounts of money on him, and all it will ever bring you is more grief. But you won't take my advice. No mother in your position—and I've given this advice to dozens of them—ever has had the good sense to take it. They all go on sacrificing themselves, their money and their (*Continued on page 144*)

The Wooing of Hester Warren

by Walter Brooks

ILLUSTRATED BY LARRY HARRIS

Miss Hester Warren was on her hands and knees in the round flower bed when a bell jangled inside the house. She sat up and said out loud, "That's the front door bell! Now who on earth . . ." Then she shook her head irritably. "Talking to myself again!" she said. "I mustn't start that!"

She got up and walked around the hedge to where old Horace Small was setting out tomato plants. "Horace," she said, "there's somebody at the front door."

Mr. Small was an arrangement in gray, faded blue and wrinkles; he was not much larger than a midget, and he had a shrewd nose. "You're hearin' things, Miss Hester," he said without looking up.

"Not yet I'm not," said Hester sharply. "Horace, go see who it is."

Mr. Small sniffed and got up and started for the house.

"Somebody got the wrong house," Hester said to herself and went back to the flower bed. For nobody ever rang that doorbell any more. Even salesmen and peddlers seldom thought it worth while to turn up that old road to the solitary house overlooking the Sound. Ten years ago it had been gay enough. Her older sister had been alive then, and with old friends from the village and new ones among the summer people there had been dinners and parties and picnics down on their little beach.

All that had stopped when Emilie came up from the cove that day with her preposterous story. Hester herself had stopped it. The friends continued to come for a while—rather furtively—but with all the gossip and ridicule and the reporters coming and printing those terrible stories in their papers, it had become impossible for the (*Continued on page 132*)

When she said, "Let George do it," she didn't mean her husband, her father, her fiancé or her brother. She meant her own, personal, thirty-foot sea serpent

Oddly, he felt strange and alien to the town, to Laura, and to this new fiancé of hers. It didn't seem like coming home.

ILLUSTRATED BY JON WHITCOMB

home is the Hero

BY KNOX BURGER

The younger members of our staff insisted—no, demanded—that we publish this story. So, of course, we did. Were we right?

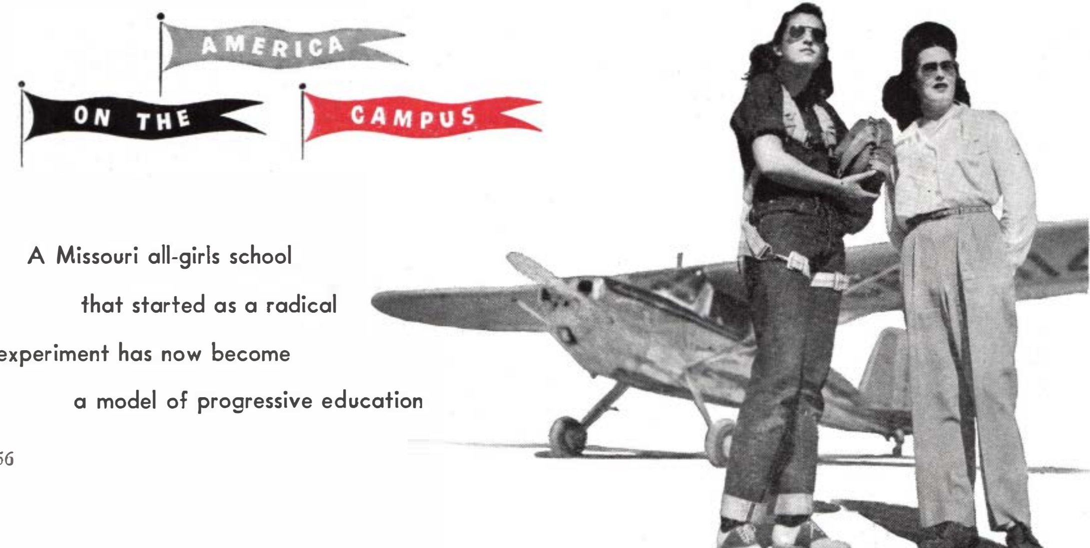
There is a magnetic quality about the small suburban towns that fan out from the big cities. It's as if they have positive and negative poles, an ability to attract and at the same time repel.

The people Ike O'Hare grew up with—and was separated from during college and the war—keep coming back to Heraldton and going away again. There is an age at which one isn't quite ready or able to break away from dependence on older people and yet can't gracefully submit to being still a child. In Heraldton, a community where most of the two or three thousand families are in comfortable circumstances, and take pains to nuture their children gently through long and relatively carefree childhoods, that age comes rather late. Perhaps in the twenties.

Even when he was working on the West Coast, Ike had a tendency to leave extra trousers and winter clothes hanging in the closet of his old bedroom in Heraldton. When he thought about it, he saw it as a shirking of the necessity to grow up, a prolonging of the long suburban adolescence he had enjoyed.

But he didn't think about it much until he went back to Heraldton for a visit in the summer following the end of the war. He had been working in Hollywood in the six months that had gone by since his discharge, writing for pictures; thinking of Heraldton only as a town on the other edge of the continent where he had happened to grow (*Continued on page 138*)

Stephens



A Missouri all-girls school that started as a radical experiment has now become a model of progressive education

College

Photos by Jean Howard and George Aarons

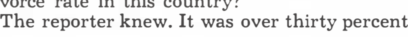
BY RALPH G. MARTIN

The student reporter from the near-by University of Missouri was surprised. "After all, Dr. Rainey, you're a national figure. You were president of the University of Texas, and you were almost elected governor. What I want to know is why you took this president's job at a place like Stephens."

Dr. Homer P. Rainey smiled. "Why? What's the matter with Stephens?"

The journalism-school reporter fumbled for words, then blurted, "Well, sir, everybody knows that Stephens isn't really a college; it's—it's a marriage bureau!"

Rainey's answer came quickly. "Well, suppose it were just that—and it isn't—do you know the divorce rate in this country?"



The reporter knew. It was over thirty percent.

"And do you know the divorce rate among Stephens graduates?"

The reporter didn't.

"It's less than four percent."

Rainey's point was this: Stephens Junior College at Columbia, Missouri, is an all-girls school. More than eighty-five percent of the girls will eventually get married. If Stephens did nothing else but train women for marriage, and train them successfully, it would still be making a contribution. But then, Stephens is doing so much more.

It's training women for careers from archeology to aviation. It's training them for community citizenship.

All this is part of the dream of James Madison Wood, the dream that instead of being taught

forty-seven irregular verbs, women should be taught what they need to know. This was the dream he peddled to the parents of his prospective students when he drove his horse and buggy all over Missouri in 1912. Wood's first fifty-two students were so enthusiastic about his ideas that they burned their black, fitted, flowing-sleeved uniforms and started wearing dresses. To seventeen thousand Stephens alumnae, seventy-two-year-old Wood *is* Stephens College.

It was Wood who picked Rainey, who told him, "Don't take this job unless you want to do it more than anything else in the world."

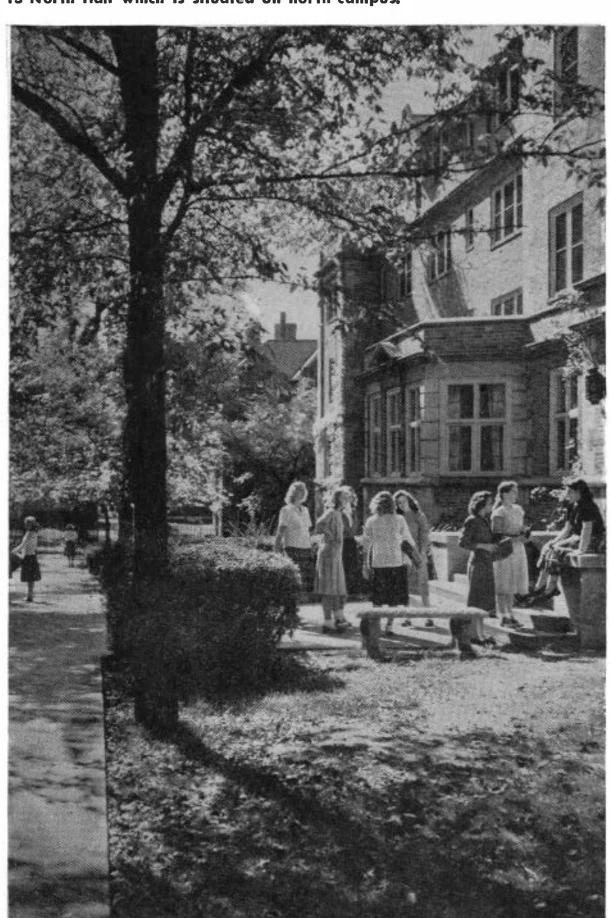
If the dream was Wood's, it was Dr. W. W. Charters who did the educational engineering, who set up a permanent Research Bureau to answer the question, "What are the needs of women?" The result was two thick volumes based on day-by-day diaries of four hundred college women. The new Stephens is based on those volumes.

If there's a national school in America, maybe this is it. Not only because all the forty-eight states (and ten foreign countries) are represented, but also because no single region or religion dominates this school. The admission quotas are so carefully set that there are just as many girls from small towns as from big cities.

But two things the girls do have in common when they get on

Freshman Susies are shadowgraphed, and posture defects are corrected by means of exercise.

Stephens girls on their way from class to North Hall which is situated on north campus.



A knock on this board will bring long-awaited letters.

Saturday-night dates come from near-by Missouri University.

Classes in modern dance help develop poise and teach rhythm.

the train—they're all about eighteen years old and most them are a little scared. For so many, this is their first time away from home. So if you travel anywhere in the middle of September, you may see them staring out of the windows eating their chocolates; you may even hear them cry themselves to sleep.

But at St. Louis everything changes. There, the girls get off their separate trains and pile into the slow-moving Stephens Special which takes four hours to make the 125-mile trip to Columbia, Missouri. But in those four hours, Syracuse, New York, is comparing boy-friend pictures with Cisco, Texas; and Dundas, Minnesota, is sharing a chicken sandwich and some excitement with Boligee, Alabama. Very probably, too, several are singing:

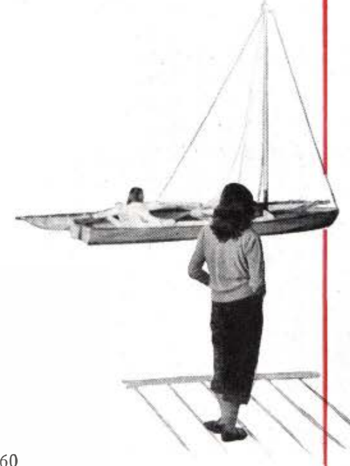
> Clickety-clack, clear the track
> We're on our way to Columb-ai-yay . . .

And a lively long-haired blonde is running from one car to another, calling the name of a girl she has never seen. "Anybody here named Ursula Worch?"

Majorie Momyer has a class in how to handle and care for babies.

All students are given make-up advice to fit face and personality.

This year there *is* a Susie Stephens, shown here with President Rainey.



And, finally, a cute girl sitting by herself turns excitedly and says, "That's me. I'm Ursula Worch——"

Then the blonde, who comes from Colorado Springs, gives her a long look and a wide smile and says, "You're my roommate."

Four hours later, a knowing senior points with an exciting squeal to a radio tower in the distance, "Look! That's Stephens. That's Stephens!" Then the giggling will hush, and the windows will be lined with wondering eyes.

"When I got off the train," said the little freshman from Parkin, Arkansas, "and I saw all those seniors hugging their old friends and everything, I felt so lonely that I wanted to get on that train and go right back home again. But once I got on the campus, everything was okay. The girls just swarmed all over me; they wouldn't even let me carry my own bag."

It really isn't a campus yet; it's the beginning of one. The red brick buildings and the old arch in Senior Hall constitute the heart of the school, but the rest sprawls out among forty (*Continued on page 101*)

Burrall social workers Goodwin, Bernstein, Moore assist in crippled children's ward.

Designs made in dress class are sometimes sold commercially.

It was more than an official car to Milly — it was a way out of the disgrace and humiliation she had borne for so long.

SIXTEEN

She was only sixteen, but already one shadow darkened her whole life. And then one day, without warning, the shadow was lifted

BY GORDON MALHERBE HILLMAN

The Elkhorn Argus was the most wonderful newspaper in the world. It was not as large as The New York Times, certainly, nor as exciting as the Chicago Tribune. But, in its way, it was better than either, and, besides, Mildred Richards regarded it as her personal property.

She was going to work on it when she was eighteen and out of high school, and since that was all of two years off, she was about to drop in for a chat with Mr. Sanborn, the owner and editor.

No one, seeing Mildred in her thin white sweater, plaid skirt and bright blue socks, would have considered it likely that she was going to see Mr. Sanborn or that he would want to talk to her. They would have been quite wrong, for Mr. Sanborn enjoyed Mildred because she so wholeheartedly admired his paper.

He also liked to look at her corn-colored hair, her deep blue eyes and the clear brown and rose of her rather long face that was always serious and often sad. Mr. Sanborn considered it his duty to make Mildred laugh. If he ever did get her on the Argus, he'd have her laughing all the time.

She went through the dust-stained door, past the advertising counter and into what Mr. Sanborn called "the city room" because he liked to think of it as that. It was a small room and housed the entire staff save for Mr. Sanborn, whose office had "EDITOR" painted on the door.

The city room, at the moment, contained Pidge Miller, the lath-like office boy; Glenn Hughes, full of self-conscious majesty as city editor; Old Mr. Barnes, not full of majesty at all but obviously fighting out a hang-over at the telegraph desk; and Bernice Slade, society editor, women's-club editor and general reporter, behind horn-rimmed glasses, being fearfully earnest about something.

Mr. Sanborn, Mildred knew, thought Glenn and Bernice were awfully funny and twin pains in the neck, but he couldn't get anybody any better for the price he paid. Mr. Sanborn also said that Mildred knew more about the Argus—its staff, its irrational linotype machines, its undependable press and its bibulous mechanical department, than he did, himself.

Mr. Sanborn was standing beside the corner desk, a big, shaggy, brown bear of a man, running his hand through his thick hair as he did when he wrote his editorials that sometimes were reprinted all over the country.

Glenn and Bernice gave Mildred haughty scowls as if to say she had no right in such a temple of the Fourth Estate, but Mr. Sanborn grinned. "Hi, Milly, come over and meet my new boy!"

The new boy had his hat on the desk and both his feet beside it. He was apparently sitting on the back of his neck, and his gray eyes had an unholy light of amusement in them. In all her life, Mildred had never seen anyone like him. First, he was utterly ageless: he might have been thirty or forty-five, and (*Continued on page 128*)

ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY ANDERSON

Harry Anderson

It isn't often a ghost

can actually right a wrong. This one did.

With a yardstick

A Cosmopolitan Novelette

the Ghost of cherry street

by CZENZI ORMONDE

Somebody said it was too bad there was such rain; it kept the children indoors; and everybody in the big kitchen agreed. The mother and the aunts nodded solemnly at one another, their heads heavy with secrets. It seemed to Lida that all the walls of the house were bulging with things that were not being said.

Early in the afternoon the aunts and cousins had started drifting in, shaking their umbrellas, leaving rubbers on the back porch and depositing food on the kitchen table. Aunt Tilda had brought a ham and fresh poppy-seed rolls; one of the other aunts had baked a fresh cocoanut cake; the chicken soup was simmering on the stove; but over all this fragrance that usually went with festive days hung the secrets, heavy like the dumplings Lida had tried to make last week. Her first attempt. Oh, the shame of living all these years and not knowing how to cook. Wasting her life, that's what Grandma had told her. Nine years old, ten next birthday, and such dumplings!

Everybody was very nice about it, but only Papa had courage to eat them. He had opened his eyes wide, smacked his lips and said, "Well, these are dumplings for a king."

Lida had beamed with pride, but then Uncle Zdenek said. "For a king's army. Fine for ammunition."

Oh, the shame. And everybody else in the family such champions in the kitchen.

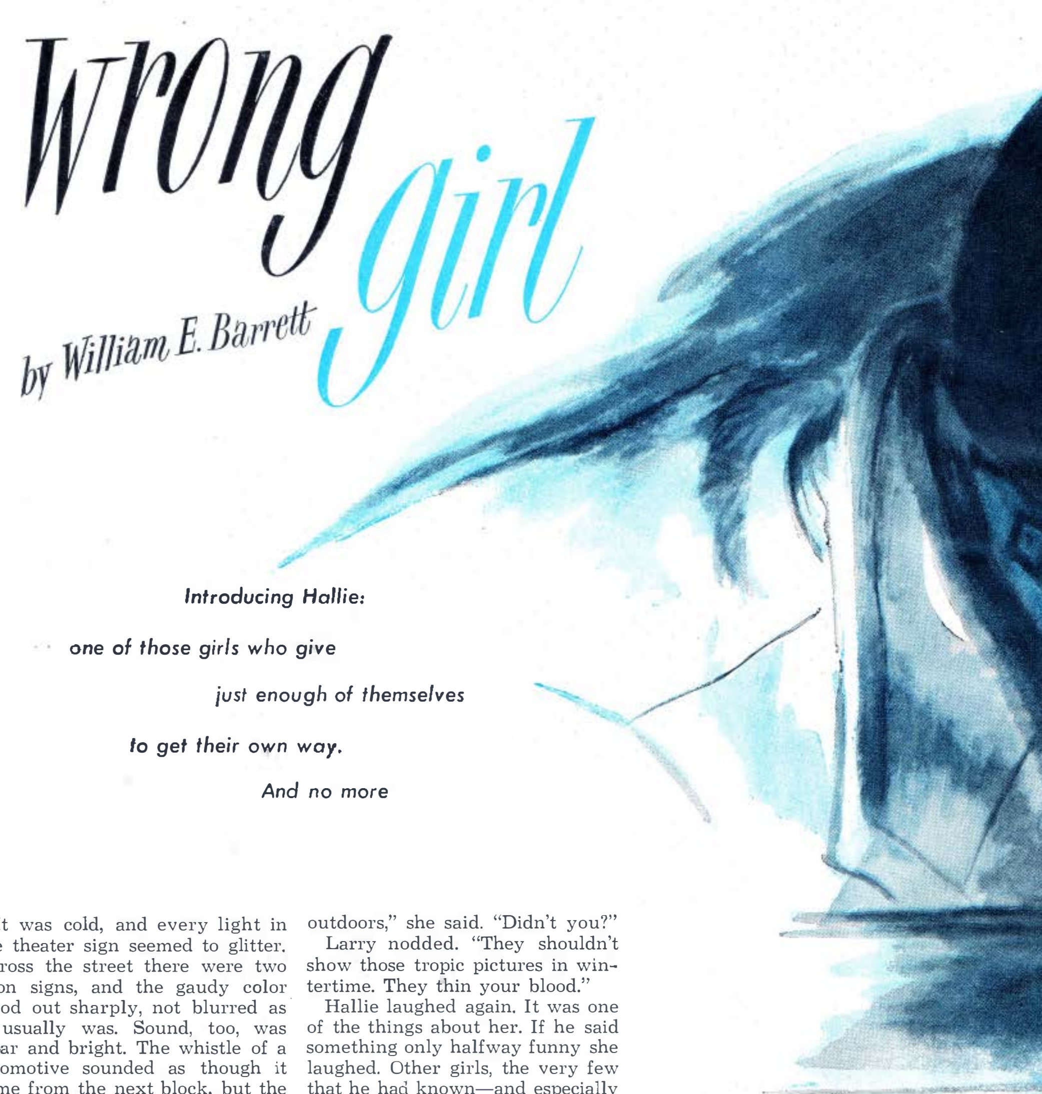
Hanging in the air with all the swollen secrets was one that belonged to Lida. It sent little feathers of excitement up and down her arms when she thought of it. After tomorrow, she would know how to cook. Grandma had finally promised.

Grandma was the queen cook. Everybody in town knew that. And after tomorrow people would say, "My, my, what delicious dumplings; what soup; what a superb gravy; (*Continued on page 104*)

ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY ANDERSON

Wrong girl

by William E. Barrett



Introducing Hallie: one of those girls who give just enough of themselves to get their own way. And no more

It was cold, and every light in the theater sign seemed to glitter. Across the street there were two neon signs, and the gaudy color stood out sharply, not blurred as it usually was. Sound, too, was clear and bright. The whistle of a locomotive sounded as though it came from the next block, but the railroad yards were a half mile away. Larry Reed braced himself against the sharpness of everything as he came out of the theater lobby, and he could feel Hallie pressing close against him. That, too, was an intensified impression. He took her left hand with his own right and put it in the right-hand pocket of his topcoat. Hallie laughed, a low, soft, lilting laugh.

"I forgot that it was so cold outdoors," she said. "Didn't you?"

Larry nodded. "They shouldn't show those tropic pictures in wintertime. They thin your blood."

Hallie laughed again. It was one of the things about her. If he said something only halfway funny she laughed. Other girls, the very few that he had known—and especially Beth—had groaned and made remarks about "corn." He missed that a little. It was fun to be insulted by a girl and pass back a few insults of your own. Hallie did not play. Everything meant something to Hallie.

They walked down the street toward his car, and he felt Hallie's hand, warm in his pocket, her fingers curled around his own. There was something exciting about (*Continued on page 118*)

ILLUSTRATED BY GWEN FREMLIN

Larry took the offered kiss,
and in exchange he gave her
all his dreams and all his hopes.

Everybody agrees that our young people must be told the true facts of life if we are to stem the rising tide of sex crimes, delinquency and disease. But the problem for most parents is how to put these facts into words without confusion and embarrassment. Here's how to overcome that problem

How shall we tell our young people the truth about

BY HOWARD WHITMAN

Advocates of sex education have convinced lots of parents that children ought to learn about sex the clean, wholesome way instead of from the scrawling on latrine walls. But many a father and mother have been left in an uncomfortable lurch. They come up with this harried question: "All right, I agree—but now *what* shall I tell Johnny?"

This article is going to tell them what to tell Johnny. And Janie. Specifically. In so many words.

It is going to go further. It is going to strip down the blackout blinds, scrape the lampblack off the windows and let the light in. First, in the service of truth we cannot go on hiding, like shamefaced criminals, from a part of life which is miraculous, sacred and full of beauty. Second, we cannot go on paying the toll of ignorance; a wretched toll summed up in divorce, promiscuity, venereal disease, homosexuality and sex crime.

A good first step for all parents is to get rid of the stork. The stork and all the other gadgets and gimmicks which parents have thought up do not help children at all. They may help the parents dodge their duties in sex education. But they confuse, baffle and misguide the child—and, in addition, expose him to a soul-quaking shock when he discovers the truth.

The Rev. Kilian J. Hennrich, a Catholic priest, tells of this incident which a retreatmaster related:

"One day a boy called on me. He was visibly excited and in a depressed frame of mind. After having been encouraged to talk, he said, 'Father, is it true that my parents do such things together as some companions told me? For three months I have visited the church daily and have prayed from the bottom of my heart that it might not be true.' "

Father Hennrich comments, "What anguish do these words reveal! But, after the priest had explained in simple words the secret of the origin of life as viewed by Christians, the boy embraced him and wept for joy that this worry had been taken from him."

Some parents have been positively ingenious at telling lies. If it isn't the stork, it's "The doctor brought you in a suitcase." Or, "Babies come from department stores." Many a parent, wrestling with the notion of fetal development, talks about "planting a seed in mommy's tummy" and leaves the poor child with the idea that he grew from something like a peach stone which his mother had swallowed.

One couple told their daughter that "babies

come in boxes" and "fairies bring them." When a baby brother was born, they actually put the baby in a box outside the door and called the little girl to "help find it."

At the University of Indiana, Glenn V. Ramsey made a study of boys from ten to twenty years old and discovered that about 90 percent got their first glimmer of sex knowledge from "male companions or from their own experience." In some cases parents came along with advice and heart-to-heart talks later on. However, only 13 percent of the boys rated their parents efforts at sex education as "fair or adequate." Fifty-five percent of them said that *neither parent had contributed anything.*

In Denver, the Colorado Congress of Parents and Teachers recently polled 650 parents on where they had obtained their early sex information and how they reacted to it. This was an enlightened group—P. T. A. members, good income level, solid citizens. Yet 289 of them admitted they first learned about sex from other kids—no doubt in the customary atmosphere of the basement,

sex ?

alley or barn. Some frankly listed "the gutter," "obscene literature" and "dirty jokes" as their mentors on the miracle of life.

How did they react to what they had learned? Fifty-two said they were shocked, 82 confused, 71 frightened. Others were "disgusted," "miserably unhappy," or "mad at mother." Fourteen said they regarded the whole thing as "unspeakable."

There is a disposition to regard the imparting of sex knowledge as a religious issue, to feel that the Catholic Church is unalterably against it. This is far from true. The Catholic Church, as will be seen later, is opposed to sex education in the public schools, but it is fervently in favor of parents giving true and adequate sex education to their own children.

Dr. Felix M. Kirsch, of the Catholic University of America, decries the fact that 98 percent of Catholic parents "never received the proper information themselves and hence cannot impart it" to their children. Two years ago a study of two thousand Catholic adolescent boys by the Catholic educator, Dr. Urban H. Fleege, convinced him that in gaining their sex knowledge "unwholesome sources outnumbered wholesome sources nearly three to one."

The ignorance, then, is abysmal. It has been a legacy of darkness, compounded of shame, handed down from father to son. How many of us have been like the college woman who said to her doctor, "How can a woman have as many degrees as I have and know so little about her own body!"

What price have we paid for this ignorance? What human collisions have occurred in the blackout?

In recent years there have been between three and four divorces in the United States for every ten marriages. Dallas, Texas, in 1945 hung up a record of dubious distinction—99.6 divorces for every hundred marriages!

Experts have studied the carnage. Dr. Janet Fowler Nelson, former Y.W.C.A. Consultant on Personal and Family Relationships, reports: "Unwholesome sex attitudes, misinformation and ignorance are basic causes of much of the country's marital unhappiness and broken homes."

At the Maternal Health Association in Cleveland, where couples on the brink of crack-ups come for help, Hazel C. Jackson declares: "Many problems which come to us might never have developed if the individuals had matured with fewer inhibitions about sex. Such inhibitions may be traced to early childhood."

To promiscuity and its handmaidens—VD, illegitimate births and abortions—faulty sex education has made similarly stunning contributions. The American Medical Association estimates that "there are at least half as many abortions as there are births." Illegitimate births soared 33 percent in fifteen years.

Cleveland last year was rocked by the discovery that six hundred of its boys and girls—young kids—had contracted venereal disease. "If that doesn't indicate the need for sex education, what does?" asks Dr. Robert Hoyt, of the Cleveland Joint Social Hygiene Committee. Health workers in several cities are beginning to call VD the "teen-age disease."

Sex ignorance—and phobias—also blight the lives of thousands of married adults, particularly women. Dr. William F. Snow, chairman of the American Social Hygiene Association, declares: "In later years women often pay heavily in unhappiness and in nervous and emotional disturbances, because they were not fully informed about their normal sex life. Young women particularly need to understand that their sexual desires are just as natural as those of men, and that they should expect to derive just as much pleasure as their husbands from marital relations."

One young wife, racked by inhibitions, said, "When you've heard, 'It's not nice, it's not nice,' all your life, you discover that the marriage service itself doesn't change a negative attitude to a positive one."

Homosexuality, increasing to the point where the courts in many of our large cities can no longer cope with it, is another stark toll of the blackout. Not long ago I sat in chambers with Chief City Magistrate Edgar Bromberger, of New York, while he questioned three homosexual boys. He asked when they had first learned about sex.

One replied, "My mother and father didn't tell me anything. I think (*Continued on page 149*)

For that brief moment
she seemed a phantom figure,
new-risen from the
foam and ageless

Aphrodite in Pine Springs

Part two of a two-part novel by **ELIZABETH JANEWAY**
who wrote "The Walsh Girls"

THE STORY SO FAR: Some women accept their beauty with humility; others see in it a weapon for advantage and power. Angela Thacher was one of the latter.

When she met Eli Bolton, a middle-aged friend of her husband's family, she did not hesitate to use the weapon. Bolton was a man of political influence; Bolton thought Angela could help him. With her somewhat obvious charms—and his sub rosa direction—she could take over the management of the Pine Springs Tribune under the pretext that Larry, her husband who had squandered most of the money his father had left him, now wanted to earn his one-third share of the profits from the newspaper.

Bolton's real object, of course, was to gain control of an influential publicity medium, and to oust the present incorruptible publisher, Henry Thacher, Larry's older half-brother.

Fate played into Angela's hands. Young Steve Thacher, Henry's son, fell in love with her. But Angela, drunk with success, overplayed her hand. On the same stormy night that Henry Thacher was laid low by a heart attack, Dr. T. R. Scoville, the Thacher family physician, was called to attend a workman who was the victim of a hit-and-run driver.

There were no witnesses to the accident, but the dying man had seen the car which hit him. It was a yellow convertible. Dr. Scoville knew that Steve Thacher drove the only yellow convertible in Pine Springs. When he confronted Steve with this evidence, Steve confessed that he was guilty.

The silence that followed Steve's words was the silence of shock. Whatever he had thought, the doctor found, it had not really been this.

"But you couldn't have known it, Steve," he said. "You couldn't have seen him and known you'd hit him and gone on like that."

"You wouldn't think anyone could, would you?" said Steve wearily. He gave the doctor a long look. Then his eyes turned away.

"How did it happen, Steve?" the doc-

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR SARNOFF

tor asked. "Perhaps you'd better tell me about it."

Steve's eyes, looking back at him, were blank and secret. "Why should I?" he said.

"I want to help. For your mother's sake, your father's sake, because I'm fond of you——"

"I don't want your help. I'm sick of being helped for my mother's sake or my father's sake." Steve's voice rose in exasperation. "I don't want anybody's help. Keep out of this. That's the only help I want from you. Let me alone."

"No," said the doctor pleasantly, "I won't. I can't let you alone because you're not in this alone."

"What do you mean?" Steve asked quickly. "I was alone——"

"I mean that there's someone you're forgetting—and that's the man you killed. I made that man a promise before he died. I promised him that I would see that whoever killed him was punished. I don't break a promise lightly, Steve. But I don't think you should be punished for an accident—even a tragic accident."

"That's what it was," said Steve sullenly; "it was an accident."

"How did it happen?" T. R. asked again. "Why didn't you stop?"

"None of your business," said Steve.

Then the doctor exploded. "You damn young fool!" he rumbled. "Don't you realize what a mess you're in? You seem to have no more idea of what you've done than a baby! You killed a man, Steve!"

"It was an accident," said Steve. "They can't—they couldn't say it was manslaughter! You're trying to scare me."

T. R. stood up. "You'd be better off scared," he said, "than the way you are now. Don't you care what you've done? Well, I'll tell you about it anyway. Maybe you'll be a little more interested then. The name of the man you killed was Vladek, Joe Vladek. He was an old man and alone in the world. One of his sons, who was killed someplace sometime in the war, went to school with you when you went to public school here. Vladek remembered that. He said—he couldn't say much—he said he'd always thought you were a nice boy. He was more surprised than anything else by what had happened to him. He was very surprised to be dying but it didn't take him very long to die. He died before the police came. I was alone with him. I am, incidentally, the only person who knows that he identified the car that hit him and went on without stopping. I know because he told me. And now you know too."

Steve had listened to this with his head in his hands; now, as he looked up at the doctor, his face was sick with horror. "Of course I care about it," he said. "Of course I'm sorry. I'd give anything if it hadn't happened. But what good does it do to tell me all this? You don't have to—have to—— He's better off dead! Old, and alone, like that..." His voice trailed off.

"That idea may be a comfort to *you*, Steve," said the doctor drily, "but I wonder whether Vladek would agree with you? Unfortunately, he *is* dead, and so he can't tell you whether he mightn't rather be living after all, even if he was old and alone." Bitterness and disgust came into his voice as he added, "You're not exactly an unprejudiced witness, you know. I don't think you'd satisfy any judge—not even your own conscience. Do you?"

"I said I'm sorry. I'm awfully sorry. But—it can't do any good to go over it and over it, to rehash it and think—I don't want to think! I don't want to remember it!"

"I'd like to forget it too. But Steve, even if I managed to forget it, the police won't. That's what I was trying to tell you."

"Police?" said Steve. "But if they don't know, if you're the only one who knows—you don't mean *you'd* turn me in?" His voice was utterly unbelieving.

"Why should I not turn you in?"

"But it was an accident—an accident!"

"Then why didn't you stop?"

"I wanted——" Steve began, and then his voice died. Suddenly he got up and cried, "Get out of here! Get out of here!"

"Yes," said T. R. wearily, "I will. But you'd better listen to me for another minute before I go. You're a grown man—even if you're not acting like it right now. I'm not going to *(Continued on page 163)*

NEXT MONTH

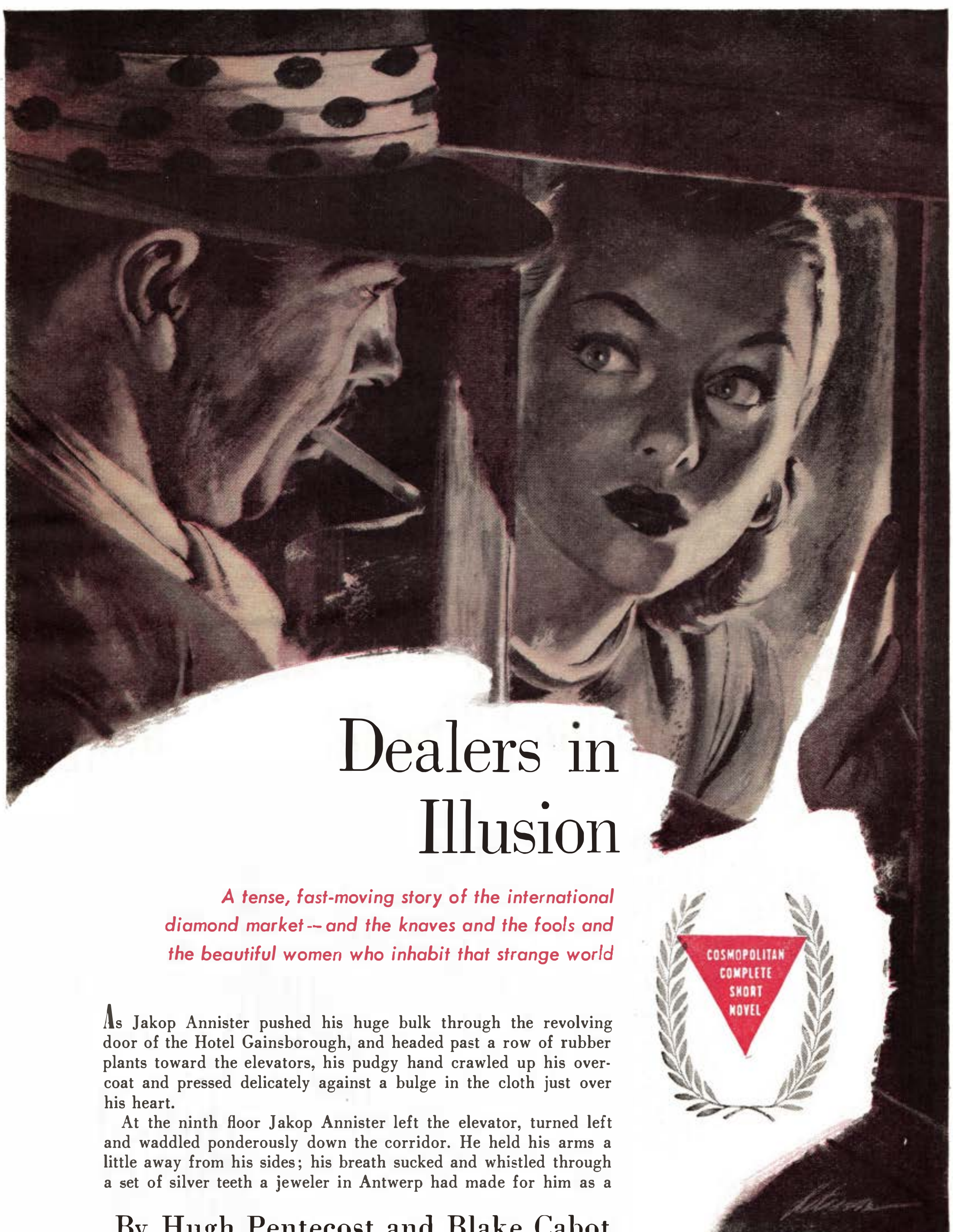
White House Diary

★

BY HENRIETTA NESBITT

Harry Hopkins was always asking for popcorn at all hours of the night. **Madame Chiang Kai-Shek** wanted the silk sheets on her bed changed several times a day—and had to have the tops of them folded back and sewed to the blankets. And then there were the **King and Queen of England** (a nice couple but their servants were awful) and **Molotov** and **Alexander Woollcott** (he threw the place into an uproar) and, of course, the **Roosevelts** themselves. These are some of the famous people who appear in the liveliest, most entertaining book of the year which begins in the March Cosmopolitan. Don't miss it.

The story of twelve hectic years as Franklin D. Roosevelt's housekeeper



Dealers in Illusion

A tense, fast-moving story of the international diamond market—and the knaves and the fools and the beautiful women who inhabit that strange world

COSMOPOLITAN
COMPLETE
SHORT
NOVEL

As Jakop Annister pushed his huge bulk through the revolving door of the Hotel Gainsborough, and headed past a row of rubber plants toward the elevators, his pudgy hand crawled up his overcoat and pressed delicately against a bulge in the cloth just over his heart.

At the ninth floor Jakop Annister left the elevator, turned left and waddled ponderously down the corridor. He held his arms a little away from his sides; his breath sucked and whistled through a set of silver teeth a jeweler in Antwerp had made for him as a

By Hugh Pentecost and Blake Cabot

Peering through the basement window, Steve saw Ackroyd swing the heavy wrench in a short, brutal arc.

ILLUSTRATED BY PERRY PETERSON

special favor. When he came to Room 986, he unlocked and opened the door, reached past it to snap on the ceiling light. Having carefully locked the door again and pushed four heavy bolts into place, one after another, he stood quietly for a moment, unblinking as a turtle in the sun.

Without moving his head, he glanced toward an alarm clock on the bureau. Not quite midnight.

He took off his black felt hat, then his dingy, rust-streaked black overcoat, and threw them across a chair. Pursing his lips, he reached inside his jacket, pulled out a leather wallet that was attached at one corner to a length of thin steel chain looped around his waist. He clasped it thoughtfully in both hands, then let it fall so that it dangled in front of him halfway to his knees. Methodically, grunting at each motion, he stripped off coat, shoes, trousers, tie, shirt and socks and then, vast and flabby in woolen underwear, he yanked at the chain, and having fished the wallet up onto the bureau and unbuttoned its four flaps, he took out an oblong white paper packet. The stiff paper crackled in his fingers as he unfolded it and spread it flat against the bureau top. His eyes stared affectionately at the contents of the packet, a greenish, irregular lump, large as the top joint of his thumb, its surface clouded with a white blush, like a fresh Malaga grape. Blinking, Jakop Annister picked up the rough diamond and popped it into his mouth.

He shed his underwear, took a pair of white cotton pajamas from a bureau drawer and, balancing on one foot and then the other, pulled on the pajama pants. Then he struggled into the jacket. His eyes fell on a loupe lying on the cluttered top of the bureau. Annister plucked the stone from his mouth, screwed the loupe up close to his right eye, and squinted through its twin lenses at the diamond which he revolved carefully between his pulpy thumb and forefinger. Then, holding the stone tightly in his fist he went over to the bed and sat down. He picked up the telephone.

"I'm calling Burryton, Long Island, person to person, collect. I want to talk to Clay Henderson."

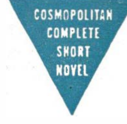
The sound of traffic in Times Square filtered dimly into the room, punctuated by the loud ticking of the alarm clock. A voice scratched faintly from the telephone receiver lying in Annister's lap. He picked up the instrument.

"Henderson? Jakop Annister here. . . Listen, I got something wonderful for you. . . Yes, a single stone. . . Blue. . . Blue, I say. . . No, I can't tell you who I got it from. . . What difference does it make? The stone speaks for itself. . . All right, sixty carats, maybe a few points less. . . When? . . . There's no hurry. . . Not tomorrow; Wednesday's soon enough. . . John Lennep? . . . That's your business, not mine. . . No, I tell you. Wednesday."

Annister let the telephone fall to his lap and frowned at the scratching, protesting voice. He gazed reflectively at the ceiling for a moment, then squashed the receiver against his ear again. "No, you'll be the first to see it. . . How much? . . . Please, we're not that far along yet. . ."

He held the receiver against his belly, smothering Clay Henderson's voice. His fingers folded back from the stone in his sweating palm. Sighing, he picked up the phone. "Wednesday," he said. Then, "Please, you disgust me." He hung up.

Moving in bare feet to the bureau, he wrapped the rough diamond in the white paper, buttoned it into the wallet, and stuffed the wallet into an inside pajama-coat pocket. After switching off the ceiling light, he climbed heavily into bed, twisting and hunching himself under the covers, which he finally managed to pull up snugly under his chin. The blanket stirred as his hand reached down to pat the wallet bulging against his side. Soft reflections from an animated electric sign in Times Square flickered across the back wall of his room. Gradually Jakop Annister's wheezing breath slowed down to a long, steady bubbling snore.



The world always looked full of angles to little Slappsy Marquis, but

almost inevitably, it seemed to him, somebody else had managed to figure them out just before he did. When that happened, it made him sad. But today he was happy. Steve might go for the deal in the dark, and if he did that would be all right, because one percent of fifty grand is five hundred bucks, and there was definitely a place in Slappsy's life for that kind of money.

Hands in overcoat pockets, Slappsy shouldered open a green steel door on which "John Lennep" was printed in neat gold letters. His thumb jabbed a button. Almost at once there was a faint click, a panel swung open in front of him, and a girl's head, red hair haloed by the light behind her, appeared in the foot-square opening in the wall.

"Hello, Slappsy." She wrinkled her small nose agreeably. "What's cooking?"

"Who knows?" Slappsy said. "Maybe even business. Can the boss see me, Miss Constable?"

"I'll find out. He's on the phone."

Slappsy killed time by peering absent-mindedly at a row of framed photographs hanging on the foyer wall. The photographs were windows into a phase of the diamond trade that Slappsy knew must exist—just as you had to have a hen to get eggs—but which was very unreal to him. A row of bearded Dutchmen, in 1905 collars and straw hats, sorting rough stones at a long table. An enormous hole in the South African earth, with the caption lettered in white ink: View of Premier Mine, Kimberley. It was the next one that always gave him goose pimples. That heap of stones looked big enough to fill a bucket. Shaking his head sadly, Slappsy spelled out the caption: One Day's Find at Pulsator.

"One day's find." He shoved his nose close to the glass. "It should happen to me."

The door with the cubbyhole opened abruptly. "Dreamer," Tobey Constable said cheerfully. "Come in. He'll see you."

In the quiet front office, Steven Gill sat before a table covered with black baize, doodling triangles on a pad of glossy white diamond paper. In Tobey's book, Steve was a handsome guy. Trim as a race horse, and just about as nervous. She wasn't quite sure whether the strained look on his face was delayed battle shock or the result of trying to hold his own with the sharpest sharpies north of Forty-second Street. But handsome.

The door closed behind Slappsy's bouncing figure.

"Hello, Mr. Gill." The little broker held out his hand. "Take five."

Steve smiled, and they shook hands.

"Now count your fingers," Slappsy said, pulling his hand away.

"One, two, three, four, five. So what?"

"When you shake hands with a guy in this business, you got to make sure you still got all of them. Catch?"

You got used to Slappsy after a while. He was kind of a fixture, like the big, old-fashioned safe, and the desk, and the scales nicely boxed in glass and mahogany. You even got sort of fond of him.

"You're a great kidder," Steve said dryly. "But I love you."

"Listen. I ran into Jakop Annister. At the Club. He's got a very interesting parcel of goods you can look at."

"What kind of a parcel?"

"Seven thousand carats." Slappsy watched Steve carefully. "Coateds. Six to eight grainers. In the dark."

"In the dark?"

"Well, that's how he put it to me."

"How much?"

"We didn't get to that. You know how Annister is."

"Yes," Steve said. "I do."

"But it would be maybe around seven a carat."

And that, Steve reflected, would make it around fifty thousand dollars for the parcel. Fifty grand at one crack. A profit of maybe five thousand for the boss if he guessed right, and maybe a loss of twice that, more or less, if he guessed wrong.

"Are you interested?" Slappsy asked.

Steve pivoted around. "I might be. But I'll have to talk to Lennep. How long can Annister hold the deal?"

"Until ten tomorrow morning," Slappsy said.

Steve frowned. Fifty grand at a crack. What was he making just after he got out of college and before he joined up with the Infantry? Forty-five a week, wasn't it? On a good week. Selling insurance policies.

Slappsy knew better than to press him. "Anything new from London?" he asked.

"A cable." Steve ripped off the top sheet of the pad and began a fresh batch of doodles. "They cabled Lennep yesterday. There'll be a shipment in a few weeks."

"What are you taking?"

"Forty thousand pounds' worth," Steve said. "If the market looks right."

Slappsy's eyes sparkled. Steve could almost hear the adding machine racing inside Slappsy's head. Forty thousand pounds into dollars, at the current exchange, and figure a third of that as the most he might get a crack at selling. Then take one percent of that and subtract the down payment on a cottage in Kew Gardens.

"I got my fingers crossed," Slappsy said. "Look, Mr. Gill—I got to let Annister know. Tomorrow at ten?"

Steve nodded. "But don't start spending the commission."

Tobey saluted the departing Slappsy as she walked into the office and perched on a corner of Steve's desk, swinging her pretty legs, smiling the kind of smile that made Steve want to choke her.

"Well?" she asked.

"I may go for it," Steve said calmly. "And I may not."

"Steve. Do you really have to wait for permission

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN "DEALERS IN ILLUSION"

General Trade Terms

ABC STONE: rough diamond which can be accurately appraised; the opposite of speculative

THE CLUB: where members of the wholesale trade gather to eat, make appointments, and to buy and sell diamonds

GOODS: diamonds

ILLUSION: somewhat mystical conviction that a diamond, or group of diamonds, will yield a big profit

IN THE DARK: diamonds bought or sold sight unseen

STROP: disastrous deal; a rooking

SYNDICATE: Diamond Trading Company, Ltd., London, England. Outlet to the wholesale market for approximately ninety-five percent of the total world production of rough diamonds

SYNDICATE LIST: limited group of importers privileged to buy directly from the Syndicate

Technical Terms

BORT: imperfectly crystallized diamonds, which are generally crushed into powder used in cutting and polishing

COATED: having surface coloring

FROSTED: having a surface like ground glass

GLETZ: fissure or crack in diamond

GRAIN: one fourth of a carat

INGROWN: small stone imbedded in a larger one

LOUPE: small, double-lensed magnifying glass. Fits into eye like a monocle.

NAAT: literally, a knot; rough diamond with internal grain irregularities

PIQUE: speck of foreign matter embedded in diamond

SERIES: group of stones of same shape and color

SKIN FLAW: surface imperfection

CRINKLED, SHAPE, BLOCK, MACCLE, FLAT, CRYSTAL: Classifications of rough diamonds

SAW, CLEAVE, GIRDLE, POLISH: Steps in manufacturing finished stones

DOP, TONGUE, WHEEL: Main parts of apparatus used in polishing diamonds

FANCY COLOR, BLUE WHITE, WHITE, COMMERCIAL WHITE: Classifications of diamonds by color, in order of value

from the old man?" she asked.

Steve flushed. "Little pitchers have big ears."

"All right," she said. "But why do you think the old man has been staying away from the office if he doesn't trust your judgment?"

Tobey was really such a charming girl, in a lot of ways, with gray eyes, and copper hair pulled into a knot on one side of her saucy head, and a figure that was small but definitely adult. For Steve's money, just one look at her was a memorable experience, if somewhat disturbing during office hours.

"Listen." He got to his feet and put his hands on Tobey's shoulders. "I'll explain it all to you."

"I'm listening." Tobey smiled up at him.

"You see, there's a nice old man named John Lennep, who's a diamond importer. Then there's a fellow named Steve Gill who is trying very hard to learn the business, but still hardly knows a series of crystals from third base. Now Steve Gill works for John Lennep. And there are three things Steve doesn't like."

"Such as?"

"Being played for a sucker by his colleagues in the trade, for one thing," Steve said. "And losing money for the old man, for another. He's too sweet a guy."

"What's the third?"

"Having small fry tell him what to do," Steve said, shaking her.

"Maybe," Tobey suggested, "I could teach you a couple of things about this operation, if you weren't so pigheaded."

They stared at each other with quiet exasperation. Tobey hopped from the desk and, doing her best to walk with dignity, crossed the office. "I forgot to tell you," she said over her shoulder, grasping the doorknob firmly, "Clay Henderson called while you were talking to Slappsy."

"And?"

"He was in a swivet. But mysterious. He wouldn't talk to anyone but the old man."

"Speaking about the old man," Steve smiled. "And we were, weren't we? If it will make you feel any better, I was planning to see him this

afternoon, anyway. Regardless of the Annister deal."

"Not interested." Tobey slipped through the doorway.

"He said he has something important. . ." The door slammed. ". . . to discuss with me," Steve told the empty room.

There was a time, very long ago, when John Lennep looked out on the world from a diamond cutter's bench in Antwerp, just as Jakop Annister once did; but all that had changed. If Annister chose to do ten million dollars a year, gross, from a two-by-four Times Square hotel room, that was his affair. John Lennep had a different outlook. His style was a duplex in an upper Fifth Avenue gray stone apartment house. He put the profits in good living, in clothes, furniture, food, and beyond that, in pictures. His apartment was full of them—Vermeers and Picassos, Rembrandts, and Renoirs and Shagalls. But make no mistake. He was as shrewd a hand with a parcel of speculative goods as Annister ever was.

It was just beginning to get dark in John Lennep's big living room. Lennep, twisting the stem of a sherry glass in his small, beautifully neat hands, arching his back against the yellow satin of the love seat set slantwise from the mantelpiece, looked at Clay Henderson with quiet amusement.

Henderson's huge head, ugly as Punch with its undershot jaw and thatch of brownish hair, was thrust forward aggressively. He somehow gave the impression that a time fuse was ticking inside him, always threatening to set him off. An intense, restless man, thirty-nine years old, or fifty, depending on the light and where he'd been the night before, he was constantly in motion, fidgeting with his highball glass, picking it up and setting it down, leaving the fireplace to rush across the hearth rug, and then back again as though he'd forgotten something.

"It's like you, Clay," John Lennep said gently. "You haven't even seen it yet, but you already have illusion on the stone."

"Discount half of what Annister told me on the phone." Henderson ran his blunt hands down the lapels of his beautifully cut gray flannel suit, which seemed as inappropriate on his dumpy figure as chromium trim on a scow. "It's still the right kind of a deal. What do you say, John? Will you come in on it with me?"

"I'm sorry," Lennep said. "But you see, it really isn't up to me to decide."

A bell chimed faintly in the hallway. There was the muffled sound of a door opening and closing.

"I don't understand you," Clay Henderson said in his rasping voice.

"I'm taking a long vacation, Clay."

"But who——"

"And turning the business over to Steve while I'm away."

"To Steve." Henderson slapped his glass down on the mantelpiece. A surprised frown deepened to anger. "Steve Gill?"

"And what's wrong with that?"

"But he's just a kid." Henderson waggled his big, ugly head furiously. "Oh, I like him. You can't help it. But it's absurd, John. I tell you, he's still wet behind the ears."

John Lennep glanced past him and said quietly, "Come in, Steven. Come right in."

"Thanks." Steve came forward from the doorway. He turned to Clay Henderson and said lightly, "And thank you, too, my friend."

"I'm going, John," Henderson said abruptly. "I'll see you again." He stalked out, stiff-backed and angry as a gamecock.

"I'm afraid I broke in on something," Steve said.

"He's been frustrated." Lennep poured Steve a glass of sherry and handed it to him. "Clay's not a man who takes frustration lightly."

"You're not kidding," Steve said.

"In the first place, he's been offered a frosted stone. A really big one. He wanted me to buy it with him. I couldn't give him a definite answer."

"That reminds me," Steve said. "Slappsy Marquis dropped by this morning. It brings up a point. He——"

"Later." John Lennep held up his hand. "Let me tell you what else is bothering Clay. He's just returned from London. He was trying to get back on the Syndicate list. But they wouldn't reinstate him."

"You know why?"

"They've been cutting down the list for a number of reasons," the old man said. "Of course, it means that Clay's knocked right out of the importing end of the trade."

"Hard on him," Steve said. And he thought: That's an understatement. The boys who controlled world production of rough diamonds didn't fool around. They kept the business as simple as a ram-jet engine. The only way you could buy from them was through the Syndicate in London. If they rubbed you off their list, you just weren't in on the ground floor any more. Knocked out was right. Knocked out and trampled on.

"Steven," Lennep said, "I told Clay I couldn't decide about the stone because I was going away on a vacation. It isn't a vacation. But I *am* leaving the country."

"Leaving the country?" Steve jumped. "For how long?"

"I don't know. Two weeks, three weeks. Maybe a month, or even longer."

"But what about the shipment?" Steve could feel the palms of his hands begin to sweat. "That may be here in three weeks."

"Yes," Lennep said. "In about that time. The Syndicate's allotting us forty thousand pounds' worth of Group One."

"Those are top goods." Steve's mouth was dry. "You ought to be around to handle selling them."

"I know." The old man laid his hand on Steve's knee and left it there for a moment before he spoke. "Steven, I've been helping my brother in Amsterdam put his firm back in shape. Or what was left of it

after the Nazis got through. It's taken all the available assets I had. I've extended, even overextended my credit to get funds to lend him. He expected to repay me before now. He hasn't been able to. And now I have a cable from his wife. He's very ill."

"I'm sorry," Steve said. "Terribly sorry."

"You'll have to take over. I'm flying to Amsterdam tonight."

"I'll do the best I can," Steve said, "to keep things going."

"You'll have to do better than that." Lennep cocked his head at Steve, and he wasn't smiling now. "There just isn't enough money to pay for the shipment. So you're going to have to make it—fast."

"But——"

"Buy and sell around town, Steven. Whatever kind of goods you think best. Don't be afraid to take risks. You'll have a working capital of about a hundred thousand, but you'll have to double it before the shipment from the Syndicate arrives."

"Listen," Steve said. "I'll try—but there are a dozen people with more experience you could get to handle the actual deals for you."

"You've done pretty well in the last two years."

"But——"

"Steven, if other people in the trade knew how precarious my financial situation is—well, when a man's down the wolves attack. I trust you completely, Steven, which at this point is more important than experience."

"That's the nicest thing you could possibly have said to me," Steve said, "but the fact remains, I'm no expert."

"Expert?"

John Lennep stood up, an elegant figure in his neat blue suit, the vest edged with white piping, a carnation in his buttonhole. He walked past the mantelpiece, and Steve thought: What's the old man up to now? He watched him fiddle with the combination of a wall safe hidden behind a mirror, reach in and take out a white packet. The old man had that half-serious smile on his face as he came back to the love seat and leaned forward to open the packet on top of the coffee table.

"Whenever I think there are such things as experts," Lennep said, "I get this out. Here, have a look at it."

Steve held the rough diamond in his fingers. It was gray, flecked with black specks, like a dirty, cracked ice cube, and about half as big.

"A naat," Lennep said. "As you can see. It would have to be cleaved. The saw blade would never get through. And it might shatter on the girdler. Fifty-six carats of imponderables. What would you say it's worth?"

"I'd hate to try and figure it," Steve said. "Maybe fifty a carat."

"A lot of experts have looked at it. Moresby and Meyerhoff and Jacklin, among others. They examined it for hours, did everything but crawl inside of it. Their estimates varied from forty to two hundred a carat. Those are the imponderables of the trade."

"Sure," Steve said. "That's why I get so many blinding headaches."

"Imponderables, Steven. You look at a speculative stone, like this one. Its potentialities and its uncertainties excite you. Your imagination runs amuck." He smiled. "You have illusion."

"Not me," Steve said.

"Why not?" John Lennep tapped the naat. "Why not, Steven? It's the salt of the business. What would be the fun if it was all ABC goods?"

"What do you think it's worth?"

"I paid four thousand," the old man said softly. "My dream is that it wouldn't shatter, all the piques would polish out, and I'd get two blue marquise-cut stones worth at least sixty thousand dollars. However"—he smiled wickedly at Steve—"I'm not going to sell it, and I'm not going to have it finished, so I'll never know. I don't want to."

Steve held the naat toward the lamp, peering into its murky depths. How high are the mountains? How deep is the sea? And the way to pick a winner is how the horse eats hay. He dropped the naat on the coffee table.

"I mean," John Lennep said, "don't be intimidated. Even the old hands make mistakes, big ones. In the end, they balance out."

The old man picked up the square, cut-glass sherry bottle from the tantalus and filled their glasses to the brim.

"There isn't any other way," he said quietly. "We've got to raise the cash for the shipment—or we may be out of business, too—like Henderson." He smiled. "I'm not worried. I have confidence in you, Steven. You won't let me down . . . Is it settled?"

At the Club, Jakop Annister wiped a smear of butter from his cheek, gulped the last of his coffee and slouched down at a corner table where he could soak up the warmth of the morning sunlight. He glanced at the big clock over the glassed-in reception desk where a clerk was feeding an endless stream of names into the public-address system. Five minutes to ten. Annister locked his hands across his belly and waited, the furious hum of the conversation lulling him into a doze. At exactly ten he would leave for Lennep's office.

His colleagues' voices swirled about him as they roamed back and forth from the lunch counter, leaped up from the baize tables to have their parcels of goods weighed in the scale room, and popped restlessly in and out of a row of telephone booths. Annister's glazing eyes peered at them, some two hundred men who glared, kibitzed and insulted one another as they feverishly bought and sold. Crinkled stones, speculatives, shapes, frosteds, blocks, cleavages, maccles, naats and flats; crystals from the Premier, grayish bort from the Congo at a dollar a carat, yellow stones from the Sierra Leone that

someone dreamed would come out blue as the sky.

"Annister." A broker slipped into the chair across the table.

"Well?" Annister woke up angrily.

"I got a nice stone. Six carats." He dropped it on the black baize.

Annister louped it contemptuously. "Bad color."

"Blue white," the broker said without conviction.

"And poor quality."

"I bought it," the broker lied. "I got to get two hundred."

Annister shook his head ponderously.

"Not for you, huh?" But the broker lingered. "Remember Joe Ackroyd?" Anything to keep the conversation going. "Joe's back in town. Saw him last night."

"Drunk?"

"Getting there." The broker giggled. "He told me he's been offered a job. Working for Clay Henderson."

"Would anyone but Clay Henderson be stupid enough to hire Joe Ackroyd?" Annister said without interest. His eyes closed. But he carefully filed the information in his brain.

Steve glanced at his wrist watch again and thought: He'll be here any minute now. Beware of a Greek bearing gifts, and a Dutchman with a deal in the dark. Reflectively, he pushed up the glass panel of the sleek chromium and brass scales, tapped the left pan with his finger tip and watched it float gently up and down. Delicate enough to weigh a baby's smile. The clicking of the door spun him around, and then he relaxed as Tobey's saucy red head bobbed into view.

"Boss."

Steve grinned. "Well?"

"Steamboat 'round the bend," Tobey said in a hoarse stage whisper.

"Annister?"

"Puffing and wheezing in the foyer."

"Come in a minute," Steve beckoned, "and shut the door."

"Yes, boss."

She sat on the arm of the gray leather-covered couch, wrinkling her nose thoughtfully. Her frown somehow made her pretty little face even prettier, and for a second Steve forgot about Annister waiting outside with his pocket stuffed with rough diamonds, and Slappsy, with the adding machine clicking inside his head. He yanked himself back to reality. "I'll be frank with you, Tobey," he said. "Which is probably a mistake. The boss has the jitters."

"Nonsense." She waved her hand airily. "This business is just a bunch of guys."

"I feel as if a bunch of guys were walking around inside my stomach."

"You'll do all right."

"It's an awfully big assignment the old man handed me," Steve said.

"He wouldn't have given it to you if he didn't think you could do it."

"I'm going to need help. I mean from you, Tobey."

"You're sweet." Tobey stood up, and Steve got a feeling that she was about to give him a piece of advice. Then she seemed to change her mind. "If I can, I'll help. You know——" She bit her lip. "Lots of luck," she said quickly and slipped out of the room.

Steve smiled, and then stopped smiling as Jakop Annister, with Slappsy anxious at his heels, rolled into the office, dropped his black felt hat neatly on top of the safe and stood motionless in the center of the blue carpet.

Steve motioned to a chair at the opposite side of the black baize-covered table. Annister sat down, tucking the skirts of his overcoat across his lap, his huge body overflowing the chair, his belly pressed against the table's edge. His chest heaved in a deep, sobbing breath. He rested his hands carefully on the table, fixed his small, unblinking eyes on Steve and waited, silently.

"All right." Steve's mouth was dry. "Now, let's have it."

Annister's head bobbed forward half an inch. A pudgy hand dipped under the lapel of his coat, wriggled deeper and finally emerged with a worn, black alpaca bag trailing a steel chain that looped out of sight through a buttonhole in his waistcoat.

Annister shot out the tip of his tongue and rested it on his fleshy lower lip. He unbuttoned the black alpaca bag, fished out an oblong, heavy cardboard box which he placed on the table, poking at it until it lay exactly parallel to the edge of the pad of diamond paper. Slappsy, standing behind Annister, leaned forward to stare fixedly at the red wax customs seals splashed across the edges of the box and at the heavy black stamp of the London shippers in one corner.

"Absolutely original." Annister stuffed the alpaca bag into his jacket pocket. "Unbroken seals. Seven thousand carats in all, according to the invoice. Coateds. Average weight of the stones, seven grains."

Steve caught a quick glimpse of twin rows of silver teeth. His eyes went back to the red seals on the cardboard box. (The time has come, the Walrus said, to talk of many things.)

"How much?" Steve asked.

"Yes." Slappsy wrung his hands in agitation. "Why don't you tell the gentleman your price?"

"The invoice on the lot was fifty thousand dollars. About seven a carat." Annister pursed up his mouth. "If you buy them in the dark, without opening the box and looking at the goods, I got to get a profit of twenty-five percent."

"In the dark," Steve said.

"Yes. You can have them that way for sixty-two thousand, five hundred."

Slappsy, out of Annister's line of vision, nodded his head violently. He likes the offer, Steve thought. Mr. Marquis is in love with this deal. And why not, at one percent for him, win, lose or draw?

"I'll have to think about it." Steve drummed his fingers on the table.

"I got a suggestion," (*Continued on page 83*)

Dear Jane —
Last night we went to one of New Orleans' famous restaurants. Have you had a soup called gumbo? It's simply scrumptious!
Love — Carol
NEW ORLEANS 9 PM LA
POST CARD
Miss Jane Williams
128 West Sedgwick Ave
Mt Airy 19, Pa.
New Orleans' French Quarter. This view in Chartres Street shows a typical balcony with its beautiful iron "lace work" grille.
Mardi Gras—a time of high romance for thousands who journey to old N' Orleans.
FROM AMERICA'S MOST
Glamorous City
COMES AMERICA'S
MOST EXCITING SOUP!
City of the Mardi Gras, of gaiety and romance, of celebrated restaurants and world-famed dishes, among them—chicken gumbo soup.
Have *you* tasted this truly different soup of rich chicken and fine vegetables? If so, then you know why people everywhere have taken to it eagerly. Adapted by Campbell's from an old Creole recipe, Campbell's Chicken Gumbo Soup has a deep-flavored chicken stock crammed with such delights as delicate green okra, luscious red-ripe tomatoes, fluffy rice and tender pieces of chicken—seasoned with rare, savory herbs.
Doesn't it make you hungry just to number all those good things? Then make a note *now:* Serve this excitingly different soup of the Old South soon — very soon!
Campbell's
CHICKEN GUMBO SOUP
Campbell's
CONDENSED
CHICKEN GUMBO
SOUP
LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL

GILBEY'S SPEY-ROYAL BLENDED SCOTCH WHISKY 86.8 PROOF . . . DISTILLED AND BOTTLED IN THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS BY W. & A. GILBEY LTD.

National Distillers Products Corp., New York, N. Y. Gilbey's Distilled London Dry Gin. 90 Proof. 100% grain neutral spirits.

Dealers in Illusion *(Continued from page 80)*

Annister said suddenly. He twitched the lapels of his overcoat, thought for a moment and then said, "Open the box and look over the goods, if that suits you better. But if you do that you got to agree to pay a little more if you buy. Thirty percent over the invoice if you like what you see."

"And if I look and don't buy?"

"Naturally," Annister said, "that'll cost you a little something." He blinked, turned his eyes toward the ceiling. "To be exact, it'll cost you twenty-five hundred dollars for the privilege of opening the box and turning down the goods."

Slappsy was shaking his head, transfixed with anguish. Steve disregarded him.

Sixty-two thousand five hundred in the dark. Sixty-five thousand if you want to look first. Twenty-five hundred if you look and don't like.

Steve could feel the sweat between his fingers and on the palms of his hands. But how can you buy unless you see the stones? You'd be a fool. Or would you?

Annister lowered his eyes. "Are you interested, Mr. Gill?"

"Yes," Steve said. "I want to look."

Jakop Annister stared across the table, his breath wheezing gently. He shrugged his shoulders and picked up the cardboard box. Breaking the seals with a paper cutter, he lifted off the cover. A canvas bag lay in a nest of tissue paper. He took the bag, opened it and poured a stream of rough diamonds across the shining pad.

Some of the grayish, greasy-looking pebbles, the size of buckshot, spilled from the pad of diamond paper to the black baize cover of the table. Mechanically, Steve brushed them back onto the pad, then ran his fingers through the stones, surprised, as he always was, at how warm and light they felt. He pulled out a handkerchief and wiped a film of perspiration from his forehead.

Holding three of the stones in his hand, he went to the window and louped them, one by one, against the bright morning sky. He peered through the lenses into clouded, grayish depths, fissured and shot through with tiny black specks of carbon. Imponderables. That was the word. The old man wasn't kidding. Three stones. And there were better than three thousand on the table.

"Nice shapes." Annister stirred in his chair.

"And a nice thick skin," Steve said.

"Coated goods," Annister said, pouting. "Naturally. They're speculative."

Steve picked twenty stones at random from the heap and louped them. Annister was right; the shapes weren't bad. But what about the color and the specks and the cracks? There was the speculation. The range of possibility of how the stones might come out on the cutter's wheel was enormous. If the grayish coating was not too deep and the defects would polish out, and if you could have five stones cut to find out before you paid the price . . . Sure, Steve thought, and if my aunt had wheels she'd be a bicycle.

Annister waited, vast and watchful, at the black baize table, his half-shut eyes fixed on the gleaming pile of rough diamonds. Steve slipped into his chair, reached out and brushed his hand across the stones. What had the old man said? Even the experts make mistakes. But in the long run they balance out.

"Well?" said Jakop Annister.

Abruptly, Steve picked up the phone. "Tobey. Draw a check, please. Right away. For sixty-five thousand."

He scooped up the stones and was pouring them, a handful at a time, back into the cardboard box when Tobey came into the room. Silently, without looking at him, she let the check flutter down to the table and left quickly.

Annister took the check and twisted it in his pudgy fingers.

"What do you think?" Steve asked.

"Frankly, that you did right."

"You've got the money," Steve said dryly. "You can afford to be polite."

"I mean it." Annister screwed up his mouth. "As a matter of fact I tell you what. I'll buy them right back now, with a ten percent profit for you."

"For God's sake!" Steve said.

At the window Slappsy let out a squeak and began to shake his head in fresh agony.

"You paid sixty-five thousand." Annister wet his lips. "I'll give you seventy-one thousand, five hundred. Tear up the check. You get the sixty-five hundred in cash. I take the goods."

"You're not serious."

"I buy and sell," said Jakop Annister.

Steve brushed his hand wearily across his dark, short-clipped hair. He looked out the window at the distant river, and the barges, and back into the room. Why not? What's wrong with ten percent? Let Annister get stuck. His fingers trembled as he took the check and tore it first in halves and then into tiny pieces.

"It's a deal," he said.

Annister produced a wallet and methodically counted out one five-hundred- and six one-thousand-dollar bills. He counted them again and arranged them in a neat pile on the table. There was the quick flash of steel chain as he plucked the alpaca bag from his jacket, stowed the cardboard box inside it and returned it to his pocket. He stood up.

"Slappsy," Steve said. "Go along with him, will you?"

"But——"

"Tomorrow. It'll take me until then to figure out what your commission is."

They left and Steve called, "Tobey."

Her head ducked into view. "You want me?" she asked, dead panning him.

"Here." He wadded up the money and tossed it to her.

"What's this?"

"A bird in the hand," Steve grinned.

She stared at the wad of bills, frowning delicately.

"Well?" Steve felt uncomfortable, and then he felt angry because there wasn't anything to be uncomfortable about. "I sold them back for a ten percent profit."

"Fine."

"Buy low and sell high, you know."

"Good," Tobey said.

"Have I done something wrong?"

"I don't know," Tobey said. "Have you?"

"Go to hell," Steve said.

Tobey sat down on the leather armchair. She made a pistol of one hand and leveled it at Steve.

"Want to know what I would have done?"

Steve went toward her. "I'm sure to find out."

She pulled the trigger. "If a sharpie like Annister offered me ten percent more, then I would have said no-—"

"Not if you'd been sweating over the goods as long as I had."

"Because there would be somebody else who would pay a lot more."

"Maybe," Steve said. "But when he offered to buy I felt like the guy with a reprieve from the governor. Those stones were anybody's guess."

"The stones?"

"You know. Diamonds, goods. The stuff we deal in."

"Look," Tobey said patiently. "Who cares about the stones?"

"Who cares?" The water was closing over Steve's head, but he was still game. "Why do you think I'm sitting up nights studying books on this stuff? What you can't get into your head is that there's a science to diamonds. Imponderables or not, there's still a science."

"Sure," Tobey nodded gravely, "and Wall Street is an annex to the Public Library."

"Please . . ."

"No," Tobey said. "It's how you handle the deals that pays off. You shove the goods under a customer's nose, and then you watch him. How he lights a cigarette, how he sits, the expression in his eyes, how he holds his hands. You get to know one man will gamble if he's losing money, another one if he's ahead. You find the soft spot, and you sink the stiletto."

"I'd hate to meet you in a dark alley."

"All right." Tobey blushed. "But it's like poker. The cards even out in the long run, and so do the stones. It's how you play your hand; not what's in it."

"I just made sixty-five hundred bucks, less commission, for the old man," Steve said, a little hurt.

"There's only one thing wrong with you." Tobey smiled up at him. "You're too nice for the type of work you're in."

Seated half in shadow at the far end of the bar, Clay Henderson kept his huge buffoon's head turned toward the door through which a stream of after-business customers was entering the main lounge of the Silver Pheasant. He finished his second Scotch and water, no ice, and slid the empty glass across the bar. It was almost a quarter to six, and they should have come in before now, unless they'd changed their habits.

"One more," he said to the bartender.

For the twentieth time he glanced at the door, and this time he hit the jackpot. His fist unclenched, and there was a faint smile on his tense, restless face as he watched Steve and Tobey thread their way past the tables to a corner banquette. It would be much easier this way, very casual, just running into him over cocktails. He waited, tense and expectant, in the shadowy light.

"Here you are, sir." The bartender poured Scotch into Clay Henderson's glass and half filled it with water.

"Hold it, will you? I'll be back in a few minutes." Henderson slipped off the chromium and leatherette stool, ran his hands flatly down the lapels of his jacket. He flexed his back and arms, like a boxer waiting for the bell, and then he started across the tiled floor.

When Tobey caught sight of him she stopped laughing, and her gloved hand reached over to tug at Steve's elbow. "Here comes Handsome," she said.

Clay Henderson reached their table. His hand fell on Steve's shoulder and gripped it with a friendly pressure. "Hello, Steve . . . Tobey."

"Sit down," Steve said.

"Just for a minute. I'm waiting for someone at the bar." He slid onto the banquette beside Tobey. "You know. Steve," he said carefully, "I was sore the other day. At old man Lennep's."

"Forget it."

"I wasn't sore at you," Henderson said. "And I shouldn't have made that crack." A waiter sidled up, put two cocktails

COSMOPOLITAN COMPLETE SHORT NOVEL

on the little table.

"That's all right," Steve said to him. "Forget it. I have."

He meant it. He didn't have any feeling one way or another about Clay Henderson, and he didn't know how to hold a grudge.

"Thanks." Henderson leaned back, silent for a moment, and then he said, as though he'd just thought of it, "I ran into Jim Propheter an hour or so ago, at the Club. Remember him?"

Steve nodded.

"Jim was feeling high," Henderson said in his rasping voice. "He'd just bought a business from Jakop Annister. Seven thousand carats, and at a good price. He's hot for that kind of goods right now. To manufacture them, I mean."

"So?" Steve said.

"He got them for eighty thousand."

"Really?" Steve felt his throat tighten.

Henderson waggled his oversized head slowly. "As a matter of fact, didn't someone tell me you had first crack at that series?"

"Stop it." Tobey peered at Henderson over the rim of her Martini. "We don't handle cheap stuff like that."

"That's funny," Henderson said, "because——"

"Tobey's clowning," Steve said. Tobey kicked his ankle. He put his foot on her toe and kept it there. "I bought that lot from Annister yesterday and sold them back."

"A good profit?"

"Not bad."

Clay Henderson looked at Steve with a smile that only skirted his angry eyes. "I tell you what," he said. "You might be interested in a deal I've got brewing with Annister."

"I might be," Steve said calmly. He pressed a little harder on Tobey's right slipper.

"A single stone. I haven't seen it yet." Excitement was beginning to flicker uncontrollably across Clay Henderson's face. "It sounds terrific. A sixty carater."

"Do you know the price?"

"I'm going to find out tomorrow. Look." Henderson kept his voice level. "I'll let you in on it. If the price is right, we might buy it together. What do you say?"

"Share the wealth." Tobey made a face.

"And the risk," Henderson snapped. "I'm no Santa Claus." He checked himself and said carefully, "If the stone is what I think it is, and you like it, we'll have it manufactured."

"I'll let you know," Steve said. "I'll let you know right away."

Clay Henderson left the table, and Steve and Tobey gazed curiously at each other.

Tobey broke the spell. "Eighty thousand!" She tossed off the last of her Martini and set the glass down with a sharp click. "See? You resold to Annister for seventy-one, five."

"Why don't you say 'I told you so'?"

"I told you so," Tobey said, fishing for the stuffed olive.

She was wearing a thin gold chain around her slender neck, and ordinarily Steve thought it added to her charm. Now he rejected the impulse to hook his fingers through it and twist it like a tourniquet.

"But I'll forgive you," Tobey smiled agreeably, "if you don't have any more truck with that snake in the grass."

"The firm used to buy goods with him."

"Sure, but the old man——" Tobey bit her lip.

"The old man was around," Steve said, "to keep him from walking off with the fixtures. Is that the idea?"

"Henderson is no good," said Tobey. "And everybody knows his judgment is terrible."

"He's just another dealer."

"Why do you think the Syndicate cut him off their list?"

"I wouldn't know."

"Maybe he got caught endowing an orphanage."

"Come off it," Steve said. "London pares down the list every now and then. Somebody has to go."

"And sometimes they hear about trade practices they don't like and——" Tobey drew a carmine-tipped finger across her throat just above the thin gold chain.

Steve pushed his chair back from the table. Maybe she was right, but if you started ducking the fast operators you wound up sitting on your hands and waiting. And he couldn't afford to wait. The old man needed cash—and quickly. He'd never get there sixty-five hundred at a clip. He stood up.

"Let's get out of here." He grabbed the check. "Meet me at the door, will you? I want to speak to Clay."

At the bar, Clay Henderson waved agreeably to Steve and, looking at him, you might have thought this was one deal he could take or leave alone.

"So?" Henderson said. "Did you talk it over with Tobey?"

Steve flushed. "When can we see it?"

"Tomorrow. Any time tomorrow."

"In my office?"

"Why not?"

"Okay," Steve said. "Tell Annister to be there around five. I'm tied up until then."

"Good." Clay Henderson nodded.

"And if it looks right," Steve said, "we'll buy it."

Tobey was waiting for him at the cashier's desk. Steve paid the check and she said, "You did it."

"You can't get shot for looking." Steve took a firm hold on her elbow.

"There's one thing about all this." Tobey squinted reflectively up at him. "It'll be good training."

Steve wasn't thinking. "For what?"

"Going over Niagara Falls in a barrel," Tobey said darkly, and pushed the revolving door.

Clay Henderson arrived at the office first, at five minutes before five. He began pacing restlessly up and down, and Steve thought: What's a man like Clay got to be nervous about? He's been around.

The buzzer on Tobey's desk drilled a hole in Steve's ear. He snapped open the panel door in the wall, and there was Jakop Annister as solid as Plymouth Rock. Steve showed him and Henderson into his own office and carefully closed the door. He had a sudden feeling of excitement. This ought to be good. A couple of sharpshooters like Clay and Jakop Annister. An immovable object and an irresistible force. The immovable object slumped into a chair. The irresistible force paced up and down, then stopped abruptly.

"Come on," Henderson said to Jakop Annister. "Unbutton."

"You disgust me," Annister said. He sucked his silver teeth. Then he pulled the wallet out of the top of his trousers and unbuttoned the four flaps, laying bare a soiled white paper packet a little larger than a dose of headache powder. There was a shiny wax-paper lining in the inside packet. Annister unfolded this and tenderly dropped the rough diamond on the table. His eyes, revolving like marbles in his motionless head, finally left the stone to rest first on Steve and then on Clay Henderson.

"A beautiful frosted stone." He rolled it across the glossy pad. "Just like I said, that night, on the telephone."

"Green," Henderson said contemptuously. "What's blue about it?"

Annister shrugged his flabby shoulders.

Henderson strode rapidly to the window and held the rough diamond between thumb and forefinger against the light. He louped it, twisting it this way and that so that he could peer into it through the loupe's lenses from every possible angle. Steve watched him, then silently took both loupe and stone back to the table.

A little bigger than a robin's egg. Steve rolled it between his fingers. Filmed with white, as though it had been lightly dipped in powdered sugar. Even under the brilliant artificial light you couldn't see exactly what lay underneath the frosted skin. He held it closer to the loupe. Bigger than a robin's egg, and a little smaller than the sky. And so beautiful. A greenish bluish yellow. Or a yellowish blue. Or a kind of bluish green. Or just the color of a dream . . .

"For God's sake!" Steve said. "What color *would* you call it?"

"Green," Clay snapped.

Annister cleared his throat. "Please," he said. "A debating society?"

"Okay," said Clay Henderson. "But let me get this straight. You haven't showed it to anybody else?"

"No," Annister said. "Like I told you before. You're the first."

"Then let's talk turkey."

"Take your time." Annister grunted. His hands lay before him in two limp heaps. "Look a little more. We're not that far along."

Henderson picked up the stone. "I don't know." He frowned. "Is that your idea of a light frosted?"

"Is it heavy?"

"Try and see through it," Henderson said angrily.

"Look," said Annister. "What's light and what's heavy? So it's a frosted stone."

"This half of it looks like a naat."

"No." Annister looked pained. "A gletz. An insignificant skin flaw."

"A gletz!" Henderson screamed. He ran a pencil point along a slight fissure in the stone. "A crack like that?"

"A gletz," said Annister.

"And you lied about the color."

"You should get everything," Annister sighed. "For a practically speculative price."

"Give," Steve said abruptly. "How speculative?"

Jakop Annister puffed out his cheeks. He lifted his fat hands from the table and locked them slowly over his great belly. He closed his eyes, slumped lower in the chair and became so still that Steve thought he'd fallen into a deep sleep. Then, suddenly, his eyes popped open. "Eight hundred a carat," Annister said calmly. "Think it over. Take your time."

"Clay," Steve said. "Let's get out of here."

Steve opened the door into the outer office, half expecting to push it into Tobey's ear, but that wasn't her mood; not this afternoon. She was sitting quietly at her desk, as mysterious and aloof as the Sphinx.

"Well?" said Henderson.

"I like it." Steve ricocheted a glance off Tobey's back. "It's a nice stone."

"Nice." Henderson's eyes crackled with excitement. "It's one of the most beautiful stones I've ever seen."

"Could be." Steve kept his voice level. "But eight hundred's too high."

"We'll get it for six fifty. Look." Henderson held up the stone. He ran his fingernail down its long axis. "Here's how we'll take it. Have it sawed right along here, see. No problem at all."

"It looks like a pretty good yield."

"At least seventy percent," Henderson said. "Forty-two carats. I figure two

. . . and the good 'doctor' might well have added—"or it won't last long".

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emerald cuts. Maybe one eighteen and one twenty-four carater. Look. We'll get it for six fifty, maybe seven hundred. That's around forty thousand. It'll cost about fifteen hundred to make it. Right?"

He eyed Steve like a pitchman selling a combination glass-cutter and potato-peeler to the sidewalk trade.

"I can add," Steve said.

"The green's just a skin, just on the surface. I've bought these stones before. If the emerald cuts come out blue, we get anyway seventy-five thousand. Even commercial white, we make money. And if we get a fancy color, we clean up."

Steve didn't need the sales talk. It was a funny thing. You couldn't tell, of course, not really; but he had a feeling that the stone would come out pretty much the way Clay was picturing it—flawless and brilliant and of gem color.

He twisted the loupe into his right eye and peered again into the stone. "There's a purplish pique at the bottom of the gletz," he said. "You saw it?"

"It'll polish out," said Henderson. "I'm not worried."

"No," Steve said. "And I'm not either."

He went on looking through the loupe. "If it wasn't for that damned frosting."

Clay Henderson grinned. "I used to know a fellow who had a way of opening up a frosted stone like this, of grinding a tiny window in it so he could get a look inside before he put his money on the line. If he didn't like it, he'd paint the frosting back on, and nobody the wiser."

"That's interesting." Tobey came to life in her corner retreat. "What was his name, Clay?"

Clay stared at her, muscles bunching at the corners of his undershot jaw. He started to say something, and then he clamped his mouth shut.

"I tell you what," Steve said. "Go in and chew the fat with Annister. I'll be with you in a minute."

When the door closed Steve went casually over to Tobey's desk and dropped the rough diamond on her blotter.

She squinted at it. "Pretty," she said. "What is it, a gumdrop?"

"That's right. At a million dollars a pound."

"Steve. You and Henderson are going to make the stone, aren't you?"

"Sure. If we buy, we'll have it manufactured. Why?"

"Oh, nothing." She gazed thoughtfully at the adding machine.

"Come on," Steve said.

"Well, when you two happy characters were dreaming up how the stone would come out, you skipped a couple of possibilities."

"I'm aware of them."

"Such as if it comes out a bad color. Or it breaks on the saw."

"Not this stone," Steve said. "I'm in love with it."

"Annister could have it manufactured, couldn't he?" Tobey was getting stubborn. "But he takes a sure profit now and lets the sucker gamble on a super profit."

"The old man needs money," Steve said. "He told me to take risks."

"Steve, I'm thinking about the old man just as much as you are. The biggest favor you could do him would be to buy the stone, if you have to, and sell it again. Don't have it manufactured."

Tobey was pleading with him, but Steve wasn't having any. "Sorry," he said coldly. "I've made up my mind."

He went into the front office and Clay Henderson said, building up the act, "I went crazy, Steve. I've offered six-fifty."

"Seven-fifty." Annister pouted. "What's the use of arguing?"

Clay Henderson grabbed the stone from Steve and bounced it on the black baize table.

"Loupe it," he shouted. "You'll see. There's a nest of piques underneath the gletz."

"Please," Annister said, fanning out his hands. "Should I shoot myself?"

"And we'll lose plenty on the wheel, with that lousy gletz going halfway through the stone."

"I see a yield of seventy-five percent." Annister leaned back, his breath bubbling in his throat. "Maybe eighty."

Steve said quietly, "I'd better have Tobey weigh it."

"I just did." Clay pointed to the scales. "Sixty carats, on the nose."

Jakop Annister jumped as if he'd been pinched. He stared curiously at Henderson, his fingers twitching.

Steve nodded. He turned to Annister. "Six seventy-five."

"If you're not interested . . ." Annister reached for the stone and began to wrap it in the waxed paper.

Steve suddenly felt panicky. He knew in his heart that if it was the last thing he did, he was going to buy the stone with Clay and have it made. Illusion. How had the old man put it? You look at a stone, and its potentialities excite you, and your imagination begins to run amuck. Yes, that's how it was. And why not? This was one stone that was going to come out even better than he dreamed.

Annister went on wrapping up the stone.

"Wait a minute," Steve said. "Seven hundred and not a damned cent more."

Annister's fingers stopped moving. He squashed himself down in his chair and closed his eyes. His lips fluttered, and his shoulders kept jerking as though he were having an argument with himself. It must have been a serious argument, because it took a long time, but finally it was settled and he opened his eyes and said, "It's not enough. But all right. Seven hundred."

"I'll take a drink on that." Henderson rubbed his hands together furiously, and he darted his eyes back and forth from Steve to Jakop Annister. "Pour them, Steve."

Steve brought a bottle of brandy and three ponies from the cupboard. The brandy burned Steve's throat. Henderson tossed his off at one gulp, but Annister just touched his lips delicately to the rim of the pony and set it down again. Steve reached for the phone.

"Please." Annister's pudgy hand stopped him. "Cash. If you don't mind."

"Cash?" Steve said.

"Haven't you heard?" Clay Henderson was needling. "Somebody broke into Annister's china pig when he was a kid. You were a kid once, weren't you, Annister? And he hasn't trusted banks since. Right?"

Annister didn't even look at him. "Thousand-dollar bills would be handy," he grunted. "Forty-two one-thousand-dollar bills."

"Whatever you want," Steve said. "I'll have it sent to you at the Club the first thing in the morning."

Annister's head ducked forward a quarter of an inch. He snapped shut his wallet, stuffed it back into his big pocket, buckled his belt, hitched his vest into place and rose, like a sounding whale, from the table.

"Good day, gentlemen," he said heavily, and was gone.

There was a dead silence and then Clay Henderson clasped his hands and shook them over his head, a boxer taking the applause big, and he said to Steve exultantly, "Like stealing pennies from a blind man. We're in, Steve."

Steve wiped sweat from his forehead with the back of his hand. The cord that had been stretched and stretched inside his brain now suddenly snapped, and his head felt as light as a barrage balloon about to take off.

"Drink?" Steve wondered where the thin, taut voice was coming from. Somewhere out of the barrage balloon.

"I'd like to." Excitement still flickered like summer lightning in Clay Henderson's eyes, but he was getting restless and beginning to fidget, wrapping and unwrapping the greenish stone in the white packet. "But I'm going to skip it. Look." He made it sound as casual as he could. "Let me handle the cutting."

"I figured you would," Steve said. "That's your department."

"I'll take it to Meyerhoff's." He made it sound even more casual. "There isn't anyone else I'd want to use."

"That's all right with me."

Steve took Henderson to the door.

"There'll be a check for my half of the price in the mail," Henderson said over his shoulder.

"Sure," Steve said. "And keep in touch, will you, Clay?"

"As soon as I know," Henderson promised.

Steve watched him step down the corridor, light on his feet as a dancer, and then, when the door was closed, he snapped the lock and tried it to make sure it was locked.

Tobey was waiting for him. "Somebody's happy," she said. "Clay looks like the cat that swallowed the mouse."

"Come with me." Steve took her hand and led her into his office. She didn't hold back or struggle.

"What's going on?" Tobey leaned back against the diamond table, a puzzled frown in her bright eyes.

"We're about to celebrate," Steve said. "Because this stone is going to bring us a big piece of the money the old man needs."

"For a character who's playing poker with the deuces and one-eyed jacks wild," Tobey said, "you feel awfully confident."

"Listen, little Miss Sharper," Steve said. "How are things on the transatlantic run?"

"I want the stone to come out right just as much as you do."

"Sure," Steve said. "I know you do."

He busied himself with the safe, clanging the steel door shut and giving the knob a whirl. "The office is closed for the day," he said. He lifted her onto the table, and she gazed back at him, swinging her nice legs.

"You think I'm a dope, don't you?" Steve asked.

"Never mind what I think you are," Tobey said darkly.

"I think you're a wonderful character," Steve said. "And I love having you around the office, although I have recently become convinced there could be more suitable surroundings."

Tobey looked pleased. "Such as?"

"Later," Steve promised, "when this deal comes off."

Just thinking about the green stone made him giddy. The barrage balloon turned into a P-51. Life was a beautiful thing. The diamond business was a beautiful business. The view was beautiful, too. It was quite dark, and the lights in Radio City were the most beautiful lights Steve had ever seen.

"I'm hungry," Tobey said. "Does this celebration include food?"

"Tell you what"—Steve made a lightning decision—"let's buy a stuffed goose. With a pheasant inside the goose and a

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partridge inside the pheasant and a woodcock inside the partridge."

"And a hummingbird inside the woodcock," Tobey said.

"That's the idea," Steve said. "You know. Like Jakop Annister."

It was quiet in the office. Quiet and dark and beautiful. Tobey was beautiful, too; just as beautiful as Radio City. It was too bad it would take so long to have the green stone sawed and girdled and brillianted. A week, maybe ten days. Well, he could wait. Everything was going to be all right. The business and the stone and Tobey. He put his hands lightly on Tobey's shoulder, and she turned swiftly toward him in the darkness, her glowing face blotting out the lights.

TEN days passed through the office of John Lennep, a month at a time, melting down Steve's dream until it was just a cold pressure at the back of his skull. Tobey was being difficult. Her idea was to call Clay Henderson, or Pieter Meyerhoff and Son, but Steve wasn't having any. He wasn't a kid calling up teacher to find out whether he'd passed his examination. He wasn't, but that was how he felt.

"He ought to let you know," Tobey insisted for the one-hundredth time.

"Stop it," Steve said. "He will."

But when the cable came from John Lennep, saying he was taking the plane that afternoon, Steve changed his mind. Only he didn't have to call Clay Henderson because the day that the old man was due back, just before closing time in the office, Tobey buzzed Steve's phone, and when he picked it up Henderson's rasping voice hit him in the ear.

"Steve," the voice said. "When can you get over here?"

"Give," Steve said.

"When you get here!" There was a click.

Steve got up and put on his hat and coat. His mouth was dry, his heart was banging against his ribs. "Tobey."

Her eyes held a question.

"I don't know," he said. "Stay here, will you, honey? I'll call after I've talked to Clay."

Walking into Clay Henderson's office was like walking into a mirror. Just another diamond office. A little larger, and the rugs apricot instead of blue, but the basic ingredients matched Steve's. Safe, black baize-covered table, pads of glossy diamond paper, mahogany desk and glass-boxed scales. Henderson was standing at the window.

He turned, and without saying anything, he grabbed his big-jawed, sparsely-thatched, ugly head and twisted it as though he was trying to tear it off. When Steve looked at the baize table he could figure out why.

A single emerald-cut stone lay on the white pad. It shone, and sparkled, and it was a diamond; but there was only one, and it wasn't blue—not even commercial white—just a dark, nasty yellow.

Steve's breath caught in his throat.

"We've had a strop." Henderson gave up trying to tear off his head. "The worst strop that ever happened."

"Very funny." Steve picked up the diamond.

"It wasn't a Sierra Leone the way I thought it might be," Henderson said. "Just a lousy Dutoitspan."

"A little difference like that!"

Steve twisted the stone in his fingers. He didn't have to loupe it. What he could see with his naked eye was plenty. About eleven carats. With that color, worth perhaps eight thousand dollars. They'd paid forty-two, twenty-one of it John Lennep's. Seventeen thousand bucks out the window.

"Why didn't you give me a call, if this is what was happening?" Steve asked.

"I couldn't," Henderson said. "I didn't want to. I kept hoping for the best." He banged his fist on the table. "That lousy cutter?"

"What about the cutter?"

"He sawed the stone into two thirty-caraters," Henderson said. "No trouble at all. Just the way we planned it." He twisted at his head again.

"Stop that," Steve said. "Never mind the play-acting."

A thin trickle of rage was beginning to swell and spread until he could feel it pressing against his eyeballs. There wasn't anyone to get sore at, except himself, and he knew there wasn't, but that didn't help any, and he couldn't do anything to stop it.

Henderson moaned. He clapped his hand to his bulging forehead. "The first half shattered into a million pieces on the girdler. The cutter girdled the other half. No trouble. But then he begins polishing. Remember the gletz?"

"I've been dreaming about it," Steve said.

"That's what ruined us." Henderson said wearily. "That lousy cutter kept pushing the gletz right down through."

"Winding up with eleven carats."

"And eleven points," Henderson said. "I'm sorry, Steve. It's just as bad for me as it is for you."

"Sure," Steve said. He put the stone in his pocket.

"I'm thinking about Lennep," Henderson said. "I feel responsible, in a way, to him, too. After all——"

"Never mind the old man," Steve said, cold as ice. "That's my department."

He had to get out of there. He'd been taken, the way you can get taken in this business, and that was that. But he had to get out, where he could think, where he could think this through, from one end to the other.

"We'll make up for this," Henderson said. "On another deal."

"You bet."

"You're not sore?"

"No," Steve said. "Not at you."

There was a telephone booth in the lobby. Steve called Pieter Meyerhoff and Sons and got Meyerhoff himself. "It's about that green frosted you cut for me and Henderson."

"A yellowish green," the cutter said.

"Let's not get into that." Steve gritted his teeth. "It was sixty carats. Frosted. Right?"

"Right. You see——"

"What happened?"

Meyerhoff's story checked line for line with what Henderson had told him, and then the cutter said, "I'm sorry about it, Mr. Gill. You understand——"

"Sure," Steve said. "Everybody's sorry."

He dropped another nickle in the slot and dialed his office number, and when Tobey answered he said, "Close the office, will you? Meet me at the Silver Pheasant right away."

"But what——"

"Right away." His fingers slapped the receiver on to the hook.

STEVE sleepwalked out into the windy darkness of Fifth Avenue, only dimly aware that a light drizzle was beginning to fall. In the Silver Pheasant, Tobey was sitting at the corner banquette table where they'd first talked about the stones that were going to be flawless and come out absolutely blue, blue, blue.

He tossed the eleven-carat louse in Tobey's lap.

Her eyes got very big.

Steve nodded. "A strop," he said. "An absolute, unconditional, triple-decked, unprintable strop."

"Impossible." She whispered it.

"Something to tell the old man when he gets back tonight," Steve said.

"It was such a beautiful stone."

"That's what makes horse races." Steve picked up the Martini that Tobey had ordered for him. He put it down without tasting it. His face was white. "There has to be a margin for error."

"It was a really beautiful stone," Tobey said in a frightened voice.

Why did she keep saying that?

"It's amazing," Steve said, "how easy it is to toss away seventeen thousand bucks, once you get the hang of it."

The old man's gentle voice came out of a public-address system inside Steve's head: "I have confidence in you, Steven. You won't let me down."

"Don't just stare at me." Tobey stirred uneasily.

"It's news to me you thought it was such a beautiful stone," Steve said coldly.

"All I ever said was that manufacturing——" She stopped, but it was too late. She'd dropped a lighted match in a drum of high-test gasoline.

"Was a sucker's game?" Steve finished.

She flushed. "Yes," she said, uncomfortable and a little defiant.

"And that I shouldn't have anything to do with Henderson."

"I don't care what I said."

But Steve wouldn't let it alone. Anger, free-floating, unattached anger, was flaring up inside of him again in a savage blaze.

"You've been calling the turn right along, haven't you?"

"You're being nasty."

"I feel nasty."

"Not with me," Tobey said. "I don't like it."

"You were right about the seven thousand carats, and you were right about Henderson."

"Please." Two red spots glowed in Tobey's white face. She made a gesture with her hands, as though she were pleading with a drunk, or a child.

But the anger was at flash point. "You might even give me the whole routine. The stones are unimportant. It's the way you handle them. It's really just like a poker game. Right? You watch——"

"Steve! Stop it!"

"Maybe you can figure how I'm supposed to do business with a smarty pants jiggling my elbow. Personally, I can't."

"Steve!"

It was unfair. It was worse. But Steve was wound up now, and he couldn't stop. "So let's make a bargain. While I'm figuring some way to do something about this, you take yourself a little vacation."

Tobey's voice was very small and low. "How long, Steve?"

"Well." Steve got up. "Let's say for about twenty years."

And that was that. He felt as if he'd kicked a puppy in the face, and there wasn't anything he could do about it. He left Tobey on the sidewalk and started across town. The drizzle was turning into a solid, driving rain. He turned up his coat collar. Without noticing where he was going, he just walked. The thing went round and round in his head. The old man had needed money. He'd trusted Steve.

After what seemed hours of walking, he crossed the street to a drugstore and called Tobey's apartment. Wasn't the strop bad enough without doing what he'd done to Tobey? When she answered, he said, "It's Steve. Don't hang up."

She hung up.

He went back to his endless walking.

"I have confidence in you, Steven. You

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... that dares you to wear it out! 55% DuPont nylon, 45% rayon, 100% enduringly lovely! Barbizon's exclusive fabric in "Streamline" ... the slip that fits like a dress, a made-to-your-figure dress. Be measured for your "Body-Contour"* size in the new spring length. Only $4.50. Extra large sizes $5.00.
THE Barbizon CORPORATION
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*Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

won't let me down." The anger began melting away, and Steve's mind began to click. They can't do this to me. They can't do it to the old man. You didn't squawk when you took a beating, not in this business; not unless you began to figure there might be something screwy about the whole deal. Or even one chance in a hundred that there was. Suppose you figured you ought to ask a few people a few questions, just on that hundred-to-one chance? People like Jakop Annister, for instance.

There was a diner on the corner. Steve went in and ordered a cup of coffee, and while he was waiting counted out enough nickels and dimes to call Slappsy Marquis in Rumson, New Jersey. He got Slappsy's wife first, and after a minute Slappsy was on the wire.

"Listen," Steve said. "Do you know what illusion is?"

"Do I know what illusion is?" Slappsy said indignantly.

"It's when you think you're going to make a million dollars, and you lose your shirt."

"Now Mr. Gill, you——"

"But what I want to know is, where could I find Jakop Annister around this time of night?"

"There's a greasy spoon on Forty-eighth," Slappsy said. "North side, between Seventh and Eighth. He hangs around there evenings. You could try that. But——"

"Thanks," Steve said. "I will."

He threw a dime on the counter and started walking again.

Times Square looked big and shiny and wet. Rain was coming down in buckets. By the time Steve found the greasy spoon on Forty-eighth, his overcoat was soaked through, and his hat was flopping around his ears like a cabbage leaf. He didn't mind, because when he walked into the restaurant, there was Jakop Annister, twice as big as life, a napkin knotted under his second chin, working on a bowl of split-pea soup.

Annister put down his spoon. "Mr. Gill," he said calmly, through a mouthful of soup.

Steve sat down at the white porcelain table. "I thought you'd be interested to hear how the beautiful green frosted came out." He watched the broker carefully.

"Please." Annister crumpled a handful of soda crackers into his soup. "Of course."

Steve slid the eleven-carater across the porcelain. "Mighty handsome, don't you think?"

He was still watching Annister, but he might just as well have dropped the brown diamond in front of a St. Bernard. No reaction. Annister's eyes revolved in his motionless head, an eighth of an inch down to the stone, up to Steve, down to the stone and stayed there."

"What you might call a strop," Steve said.

"This is a very speculative line of business." Annister blinked. "Highly speculative."

"I've been developing a theory," Steve said. "Want to hear it?"

"Just as you say, Mr. Gill." Annister scraped the bottom of his bowl with the spoon.

"It goes like this," Steve said. "A couple of guys named Mr. Sharp and Mr. Swindler figure out a way to make a monkey out of a semi-pro by the name of Mr. Sucker. They build him up with a deal, a deal for, say, seven thousand carats. They make him feel pretty good about his judgment, but at the same time let him know that he might have done even better. Follow?"

"It's an interesting line of thought."

"It fascinates me," Steve said. "So then Mr. Sharp gives Mr. Sucker the business with a greenish frosted stone that's really worth, say, about three hundred a carat. He sells it apparently to both Mr. Sucker and Mr. Swindler, but Mr. Swindler gets his half of the price back from Mr. Sharp. Mr. Sharp is still getting three fifty a carat, a good price. And he and Mr. Swindler get a free ride on their half of the stone, just in case they made a mistake, and it comes out really worth something.

"An interesting theory," Annister said. "Do you think the arbitration board at the Club would go for it?"

It was a shot in the dark, and Steve had no idea of calling for the cops. All he wanted was to needle Annister into making a move. Annister didn't bat an eye. He just sighed a deep, bubbling sigh. "Please," he said. "Who cut the stone?"

"Pieter Meyerhoff," Steve said.

"Not Joe Ackroyd?" Annister's fingers twitched.

"Never heard of him. Why?"

"Nothing," Annister said mildly. "I just used to know a cutter named Joe Ackroyd."

"Well," Steve said. "The name doesn't send me." He pushed back his chair.

"There's no hurry."

"Good-by," Steve said.

"Always glad to do business with you, Mr. Gill."

ACROSS the street Steve stopped and looked through the rain-spattered window of the restaurant. And suddenly he had a feeling the shot in the dark hadn't missed after all. He saw Annister make a phone call and then walk rapidly to the coat rack, put on his hat and overcoat, and emerge into the rainy street, where, after only a moment's hesitation, he started toward Seventh Avenue.

Steve crossed over and stayed about thirty feet behind him. At the corner Annister hailed a cab. Steve stopped, his soggy coat collar turned up against his dripping face. Annister, holding on to the door of the cab, said, "Burryton, Long Island."

"You?" the driver snapped. "Have you got that kind of dough?"

The door slammed, and the taxi took off across the town at a fast clip. Steve grinned. He wondered how much less than half a million bucks in cash Annister had stashed in that buried wallet. He was beginning to feel high, as hopped up as a snowbird. His feet took him very rapidly into a cigar-store phone booth, and when he got Tobey, he said, "Don't hang up. Just do me a favor and don't hang up."

"Why?" Tobey asked belligerently.

"There's going to be a bulletin," Steve said. "Stick around the apartment, will you?"

"You've been drinking," she said coolly.

It was a little harder than selling Brooklyn Bridge to a bookie, but Steve finally persuaded Tobey to wait for his next call. When he'd accomplished that miracle he found a cab heading crosstown, which was where he wanted to go, and he gave the driver Clay Henderson's address in Burryton, Long Island.

It took about forty minutes to reach the village of Burryton. The driver ducked into a diner to ask for directions. Two miles past the town they turned left on an unlighted, winding road, and Steve leaned forward, squinting through the windshield down the green tunnel of dripping trees and the glistening black surface of the macadam road. Just short of the crest of a long hill the driver suddenly stepped on the brake.

"There it is, Mack." The cab ground to a stop.

The sign, fifty feet away, was very clear, with HENDERSON spelled out in little buttons that gleamed in the cab's headlights.

"Put your lights out." Steve stepped into the rain. "And wait for me here."

"Better give me some dough," the driver said ominously.

Steve threw a ten-dollar bill at him and started down the muddy shoulder of the road toward the sign. He could make out the blurred outlines of another cab parked a discreet distance past the sign. He thought: That would be Annister's, and he walked at a faster pace through the drenched night until he came to the driveway where he turned in. When he became aware of gravel crunching under his feet, he moved to the lawn and continued on until the house was very close. When he heard the noise he stopped and stood stock still. You couldn't mistake it. The pulsing of an electric motor and mixed with it the whine of a cutter's wheel spinning oil and abrasive dust against a diamond.

He started toward a glow of light fanning out from a basement window. He leaned down, and when he peered through it into a small, concrete-floored room, he sucked in his breath sharply.

Jakop Annister, his vast back half turned toward the window, was rummaging furiously through the litter on top of a fully equipped cutter's bench. Everything was there. Cleaving box, girdling lathe, saw, and the wheel itself. The wheel, set flush with the bench top, revolved on its spindle so rapidly that it seemed motionless, a motionless pool of grayish, gleaming light.

Steve knelt down, his body pressed against the house, keeping his eye only a few inches in from the side of the window. As he watched, Annister abandoned the search on the bench top and stretched his hand toward the dop, a small copper tulip, its stem stuck through the small end of the tapered tongue that pressed the screeching diamond against the wheel.

When Annister lifted the heavy, steel-edged tongue clear of the wheel, the screeching stopped abruptly. His head tilted upward, and at once Steve heard the faint scratching of footsteps across the floor directly over the little room.

Annister twisted the tongue around, holding it close to a hooded lamp hanging over the bench and stared fixedly at the diamond stuck in the solder-filled cup of the dop like a plum in a tiny cake. He wiped the dop across his sleeve and stared at it again.

"Henderson?" A muffled voice bounced the question into the cutting room.

Annister glanced up from the dop. A man appeared in the doorway. He was in his shirt sleeves, a short, stocky man with a crest of blond hair falling over his ears and half across bleared eyes.

"Ackroyd." Annister stood quite still. "Joe Ackroyd."

"Looking for something, Jake?" The cutter spoke softly.

"Please." Annister sighed. "Where's the other stone?"

"No speak English." Ackroyd took a step forward, swaying a little, a wary expression on his blotched face.

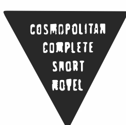
"I want it," Annister said.

"Henderson will be back any minute. He isn't going to like this." An edge came into Ackroyd's thick voice. "Not any part of it."

"That swindler," Annister said.

Ackroyd spoke so softly that Steve could hardly hear him. "Look, Jake. Why don't you beat it, right now, see, before the boss gets back? Be like the monkeys, Jake. See no evil, hear no evil, speak no

New lotion sensation works wonders for your whole hand!



evil. What do you say?"

"Swindler," Annister said. He waved the tongue angrily.

The cutter grasped Annister's arm and pushed, lightly at first and then with increasing pressure, edging him away from the bench. Annister wrenched himself loose, his huge chest heaving. Ackroyd stood back. He swayed, indecision and fear in his pale eyes. Then he began to move slowly, calculatingly toward Annister.

"The other stone," Annister said hoarsely. He turned and once more began to search among the tools and metal boxes and rags that cluttered the bench top. This time he found what he was looking for. He grasped it in his left hand and held it close to Ackroyd's face. It was like pulling the pin in a hand grenade.

"Give me that." Ackroyd spat the words through his teeth. "Give me that and get out!" He screamed it. "Get out!"

Annister's face grew purple. He raised the tongue, brandishing it like a club, and when Ackroyd came toward him again, he lashed out with it, clumsily, like a girl throwing a ball. The tongue glanced off the cutter's head, raking a deep cut along his cheekbone. Ackroyd fell back, then seemed to explode. He picked up a heavy wrench, swung it in a short brutal arc. Annister pitched forward and seemed to billow to the floor, vast and spineless as a struck circus tent.

STEVE got to his feet and ran, stumbling across the wet lawn, to the cellar door. He was down the stairs and halfway along a narrow, dimly-lighted corridor, when a figure came around the corner and rocketed into him. Steve drew back his fist and drove it at Ackroyd's pale face with all the power of his shoulder and back. The cutter's head jerked back. He spun half around and fell heavily at Steve's feet.

Steve ran into the cutting room, found a coil of copper wire and returned to Ackroyd. He knelt beside him, rolling his limp body face down on the concrete floor. He bound the cutter's wrists together with a triple strand of wire, and then his ankles. He left him there and went back to the little room where Annister lay.

Annister's eyes were closed. A line of dark blood was leaking from one temple and dribbling across his grayish cheek. Steve grasped Annister's left wrist and was turning it gently palm upward when he heard a door slam in what seemed like the remote distance, and after that footsteps banged across the floor overhead. The footsteps stopped abruptly, then began again, running now, and getting louder all the time.

"Ackroyd!" Henderson's voice boomed. "Ackroyd!"

Steve stood up, dropping Annister's wrist. Clay Henderson stood in the doorway, waggling his big head, fear and bewilderment in his eyes.

"Steve." His mouth fell open. "What is it?"

"It could be murder," Steve said, "among other things."

"You?"

"Stop kidding. Ackroyd." Steve jerked his thumb toward the corridor. "He's out there, fixed up like a Christmas turkey."

Steve turned away from Henderson. He squatted down and very gently folded back the half-clenched fingers of Annister's left hand. He hadn't seen what it was that Annister had pushed into Ackroyd's face, and he had to know. The fingers opened out, and there it was. A tiny bolt of lightning flashed in the palm of Jakop Annister's hand. A thumbnail-sized block, glittering like fire on the pudgy flesh.

Steve caught his breath. He picked up the diamond, held it lovingly between thumb and forefinger. Emerald-cut. No less than twenty-four carats and better than any dealer's absolutely blue, blue, blue. Really blue, bluer than the sky, of the most exquisite gem color.

Henderson's eyes started out like agates. He struck the palm of his hand violently against his forehead.

"I've got to talk to you," he said hysterically.

You sure do, Steve thought. The stone was a whiff of super-refined benzedrine. You surer than hell do. Counters were clicking in his mind, like the counters in Tobey's adding machine. And in a few minutes he was going to pull the lever and get the total.

His eye fell on the tongue that lay on the floor where Annister had dropped it. He picked it up and loosened a bolt so that he could pull the copper stem of the dop through the slit end of the tongue and then, holding the dop like a flower, he peered at the diamond embedded in the blob of grayish, thumb-smoothed solder. Eighteen carats, at least that. And almost finished.

Steve held the other stone beside it. That did it. He pulled the lever and the total came out, clear and handsome. Both emerald-cuts, and the same color. According to plan. According to operation wonderful-green-stone.

"Forty-two carats," he said coldly to Henderson. "Or just about, counting them both together. In this kind of goods, Clay, that's something to kill a man for."

"Ackroyd," Henderson gasped. "Not me."

"You hired him," Steve said.

"But not for that." Henderson pointed at Annister. "Not for anything like that. Not——"

He began to blubber, trotting in a circle on the cement floor, incapable of uttering two words together coherently.

"Stop it," Steve said.

He grabbed Henderson's coat lapels in his fist and held him motionless. He drew back his hand and slapped him, just once, across the face. Henderson stood stock still, his lips trembling.

"You might as well come clean," Steve said. "What's a swindle, alongside a slight case of murder?"

"Ackroyd," Henderson said bitterly. "That drunken fool."

"All right," Steve said. "But Ackroyd didn't plan the switch." He slipped the big stone and the dop into his jacket pocket. "Now did he, Clay?"

Clay shook his clumsy head.

"That was your bright idea."

"I want to explain it, Steve."

"Sure," Steve said. "Think of all the things you're going to explain, Clay. For instance, where did you get the stone you gave to Pieter Meyerhoff to cut?"

"I bought it a long time ago," Henderson said sullenly. "I had it in my safe."

"You had it in your safe."

Now isn't that nice, Steve thought. He had it in his safe. It was all so neat and clear.

Clay had been holding on to a sixty-carat greenish frosted stone, because there was something about it he didn't like. He kept it. He didn't sell, and he didn't have it cut. He just hung on to it, and then when Jakop Annister offered him the green stone, Clay got a very bright idea.

"What was wrong with it?" Steve asked. "Did you open it up, just a tiny window in the frost, and find something suspicious?"

"An ingrown. I was afraid the whole damned stone would shatter on the saw," Henderson said.

"And you didn't think much of the color, once you took a peek inside. You figured it might be a Dutoitspan."

"It was."

"Share the wealth," Steve said. "And the risk. I paid for half of Annister's stone, the one Ackroyd cut, but you were to get all the profit. What I was to get was half of what came out of the Dutoitspan. It didn't cost you much, did it, Clay, for the Dutoitspan?"

"The guy was in a jam for cash," Henderson said sullenly. "Two hundred a carat."

"Funny, though," Steve said, "that they both weighed exactly the same, exactly sixty carats. The color was easy. No two people would describe the color the same way. Or the shape. But we weighed the stone in my office."

Henderson stared silently at him.

"No," Steve said thoughtfully. "Not we. You weighed Annister's stone, didn't you, Clay? Your Dutoitspan weighed exactly sixty carats. Annister's must have been a few points under."

"Twenty-one points under," Henderson mumbled.

"But you told me sixty carats, on the nose, so when I asked Meyerhoff, and was told sixty carats, it would all check."

Annister groaned faintly and began to move his head. His lips fluttered. Steve looked down at him and then at Henderson.

"You'd better go upstairs," he said. "And call the cops. Tell them to send an ambulance."

Annister groaned again. He opened his eyes, blinked, shifted them until they fell on Steve. "Mr. Gill," he said.

"I'm sorry," Steve said, kneeling beside him.

"Please," said Annister. "Not Mr. Sharp or Mr. Swindle."

"I know." Steve smiled. "I had you tagged wrong."

"A fine young man." Annister sucked in breath painfully. "Miss Constable," he said weakly. "A fine young lady."

"Take it easy." Steve put his hand on Annister's shoulder.

"I had to hurry." Annister's voice was fading. He closed his eyes. "Another day, and they might have had the stones on the market."

Annister clenched and unclenched his left hand, tried to lift it up and began to grind his teeth together.

"Here," Steve said. He fished the big diamond out of his pocket and held it up. "Stop worrying."

Annister sighed heavily. "I had illusion on that green stone." He frowned. "Me, Jakop Annister. I had to find out." He shook his head. "Never permit yourself illusion, Mr. Gill," he said, and fainted dead away.

STEVE went upstairs and across the pine floor of Clay Henderson's living room. Henderson left the telephone and trotted to the huge fireplace, wheeled, ran back across the rug and hurled himself, groaning, into an armchair. He poured himself a multiple Scotch and drank it raw.

"I called the police," he said. "They're coming."

"Good." Steve picked up the telephone. "I'll wait for them." He gave the operator Tobey's number.

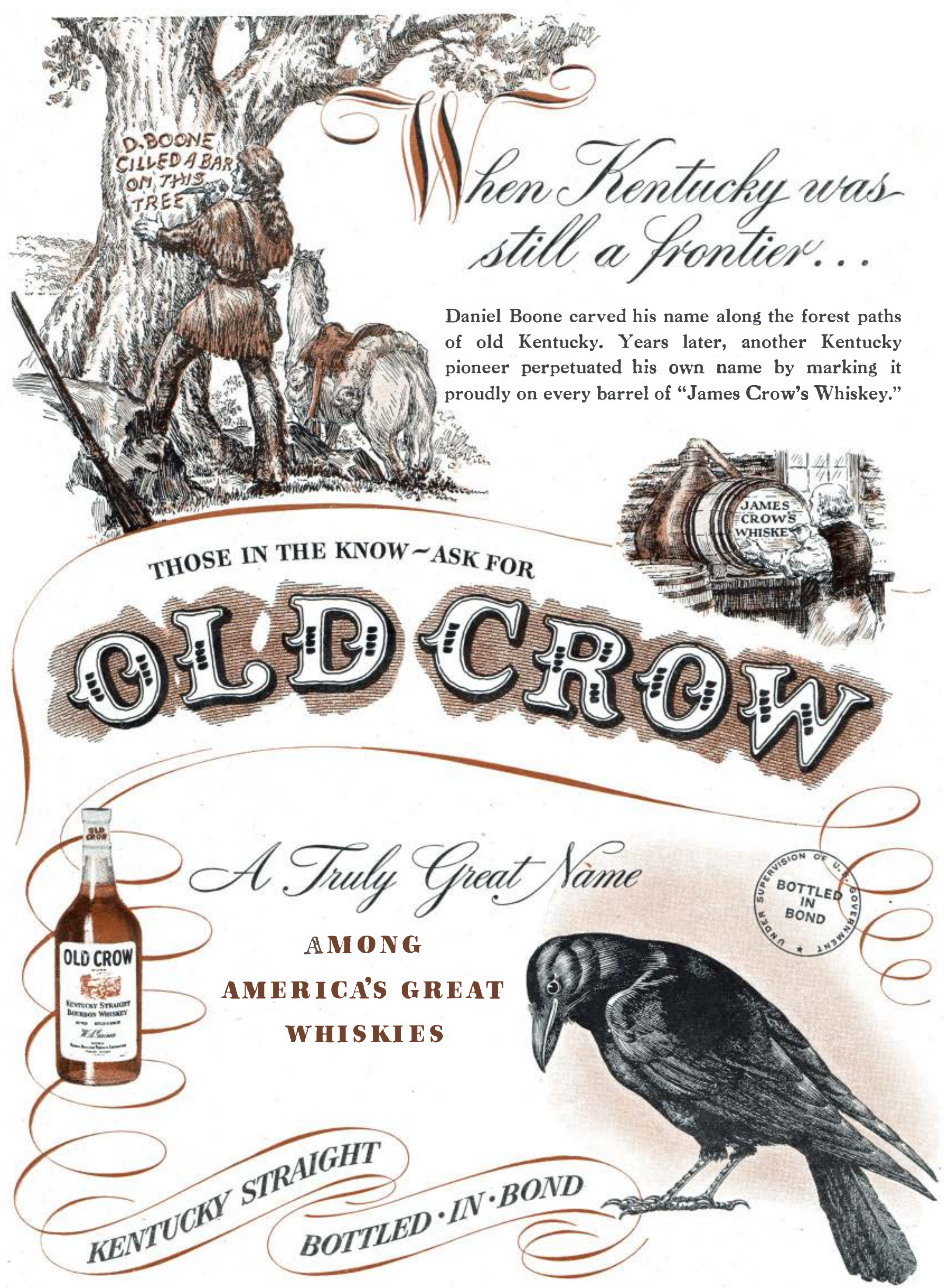
"Steve," Henderson said despairingly. "I wasn't going to go through with it; not all the way."

"Sort of basic training for me, Clay?"

"Well, you——"

"With live ammunition," Steve shook his head. "Save your breath, Clay. For the cops."

Steve held the receiver close to his ear,



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and when Tobey came on the line he said, "Tobey, listen."

"That's what I'm doing," Tobey said.

"I've got to see you."

"You will," Tobey said. "At the office, in twenty years."

"I mean tonight. In about two hours. I want you to meet me at the old man's house."

"Why?" Tobey asked.

"I've got a stuffed goose," Steve shouted. "For you and him."

There was a silence.

"With a pheasant in it?" Tobey asked in a small voice.

"Right down to the hummingbird," Steve said.

"Steve!"

"Tobey, I was right about the stone," he said, "but you were right about the way to play the cards."

Tobey's voice sounded far away but special. "You know what I always say, Steve."

"What do you always say?"

"That two heads are better than none," Tobey said.

Steve laughed. That was the true, the original, the only Tobey. She was for him.

THE END

Is an illegal act justified if it is employed to correct an intolerable crime which is itself beyond the law? That is the poignant challenge in Nelia Gardner White's novel "The Girl in the Post Office," complete in the March issue

The World and Arthur Royal *(Continued from page 42)*

have the facts. I've got to report this, Mister."

Art looked at him. "There's nothing to report. A car came around the corner as I was crossing with the light. The right fender knocked me across the sidewalk. I didn't get the license number. The driver didn't stop. Nothing more I can tell you."

The policeman frowned. He looked at the intern. The intern lifted his shoulders again. Art took out his wallet. He folded a bill in his concealed fingers. He put his hand out to the intern's palm. "For your trouble. Thank you. I've got to find a tailor."

The crowd parted for him reluctantly. The policeman said, "But Mister . . ."

Art did not stop. He limped away until the double wash of the passers-by engulfed him, made him as one of them.

He found a tailor shop. He said to the man's blank, incurious face, "Fix this as well as you can."

He sat in a curtained booth in his shorts. He heard the whir of a machine, the hiss of a steam press. He thought: I could have been killed.

He swallowed. He tried to think what would have happened after. He would have been thrown to the pavement as he had been, only in that case, when the ambulance came, the intern would have shaken his head. The report would have said DOA. The ambulance would have clanged away, and a police wagon would have come instead. They would have covered his body with a blanket while they waited, and the crowd would have stared just as it had a few minutes ago.

That was all. There would have been a line or two in the papers. Something about Arthur Royal, thirty-five, of Chestnut Lane, Larchmont, account executive with Kalman-Kaye, Advertising, killed by a hit-and-run driver at Madison Avenue and Forty-seventh Street. Maybe a line about Joyce and Liz.

He meant nothing to the world—to the hurrying people. No one would remember a week afterwards that he had ever been. Liz, yes, and Joyce for a while. And maybe Hester.

It started him thinking. He had not been thinking that way for a long time, if ever. Of Arthur Royal, not as he saw himself—with everything that happened to him of solemn importance—but as just another human being among a billion or so, unimportant to the world at large.

It shook him. It brought into different focus all that had been happening.

He saw it all now as if he had shifted to the point where the angle of vision was changed. Liz, his wife; Joyce, his daughter. And Hester . . .

IT BEGAN, Art remembered, as he lit a cigarette with still shaky fingers, the evening he came from town after that first unsuccessful meeting with United Metals. Almost two weeks ago. He'd left J. B. Kaye, his boss, at the New York Central gate and had run to catch his New Haven local. He had remembered J.B.'s dark face under the gray hair, and he'd thought as he found a seat: To hell with you. I'm doing my best with that outfit. But he was uneasy, too. Advertising was strictly dog eat dog; you produced or someone else was snapping at you and your job.

It gnawed at him all the way to Larchmont. Liz was waiting at the station plaza with the convertible that was getting a little shabby. She got out of the car as the local stopped, but when she saw him she didn't come towards him. She stood waiting—a fair-haired woman in her early thirties, still slim and fine-figured.

SHE must have seen a man she had seen many times before. A man some six feet tall, in a blue double-breasted suit with a starched shirt and an expensive tie: neat, alert, apparently successful.

She hadn't kissed him. She had said, even before he swung the car door for her to get in, "You might have let me know you were going to be late."

There must have been something behind that, Art thought now, but at the time he only thought, irritably: Lord, the understanding wife. He had said, closing the door sharply and going around to the far side, "We were at United Metals."

Liz didn't ask, "How did it go?" so that he could have said, explosively, "Lousy, damn it" and got some of it out of his system. She said, "Couldn't you have phoned me instead of letting me sit here since the five-fifty-three?"

The gears had squealed as Art started the car. "I couldn't. When I'm with J.B. and Haldane I stay till they've finished."

She hadn't answered. She had sat, stiff and withdrawn, until they reached Chestnut Lane. Lights were aglow in the small white clapboard house as Art drove up. Liz got out without a word and went around to the kitchen entrance.

Art drove the car into the garage. He switched off the ignition, got out and tripped the balance of the overhead doors. He stood for a moment looking at the clipped lawn that was thin in spots, even in the softening twilight; at the boxwood hedge, at the tulips. A pretty penny it cost each month for the itinerant gardener. He thought with a tearing irritation: Very nice if J.B. calls me one day soon and says, "Royal, you're through."

He went into the kitchen. It was all blue and white. The odor of lamb stew came to him, and he couldn't help the wrinkling of his nose. Liz must have seen. Her blue eyes touched his face for only a moment, and then she looked at the

electric stove again, her lips tightening.

Art went through the swinging door to the hall. He went past the foot of the stairs to the arched opening of the living room. Joyce was lying on the winered broadloom, reading a comic book. On the radio a man with an impossible accent was telling off some woman.

Joyce didn't look up. Art felt his stomach tighten with anger. He went past her and switched off the radio. She looked at him, her eyes round and blank.

She was a lean and lanky kid. She wore blue jeans and a yellow pull-over. Her fair hair was not too neat. A girl of ten. A girl who struck Art Royal at the moment as a far-from-prepossessing child.

Joyce said in her shrill voice, "I was listening, Daddy."

Art's throat swelled. "And reading that muck at the same time. You'd better go and get cleaned up for dinner."

"I've had my dinner," Joyce said, deep injury in her tone.

Art stared down at her. "You've homework then, haven't you?"

"We don't get homework," Joyce said.

"Go upstairs anyhow. You can listen to your own radio."

"It's broken." Her eyes were on Art in a curious, watchful way that tightened him still more. "It fell on the floor."

"By itself, of course." Art let his breath go slowly. "Go on up. It's past eight."

"But, Daddy——"

His patience snapped. "Go on, I tell you." He pulled her up abruptly by one thin arm. "When I tell you to do something, do it."

Her mouth opened. She cried, "Mother. Mo-o-ther," and tears filled her eyes.

Art dropped her arm. Liz appeared instantly in entrance way. Anger blazed in her eyes. Art said, trying to keep his voice level, "Since Joyce has had her dinner I think she'd better go to her room."

Joyce wept, turning to Liz, who said in a choked voice, "Do as your father says. I'll be up in a few minutes."

Joyce said, "But Mo-o-ther," and Liz gestured. "Go on, dear!"

The reluctant feet finally reached the top. A door closed. Liz said in a fierce whisper, "Don't you ever do that again. Don't you dare touch Joyce."

Art didn't answer. He didn't dare because, if he opened his mouth, there would be too many things spilling out. He looked at Liz. He thought, swallowing: Oh, my God, is this what I've come to? Is this the end of the guy who had the whole world before him?

He sat down in his oyster-white leather chair in the room that was colorful with its odd pieces of furniture, its warm draperies. He felt trapped, betrayed by life. He thought: I'm thirty-five and finished. A man who's afraid of losing his job. Tied down to a wife like—like that. A child no one would ever imagine when dreaming of children.

Liz said from the archway, "Dinner is ready."

He didn't look at her. "I don't want any."

"Suit yourself." She went out.

Art lit a cigarette. It tasted like sawdust. He snuffed it out. He could feel his heart pounding. He felt like a cornered rat, looking frantically for a way out when there was no way out.

He'd certainly finished himself. He was tied and fastened as securely and permanently as this house to its foundations. He thought: Thirty-five. That wasn't old. It wasn't even middle-aged, but it was within the shadow of that bourn. It sent the youth, which had seemed unending, skittering back into perspective. A very long distance back.

He could hear Liz in the kitchen, and he felt his fear, his anger turn against

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her. There was in the sound of her, the thought of her, a conviction of betrayal. She had been lovely and young and stirring. She had been a part of all that life promised when he had met her the winter after he took his B.A. at Midwest and came East. It was in her blue eyes and the warmth of her lips. That assurance that made her part of the surge of ambition and certainty in him. But that had been only a snare and a delusion. She had tied his hands and his feet, had shorn his hair.

He got up slowly and went upstairs. As he passed Joyce's room he heard her sniffle. She hadn't been sniffling when he started up, and it made Art's face darken. He went into his den.

Determinedly he sat down at his desk and drew a pad before him. He tried to concentrate on the United Metals business. It escaped him for the moment, and his pencil began to put down instead the figures of his financial standing. On one side the assets, on the other the obligations. The house, the bonds, the property in Ohio, the insurance. Against that, fortunately, no big debts. But when he had subtracted the liabilities from the assets there were no great numbers remaining.

In a sort of panic he forced himself to think of United. He went over everything in the campaign Kalman-Kaye had built up for United's winter advertising. He tried to find why Haldane didn't go for it. Why J.B. frowned so darkly. He thought: It's my fault. I'm slipping.

He heard the click of the light switch downstairs; heard Liz's step. The door to Joyce's room opened, closed.

When he next looked at his watch it was past ten. He was tired. His eyes ached. His mouth was dry. He thought, with an inner shrinking, of the morrow when he would have to see J.B. When it would all have to be gone into again. Bitterness tingled his every nerve. "At a time like this a man expects at least that his wife and family . . ."

He got up and turned off the lights. He went down the hall to his and Liz's room. She was in bed, but he knew she wasn't reading the magazine she held. He could tell that by the way she held it, the way she did not look at him.

Art Royal went into the dressing room and prepared for bed. He came out again and threw his robe over the foot of his bed, got in and drew the covers over him, turning away from Liz and her light.

He knew Liz was waiting for him to say something, to look at her even, but he was cold in his determination not to. They had had quarrels before in the dozen years of their married life, heated, furious quarrels; but this was something different. This left Art Royal feeling cold and empty. He thought as he closed his eyes: In the last analysis a man has no one but himself to depend on. He's a fool to look for comfort anywhere else.

WHEN he came down to breakfast the next morning the quarrel was like gelatin made the night before. Its shape had set.

Joyce sat over her cereal. She looked at him with wide, watchful eyes. Art did not speak to the child. He hated her at the moment. He opened his paper and looked at the headlines. There was no comfort in them. Liz brought in the coffee.

Art put down his paper. He took his coffee and toast. He did not look at Liz until she said coldly, "Do you know what time you will be home?"

Art raised his gray eyes. "I can get a cab from the station. Don't come for me."

She didn't answer. Art went out to the garage. He was sitting in the car, his lips tight, when they finally came. First Joyce, dawdling, then Liz.

They dropped Joyce at school. She ran to a group of kids, not even calling good-by. Art sent the car spinning down the hill and around to the station. He got out and Liz slipped over and under the wheel. He didn't kiss her. He didn't even look at her. He nodded to Joe Broker and Ed Thayer. He felt cold and unhappy; a little frightened and clothed in a sense of futility that made everything seem worthless.

J.B. wasn't in that morning. Miss Eldridge said he had gone to Philadelphia. He might be back in the afternoon.

That didn't give Art any feeling of relief. It merely meant postponement of something that had to be faced, something that gnawed at him. He got out all the material on the United Metals campaign. He pored over the copy and the made-up sketches, all the smooth advertising that represented so much work and struggle.

He went down to the cafeteria for coffee, and there he saw Hester Logan.

Hester had been with Kalman-Kaye for almost a year. He had noticed her: the soft red hair, the wide greenish eyes, the swing of her hips. He had looked at her with the calm, considered eye of a married man who has no need to stray but who has not lost his appreciation of an attractive girl. He had grouped her in his mind with all the young things you thought of as pretty kids.

She was sitting near by at the counter. When Art sat down and moodily ordered coffee, she smiled at him somewhat timidly. "Good morning, Mr. Royal."

"Morning," Art said. He was aware of Hester looking at him sideways from between her silky lashes. She couldn't, he was sure, be more than twenty. It made him think of his college days. Of sitting in the Co-op when he was a junior and a senior. Art Royal, varsity end and varsity first baseman and captain. The coeds had looked at him the way this kid was looking at him now.

It stirred in him a nostalgia, a longing for the time when he was so certain: when the world lay before him ready for him to take. A world bright with promise. He thought, irritably: It still is. If I weren't so tied down, so hindered.

He turned his head, and the color came into Hester's cheeks. Art thought: It would be nice to take this kid out . . . He hadn't dwelt on anything like that for a long time. It roused in him a little surge of interest, of speculation. He said almost without volition, "I'm going to be in town this evening. You wouldn't be free to have dinner with me, would you?"

Her eyes grew even wider. She said, "Why"—and then with a rush—"I'd like to, Mr. Royal."

"Okay," Art said. "Meet me at the St. Regis. The King Cole room. After five."

He said it calmly because he wasn't thinking of Hester just then. He was thinking of Liz and of all that was harrying him. It gave him an angry satisfaction, knowing he shouldn't.

He thought of Hester, though, that evening. She had gone home to change. (She lived, she told him over the Old-fashioneds, at a woman's club.) She wore a green suit of soft wool that set off her hair and eyes. As he sat with her at one of the oak tables, he felt again as he had years before when he escorted some pretty girl.

Hester came from Indiana. She liked New York. She'd wondered if he'd ever really talk to her; if she'd get to know him. Her boss, John Aldick of Media, admired Art. She had a girl's way of talking. The things she said soothed Art. And she was lovely. He felt her shoulder against his. And the scent she used was different.

He didn't kiss her when he took her

back to her club. He watched her go inside and settled back in the cab, rebelling at the fact that he had to rush to catch the twelve thirty. He felt no guilt. Only a sort of satisfaction that he had taken out some of his resentment against Liz in a way she would never know.

Liz was asleep when Art got home. He undressed and went to bed. Liz stirred, and in the darkness he sensed her looking at him, but he merely closed his eyes.

In the morning it was just as it had been the day before. A coldness in the atmosphere and Joyce staring with wide-eyed awareness. And at the office that uncertainty about United and only a meeting with Hester to give him balm.

That was how it had started. It had been only an outburst on Art's part. It would have come to nothing of its own accord, but what continued at home and at the office pushed it on.

Art took Hester to lunch a couple of times. He stayed in town late several nights sweating over the United mess, expecting any moment to have J.B. say, "I'm taking United off your hands . . ." Which would be the same as being fired. An invitation to look elsewhere. The only time when Art was free from worry was when he was with Hester, seeing the admiration in her eyes.

But, until last night, he hadn't thought of anything beyond that.

The icy quarrel with Liz had endured, grown solid. It was an accepted fact, and he looked forward to being with Hester more often as the days went on. He could look into her eyes and forget his troubles.

There was, too, the almost forgotten tingle of the eternal question between a man and a woman. He kissed Hester often now. A swift kiss in the cab that took them to dinner; longer kisses as she lay in his arms, her young lips parted, her eyes shining in those brief moments before they got out of the cab at the club.

Art may have thought beyond that. To a point where they would not part in the club lobby, but never so far as divorcing Liz. Of marrying Hester.

It was Liz who made him think of it.

She had sat up in bed when he came in last night. She had turned on the light. She had said, "I want to talk to you, Arthur."

Her voice startled him—even more the fact that she had called him Arthur. He had stood looking down at her. There were faint shadows under her eyes. She had said, "I've had enough."

Art hadn't answered. He had merely waited, peering with a strange objectiveness at the chiseled stillness of her face.

Liz said, "This can't go on. I do not want to be tied to the sort of man you've become."

Art had felt hot resentment boil up in him. But he had kept still, and after a moment Liz had said, her head bent, "I wanted you to know."

The light had clicked off as Art went into the dressing room. When he came out he went down the hall to the guest room. The bed had been made up for him. He had lain in the dark, his lips hard. He had thought: All right. He had thought of Hester then, and it was a thought warm and bright. A glimpse of what had been his fifteen years ago. A new life—a different one from this angry, irritating one that was frustrating Arthur Royal and all that he was.

He had swung out of the house early the next morning. He had walked to the station in a silence that refused to recognize the loveliness of the day. He had thought: No one's going to push me around. I've a life to live. A damned important life.

He must have been still engrossed in

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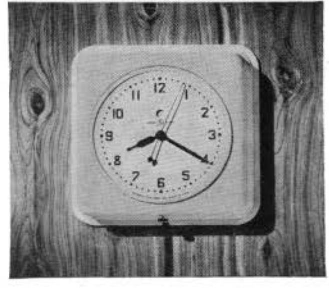

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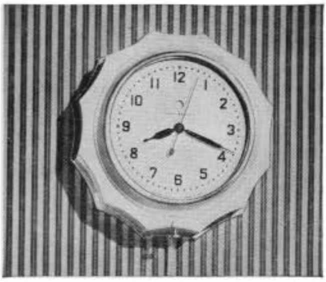

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thought when the car hit him as he walked up town from Grand Central. He'd barely seen the car before it slammed him, and he almost blacked out for a few moments from shock and the pain of his injured knee.

The truth had begun to dawn on him as he lay there after the policeman got to him. The way the crowd looked down at him; stripping from him every bit of his individuality; making him realize how unimportant he was; that whether he lived or died would not change the course of traffic, or obscure the bright sun.

He saw it fully now, as he waited in the booth for his trousers. Fatal accidents happened every day in a big city. He had seen such items in the papers a hundred times, and they had meant nothing to him. Nothing to the world at large.

And it was right—or if not right, then only natural. Culture, civilization, stressed the importance of the individual, but only as a part of the whole. A very small part. Of itself one man's living or dying meant nothing to the world.

Art drew on his cigarette. He thought in a shocked breathlessness: That's been the trouble with me. Thinking of myself as important to everyone. And it isn't so. If I'd been killed today, it would have been as if I'd never lived.

He saw that, and he saw back to what lay at the bottom of everything—his irritation and his anger. "I'm scared," Art told himself. "Scared of losing my job. As if it was the most vital thing in the world. As if I couldn't ever get another. That was what made me ratty. Made me take it out on Joyce and Liz."

Of course, Liz hadn't helped, but then he hadn't given her a chance. He hadn't told her. He had no right to expect Liz to be a mind reader. She shouldn't have jumped on him, and maybe she could have been a little less stony, but maybe she had been upset, too. Maybe that dumb sister of hers had been writing for money, and he knew how Liz hated to ask him for it.

No, Art thought. It isn't all Liz; it isn't all me, but the initial fault is mine.

The tailor brought his trousers. As Art pulled them on he said to himself, "If I'd been killed someone else would have taken over my job at Kalman-Kaye. The world would go right on, and no one would suffer but Joyce and Liz. They are my responsibility. My only one. Whether Joyce is a nice kid or not, whether Liz is the best wife in the world or not doesn't mean a damn. Liz is my wife and Joyce is my kid, and it's up to me to care for them. I've no other business, no other importance here on earth."

He paid the tailor, went out into the warm sunlight. He murmured, "Joyce and Liz and I. We're an unimportant little group in a world of millions of such groups. Our only importance is our importance to each other. Mine to Liz and hers to me and Joyce's to us both."

He could see clearly that he had betrayed them and himself, too. "I chose Liz. No one made me. If I don't think her the loveliest, finest woman that ever lived I've let myself down. My judgment. And I don't believe that. It's me. It's being scared of my job. And being scared only demeans me; degrades my little world on Chestnut Lane. The hell with the job! I've only got one life. I've got to make the best of it. I can't go back and begin again. I don't want to, really." Hester had been an effort to go back; to get away from reality. That was all.

It was just ten and Hester was waiting for him in the cafeteria. She turned her bright head from the counter, smiling. Art said, "Let's sit, Hester."

She carried her cup to a table in a corner of the empty room. Art got his from the counterman. He set it on the table and eased his stiff body onto a chair. He met Hester's green gaze, and he felt a queer sadness in the quiet that was in him now. He said, "I'm married, Hester. I've a child, too. She's ten."

Hester's hair gleamed. "I know. But—but we've done nothing wrong . . ."

"You haven't," Art said. "At your age it's a feeling for life. A reaching for some contact with it. But I should know what life is like by now. For me it's wrong."

He saw the shadow that passed over her face, that pretty face that as yet bore nothing but the imprint of youth. A face like ten thousand other pretty faces in a big city. She was thinking from her own point of view, from her own pinnacle of importance and that was natural, too. Art got up. He touched her bright hair and walked away.

There was a memo on his desk when he got to his office. J.B. wanted to see him. Art held the slip of paper in his hand. Yesterday the typed words would have sent his heart to his boots. Today it only made him think: I could be dead now. Being alive makes it no longer important.

He went down the hall to J.B.'s office. There was a deep green carpet on the floor. There were green draperies over the three big windows, and the sandalwood walls had a soft sheen. Behind the cleared desk J.B. Kaye looked up. His hair was almost white in the morning light, the lines in his face deep and sharp. He's barely past sixty, Art thought. What's he eating his heart out for? A lousy fortune? . . . It wasn't a jest either.

J.B. waved, frowning. Art sat down, bending his bad leg gingerly. He knew what he was going to do—what he was going to say. There was no tremor in him. He saw clearly now: worrying about things was stupid. You found out; you knew; then there was no need to worry. He said, "Do you want me to quit, sir?"

J.B. swung around, the frown deepening. Under the jet eyebrows his steely blue eyes were hard. "That where you've been all morning? Lining up something else?"

Art shook his head. "No, I had an accident. A car knocked me down."

J.B. said quickly, "You all right?"

"Skinned knee," Art said softly. "But *I* might have been killed. It's made me see things a bit differently. That's why I asked you. Do you want me to quit?"

"Do you want to?"

"No," Art said. "I don't."

J.B. put his hands flat on the desk. "Then what in hell's been wrong?"

Art shifted his bad knee. "Worrying about my job. Worrying about United."

J.B. stared at him. "You think it a good campaign? You believe in it?"

"Yes," Art said. "I do."

"Then why worry? So long as your work is good—and it *is* good—what is there to worry about? What will worrying get you or Kalman-Kaye?"

J.B. said, shaking his head, "You young ones. Forget it, Royal. Haldane *is* no fool. He knows it's good. Maybe there's something underneath. Maybe United is figuring on taking their account somewhere else. What of it? I've lost accounts before. It's all in the year's business. It's you who matter. I can always get new accounts, but I can't always get good men. Is that clear?"

"Yes, sir," Art Royal said softly.

"All right." J.B. waved. "You'd better go home early and rest up. You look done in. And don't worry about United. If they don't want to use this campaign someone else will. There's always a place for a good job . . . That's all."

It was just past four when the taxi let Art Royal out at the white house on Chestnut Lane. He stood a moment on the pavement, stiffening against the pain in his knee, looking at the pleasant lines of the house. Joyce came across the lawn.

Art stared at her, seeing her with clear eyes. He smiled. Joyce's face lighted.

She said, "Hello, Daddy," and threw her thin arms about him

Art held her tight. He thought: A child's only a mirror. If you frown, what can she give you back?

He said regretfully, "I meant to bring you a present. I forgot. Forgive me."

She lifted a bright face. "Of course."

From the house next door the Cahill's Phoebe called, "Joyiss . . ." and Joyce said breathlessly, "May I, Daddy?"

"Sure," Art said. "See you, Joyce."

"See you," Joyce called, her legs flying.

Art went up the walk and into the house.

The comfort of it, the reassurance, flowed all about him. He felt his throat tighten. There was so much he wanted to say to Liz, and yet he didn't know what he could say. He was afraid to see that look in her eyes.

He called, tentatively, through dry lips, "Liz?"

She appeared in the doorway. She was wearing a bright print and the light from behind made a golden nimbus of her hair, threw her face into shadow.

Art said, "Liz—look—" and then, his eyes smarting, "Oh Liz, I'm sorry I've been such a rat . . ."

He wasn't prepared for the way she came to him, the way she flung her arms about him. It wasn't like Liz. But he was still thinking of himself. He said into her hair that had a sweet scent all its own, "We were having trouble with United, and I let that throw me. I brought it home with me and took it out on you and Joyce as if—as if any damn thing in all the world was that important."

Her face lifted. "I should have known there was something wrong, but I——"

"Yes," Art said, holding her gently. "There was something bothering you too, wasn't there? Mildred again?"

"No." She looked up into his eyes, and Art saw that her face was quiet—the way he remembered it and loved it. "I'd been to see Doctor Michael the day you came home so late——"

Art felt suddenly weak and afraid, with a fear he'd never known.

"Liz, what is it?"

She smiled up at him, rueful. "There was a lump, here." She put her hand to one of her firm, clearly defined breasts. "He couldn't tell me. He made tests and told me to come back this morning. But I imagined—you know what. I was so scared, and when I waited at the station and you didn't come I got angry with you for not being there when I needed you. So when you did come and everything was so hateful while I worried and tried not to, and . . ."

Art took her by the shoulders, his fingers tense. "Oh, God, Liz, I'm sorry. But you saw Michael? He—is—is . . .?"

"It's all right," Liz said softly. "Just a lump, and it's going away. It isn't anything at all. But us . . . Art, let's never be like that again. So cold and distant. As if there weren't anything between us. As if you weren't my whole world. It made me feel so lost and alone . . ."

"Don't," Art said, his voice breaking. "Don't, Liz."

He held her close, welding himself to her, to this world within this house. This tiny world greater by far than the one without or any in the vastness of infinity. The only world that mattered to Arthur Royal.

THE END

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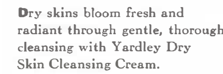

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buildings on 250 scattered acres. To keep up with the constant expansion, private homes on near-by streets were bought up and converted into dorms and classrooms. On the drawing boards now is something called a Libratorium which is based on the idea that library books should be kept close to the classroom where the subject is taught. It's all part of a new-style campus to fit this new-style college.

Stephens thrives on new ideas. One young teacher put it this way: "I suppose I could go somewhere else and make more money, but I'll tell you why I'm sticking around. Nothing stands still here. Other schools just talk progressive education; here they put it into action. If I get an idea, they let me try it out."

One of these ideas is Vespers. Ask any Stephens alumna anywhere what school memory lingers longest in her mind and she'll tell you about Vespers. She'll tell about the first time she walked into the hushed quiet of the auditorium with its beautifully lit stage and the organ music all setting the mood. Every week the lighting and music change, because the mood changes. And the mood is set by the talk.

The topic will range from "Dating" to "The Roommate Problem" to a whole series about soldiers during the war: "Tomorrow they come back . . . Some of them disabled . . . Some of them woman-hungry . . . Some of them afraid of the future . . ."

Vespers was Wood's idea. When he drafted Paul Weaver for the job thirteen years ago, he told him that he wanted Vespers "to give the girls what they need that they can't get anywhere else. Don't preach a code or a creed to them; just try to make them sensitive to the values of things around them."

"The wonderful thing about Vespers," remarked a senior, "is that they always seem to know just what to talk about. For example, the first week you're too busy to be homesick; but the second week, that's when it hits you, and that's when they talk about it at Vespers. And you just walk out of there feeling so much better."

Weaver knows what to talk about because it's all planned. Before he selects a subject, he discusses it with his group of student representatives. The final decision is theirs—they *know*. Two days after the program the Student Evaluation Committee brings back a reaction to the color scheme, the music, and this question: "Was the talk related to you directly?"

Not that Vespers will cure anything. But it helps. The other big help is the advisory setup. A Stephens Susie with any problem has somebody to turn to. She has her choice of a Senior Sister, who faced the same problems only a year before; a hall counselor, usually a combination house mother with a Masters degree; her faculty adviser, a focus for every report made on the girl; and finally the admissions counselor, the man who first told her all about Stephens—who had visited her home and knew her little brother.

THERE are sixteen admissions counselors, and they all spend the first six school weeks at Stephens just to be near "their girls." Somebody called them "talent scouts." But whether a girl flunked geometry, or picked oranges to earn her tuition, isn't a determining factor. The important thing for Stephens is—what is *inside* the girl.

That's the answer to those who look at Stephens long distance and mutter, "Snob school." or "That's where you get a degree in horseback riding." or "A glorified country club--they know more about lipstick than they do about Latin."

One brand-new Stephens Susie even admitted, "That's the one big thing I was scared of before I came here. So many people told me it was a snob school, and everybody would be snooty to me because I didn't have as much money as they did. But it isn't that way at all."

That doesn't mean there aren't any snobs here. The kind of girl who sent her chauffeur ahead in a new car so he could meet her getting off the plane at the Columbia airport—she's still here. But she's changed. She soon discovered that she was just another girl among 2,241 others, that snobs are quickly isolated. She found out that you don't leave a tip for the dining-room girl.

If there's a caste system at Stephens, the dining-room girls are it. The waitress's uniform has become such a badge of honor that there are always more applicants than jobs. It's the "thing to do." A purely secondary reason, of course, for wanting to be a waitress, is that "the Missouri University bus boys here are the cutest things——" Waitresses make up only four percent of the student body, but they hold almost one third of the important student offices. Beautiful Pam Stoddard for example, is the president of Civic Association, the biggest job on campus. And the girls like to tell you that even Joan Crawford worked in the dining room when she went to Stephens.

Allowances from home average about thirty dollars a month. Although there are some girls whose fathers are practically millionaires, most of the students are from middle-class families, averaging a six-thousand-dollar-a-year income. And the fathers of twenty-five percent of all the girls make from eighteen hundred dollars to five thousand dollars a year. Anyway, it doesn't matter here how much money your father has. If he can't afford to pay the full tuition, part-time jobs will make up the difference. And the $1,350 tuition fee covers even such luxury courses as horseback riding and private music lessons.

The school's ten clinics are also open to everybody.

If a girl is having budget headaches, there's a personal finance clinic to help her manage and teach her how to keep a checking account. ("So what if I'm overdrawn this week? Did I say anything to you last week when I had two dollars left over?")

There's a Clothing Clinic to help her select her wardrobe and advise her which style suits her best; an Interior Decoration Clinic which teaches her taste and imagination in individualizing her room; a Health Clinic that will worry about her acne and her posture; and the highly publicized fifteen-year-old Personal Appearance Clinic.

"Honest," said Frank Sebree, Missouri University man, "I can walk into a roomful of girls and spot a Stephens Susie every time. I don't know how to describe it. It's something intangible. Maybe it's the way she wears her hair or the way she wears her clothes or the way she walks. I don't know just what it is. It's the Stephens Look."

The Personal Appearance Clinic teaches a girl just that—the best way to fix her hair (not just the latest style), and which cosmetics to use, and how to walk gracefully. All this adds up to the poise that is so hard to describe.

Still another reason so many Missouri men prefer a Stephens date is that a dime coke at the Student Union constitutes an evening's pastime. Stephens girls aren't permitted to go to bars or ride in cars unless they have special permission.

The dating picture is brighter this year. The popular Stephens Life, the campus newspaper, announced officially that there are now three available college men for every Stephens girl. Normally the University of Missouri men in Columbia would be able to pick and choose among Missouri U. coeds, Stephens Susies, town girls and the Christian College girls. At one happy time there were seven girls to every Missouri man.

But the dating ratio has not affected the popularity of the half-dozen teacher-bachelors on campus. Twenty-six-year-old, handsome Ward Whipple constantly gets mash notes. One girl confessed in the campus newspaper: "I wouldn't mind if I took American Government eight hours a week."

There was one teacher who looked so young that when he went to the Hall to see one of his students about something, the maid told him, "Sorry, no dates allowed in here tonight. This isn't a dating night."

You hear stories like that if you drop in on one of the five Blue Rooms, the retreats for girls who want to smoke. (Half of them do, but most of them don't inhale.) The talk may range all the way from neutrons to necking.

THE SUSIES are their own best critics. In unsigned answers to a questionnaire—"What Shall Our Standards Be This Year?" there were answers like these:

Downtown: "Don't walk four abreast and don't giggle. Act your age. Stephens students aren't the only people in Columbia.

Dining Room: Stop showing off to attract the bus boys.

Swearing: Saying "damn" in your room is all right if it relieves your feelings.

Necking: My father always told me that if I had to neck, the place is at home. But it shouldn't be done in front of the Hall because it can prove very embarrassing to some people.

Researching the problem of love, which is an important problem on this campus, the school asked 672 girls if they believed that success in marriage comes naturally to those in love. Only ninety-seven said yes. The rest said it had to be "worked for." Three objected to studying about marriage because "it might kill romance." But the rest have flocked to Dr. Henry Bowman's year-long course on Marriage and the Family.

What Bowman repeats often is that it's more important for girls to know about conjugal relations than about conjugating foreign verbs. "Too many girls marry in this streamlined period with Model-T equipment."

Bowman's job is to build up rapport so that the girls will be frank and specific. There are still girls who ask, "Is it really true that you can get a baby by kissing a boy?" But the question thrown at him most often in his class is, "How can you tell whether it's love or infatuation?" Bowman has thirty-five answers for that one, but he always precedes them with, "Don't send your rings back tonight."

He tries to touch specific problems—the girl who wanted to marry a soldier she had never seen; or the one who was terribly worried because she was engaged to four boys at the same time; or the one who planned to marry a man twice her age who had two children. Bowman may get all this from the girl's advisers, and he'll bring up the questions in class,

stressing all the difficulties involved. The girls get the point.

However, most of the marriage course is beamed at the girl who comes up to him after class and says, "I'm getting married, and I want to know everything. Nobody's ever told me."

Girls not only want to learn how to be good wives; they also want to learn to be good mothers.

In the Child Study course, one Susie told the instructor, Miss Momyer, "I don't know why I'm taking this course. I hate children." Several weeks later, after she had been working in the nursery, showing the kids how to build blocks and tie their shoe laces, she said, "You know, Johnny is kind of cute, isn't he?" Finally, in the middle of the term she confessed, "I was wrong. I didn't really hate children. I was just afraid of them."

Marjorie Momyer still gets air-mail special-delivery letters from girls saying how sorry they are that they didn't take her course, but would she please advise them what to tell children who want to know how babies are born.

SOME time ago Stephens decided that since women spend ninety percent of all salaries, they should learn how. Instead of counting calories, they plan menus, select stores, buy food, compare costs and quality. Then they investigate and grade all Columbia's restaurants according to cost, quality and the bacteria count on their silverware. In class, they talk about what kind of insurance they need; whether to rent, buy or build a home; what things to look for when you buy clothes; how to plan a budget.

"A woman's future is tougher than a man's," one student decided, "because she has to prepare for marriage and a career at the same time. Why do I want a career? Well, what if my husband gets sick and I have to support him? Or what if, when my children grow up, I want to have something to fall back on?"

Dorothy Pollock, who heads the Occupational Guidance Division, has a corollary to that: "I believe that if a woman has a specific occupational skill which can make her economically independent, she's more likely to marry a man of her own choice, rather than reject somebody because she's afraid he can't make a good living."

One Stephens girl who was always kidded because she was studying cattle breeding at the University of Missouri, now has several students sent to her Montana ranch each summer for special training. It opened another interest area, as did the graduates who have become architectural engineers, efficiency experts, funeral directors, postmistresses, attorneys, bridal consultants, geographers, cartoonists, flight trainers and hostesses on dude ranches. A table of more than five hundred of these jobs for women has been compiled by Miss Pollock, listing the qualifications, the pay and the suggested preparatory courses.

Probably the most ballyhooed specialists at Stephens are the girls taking the aviation course. So many people think that every Stephens Susie is an amateur pilot. Actually there are only fifty. And, in more than seventy-thousand hours of flight, none of the four hundred Stephens girls who have earned their pilots' licenses has had a serious accident—even after they left school.

To improve their teaching, aviation instructors drafted thirty-six faculty members, the "flying faculty guinea pigs." Recording machines in the planes took down all their questions, which were then carefully analyzed. The teacher who taught art instructor Russell Green to fly was a former student of his, Jean Braasch. This is Jean's third year of teaching. She now has a commercial pilot's license, an instructor's license, eighteen hundred flying hours. And she's only twenty-three.

"The younger you are, the closer you are to your students, the more patience you have with them, because you can still clearly remember how you felt," she says.

During the war Jean and another student were flying to a football game in Austin, Texas, when bad weather forced them down near a small Arkansas town. Besides the slacks they were wearing, all they had were some slinky black dinner dresses. After three days of being weathered in, they got so tired of wearing their dirty slacks, that they put on the dinner gowns. When they walked down Main Street men gaped, and mothers pulled their children in. Just before they left, somebody asked them if it was really true that they were government agents looking for German spies.

Just as Stephens' fifteen planes show the trend of the times, so does its own model radio station, WWC. It's aired to the dormitories via the water pipes for four and a half hours a day.

Pipe-smoking Hale Aarnes teaches his girls radio by constantly putting them under pressure, making them suddenly improvise.

"He treats us like employees—not like students," said one of the girls, "and sometimes he scares the heck out of us. But then, if we had one of these soft-spoken sweet guys, we wouldn't be ready for the tough radio competition when we got out of here. He's already told us that the only way we can get an A in this course is to stand on our heads and move across the room by using only our head muscles."

He speaks their language, too. When he wants a girl to whisper, he'll yell at her, "Make believe you have cake make-up on and you don't want to wrinkle it."

Last year, the radio students put on a show for the School Broadcasting Conference in Chicago, a clever satire on a Day with Broadcasting. One of the girls in the play now has a $3,600-a-year job as a clothing commentator in Chicago. Another handles nineteen radio shows in Spokane, Washington. Still others include a radio traffic manager in Spartanburg, South Carolina; a woman's program in Akron, Ohio; and a woman's programmer in Ocala, Florida. One of the present students, Eleanor Kramer, has been assured of a television job when she graduates. She came here on an Atlantic City Beauty Contest Scholarship, as Miss Pennsylvania. Not everybody gets a job, though. A girl wrote sadly, "Let's face it; a nineteen-year-old girl doesn't command the respect that an older man does."

Even newer than the radio station is the big fashion-design department. Two years ago the setup was still experimental. Now its annual fashion show of one hundred original dresses attracts buyers and manufacturers from all over the country. The currently popular ballet-length skirt was a Stephens feature three years ago. A lounging pajama original is now being featured throughout the country under the "Susie Stephens" label.

To test their imagination, teacher Patricia Rowe sends her girls to a hardware store. So far they've come back to make belts out of sink strainers, hats out of ice bags, and a Venetian-blind skirt that can be pulled up or down.

A still wider field for women is merchandising, offering at least one hundred different jobs. One of the graduates who made good, twenty-two-year-old Eleanor Evans, came back to tell the other girls how she did it. "I just walked into the office of the president and sold myself the job of fashions co-ordinator. I told him he needed me. Before I left, he even promised to decorate my office in pink."

SOMEWHERE between the career woman and the wife is the added job of being an intelligent citizen. Stephens works on that, too.

Burrall gives Susie a good sample. Burrall is an intercampus organization which works on a community basis. On Can Sunday, they ring doorbells and pick up four thousand cans of food for the town's poor. They adopt orphans at Christmas time; read aloud to the patients at the near-by State Cancer Hospital; provide a hot-lunch program for elementary schools; serve early Sunday breakfast for the town's newsboys; volunteer as baby sitters for the married Missouri University students living in trailer camps; assist teachers for the crippled children and community kindergartens.

Burrall also fills a spiritual need in the town. To an old tailor it means playing a cello in the mixed Symphony Orchestra program every Sunday. It also means a choir of one hundred mixed voices and a dramatic talk by Paul Weaver. To show Burrall's effect on Susies, twenty-two out of twenty-four girls who planned to change roommates changed their minds after one Burrall program.

Burrall most closely ties in with the social studies courses. Unlike colleges that have departments in history and economics and civics, social studies cut a straight slice through all of them. Columbia is their course laboratory. The students learn about the housing problem by taking a bus trip to the Columbia slums where people live in tents and broken-down trailers. An airplane view gives them a first-hand look at soil erosion in Boone County. The League of Women Voters taught them politics by showing them how to organize a drive to get a local city manager. And they get their current history from some of the people who make it and report it—lectures by the Shridharani of India, Raymond Gram Swing and Dorothy Thompson.

ONE OF Stephens' special memories is Maude Adams. For six years she taught there, almost always wearing a brown outfit with a tricorner hat and a long veil, and dresses down to the floor. When the girls' fathers came to visit them, they would walk, hats in hand like little schoolboys, to tell Miss Adams how much they had enjoyed her in "Peter Pan" and what an honor it was to shake her hand.

She was a gentle old lady with such a lovely voice that when she read the Twenty-third Psalm and asked the girls to join in with her, everybody almost whispered, so that they could still hear Miss Adams.

An actress who didn't come here to act was Jean Arthur. For six weeks she sat in classes like everybody else and learned about social studies, psychology and tennis. She liked it so much that when summer came she returned to Hollywood —with her three teachers. Social-studies teacher Dorothy Martin swears it wasn't a publicity stunt; that Jean Arthur really was hungry to learn.

To the constant charge that they bring "big names" here, Stephens says: "We bring them in not for window dressing, but because we want to show the girls the best in the business; we want to give them something to aim at."

The most frequent "big name" visitors are the ones in sports, like Patty Berg for golf. Golf and bowling, incidentally, are lots more popular than horseback riding. Like the rest of the curriculum, the accent in sports is on the functional—what

sports will they continue after they leave Stephens? That's why tennis is more popular than field hockey, even though some Stephens graduates back East still get together and play hockey.

THE conventional courses are still taught here at Stephens, but they're not taught the conventional way. Stephens is probably one of the largest college users of audio-visual aids in the country. The language courses are taught with recordings, earphones, mirrors and tape recorders. Instead of memorizing abstract theories for the philosophy course, the girls learn to plot their own design for living. Botany stresses actual gardening. Psychology concerns itself with social adjustments, not rat behavior. Biology here means human biology, talking about health, disease, chemical preservatives in food and housing insulation. The girls learned about Mexico by getting into a special train and going there.

All these courses are the answer to the fundamental question originally asked by President Wood: "What would be left of your course if you included in it only that which you would hope and expect your students to remember all their lives?"

A revolutionary answer to that was the Communications Division. Traditional English grammar, composition and public-speaking courses have no place here. If a student speaks well or writes a good composition, there's no need to waste time teaching her these things all over again. You give your attention first and longest to a girl's greatest need.

WHEN Dr. Rainey came to Stephens, he did a wise thing. Instead of taking over at once, he spent six months absorbing the college and the courses and the traditions. He saw the leopard skins and yellow earmuffs and other crazy costumes on Play Day; the eighty hours a committee spent in picking candidates for the Ten Ideals; he watched the long procession of Susies, all in white on first school Sunday; the daily afternoon rush to their rooms for the one-hour siesta, and the juniors throwing their green ribbons into the barbecue bonfire, then dancing the Coki-Oki. And finally one night he heard the girls yell, "We want Homer . . . we want Homer!"

Then he knew he "belonged."

At fifty-one he looks like a big easy-going rancher, not like the Baptist minister that he was. The thing he's most proud of is the Thomas Jefferson Award which he has on his desk. He got that from five hundred city editors and fifteen hundred civic organizations for being fired as the President of the University of Texas. He was fired because he defended the academic freedom of three professors to express their opinions at a public meeting.

Right now, though, he's thinking in terms of the next twenty-five years. He's thinking of the best way to get eighteen million dollars to build a campus to fit a college. Because Stephens isn't really a rich college. It's never had any large endowment fund.

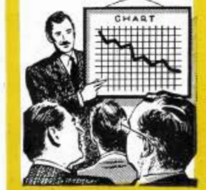
The alumnae are already working for that, seventeen thousand graduates including the United States Deputy Marshal in Arkansas, the Dean of the Home Economics Department at Drexel, the girl who went to Australia to reorganize the social work there, and the little girl who greeted "Daddy" Wood when he walked into the air terminal at Stockholm. One hundred and twelve Stephens graduates particularly want to get the best for a new, better Stephens, because they have already preregistered their baby daughters for the class of 1960.

THE END

Parents-here's hopeful news about

Rheumatic Fever

1. The disease is causing fewer deaths!



The mortality from rheumatic fever among children has dropped over two thirds during the past 30 years. However, this disease is still childhood's great enemy because it attacks the heart.

Fortunately today most rheumatic fever patients, thanks to earlier diagnosis and good medical and nursing care, may escape serious damage to their hearts and lead normal, active lives.

2. More cases are being caught early!

As more parents learn the signs that *may* mean rheumatic fever—and as more children have periodic medical examinations—an increasing number of cases are being diagnosed in the early stages, when medical science can do most to protect the child's heart.

Rheumatic fever often has no distinctive symptoms, but such conditions as pain in the joints, continued low fever, loss of weight, poor appetite, or a generally "below par" feeling should have immediate medical attention.

3. Recovery is still a slow process!

Effective treatment for rheumatic fever usually requires rest in bed under a doctor's care. A long convalescence is generally necessary to protect the heart and to help it return to normal.

This is the time when parents can do much to help the child by seeing that he is kept occupied and in a cheerful frame of mind. As recovery progresses the doctor will guide the parents in gradually increasing the child's activities.

4. Children can be protected against further attacks!

As rheumatic fever often attacks more than once, it is necessary to guard against a return of the disease. Frequent checkups by a doctor are essential.

Just as important is the parents' co-operation with the doctor. Working as a team they can help protect the child from throat and respiratory infections which often pave the way for rheumatic fever. Good food, plenty of rest, and maintaining a good physical condition are also important safeguards.

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Medical science is constantly working to increase its knowledge of rheumatic fever. For further helpful information about this disease, send for your free copy of Metropolitan's booklet, 82-B, "Rheumatic Fever."

what a fine cook Lida had suddenly become. How did this wonderful thing happen? To think overnight she can cook like her grandma!

Grandma said she never had time to teach anyone. She thought Hana, Uncle Jaroslav's wife, was stupid because she used a cookbook.

"Fency. Always fency that Hana," said Grandma.

"Most ladies learn from cookbooks," Lida had told her.

Grandma made a face. "Tsah! You learn cook like yo' gremma, you no look inside book. Nutting. Jus' cook."

"But how will I know how to measure?"

"Is easy," said Grandma. "Some of dis, li'l bits someding else, pincha salts, roll dough sooo tin, push on apples, sugar, cinnamons, push in oven, take out. Votcha got? Strudel! Is easy. Someday I teach you. Today no."

Grandma had put on a clean apron and, humming one of her liveliest Bohemian folk songs, *"Hraly Dudy,"* had hurried out to feed the chickens. Lately she always sang when she went out into the back yard because she said if the Andersons, her neighbors, were listening they would know she was "honest, happy voman," and not at all concerned over the quarrel they had over the property line. The Andersons, Grandma insisted, were building their new fence on her property. Seventeen inches. Grandma wasn't speaking to the Andersons.

Aunt Amelia's shining umbrella came bobbing along outside the kitchen window. There was a thumping and puffing on the back porch as she came in carrying a small suitcase and a long box that was wrapped and tied and stamped all over with postmarks. She set the bundles on a chair, then quickly turned the door key in the lock.

"For heaven's sake," said Lida's mother, "it is still daylight!"

Amelia's mouth always shook if anyone scolded her for being so nervous.

"All right," Mama said, "keep the door locked. But everybody will say you are afraid."

"I am," said Amelia. "And I'm not the only one. Everybody is talking about the —the thing Mr. Casey saw . . ."

"Him!" said Aunt Tilda. "People should talk about what Casey does *not* see!"

"He's a very respected citizen," said Amelia. "A churchgoer. Last year at the Hibernian ball he took first prize as best jigger."

Tilda laughed. "Nobody in town knows more about jiggers than Casey."

Mama's mouth got thin. "That, I think, is not funny. You forget children are in this room. So now, Amelia, did you bring your collection of post cards?"

"In the suitcase," said Amelia.

The sisters and cousins swooped down on the suitcase and quarreled and laughed over who would carry it upstairs. They were very noisy, and long after they had pushed their way out of the kitchen Lida could hear them shouting about what games they could play with all the beautiful cards. You could travel all over the world with Aunt Amelia's post cards. She'd been saving them ever since she was a little girl. Usually Lida played a special game with the ones that were given to her. She gave each one a name and laid them in neat rows on top of her bed. Then she'd screw up her mouth and call on each one to recite, just like Miss Leslie, her history teacher, who had a habit of making sounds with her tongue against her teeth. But today Lida could not play teacher and make noises. She had to wait until the long box on the chair was unwrapped. She already knew what was in it.

Every time a package with Aunt Ludmila's address in the left corner was opened, Lida always looked away. Today she must not do that. Tomorrow was her grand day. Her cooking day. She was going to put on a big apron and be an important lady. The other ladies in the family did not turn away when the packages from Aunt Ludmila's farm in North Dakota were opened. They didn't feel their insides curl up and sizzle like hot bacon. No, indeed. They said, "Ah, more dried mushrooms. How fine." They didn't seem to mind at all that Aunt Ludmila always stuffed the dried mushrooms into a long black cotton stocking and tied the top. Lida could never understand why she didn't use a sack or a small box. But the women said a stocking was the best thing to send home-grown mushrooms through the mail. To Lida, Aunt Ludmila was the woman of a thousand legs. Every once in a while she cut one off and sent it parcel post. It was a thought to twist one's ribs, and everyone wondered why Lida refused to eat or touch dried mushrooms. Well, she would have to get over it, that's all. Grandma said you couldn't cook without two things—wine and mushrooms. Might as well not try.

The aunts seemed relieved to hear all the noise coming from upstairs and huddled together to whisper and speak in low voices.

"When I think of our little mama living up there all alone on Cherry Street in that big house . . ." said Amelia.

"What else?" said Tilda. "Ilonka was the last to get married and to leave. Better a lonely mama in a big house than an old maid in the family."

"But such a dark street," said one of the other aunts.

Amelia shivered. "When I think of strange things being seen up there in the middle of the night it makes my skin have pimples—like ducks."

"Goose," Mama corrected her. "Here, some hot coffee. And please, Amelia, just this once, stir the sugar softly."

Amelia's lips began to shake. Mama sighed.

"Very well," she said. "Stir. Stir hard. What I say now is that our family affairs are much more important than Mr. Casey's troubles. He should not have enjoyed so much the wake for old man O'Farrell last night and roared so loudly when he saw something in the fog on his way home."

"A ghost he said it was," Amelia whispered.

"Of his dead wife," added one of the aunts. "All bent over just like she used to be when she dug potatoes . . ."

"Enough of Casey," said Mama. "What he sees on foggy nights is not our concern. But our brother Jaroslav's dilemma is of grave importance. Tonight he is coming over to discuss. We have a big decision to make. It concerns his career and future, his success as the assistant in the surveyor's office, a position of great distinction."

Lida sat very quietly in the corner. Her mother and the aunts were so full of talk they didn't notice her. They even forgot to open the parcel-post package from Aunt Ludmila.

Finally Mama said, "Turn on the lamp, Tilda. Time to set the table."

The thick rain outside had blinded the windows, and the kitchen had filled with shadows. When Tilda turned on the kitchen lamp, Aunt Amelia squealed and pressed a hand against her mouth.

"Don't do that!" Mama said. "You make all of us bundles of nerves."

Aunt Amelia said she couldn't help it, it gave her such a start to see two eyes in the corner.

Mama and the other aunts turned around and saw Lida.

Mama looked a little troubled. "You heard what we have spoken about?" she said.

"You mean the fuss Mr. Casey made last night on Cherry Street?" said Lida. "Everybody knows about that."

Mama sighed. "And we were taking such care to keep the children from being frightened by the rumors. Oh, well."

Aunt Amelia looked at Lida closely. "Even though you were sleeping up there at your grandma's, heard all the noise and yelling in the dark, you were not frightened?"

"No," said Lida, still looking at the box from North Dakota.

"Was your grandma not startled?" Mama asked.

"No," said Lida. "She said Mr. Casey is an idiot."

Grandma had really said much more about Mr. Casey, but Lida thought it best not to repeat it, even if it was said in very good Bohemian.

The front doorbell rang and Tilda went to answer it.

"That will be Zdenek," she said.

Uncle Zdenek always used the front door if he'd been in court that day. He walked straighter on those days and even when he said, "Good day," he said it with great dignity as if he were still talking to the judge and the jury.

Uncle Emile and Papa were coming around the back way, and at the same time one of the aunts was finally opening the package from Aunt Ludmila. There was a noisy confusion as Emile and Papa pounded on the back door and roared out who in thunder had locked them out. Aunt Amelia giggled nervously and scurried to let them in.

All three of the men warmed their hands at the stove.

"Mark my word," said Papa, "there is a cold spell in the air. Before night, no more rain. Just cold, and fog. Ya, ya."

Uncle Emile was already sampling the icing on the cake. "Now, what's the matter with that one?" he said, pointing at Lida. "Pale as a ghost."

Amelia shuddered. "Don't use that word!"

Mama stopped with a stack of plates in her arm and looked at Lida. "Something is wrong?" she said.

Lida couldn't speak. She was staring at the long lumpy black stocking that the aunt was pulling from the box.

Papa understood. "It is the dismembered leg that stuns her," he said. "Eh, Lida?"

Dumbly, Lida nodded.

"That is strange," said Mama. "Not afraid of mysterious doings at midnight and scared of a stocking full of mushrooms."

"It's like a leg," Lida said. "Aunt Ludmila's leg."

"Ha!" said Emile, looking at the lumpy black cotton. "Ludmila's legs should look so good."

Zdenek looked at Uncle Emile and said in a gloomy voice, "A little more culture would do this family some good."

"That," said Emile, "coming from a mind that will not admit the superiority of Voltaire to Rousseau means nothing to me. Pft!"

"Everybody and his culture, leave the kitchen please," said Mama. "Such confusion. With all this nonsense, Tilda, we

have set the wrong table. Tonight we eat at the bigger table in the dining room. Hurry, hurry."

UNCLE JAROSLAV was a big man, almost as big as Papa, and he always wore a vest. He sat between two of the aunts at the table, and every time he wanted to make something very clear to everybody he reached into his vest pocket, took out one of his pencils and shook it in the air.

Uncle Jaroslav was a very important man. He knew the mayor.

"Jaroslav," said Lida's mother. "We will discuss your problem later when the children are not present."

"It is no longer *my* problem," he said. "It concerns everybody at this table. The honor, the name of the family, the disgrace if I lose my job. Besides, my appetite has failed. My worry has become so aggravated I have lost weight." He looked around for sympathy. "Only one hundred and ninety by the scale in the city hall this morning."

Uncle Zdenek, who was thinner than the other men, glanced at Jaroslav's plate. It had been filled twice and was almost clean.

"Lean men don't have problems," said Zdenek. "They are sharper in the head."

"That is not a truth!" said Jaroslav.

"Caesar thought so," said Zdenek.

Emile chuckled. "And look what happened to Caesar. Pass the cake once again, someone. Delicious."

Lida's father dabbed at his mustache with the big white napkin, and when he spoke the deep roll of his voice made everybody listen.

"Let us now have cigars and forget Caesar," he said, striking a match. "You must overlook Zdenek's superiority this night, Jaroslav. It is difficult for him to leave the intellectual Olympus of the courtroom and mingle with us mortals who enjoy our roast goose—very fine by the way."

"Thank you," said Mama. "A good bird, tasty but a little too lean."

Emile grinned at Zdenek. "You see? The goose was lean. Not smart enough to run from the ax."

"Let that suffice," said Papa. "Lean, fat, who cares? A good man is not judged by his brain or the size of his stomach. It is the heart. So be it! Now, Jaroslav, we will discuss your problem."

"In front of the children?" said Mama.

"In front of the children," said Papa. "So now, let us hear what ails you, Jaroslav."

"Perhaps a little pinochle first?" Emile asked.

"No pinochle, please," said Jaroslav. He was so worried he'd had only one helping of dessert. "I have no mind for cards tonight. I am weighed down by things heavier."

"Sure," said Zdenek. "Goose fat."

"Enough," Mama said firmly. "We have gathered tonight to see what can be done for Jaroslav. You have been all day in the courtroom, Zdenek, without interruption of your silver tongue. Allow now someone else."

Lida hadn't known that Uncle Zdenek had a silver tongue.

"In court, eh?" said Jaroslav. "What scoundrel were you defending this time?"

Uncle Zdenek sat very straight. "A man of character and nobility," he said. "An honest citizen and taxpayer who found himself in an embarrassing circumstance. A victim, not a violator, of the law."

Uncle Emile looked at Papa with a puzzled frown. "Who's he talking about?"

"Casey," said Papa.

"That bum!" said Jaroslav.

"He was released?" Papa asked.

"For the time being, but he will have

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to appear," said Zdenek. "I admit defending a man of Casey's habits is not easy."

"Besides, no prestige," said Jaroslav.

"Yet," said Zdenek, "many lawyers have built splendid reputations on the ingenuity with which they handled insignificant cases. I am clever, and I possess a modest wit."

"But no witness," said Emile.

Zdenek sighed. "Unfortunately, you are right. No witness for the defense."

Lida saw Aunt Amelia looking at her thoughtfully. She wished now that she'd gone upstairs to play with the post cards.

"Can a child be a witness?" Amelia asked.

"I suppose," said Zdenek. "Anyone who has reached the age of reason."

"May I be excused?" said Lida softly. No one paid attention.

"Lida heard Mr. Casey roaring his head off last night," said Amelia. "She wasn't at all frightened, not a bit."

"You don't say?" said Zdenek, looking at Lida as if he had never seen her before. "Lida, do you know the meaning of an oath?"

Lida nodded. She didn't like to have everyone looking at her. "When you hit your thumb with the hammer . . ." she said.

"I mean," said Zdenek, "could you say truthfully that you, a child of nine, heard the defendant's voice in the middle of the night, and it was so mild, so innocently free from bombastic overtones . . ."

"A poet now," said Emile. "Speak English."

"I am only thinking if a child wasn't frightened it would discredit those who phoned the police that they were scared out of their skins." Zdenek's eyes grew very bright. "This might prove to be a brilliant idea of mine. You're sure you weren't scared, Lida?"

"No, I wasn't," she said.

"Splendid!" said Zdenek.

"But peculiar?" said Papa, studying the smoke from his cigar.

Lida hoped he wouldn't look at her. Papa could always open the little doors in your head and peep in.

"Something fishy," said Emile.

"Well now, I don't know," said Papa. "The very old and the very young know no fear. It is just we unfortunates in between who have learned to run from our own shadows."

Frantisek stopped eating long enough to say, "Lida's afraid of everything; she's scared even of a mouse."

"I'm only scared to walk through the woods at night and meet the *jezeniny*," Lida said.

Everybody stopped and looked at her.

"The what?" said Tilda.

Lida repeated the word. "The evil spirits that live in the forests and make you sell your left eye to the devil if you want to get out alive."

There was a silence.

"Fine witness," Zdenek said with disgust. "I have a tipsy client who sees ghosts and a witness who sells her left eye. I'm sunk."

Papa was pulling on his lower lip. He looked at Mama. "This *jezeniny*," he said. "This is new to me."

"Some ancient superstition," said Mama. "I believe she has been too much with her grandmother. Someone else had better stay up there nights after this."

Oh, that couldn't happen, it mustn't happen—not tonight.

Uncle Jaroslav was sulking. He said nobody cared about his troubles. He had made a special trip, put on a clean shirt, even brought a bag of candy for the children—and nobody talked about his problem.

"Ya, ya," said Papa. "That is right. Let us have more hot coffee all around, eh? Then we listen."

But while the coffee was being poured Father Sebastian arrived.

The aunts hurried to set a place for the priest, but he said no, no, it was an imposition although something smelled very tantalizing. He had just dropped in to thank Zdenek.

"I can tell you," said Father Sebastian, "that Mr. Casey is indeed grateful to you for getting him out of jail. He has promised to stay away from any wakes in the future. He grieves too much. He came to me first thing after he was released today, and I assured him being arrested for disturbing the peace was nothing to be overlooked, yet it was after all not a mortal sin. The poor man wept for joy."

Lida was standing behind her chair and was very ashamed to think Frantisek remained seated in the presence of the old priest. She hoped Father Sebastian would sit down before anybody noticed, because it would mean a punishment for Frantisek.

It was Father Sebastian's weakness for goose that saved Frantisek. The priest couldn't resist it. He sat down at the table, and before he began to eat he put a hand on Frantisek's busy bowed head.

"Ah, the devout child," he said. "On Saturdays he is the last to enter my confessional box. Never in a hurry. From my seclusion within I can look out of the little curtain and see him there in the church, right across the aisle, kneeling like a young saint, his head low in prayer and meditation."

"This is indeed news," said Papa.

"Must be somebody else looks like him," said Aunt Tilda.

"Meditation?" said Emile. "More likely thinking up a good trade for his catcher's mitt."

Frantisek's face had grown very red, and finally he raised his eyes and scowled at Lida. He was afraid she would tell. She was the only one who knew why Frantisek was always the first to dash into church at confession time and the last to leave. Although it was a very wrong thing he did, and she had told him so, he should know that she would never tell on him. He was bigger than she was.

Frantisek had discovered that some people like old Mrs. Rafferty or Lena Kronkheit, the dressmaker, or Mr. Casey went into the curtained partition of the confession box on the aisle, and when they confessed they did so in such loud whispers you could hear everything they said if you sat close enough. Lena Kronkheit was thin and dry and so were her confessions. Nothing ever happened to Lena. But Mr. Casey was different. He had once thrown a frying pan at his wife and, although she had hit him right back, he was still repenting. Frantisek had told Lida he could always depend on Mr. Casey for an interesting and lively confession.

"Yes," said Father Sebastian. "One of these days Frantisek might hear the call of divine duty. I wouldn't be surprised."

"I would," said Emile.

Frantisek, his face still burning, hurried away from the table. As he passed Lida he said gruffly, "Here." Lida felt something drop in her lap. It was Frantisek's enchanted marble.

Her mouth opened in surprise. It was still open when she looked up and saw Father Sebastian smiling at her. When no one was looking, he winked. Why, he must know all about the loud whispers and why Frantisek buried his head in his hands. The priest knew he was smothering giggles, not saying his prayers. What a wise man—wiser than Solomon. He had cured Frantisek of his naughty habit, and at the same time saved him from getting a spanking.

"Now," said Mama suddenly, "everybody quiet! Poor, poor Jaroslav. Comes specially to seek our counsel, and we talk about everybody else but Jaroslav."

"That's quite all right," Uncle Jaroslav said. "Don't mind me. Just pretend I'm not here."

"Then let's play pinochle," said Emile, rubbing his hands.

It took a few minutes to convince Jaroslav that Emile was only joking.

"As you know," Uncle Jaroslav said, "I am now, after fifteen years' faithful service, assistant in the office of Mr. Andrew McDougal Benedict, the city and county surveyor. I have a private office and a big desk. My name is on the door. Important men of this city, yesterday even the commissioner of public works, stop in for a chat and cigars . . ."

"What kind do you give them?" asked Papa.

"The best."

"No wonder they stop in," said Zdenek.

"Now for the past ten days my life has been a torture. A veritable horror," said Jaroslav. "All because somebody insisted our mama should have a telephone!"

"We all decided," said Lida's mother. "There she is all alone in that big house—she might need help some time."

"Has she *ever* phoned anybody for help?" Jaroslav said.

"Well—no," said Mama. "But she might get sick."

"Her?" said Emile. "Healthier than all of us put together. Can run faster too."

"Exactly!" said Jaroslav.

"This seems to be a family discussion," said Father Sebastian. "Perhaps I had better leave."

"Sit down!" roared Jaroslav, forgetting he was addressing a priest. "I mean, please stay, Father. Maybe you can help. Where was I?"

"Passing a cigar to the commissioner of public works," said Papa. "The best."

"Now," said Jaroslav, "you must all understand that Hana and I have a social position also to maintain. Next week we have a dinner engagement at the home of Mr. Benedict himself. It will be a big affair. Hana has a new gown for the occasion . . ."

"What has Hana's gown to do with Mama's telephone?" asked Tilda. "To the point."

"Just this." Jaroslav took a deep breath. "She calls my office two, three, sometimes four times a day complaining her neighbors are building their fence seventeen inches on her property! I have tried to explain that the Andersons are perfectly right. That land of Mama's was properly surveyed by Mr. Benedict's office when she sold part of it to the Andersons. Now she phones and phones. I am a nervous wreck, I tell you. Instead of going out to lunch with my important friends, having a businessman's blue plate, a dollar and a half plus tip, I sit at my desk and eat a sandwich."

"Why can't you go out to lunch?" asked Mama.

"Because I'm afraid she'll phone while I'm out," said Jaroslav. "It creates confusion if anybody but myself answers. They call me just my initials in the office—J. J.—and when she phones they can't understand. She doesn't say hello. She says, 'All right, my poy Jaroslav over dare?' " He threw up his hands. "I ask you!"

"That is bad," said Mama, "very bad."

Lida could have told them something else. It was she who helped Grandma find Mr. Benedict's telephone number in the book. When the person who answered the phone finally understood that "my poy

Jaroslav" meant J. J., Grandma always said, "Hokay, so push him please by telephone. I van' spik him. I vait." Then while Jaroslav was being called to the phone Grandma would hum to herself: "Doody-dee-doo . . ."

Mama was very concerned. "I don't know what we can do. You know our little mama. Doesn't trust the surveyor's measurements."

"Doesn't trust *anything*," said Tilda. "Four strong garters on her corset, good solid American make. Still she ties string around her knees, just to make sure." Then Tilda blushed because she had forgotten the priest was present.

"Yet it all boils down to a problem of human vanity, Jaroslav," said Papa. "You are just embarrassed. Humiliated because your mama makes a telephone nuisance about her property line. The answer is this: Be bigger than the problem. See it small."

"That is right," said Father Sebastian. "We cannot help the things that happen to us, but we can control our perspective of them. Trouble is as big as we allow it to be."

Uncle Jaroslav stood up and put his hands flat on the table. "I have not told you the worst," he said slowly. Everybody waited for him to speak. "While I have been losing weight, our dear mama has been going over my head. She has been telephoning Mr. Benedict himself!"

"No!" said all the women.

Oh, Grandma, thought Lida, what have we done!

Uncle Jaroslav nodded his head and wiped his forehead with a handkerchief. "Now perhaps you will see the gravity of my position. Very unstringing such a thing to happen to me—a good American citizen. Mr. Benedict is not exactly a—warm personality. He came bursting into my office today shouting, 'If you can't stop that mother of yours from phoning this office, I'll—I'll have to stop her myself!' He also intimated he would have to replace me with someone whose mother could at least complain in plainer English. She calls him 'Mister *Benediction!*' And him a good Baptist.

"She even threatened to go over Benedict's head," continued Uncle Jaroslav. "Report him to the mayor. And she'd do it too. I tell you something's got to be done! Mr. Benedict says one more call from her, and he's going out to her house and give her personally a piece of his mind for criticizing his office!"

"Boze!" said Mama.

Lida knew that whenever her mother said that, things were dark indeed.

"I'm afraid I'll lose my job." Jaroslav sank into his chair.

"Now, now," said Papa. "We think of something—I don't know what—but something."

While the talk was going on at the table Lida got up and very softly walked into the next room. She looked around and found Frantisek's jacket. After one more good look at the beautiful marble, she carefully put it in one of the pockets where Frantisek would be sure to find it.

LIDA drove up to Cherry Street that night in Uncle Jaroslav's automobile. She sat in the back seat beside Papa, and Uncle Emile sat up in front. It had stopped raining, just as Papa had said it would, and now the fog was so thick in spots it seemed to Lida that Jaroslav had to slow down the car because it was pushing bales of thick white cotton ahead of it.

Emile was giving Jaroslav advice. "The thing is, be firm," he said. "When we go in there you say, 'Look here, Mama, cut out the phoning. It makes my boss mad.' "

"I already told her that," said Jaroslav. "You told her you'd lose your job?"

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"Yes. She said, 'Too bad. But I lose too—seventeen inches.'"

"She is a woman of solid convictions," said Papa.

"Like cement," said Jaroslav.

"Concrete," said Emile. "Only thing to do is pull out the phone."

"A little drastic," said Papa, taking a puff on his cigar.

Lida felt very fine. Mama had been so concerned at the last minute about Jaroslav that she'd forgotten what she'd said at the dinner table. So it was Lida, as usual, who was to spend the night at Grandma's house.

"So, you are smiling all to yourself, Lida," said Papa quietly while the uncles talked in front. "Something is beautiful in your thoughts?"

"Oh, Papa, yes," said Lida, unable to keep her secret another minute. "Tomorrow I'll be a cook! Grandma is going to show me."

"She is?" said Papa. "A big surprise indeed. How did you accomplish this miracle?"

"She promised," said Lida.

"So?" said Papa. He was thoughtful for a few minutes. "In return for this unusual gesture of your grandma's, what do you do—wash dishes, dust?"

Suddenly Lida couldn't look at her father.

"No," she said. She could feel Papa's eyes watching her. "Spek-oo-lation," Grandma would call it.

Lida kept her eyes straight ahead, fastened on the mole at the back of Emile's neck. Presently she felt Papa put the box from North Dakota on her lap.

"Since tomorrow you are to be a queen in the kitchen," he said, "you will undoubtedly need this. Fine mushrooms. Better get used to them."

GRANDMA was always glad to see her sons and Papa. She hurried to turn on the lamps in the living room, and said, "Sit, sit. But don' stay too long." She always went to bed very early. "Hard vork, all day hard vork in garden," she said.

She sat very straight on the edge of the chair, and her dark eyes sparkled at the sight of the box Lida carried until she saw it was from her daughter in North Dakota. "Ludmila," she said. "Always mushroom. I got ten pounds already. Take in pantry, please. Now"—she looked at the men—"vot's da matta you?"

Jaroslav cleared his throat and leaned forward, very stern.

"Look here, Mama. It's about this phoning. This property line."

"The Anderson's fence," Emile said.

"Sure. Seventeen inches my property," said Grandma.

"It is not, Mama," said Jaroslav. "It was properly surveyed when Anderson bought the land from you. Our office does not make mistakes!"

Grandma raised one shoulder and gave a little laugh. "How you know dis?"

"We just *don't*, that's all," said Jaroslav. His lower lip was beginning to shake. "Our crews, our people, Mama, are highly trained."

"Went to fine schools," said Emile. "Mama, these men spent their whole lives getting smart enough so they don't make mistakes when they measure your property."

"Doody-doo," sang Grandma, meaning all that meant nothing to her.

"Mr. Anderson is building his fence on the right line," said Jaroslav, "you can be sure."

Grandma shook her head firmly.

Jaroslav sighed. "All right, Mama. Say he isn't. What then? Is it worth such a fuss?"

"Seventeen inches him, is seventeen inches me," said Grandma.

Jaroslav got excited. "But our men *measured*. They used science. Scientific instruments."

"Ha!" cried Grandma. She curved a hand around one eye and peered through it as if she were looking through a telescope, and half bent over, she imitated the men from Uncle Jaroslav's office. "Votcha see t'rough li'l pipe on t'ree stickses? Shame, shame! Beeg men, no can take yardstick, say vun, two, t'ree like everybody else!"

Papa said to Grandma, "What makes you so sure Jaroslav's office is wrong in the measure?"

"Easy. I tell by my pitch tree," said Grandma. "Las' year I sell my land I say, 'Ho, ho, Mr. Handerson! Goot t'ing your property far enough over, odervise you could pick my ripe pitches.'" Grandma shook her finger playfully close to the side of her nose. "I make li'l joke. All right. Now Mr. Handerson builds fence—vot's dis I see? Chee viss! Hanging over Handerson fence is branch my own pitch tree. Vun, two, t'ree ripe pitches."

Jaroslav threw out his hands. "University men in my office, and she measures by a peach tree!"

The uncles were still arguing with Grandma, getting nowhere, when Lida tiptoed up the broad shining staircase and went into the bedroom. She didn't take off her coat and get ready for bed. She sat in the beautiful chair, the one Grandpa had made himself. From below came the murmur of voices, and it made her sleepy. Dimly Lida heard the men leave. Her head was dropping against the chair when she heard a whisper from the stairway. "Pst, pst!"

Lida slid out of the chair and quietly ran to the landing. The stair light was shining down on Grandma's head, and her hair on top was a smooth dark doughnut.

"I'm ready," said Lida, and hurried down the stairs.

"Qvick," Grandma whispered. "Is time." She pulled a big dark shawl around her head and fastened it about her shoulders. Just as she had done last night. "You got light?"

Lida held up the small flashlight she had taken from the cabinet in the hall while Grandma got the yardstick and the tape measure.

"Make double sure," she said, busily turning out all the lights in the house except the dim stair light.

Making soft sounds like a worried hen, Grandma opened the door and noiselessly, she and Lida tiptoed out into the night. Through ribbons of fog they found their way to the far end of Grandma's front yard. She spread out her full skirts, got down on her knees and bent over the yardstick. Lida leaned over and kept the flashlight on the very edge of the lawn where it met the sidewalk. The grass was damp, but Grandma didn't seem to mind. She edged along on her knees as she placed the yardstick where her finger marked the last measure and whispered the number of feet and inches to herself.

The street was very dark, very still. Lida didn't like it much.

"Grandma," Lida whispered, "couldn't you do this easier in the daytime?"

"You crazy?" said Grandma, not stopping. "Neighbors see."

"But it's so--so——"

"Keep light on yardstick!" Grandma whispered. "You scare?"

"N-no."

"Goot! Then please, be nice girl, shut mouth. I count."

Lida obeyed. After all, it was worth it. She was earning her cooking lessons.

They were over halfway now.

Lida's eyes moved from side to side in her still face. "Grandma, do you hear something?" she said.

"Jus' you, talking. Sh!" Grandma continued her work.

Lida listened. It must have been the wind in the trees; but after a while she heard it again, a faint melody, out of tune and very sad.

"Grandma, do the *jezeniny* sing?"

"Sure, alla time," said Grandma. "Qviet now, putty soon I'm finish."

"I can see the Anderson fence now," said Lida with relief, "and it isn't far. Hurry, Grandma."

The light was shaking in Lida's hand, and Grandma said for heaven's sake to hold it still. Grandma didn't seem to hear the song. It was coming closer.

"Don't—don't they usually sing in Bohemian?" said Lida.

"Vot else?" said Grandma, busy counting.

"Grandma," said Lida in a small voice, "this one is singing with an Irish accent. 'My Wild Irish Rose.'"

Grandma lifted her head and listened. It was loud now, not very good singing.

"Can't be Casey again," Grandma said. "He be in jail."

"No, Grandma," Lida whispered. "He's out. Uncle Zdenek got him out."

Grandma was disgusted. "Fine lawyer dat Zdenek! Vy no can't he keep his customers in jail!"

They both listened. There were footsteps now and sometimes the song stopped, and Casey whistled instead.

"Grandma, Mr. Casey thought you were a ghost last night—of his wife."

"Don' bodder me," said Grandma. "Tonight I finish measure, Casey, no Casey!"

Grandma was hurrying now, trying to reach the fence. But she didn't finish, because the whistling suddenly stopped and not far away stood the bulky outlines of Casey. His body seemed to be wavering in the fog, but his feet stayed in one place. A thin croak came from him; then suddenly he was yelling and bellowing as if a thousand spirits were after him.

"It's her again!" he screamed. "Have mercy on me poor soul—it's her a-diggin' and a-diggin—oooo*oh!*"

Grandma grabbed the flashlight in one hand and Lida in the other, and Lida's feet scarcely touched the ground at all. She seemed to fly through the air, and suddenly she and Grandma were inside the dark house, peeking out the window. Lights had gone on in the houses around, and men in robes and pajamas were outside—trying to calm Casey. He had a terrible, wailing voice, and it kept going higher and higher until it broke.

Lida saw Mr. Anderson, tall and thin in his nightshirt and robe, looking doubtfully at Grandma's house. Faintly she heard his voice. "I hope the little old lady wasn't frightened," he said.

"Maybe we'd better ring her bell, make sure," said another man.

But someone answered, "There's no light. Must have slept right through it like she did last night."

Then the police came and took Casey away again.

Grandma gave a big sigh. She was exasperated. "Eediot!" she said. "Dat Casey—oh, he make me so mat!"

She put away her shawl and stood there in the hallway for a minute. Then she looked at Lida and started to giggle.

"Is it funny, Grandma?"

"Is funny," she said, her shoulders shaking. "I t'ink of Zdenek's face. Casey back in jail. Is very funny." She sobered quickly. "Vell, ve try again tomorrow. You go bed now. I bring you hot milk. Be sure say prayers."

GRANDMA seemed very quiet in the morning. Usually she hummed as she fixed breakfast but not this morning. Every

time she put a spoonful of oatmeal into Lida's dish she jerked the spoon as if it were an ax and said, "Big fool Casey," under her breath.

She poured thick cream over Lida's cereal; then they both sat down to eat.

"Vell, missus," Grandma said finally, "how you today?"

"Very busy today," said Lida. "Big cooking. What will I learn first, Grandma? Bread? Cake? Pudding?"

"Zoup," said Grandma.

Lida was a little disappointed. "Why soup?"

Good fine soup, Grandma told her, was the backbone of every good meal. To serve a dinner without first serving soup was like going to church without wearing a hat.

"You understan' dis?" said Grandma, clearing the table.

Lida nodded.

Grandma got a big white apron just like her own from the sideboard, and tied it around Lida.

"Now," said Grandma, "you vait here. Yo' gremma got business."

Lida stayed in the kitchen until she heard Grandma telephoning in the next room. Lida followed her.

"Who you calling, Grandma?"

"I call Mr. Benediction. Tell him send out men vit li'l pipes on sticks or I go to mayor. Big shot."

"But Grandma, you promised not to phone."

"Doody-dee-doo," said Grandma. "I say 'maybe.'" Then into the phone she said, "Dis Mr. Benediction?"

Lida went into the kitchen and closed the door. She couldn't bear to listen.

Soon Grandma bustled in after her. "Now," she said happily, "in pantry please. Ve cut up chicken, get carrots, parsley—make fine soup."

"What did he say, Grandma? Was he awfully angry?"

"I don' know. I jus' say my say—hang up."

Lida put a hand over her mouth. "Oh, Grandma! He'll be so mad he'll come out here himself."

"Fine," said Grandma. "He should bring also his poys vit li'l pipes . . . Move pitcher of vine, please. Goot cook needs lotsa room."

Well, Lida thought, as she moved the big blue pitcher filled with Grandma's cooking wine, if Grandma isn't worrying, why should I?

She hitched up her apron. "What do I do first?" she said.

The first thing to do, Grandma told her, was to peel a big onion . . . And that was as far as the lesson got because just then the telephone rang.

Grandma rushed to answer it and while Lida was struggling with the onion, Grandma was pouring a stream of Bohemian into the phone. At the end she said, "Sure, sure. I come down right now."

Then Grandma untied her apron, ran upstairs, ran down again, and she was all dressed in her best town clothes, with her Sunday hat perched on top of her head.

"It vas yo' mama," she told Lida. "She say I should come down her house right away. Jaroslav tells her so. I meet him. Someding important. Mus' be about fence. Goot-by. I see you."

After a time the long hand on the kitchen clock began to tease Lida. It said, "I'll be on number four before Grandma comes back." and sure enough it moved to four and said, "See?" It wanted to go on playing the game after it passed six and seven, but Lida wouldn't play. She wouldn't look at the clock.

The onion on the table said, "Well, here

I am. Don't you know what to do with me? My, my."

She looked down at her folded hands and they said, "We have nothing to do, not a single thing. Where are all the spoons and dough and work you promised us? Too bad you gave the marble back to Frantisek; we could have gone to Chicago. Looks as if Grandma won't be back for quite a while . . ."

She went back to her chair in the kitchen. Tears fell on her hands. Something had happened to her big cooking day. It was as flat as the dumplings she'd made. She'd never learn, never . . .

She was still sitting there when Papa came in the back way. He was looking at something wound around his hand.

"I found this out in front, caught on the bushes," he said. "A peculiar ornament to be hanging on a tree. Better put it back in your grandma's sewing basket."

Lida took the tape measure Grandma had dropped in the bushes last night and put it away. When she returned Papa was holding the big peeled onion in his hand.

"A noble vegetable, but a sad one, eh?" he said, blinking his eyes. "Better put it away too, then we will have no reason for pink eyes." He went to the sink and splashed cold water on his face and told Lida to do the same, it would cure her onion eyes, he told her. Lida almost smiled, Papa looked so funny.

"A-*ha!*" he said when they had dried their eyes. "Now we are respectable-looking. We will sit and wait."

"For what, Papa?"

His voice was slow and patient. "Mr. Benediction," he said.

"But Grandma isn't home!"

"Precisely," said Papa with a sigh. "Your mama and aunts are trying to keep her in hand until Jaroslav arrives. They already were having their hands full when I stopped by."

"Grandma will be sorry to miss Mr. Benedict," said Lida.

"That is a meeting," said Papa, "which the whole family is trying to prevent. If it occurs, Jaroslav can say good-by job. That is why I, on a fine day of business, must leave my restaurant and come up here. Your mother asked that I do this. So did your Uncle Jaroslav. He called up very excited. To him, losing a job where he can sit at a big desk and give away good cigars is worse than being expelled from heaven."

"Oh," said Lida. "Do you think they can keep Grandma away until Mr. Benedict has gone?"

"No doubt by this time your Aunt Amelia has locked all the doors."

"That should do it," said Lida.

"Your grandma of course would prefer to be up here giving you a cooking lesson," he said. "You know this?"

Lida nodded.

"You understand that just because people are old, they are not always blessed with infinite wisdom. So what happens? Troubles. And the troubles they create keep them from enjoying the things they would like to do!"

"You mean Grandma's seventeen inches?"

"With most people it is money," said Papa. "With your grandma—inches. Ya, ya. There is little difference."

The doorbell rang and rang. Lida drew herself into a tight knot because she knew it must be Mr. Benedict pushing the bell so impolitely. Papa opened the door and had to wait for the man to stop shouting before he could say, "I am sorry, she is not at home. Perhaps you can return?"

"No, sir, I will not return!"

"But she will be gone for some time," said Papa. "Perhaps I . . ."

"No! If her own son who works in my office can't keep her from making a laughingstock of me, then I'd like to know, sir, who can? I'll wait! I'll sit right in her parlor and wait—until midnight if necessary!"

"As you wish," said Papa, letting him in. "Pick a comfortable chair."

Lida stood in the dining room and stared at the tall man as he sat down and crossed his arms across his chest.

Papa settled himself in another chair and said, "Cigar?"

"Never touch them," said Mr. Benedict. He was very cross.

"A glass of wine, perhaps?"

"Never touch it!" said Mr. Benedict.

"I don't suppose a cup of coffee—no, I guess you don't touch it. Perhaps you would like a glass of water to help swallow your pill?"

The man looked at Papa, then pulled out a big watch from his pocket. His eyes grew tiny, like thumbtacks. "How did you know it was time for me to take a pill?" he snapped.

Papa shrugged. "A surmise only. A man's stomach is often a barometer of his mood. Lida, a glass of water, please."

Lida hurried to obey, and when the man drank the water he didn't thank her. He grunted and looked at his watch again.

Papa was a fine talker. He spoke of the weather, business conditions, the high taxes—but Mr. Benedict didn't answer. He kept tapping his fingers against the arms of the chair; otherwise he was motionless, made of solid stone.

"Well, Mr. Benedict," said Papa, "I am afraid you have a long wait. Surely an important man has important things to do."

"Golf," said Mr. Benedict. "But only nine holes. Doctor's orders."

"Ah, yes" said Papa. "So now it would be better to be out in the fresh air, push the little ball today?"

"I'm—not—budging—till—I've—seen—that—woman!" Mr. Benedict pounded each word hard with his fist.

"And such a gentle little thing she is," said Papa. "So helpless, so trusting. She will be distressed to know she has irritated such an honest man."

"My integrity has never been questioned," said Mr. Benedict, "until she started phoning!" His nose was getting very red, and he started to fidget. Again he looked at his watch. "Twelve thirty. First time in twenty-three years I haven't eaten lunch on the dot. I tell you that *gentle* old lady is making a blithering wreck out of me!" He crossed his arms again, and his face folded into pleats, like a paper lantern.

TWELVE THIRTY and no lunch. That was dreadful. And here he was in Grandma's house where no one was allowed to go hungry.

Lida whispered to her father. He thought a moment and then said, "By all means. I could do with some myself. Hot soup is just the thing, eh, Mr. Benedict?"

"What say?"

"We will have something to remove the chill from the bones," said Papa.

Mr. Benedict grunted. "Nothing more than soup. Very light. Doctor's orders."

Lida wished she could tell Papa there would only be enough soup for Mr. Benedict, but she didn't want Papa to go hungry either. A good cook, Grandma always said, managed somehow.

So Lida went into the kitchen and shut the door. Her heart was suddenly like a cage full of birds. Happy ones and worried ones. She smiled as she turned up the fire under the soup pot, and then the worried birds picked at her with sharp beaks because Papa wanted soup too. Grandma had left over only enough for one, and Papa was a big eater. He always had two or three helpings. What to do?

Lida peeked into the pot. The small amount of soup was beginning to bubble and she could see the barley dancing up and down. It smelled fine. Flavor was the thing, Grandma always said. But if Lida watered the soup so there would be enough to go around, there would be no flavor. She went into the pantry to worry, and when she came out her worries were over.

She held the pitcher of cooking wine with both hands and, oh, so slowly, she poured wine into the soup. She waited until it was very hot and looked again. It still wouldn't be enough. It needed more flavor, much more. She tipped the pitcher again. Now there would be plenty of fine soup. What an excitement to get up on a chair and carefully take Grandma's best soup tureen off the shelf. It was huge and blue, very pretty, and when Lida poured the steaming soup into it she felt her cheeks grow warm.

Why, this was her big day. She had guests for lunch and pink cheeks. My goodness!

She had to ask Papa to cut the bread because all Grandma's big knives were too sharp. The bread, great thick squares of it, were piled high on a dish, and soon the two men were sitting at the dining-room table. Lida hadn't set a place for herself. She was going to watch.

Papa lifted the cover of the tureen. He hesitated a minute, then sniffed again. A puzzled look came on his face. Lida grew anxious. Maybe she'd done something wrong.

"I'm afraid it hasn't enough flavor, Papa," she said.

"I'm afraid it has," said Papa. "Well, we try it once."

Lida watched with big eyes as he ladled the soup into the two plates. He didn't seem very hungry. He just played with his soup, cooling it with his spoon, and he kept watching Mr. Benedict. Mr. Benedict was a good eater. He bent over his soup as if it were important business and systematically went at it. Papa looked at him very strangely, then he took his first spoonful of soup—and exploded.

Lida brought him a glass of water. "Is the soup too hot, Papa?"

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Benedict. "Just right. A fine clear soup, by the way, young lady."

Lida dissolved with happiness. *Young lady.* What a wonderful thing to be called.

"Can't say that I ever tasted this particular kind of consommé," he said to Papa. "What is it?"

Papa's face was red behind the napkin, but he had found his voice again. "A very old—Bohemian dish," he said. "Very special."

Mr. Benedict had another bowl of it, and Papa watched him eat it. When Mr. Benedict had half finished he held his spoon still for a moment, and his face twisted to one side. It took Lida a moment to realize he was smiling. She guessed his smile was a little rusty. He didn't use it much.

"I remember a broth my old mother used to prepare in Scotland," he said.

Papa tapped the ash from his cigar. "Well, in Scotland or in Bohemia, or in this fine America—wherever—good soup is good soup when made by our dear mothers' hands."

Lida had never heard Papa talk flowery like this. But Mr. Benedict seemed to like it. He liked the soup too. He finished it, right down to the last drop.

"Scotland," said Papa. "Now there is a beautiful country. The River Clyde, the moors and the heather . . ."

"Aye," said Mr. Benedict, his eyes

dreamy. Then he remembered why he was here and frowned. "When will she return, did you say? I haven't all day!"

Papa cleared his throat, and he looked at Mr. Benedict quickly before he spoke. "I was thinking," he said, "if your wonderful mother from Scotland were here she'd like to be sitting at this table. She'd say, 'My son, life is short and, after fifty, so is the breath. Take it easy.' "

Mr. Benedict sighed and patted his vest as if he were surprised. "I feel unusually fine," he said and got up from the table to walk into the living room. He seemed to have a little difficulty. He sat down in the big chair and said, "That cigar of yours smells mighty good."

Papa gave him one, and Mr. Benedict made a great job of lighting it. "First in ten years," he said, looking at it.

"I was also thinking," Papa said carefully, "if your mother had a certain fence being built on her property . . ."

Mr. Benedict made a face. "Don't mention that. I was just beginning to enjoy this cigar."

Papa talked very quietly, very smoothly, like a canoe on the lake; such beautiful talk, Lida couldn't understand it. She only knew that every time Mr. Benedict remembered to frown Papa would mention Scotland and Mr. Benedict's dear old mother, and the frown would disappear.

Finally Mr. Benedict stood up and said, "All right, where's the phone?"

Papa showed him, and while Mr. Benedict telephoned Papa took out a handkerchief and wiped his face.

Mr. Benedict hung up. "They'll be right out with the equipment and the charts. We'll have this thing settled once and for all!"

In no time the men with the long rolls of blue paper and instruments came in a truck, and Mr. Benedict went outside with them, giving orders. Lida saw Mr. Anderson come out to the fence. He had a toothpick in his mouth, and he shook hands with Mr. Benedict.

Uncle Emile and Uncle Zdenek came walking up the street, and when they saw the men measuring Grandma's property they stopped and scratched their heads.

When they came in the house Papa said, "Ask no questions. Just pray your mama doesn't arrive and spoil everything before they have finished."

Uncle Zdenek didn't look very happy.

"Zdenek," said Papa. "I have a theory."

"Theory I don't need," said Zdenek. "What I want is a client who can stay out of jail."

"Exactly," said Papa. "And I'm sure a little word in the judge's ear will accomplish this. Has it not struck you as extraordinary that your mama on both nights of Casey's ghost was not in the least disturbed?"

"Nothing about Mama surprises me," said Zdenek.

"Or the fact that in her front yard the morning after the ghost disturbance there is a tape measure which does not grow on trees? Or the fact that your dear mama has not only a green thumb, but today, on close observance, also possesses green knuckles? Grass stain, tape measure—what you got? Casey's ghost in the fogs."

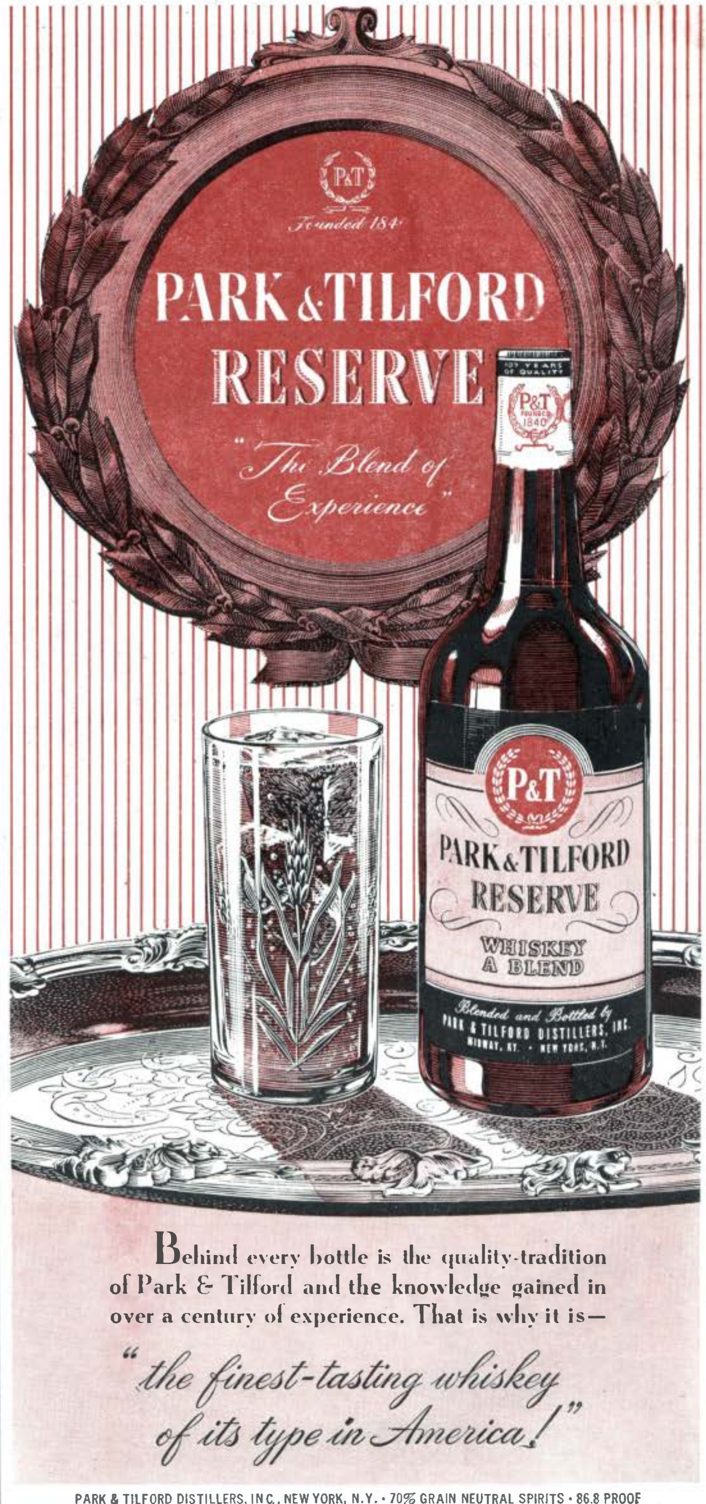
"That's Mama," said Emile. "But how could she see in the dark."

"An unimportant detail," said Papa, glancing at Lida.

Lida didn't look up. She was busy studying the toes of her shoes.

"Getting Casey out of jail twice in two nights will make you the talk of the town," Papa said to Zdenek. "Great professional prestige."

"Fine prestige!" said Zdenek. "Everybody will say I am the lawyer whose



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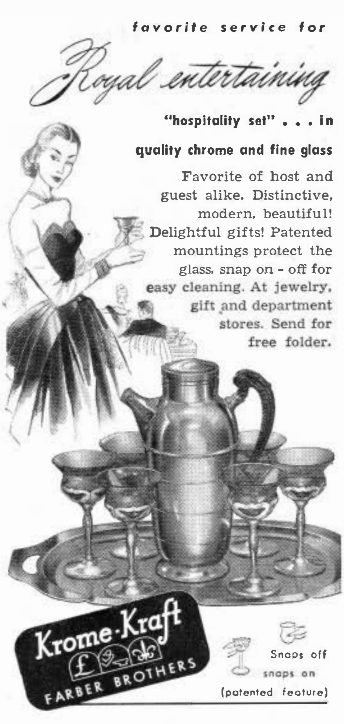

mother creeps around on her hands and knees after dark." He thought awhile. "No. it is best Casey has a lesson. Well"—he took a deep breath—"now I feel better. What's new?"

"Oh-oh," said Emile, pointing out the window.

Uncle Jaroslav's car had drawn up. It was full of aunts, Mama and Grandma. Everybody but Grandma looked upset. Jaroslav tried to get out of the car first, but Grandma was too quick for him. She was walking straight for Mr. Benedict.

Papa and the uncles went outside, and Lida stood in the open doorway.

Jaroslav looked sick. "This is the end," he said. "We couldn't keep her down there another minute. I thought anyway he'd be gone by this time. Now look."

They all looked, and Jaroslav's mouth dropped open.

Mr. Benedict was over by the fence, taking off his hat and bowing to Grandma, and she was being so sweet, smiling and bowing. Oh, Grandma was an actress!

Mr. Benedict called Jaroslav over and said, "Look here, we've just finished. Look at these figures. Why didn't you call this to my attention before? There's been a mistake. The Anderson's fence here is on your own mother's property. To be exact—seventeen inches."

Jaroslav didn't know what to do. He looked at Grandma, but she just opened her eyes wide as if it was a great surprise to her. He looked at the paper and then to Mr. Benedict. All he could do was swallow. Mr. Benedict patted him on the back, and said we all made mistakes sometimes, forget it. Then he explained things to Mr. Anderson. And Mr. Anderson looked relieved. He laughed when Grandma shook her finger near her nose and said, " Ho, ho, Mr. Handerson, you jus' van' pick my pitches."

Mr. Benedict shook Grandma's hand, and said nice things, though he sometimes got a little mixed up and thought she came from Scotland.

Grandma just smiled and said, "Denk you, denk you, Mr. Benediction."

After he and his men left, everybody came into Grandma's house.

"He's be crezy," said Grandma. "Ask me how I make such nice zoup. I got no zoup."

While everybody was saying well, thank heavens that's settled, Papa was talking quietly to Grandma, explaining something.

Lida was sitting all alone by the dining-room door, thinking things over. So much had happened.

"Vell now," Grandma said to them all, "everybody stay my house for dinner. I make fine dinner."

"I'll help," said Mama.

"Let me," said Aunt Tilda.

"I could make the dessert," said Aunt Amelia.

They all wanted to do something. But Grandma very firmly said, "No."

She took off her hat, coat and gloves, found her apron where she had left it, and smiling, with bright eyes, she said, "Tonight fine celebration. Invite everybody. Even Handersons. Nobody come in my kitchen but me—and somebody else. She's gon' be best cook in whole town!"

She passed Lida and turned around. "Vy you sit?" she said. "Come, come!"

Lida looked around. She couldn't believe her ears. Mama and the aunts were grinning, and Papa winked at her.

"You slowpoke," said Grandma. "Hurry, hurry."

To think Grandma, the queen cook of the whole town, had chosen her!

Humming "Doody-dee-doo," Grandma went into the kitchen. With a smile stretched across her face, Lida followed her.

My, my, what a cooking day!

THE END

Firemen Must Be Fast on Their Feet *(Continued from page 46)*

of the elevator shafts where an elevator, with a girl operator in it, had dropped half the height of the building to the basement.

English shouted at the people, "Where's an elevator operator?"

Somebody pointed at a frightened little man who was standing in a corner of the lobby.

English yelled at him, "Which one goes highest?"

The man pointed at one of the elevators, and English grabbed him by the arm and dragged him into it. His truckmen and some hosemen from Engine One, which had also arrived by now, crowded into the car behind him.

They rode to the sixty-fifth floor where the hosemen unreeled a fire hose from the wall and began pouring water down the burning elevator shaft. English led his truckmen upstairs. Unburdened by tools, he raced a flight ahead of the rest of them, looking on each floor for flames or smoke. At the seventy-eighth floor he found flames but saw no one. He ran up another flight of stairs, yanked opened the door leading to the corridor of the seventy-ninth floor and was knocked to his knees by a blast of terrific heat.

English got to his feet, slammed the door shut, found an emergency fire hose on the wall at the head of the stairs and unrolled it. The rest of the truckmen came panting up the stairs and joined him. While the others backed them up, English and a fireman named Murphy took the nozzle of the hose, jerked open the door and moved inside.

The floor was a mass of pitch-black smoke, shot through with long tongues of flame.

"The flames were cherry-red," English recalls now. "They made a lot of noise. They were really roaring. The heat was more than two hundred degrees, I think."

As the firemen advanced along the corridor, they heard somewhere behind them in the smoke a man's voice crying, "Save us!" They started back toward the voice. By this time, some of the Engine One men had caught up with them; they took over the hose, opening a path for English and his men to an office door which they kicked in. They found inside seven men, a young boy and a girl and led them out of the room, along the burning corridor and downstairs to safety.

After that English leaned against a wall on the stairs and tried to catch his breath. He happened to glance at his watch. It was 10:04 A.M., not quite six minutes since he had been sitting at the desk in the firehouse.

IT IS safe to say that the house on Thirty-first Street is probably one of the most important fire stations in the world. It is considered the key house in the New York Fire Department's Third Division, which, in turn, covers the midtown area that is said to be the busiest as well as the most important and most dangerous part of the High Hazard District. The firehouse lies within reaching distance of the fur and garment districts, Pennsylvania Station, Grand Central Terminal, most of New York's theaters, night clubs, hotels, steamship docks, Times Square, Radio City, the big department stores, warehouses and the slaughterhouses, piers and freight terminals along the Hudson River water front. Some of the freight terminals are so big that the firemen can drive their

apparatus into the elevators, ride up to the floor where the fire is burning and drive up beside it to put it out.

Department stores keep the men from Engine One and Hook and Ladder 24 busy during the Christmas and Easter rush periods. Women are always putting lighted cigarettes on counters full of inflammable goods. The firemen slip in the employees' entrance and extinguish the fire without attracting too much attention.

Hotel fires are usually started by people who smoke in bed. Quite often a couple who do not want it known that they are occupying a hotel room together will accidentally start a fire. Invariably, they rush downstairs, check out without a word and hail a taxi. The firemen wish they would at least phone an alarm before they leave town.

In addition to Engine One and Hook and Ladder 24, the firehouse on Thirty-first Street contains a water-tower company, a searchlight company and the offices of Edward Connors, deputy chief of the Third Division. The building is two stories high, except in the rear where there is a third-floor recreation room and a three-story tower where hoses are hung to drain and dry after they have been used in a fire. The first floor consists of a parking space for the four pieces of apparatus and the deputy chief's red sedan, and a dayroom where meals are served. On the second floor there is a bunkroom where the men on the night shift sleep. In the basement, there is a woodworking shop with machinery which the firemen bought themselves. At Christmas time, they make and repair toys which the Fire Department gives to poor children.

There are always twenty-two firemen on duty. They work in three eight-hour shifts; midnight to eight in the morning, eight until four in the afternoon and four until midnight. Each shift begins with a roll call. While they are waiting for fires, the men on duty clean the firehouse, check equipment, play handball on a court they built themselves, listen to the radio, work in the wood shop or read. Very few of them play cards. No matter what else they are doing, they are always listening for the alarm bells. Every alarm received by headquarters from the five boroughs of New York is tapped out in every firehouse in Manhattan. And the bells, signaling the number of the box nearest the fire, sound in every room in the firehouse.

A box number within the firehouse's own area starts a swift series of coordinated movements in the building. The first two numbers tapped by the bell tell the firemen whether it is a box on which they are "first due." After the second number they start to run for the apparatus. They are still listening for the third number, which tells them the exact location of the box.

One fireman is always on duty at the watch desk inside the main entrance to the firehouse. As the bell taps come in, he writes the numbers down on a blackboard behind his chair. Then he checks the location in a card-index file beside the blackboard. He holds this information in his head while he reaches up and bangs the house bell for the benefit of any fireman who might not have heard the bell signal from headquarters.

Then he presses a button on an electric winch which rolls the steel firehouse doors up and back against the ceiling. He presses another button which rings an alarm on the nearest street corner, warning the policeman on duty there to go into the middle of the intersection and stop all traffic.

By this time all firemen in the house

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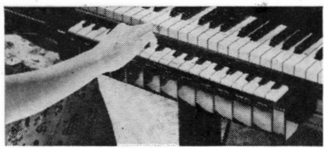

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are converging on their apparatus. Many of them slide down from the upper floors on the brass poles. The poles run only one floor in depth. Otherwise men getting on the pole beneath others already sliding down might cause delays, jams and injuries.

As the firemen reach the apparatus, they kick off their shoes, hook their fingers in the loops inside their rubber boots and yank them on. This is the only change of clothing attempted inside the firehouse; they struggle into helmets and coats on the apparatus while they are riding to the fire.

As the captains and lieutenants run past, the man on the watch desk shouts at them the location of the box. The officers jump into the seat beside the driver, glance back to see that everything is set and give the signal to go. The last man to leave the firehouse is the tillerman who sits on the rear end of the hook and ladder. As his head clears the top of the firehouse door and the rear end of the truck heaves across the sidewalk and into the street, about ten seconds have elapsed since the alarm started to come in.

The senior officer at the Thirty-first Street firehouse is Captain Edward Meany of Engine One, a slight, brittle-looking man with white hair and a gentle voice. He has spent forty years as a fireman in the Third Division. Although he is now sixty-two, Meany still thinks nothing of getting up in the middle of a bitterly cold night and going out to fight a fire for three or four hours.

When he was twenty-one, Meany took a vow never to touch alcohol. He has never broken it. Some time ago he and his company spent most of a February night putting out a midtown fire. The temperature was ten above zero. The department medical officer who was on the scene advised the men to go into a nearby bar and warm up after their work was finished.

Meany and his men, covered with ice, lined up at the bar while the bartender took orders for double shots of whisky. He asked Meany what brand he preferred.

"I'll just have a glass of ginger ale," Meany said.

The bartender looked at him. Meany's helmet was a solid block of ice; his coat was frozen white and stiff. "What did you say?" the bartender asked.

"A glass of ginger ale," Meany repeated. "And put some ice in it, please."

The bartender served the ginger ale in silence. Then he went to the other end of the bar, poured himself a cup of hot coffee and drank it, glancing at Meany and shivering.

Despite his forty years in the dangerous Third Division, Meany has never been seriously injured, although he has been trapped in burning buildings, blown across a street by a back draft, hit on the head by furniture, pipes, icicles, bolts of cloth and floor beams and knocked off a girder by his own whipping hose. He says that the last misfortune was not his fault.

It happened when Meany and his men were trying to attack a fire from the rear by climbing up into the framework of an uncompleted building. They were sitting precariously on a crossbeam with the hose in their laps when the captain in charge climbed up beside Meany and ordered him to open the line.

"We'll go off here like a bunch of pigeons," Meany objected.

The captain disliked having his orders questioned. "I said open that nozzle," he barked. Meany opened the nozzle, murmuring to his men, "Well, here we go." The water pressure turned the hose into a live, writhing thing, and the firemen went flying off into the air in all directions.

Meany managed to grab a girder on his way down and hung there until he was able to drop safely. The captain went all the way to the bottom and broke both arms.

"If I told you I was sorry," Meany said to him, "I'd be lying."

Meany thinks the life of a fireman has softened up considerably since his early days when he was the driver of a horse-drawn steam pumper. There was no regular system of days off then. "You simply went to work and stayed until you were unconscious," he says.

The engine was pulled by three horses. Two others were always standing ready to go as spares. Meany's horses were named Willie, Archie, Cusinell, Burlingame and Blizzard.

"The toughest horses you'd ever hope to see," Meany says. "They could stand in those stalls with bits in their mouths for forty-eight hours and then go ten blocks at a dead run."

Meany held the reins for the three horses in both hands and braced one foot on the brake, ready to stand on it if he had to slow down. New York's slippery and rough cobblestone streets in those days were, of course, filled with horse-drawn vehicles of all sizes. The fire engines did not have sirens, but they were equipped with powerful steam whistles which convinced all horses for blocks around that the end of the world had come. Sometimes, as they passed a carriage horse, Meany's horses would take a nip at him. As the carriage horse shied, the engineer on the back platform would pull the whistle, and the carriage horse would be apt to take off, straight up into the air. The engineer also had a habit of throwing lumps of coal at Meany to make him go faster. The coal, missing Meany's head, would hit his horses and make them even more unmanageable.

"It all added up to a lot of confusion," Meany says. "But, to tell the truth, I was still young enough to enjoy it."

Meany's opposite number in the firehouse is Charles Kuehhas, captain of Hook and Ladder 24, a man who likes to cook. On his days of duty, he prepares the evening meal for the twenty-two officers and men who are in the house. Invariably an alarm sounds just as he is putting the meal on the table. With a roar of dismay, Kuehhas throws the pot roast back into the oven and, in the midst of a rising bedlam of firemen running and dropping from brass poles, firehouse cats leaping for their lives and apparatus motors exploding in rolls of thunder, rushes to his seat beside the driver of the hook and ladder. He glances backward to make sure everybody is aboard and waves the signal to go. The effect is often heightened by the dish towel that is still in his hand as he waves.

Company captains like Meany and Kuehhas are working officers. When Meany's engine company carries a hose into a burning building, Meany goes with them. Kuehhas goes to the roof with his truckmen and tells them where to chop windows and skylights for drafts and where to raise ladders.

Captains and lieutenants are commanded, in turn, by battalion chiefs. The chief of the Seventh Battalion of the New York Fire Department, which includes Engine One and Hook and Ladder 24, is Thomas O'Brien, a shining example of a man who has found exactly the right mission in life.

O'Brien, a pink-faced, impudent-looking Irishman who walks with a quick rolling motion, possesses all the attributes

of the perfect fireman: a fondness for excitement, a minimum of innate animal fear, a prodigious restlessness, a love for meeting a challenge, indifference to exposure to heat or cold and the physical strength and endurance of a water buffalo. His job, requiring quick coverage of a lot of city territory, entitles him to ride in a red sedan through the streets of New York with no speed limit. It is obvious that he regards this privilege as the greatest gift that a mortal man could ever receive from the powers on high.

When O'Brien became a battalion chief and took over the sedan that goes with that rank, he requested for his chauffeur his younger brother, Eddie, who was also in the department at the time. "He's good company," he says. "And putting sentimental considerations aside, he is the best driver in the department."

When an alarm comes in, O'Brien moves like lightning. He elbows aside the friends, necktie salesmen, firemen and amateur fire-fighting fans with whom he is discussing last week's conflagration and runs to his sedan. As he runs, he bawls to the man at the watch desk in the firehouse, "Where is it?" He usually identifies the box from memory, but he likes to have the man on the desk tell him anyway.

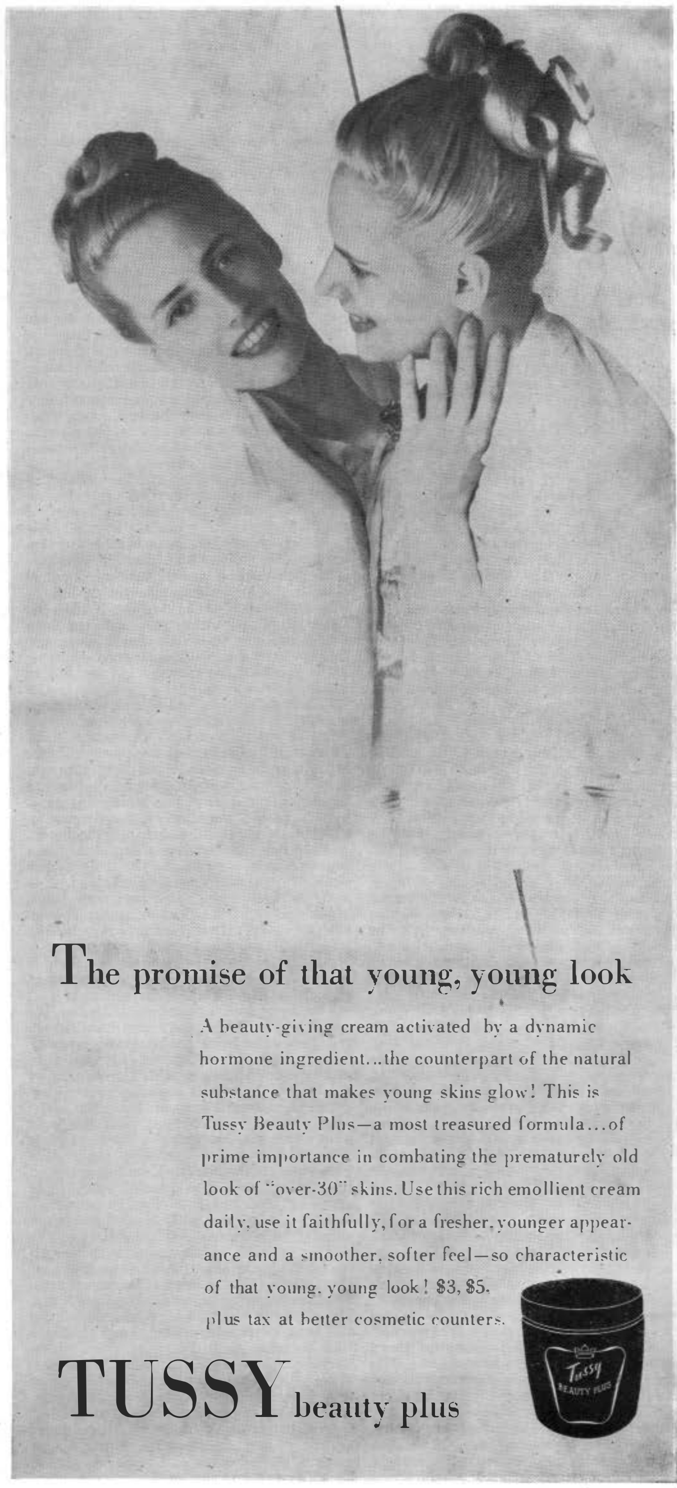
Sitting beside his brother in the sedan as it careens madly through traffic-choked New York streets, O'Brien is as relaxed as if he were on a Sunday afternoon pleasure ride. A frightful phantasmagoria of taxicabs, busses, street cars, trucks and people rushes up at the hood of the motor and miraculously dissolves in a blurred slip stream at either side. As they near the firebox, O'Brien sticks his head out the window and cries, "Where is it?" Eddie is always too busy driving to answer, so O'Brien answers himself. "There—second building from the corner." As Eddie jerks the sedan to a stop, O'Brien is out of the front seat like a stone from a slingshot and immediately disappears into the building. By the time the engine and hook and ladder companies arrive, O'Brien is back on the street with full knowledge of the nature of the fire, and all ready to direct operations.

O'Brien often moves so fast he suffers injuries that he doesn't find out about until later. Once he was the first man on the scene of a fire in the second floor of a Sixth Avenue building. He bounced from his sedan and started up the stairs to see what was burning. As he reached the second floor, an explosion blew him back down the stairs and out into the street. He rushed back into action. After the fire was out, he returned to the firehouse and, sitting down, found that he had suffered a prolapse of the rectum. He was sitting on his own intestines.

LIKE Meany, O'Brien has never worked outside the High Hazard District. He started there in 1925 with an engine company, and later he was tillerman on the tail end of Hook and Ladder 24. "I spent my time saying 'Hail Mary's' up and down Sixth Avenue," he says.

As might be expected, he has been involved in some spectacular rescues. For one of them, while he was with Hook and Ladder 24, O'Brien won the department's Trevor Warren medal. It occurred after a sign-painters' scaffolding, high on the side of a building at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street, became enveloped in flames. One of the two painters on the scaffolding had fallen to his death on the street. The other man had somehow managed to scramble up a rope and was clinging to a very narrow crossbar above the fire.

The company raised its aerial ladder,



and O'Brien ran up it. At the top of the ladder, eighty-five feet above the street, he found himself still ten feet away from the trapped painter. He called down for a fifteen-foot hook ladder. Bracing his legs in the rungs of the swaying aerial ladder, he lifted the hook ladder above his head, hooked it onto the crossbar and climbed up it. While the crowd below held its breath, he talked to the painter.

"We're a long way from the street, brother," he said, "and I don't know what your plans are. But I'm going back down on these ladders. So will you please co-operate?"

O'Brien gripped the painter and eased him off the crossbar. Then he started down the hook ladder. The painter had closed his eyes. At this point he opened them and, seeing the street ninety feet below, fainted. O'Brien reached the end of the hook ladder, made the ticklish transfer to the aerial ladder and brought his unconscious burden the rest of the way to the street.

FIREMEN like Meany, Kuehhas and O'Brien, who have spent a large part of their lives in midtown New York, can often visualize the problems involved in putting out a particular fire before they see it. Knowing the city as intimately as they do, an image of the neighborhood around the fire-alarm box registers in their minds as they are leaving the fire-house to answer the alarm. They know immediately whether it is a dwelling section where they must save human life, or an industrial area where possible poisonous chemical smoke or gas threatens the firemen themselves. The height of the buildings, facts about whether they are fireproof in construction or equipped with sprinkler systems, and the location of near-by fire hydrants pop automatically into their mental pictures. They can also estimate quickly how much traffic will be on the approaching streets, how many trucks are liable to be parked in that area, whether or not the elevator in the building will be running and, at that particular hour, how many people will be eating in the restaurant three doors from the street corner where the fire-alarm box is located.

As the fire apparatus nears the scene, they look first for smoke. Black smoke means petroleum; gray smoke might be rubber; white smoke is usually wood. The smoke firemen hate most to see is the eddying, thick yellow mass that signifies burning cellulose products. Burning cellulose produces a gas that will knock out the most leather-lunged fireman in a few minutes.

If smoke is drifting wispily out of an open window, the fire is just beginning. If it is pushing out through the window frames and billowing straight up into the air, the firemen expect trouble. This means it is under gaseous pressure and may explode any minute.

Firemen love to see actual flames! "She's opened up!" they'll yell to each other happily, as they spring off the apparatus. Flames on the outside of the building show the existence of a draft, which reduces the possibility of an explosion.

As a rule, the engine companies reach the scene first. When the engine-company officer spots the fire, he waves the driver of the apparatus to the nearest hydrant. Two firemen on the back platform jump off and connect a length of hose line. The driver steps on the gas again and continues to the entrance of the burning building, unreeling hose behind him.

Other enginemen jump off with nozzles and more lengths of hose. If the fire is in a dwelling house, they will go right in with their hose, attaching additional lengths as they need them. But it is not possible to do this in the skyscrapers of New York, where the fire is usually inconveniently burning on the tenth or eighteenth floor.

All buildings over eighty-five feet high in New York City are required by law to be equipped with a standpipe system, consisting of a large water tank in the basement which connects with an outlet on each floor above. A firehose is attached to each outlet. When there is a fire in a tall building, the firemen attach their hose from the hydrant to the engine which, in turn, pumps water into a sidewalk connection of the standpipe system, thus keeping the building's tank full and at high pressure. The enginemen carry their own hose upstairs to the floor where the fire is burning and attach it to the outlet on that floor, disconnecting the building hose which they always distrust.

By this time, the hook and ladder truckmen are also at the fire. If the building is a tenement or an apartment house and the fire is below the top floors, they raise ladders immediately to save anybody who may be cut off from the main exits. If the fire is burning inside an industrial building that is closed for the night, they seize axes, crowbars and claw hammers and start to break in the locked door for the waiting enginemen.

The firemen then crowd into the deserted lobby of the building. The elevator is usually locked, too. If they can't get it operating, they must climb the ten or fifteen flights of stairs on foot. If the elevator is operating they stop it on the floor below the one on which they believe the fire to be burning. Opening an elevator door on a burning corridor is regarded as a form of madness.

Likely as not, the building is a fireproof one, and the fire is being contained in one office or in one corridor. Opening a door on such a fire is one of the greatest risks a fireman takes. The smoldering contents of the room may be one degree below the explosion point, and the additional oxygen from the opening of the door may be all it needs to burst into terrific flame. You can never be sure about this when you are standing outside the door in the cool, protected, fireproofed corridor.

"Out in the hall, you can pull up a chair and read the Sunday papers," says O'Brien. "Open that door and step inside, and you'll get murdered."

Before the men in a hook and ladder company open a door, they will sniff at it, caress it with their bare hands and press their ears against it, listening for noise inside. When they get it unlocked, the hosemen from the engine company flatten themselves against the opposite wall in the corridor with the nozzle of their hose aimed but closed.

The truckmen jerk or kick the door open. If the fire inside is bad, the heat and gas come out in one huge searing gust. The enginemen drop and let this pass over their heads. Then they get to their feet, open the nozzle, drop their chins on their chests and move inside.

While they are still in the doorway, they aim the stream from the hose at the ceiling to break the heat waves. The wall of blinding, choking smoke in front of them gives them no idea of the exact center of the fire. They hear flames crackling, objects falling and water running from the sprinkler system. They keep the hose line between their knees to guide them back to the door if they have to retreat. When the heat gets unbearable, they kneel on the floor and turn the nozzle straight upward. The torrent of water, falling from the ceiling, cools their faces and clothing, breaks the heat waves around their bodies and adds oxygen to the atmosphere.

"It's the most beautiful, wonderful shower bath anybody ever had," says Meany.

Meany frowns upon retreating from a room except under desperate circumstances. "As long as you've got water in your line," he says, "the fire can't get you. So why go out? You'll only have to go back in again, and by that time maybe it'll be hotter."

Some of the younger men in the fire-house say that fireman Meany breathes smoke as naturally as other people breathe fresh air.

Engine and hook and ladder companies work together at a fire with the precision of a combat assault team. As soon as the truckmen make an entrance for the enginemen with the hose line, they split up, some of them staying on the floor of the fire to open windows, others heading for the upper floors and the roof, ventilating as they go. They create as many drafts as they can, with all possible speed, in order to ease the pressure of smoke and heat on the enginemen below. The slightest ventilation, even two or three floors above the blaze, may give the hosemen enough immediate relief to keep them from being forced back into a corridor.

"You can tell the instant the truck boys get the roof open," Meany says. "You're gasping from heat and half-crazy from smoke. And suddenly everything lifts off your back. The smoke moves, the air changes and you know somebody just kicked in a skylight."

FIREMEN are sensitive about the old charge that they do more damage with axes and hooks than the fire does.

"You've got to open walls and partitions and windows," they say. "Otherwise the fire will sneak through the whole building. We never do any more of that than we have to. We often move furniture out of the way before we chop through a ceiling."

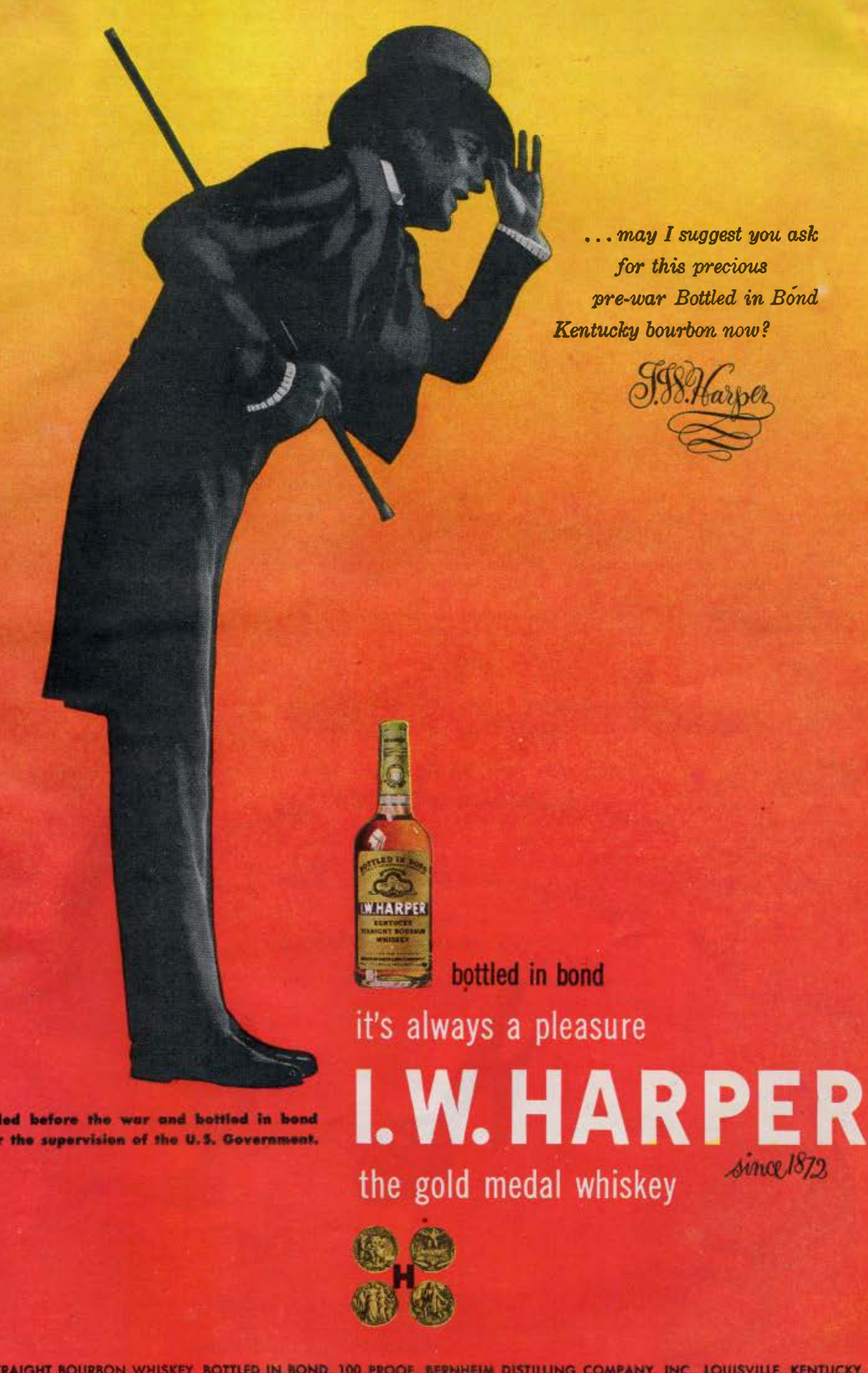
Hook and ladder men must be agile. To reach roofs and upper floors, they often have to cross from one building to another on ladders, clamber over ledges and edge along cornices, at the same time keeping an eye out for falling objects. Excitable people throw everything out of windows during a fire including, on occasion, themselves. While they are trying to get their ladders up, the truckmen work in a Niagara of suitcases, hatboxes, stuffed market bags and furniture.

People get so hysterical during a fire that they often hide from the firemen who are trying to rescue them. Truckmen make it a habit to rush from room to room, looking under beds and under mattresses and into closets. They often find children under furniture or under kitchen sinks. Very frequently they find people who make no move to escape.

One truckman found an aged Chinese man in a burning room recently and explained tersely that it was time to leave. The old man shook his head sadly and pointed at a large trunk that was standing beside him.

"I knew what the trouble was," the truckman says. "Every cent he owned was in that trunk, and he wouldn't leave without it. The thing weighed a ton, but I heaved it up on the window sill and dropped it into the alley. As soon as he saw it go, the old man crawled out on the ladder and went down it as if he'd been doing it all his life. Last I saw of him when we left, he was sitting in the street next to that trunk. He gives me a big wave as we roll off, and I give him one right back. Nothing makes you feel more like a big shot than helping someone out, and there's certainly a lot of that in this business."

THE END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that, and he could not exactly define the excitement. So far as he could understand the deal, it wasn't sex. He had thought about that.

The Bob White Café was still open, a steamy window under a wide splash of neon. He squeezed the hand in his pocket. "Something to eat?" he said.

"I don't want anything. Let's just ride."

Hallie danced a little, keeping in step with him. She always seemed to dance when she walked with him, but there wasn't any dance step in her walk at other times. He had seen her walking when she wasn't with him and when she did not know that he was watching. She walked a bit stiffly then; maybe "sedate" was the right word. He did not know what made the difference; feeling something about him maybe. Sometimes he hoped that it was that, and sometimes he wondered.

They kept on walking now and put the Bob White behind them. He had not expected her to go in. She never did. Once, when she gave him a reason for not going, she made a virtue of it. She said that she never cared to eat anything after a show and that it was foolish to waste his money that way. He wanted to believe that because it was a nice thing to believe about Hallie, but she had gone to the Bob White with him when he first started taking her out. All of the crowd went there, girls she had known all of her life, and fellows he knew, but Hallie had acted almost like a stranger with them. She didn't kid anybody, and she was left out of the kidding, even by the girls. He had figured then that she was a pretty shy girl and not at ease in a crowd. She was altogether different when she was alone with him. Still, it was fun to have a crowd. Double-dating was fun, too, but Hallie didn't like it.

He had to release her hand when they reached his car and while he fumbled with his keys. Hallie danced up and down, humming a little in a shivery soprano. When he opened the door, she gave two short jumps and she was in. "It's co-old," she said.

Her skirt swirled and took the cloth coat with it. She had pretty legs. She was cute. She made him feel awkward when she did not give him time to hold a door or help her in, but she was cute. He went around to his own side, and she snapped the button that released the lock on the left-hand door. She went back to her own side of the seat then, far over on her own side, the way she always did.

"Where will we go?"

HE ALWAYS asked her because driving to crazy places after shows was her idea, and she liked to pick the places. She hugged her left knee in the cradle of her hands now as she thought. He was aware of the knee and of the way her skirt fell back almost to her stocking top as she rocked thoughtfully.

"There's the arsenal," she said. "We've never been there."

Larry Reed looked thoughtful. "It's pretty far out."

She stopped rocking, but her fingers were locked around one shapely, nylon-clad knee. "Do you have to be home early?" she said.

He flushed and reached for the switch. He was twenty and a veteran of eighteen months in the United States Army, the wearer of a gold eagle emblem that guaranteed his maturity. If a girl did not have to be home early, it was absurd to suppose that he had to be. "You called it," he said, "so that's where we go."

They drove out Randall Boulevard, which was a long diagonal cutting the streets and avenues east of the downtown section. Larry's hands rested lightly on the wheel. He had learned long ago that he could not rest one of them lightly on Hallie. She did not like that kind of thing.

Hallie liked riding for its own sake, she said, and she made him like it the way she liked it. She talked to him as he drove in a sleepy, little-girl voice, not looking at him at all. She rested her head against the back of the seat and sometimes she cupped her hands behind her head, her body almost straight, with her feet against the floor boards. She had a slender body, and when she stretched like that she looked tall; but she wasn't tall.

Tonight, with the cold settling down hard on everything out of doors, it was warm in the car, and she unbuttoned her coat. It fell away from her body on the left side, and she was wearing a blue dress, a very dark blue, which twisted under her and curved back for several inches above her knee.

Larry had a secret feeling of shame about noticing that, but he kept on noticing it, although he kept stealing glances at her face, too.

Hallie was a medium blonde, with hair light enough to be recognized as blond but not light enough to gleam. She was not pretty, and it always astonished him when he made the mental admission, because he thought of her as pretty when he was away from her. She had a long face, and her features seemed too small for it, somehow. Her nose was straight

and sharp. Her chin looked sharp, too, in profile, and her mouth was small. Her lashes, however, were long, and there was a tantalizing challenge in her eyes, a mystery of some kind, a secret knowledge that came through to Larry as knowledge of himself. Her eyes made him feel that Hallie knew everything that he wanted from life, and all his secret yearnings; that she knew, and that she was storing all of life up so that someday he would have it. Big thoughts like that sounded ridiculous when he tried to put them into words, but he did not let words disillusion him. It was enough to feel.

Hallie was talking to him, as she usually talked; not the silly drivel that most girls talked, but a sort of wondering talk that turned life over and searched meaning out of it. He was not conscious of any sharply defined lines in her profile when she talked. There was a misty glow about her.

"I love people's windows at night," she said, "with the shades drawn and lights behind the shades. I wonder about them, especially when it's cold out, and I imagine them all warm and snug behind those shades. I wonder what they are doing and thinking and if they are happy and . . ."

Her voice trailed off and her silence seemed to finish her sentence as her silences always seemed to do. Larry's hand slid along the smooth surface of the wheel, and there was a strange singing in his blood. He was picturing all of the snug, warm rooms along the route they drove, picturing them with his own mind and Hallie's. Her voice came back to him out of the picture she had created. "We'll never know," she said softly.

She made a poignant thing out of that. They were surrounded by mysteries, the two of them, and they were shut out of the world behind the shades, where lights burned for other people; just two people in a car. He reached for her hand, and she returned the pressure of his fingers before she took her hand away.

"You understand things, Larry," she said. "Nobody else does. Ever."

THE road turned lonely when they passed the city limits. The arsenal had been a busy place during the war, an exciting place of searchlights and armed guards; it was a black, deserted hulk against the winter sky now, not even worthy of a night watchman's attention. Larry drove into the shadow of a truck-loading platform and parked. They were out of the wind, and when he snapped off the lights they were alone on an island in the night. Hallie shifted position so that her back rested against the door on the right side. Her legs were drawn up under her, and her knees formed a barrier between herself and Larry.

It was a strange thing about Hallie. He could not even kiss her. They came to places like this, and her defenses went up. She made him feel cheap if he touched her, yet her eyes forever held a promise. There would be a night—sometime—when she would not retreat behind a barrier. Everything about her promised that: the line of her body, the inclination of her head, the soft way she had of touching his hand and brushing it away. But something else about her forever said, "Not yet!"

He felt foolish about it. He had been in the Army, and he had heard barracks talk. He had seen all the educational films on sex, and the V.D. films, most of them several times. The Army poured that kind of education into a man, but it wasn't anything that he could use; it was the education of not-doing rather than of doing.

For a while after he came out, Larry

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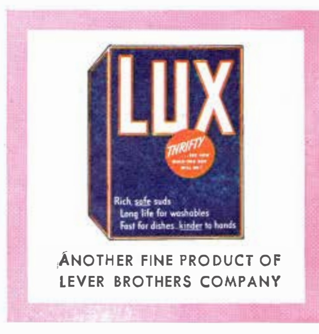

had been afraid of girls, self-conscious about them. It was a sense that he had of knowing all about them—and of being ashamed that he knew. He had been young, very young, when he went into the Army, and he had not gone out with many girls; he was still very young and there was Hallie.

The fellows back in the barracks would laugh at him, and nobody else would ever believe that he went to such spots as this with Hallie without any love-making. Still, there wasn't anything that he could do. Hallie would know how to stop him if he got started, and he could not get started because he was afraid of her.

Hallie was a rustling sound in the darkness, a soft breathing. "I like the winter," she said, "when I do not have to be out in it. I like being warm and feeling safe when I know that the winter is outside and that it could hurt me. It is like watching a tiger in a cage and knowing that he can't get out."

Her voice floated in the car, and there was a shivery note. Larry felt something of what she felt when she spoke, and there was a prickling sensation along the surface of his skin. He reached for her with his right hand and touched her knee. For a second his hand rested there, and then she pulled her legs out of the way.

"I feel so much older than you," she said.

Her face was a white blur. His hand dropped and rubbed across the fabric of the seat cover. "A year doesn't give you a big edge," he said.

"It makes a difference. And you seem *much* younger."

He did not believe that he did, but it was a sore point. Hallie was a senior at Mid-State U., and he had been awed by that fact when he first took her out; now he resented it. She drew her legs up under her again, and he rested his hands on the wheel, frowning.

"If you enter M S U in February, it will be worse," she said. "You'll be a freshman." She uttered the word "freshman" reluctantly, and she made it sound even worse than it usually sounded.

"I'd be a junior if it hadn't been for the Army," he said.

Hallie laughed. "So what? I was a junior last year. I am a senior this year. What does it add up to?"

"Education, I guess."

"Latin and French and English poets."

"I won't study that stuff. I'm going to be an engineer."

"Sure. Math and physics and chemistry. Four years of it! Then you walk around trying to get people to look at your diploma."

Hallie's voice was mocking, and it destroyed a mood. She had talked like that on other nights, and it always disturbed him. Four years *was* a long time. It was such a long time that he hated to think about it himself; he hated still more to be reminded of it by Hallie. He had thought about marrying Hallie, of how it would be. He did not want to marry Hallie, or anybody, but he thought about it.

Marriage was possible under the GI Bill. Other people did it. But you couldn't ask a girl to live for four years in a Quonset hut, if you could get a Quonset hut; not a girl who hated colleges the way Hallie did.

"If I were a man," she said, "I would go to a business college and spend less than a year. And I'd get a job out of it. I wouldn't waste four years of my life."

"I won't waste them."

"No?"

"No."

He set his jaw stubbornly. All of the things that he disliked about Hallie were bubbling on the surface of his mind. She was so sure about everything, and she never let him win, not even when he was right. She made his best thoughts seem childish, and she carried him into her own thoughts in spite of himself. She was taking him along with her on some plan of her own without telling him what it was, and it was like being caught in a strong current; you went along, and you had no way of stopping.

He was not even sure that her own family liked Hallie. They had all been wonderful to him; her mother and her father, and Katherine, her older sister. They had been respectful at first besides being friendly, but now he felt the friendliness and nothing else. It was hard to put into words, but Katherine looked at him sometimes, and there was amusement in her eyes: not exactly making fun of him in her thoughts, but feeling a little bit sorry for him in a kind sort of way. That was mixed up, but he felt it that way—confused.

Then, there was the old man . . . Hallie's father liked him. He knew that. He was a short bald-headed man, and he did not do much talking when Hallie or her mother were around. One night, though, while Larry waited for Hallie to come down, the old man had done a lot of puffing on his pipe. He did not get much out after all that effort, but the little he did say meant something.

"Son," he'd said, "you're just learning about women. Sitting around waiting for them to come down is part of the learning. But don't waste time studying them. If you always keep something in your life that is bigger than the woman, she'll keep trying to reach it, and she'll grow more than she would otherwise."

It was a fine, wise-sounding statement, and Larry had been impressed by it. He had remembered it, too, and it came back to him now. He did not have anything in his life bigger than Hallie; unless, maybe, it was his plan for college, and Hallie did not like college.

Her voice came softly from the darkness. "Larry! Are you mad at me?"

"Why should I be mad at you?"

"You act it."

He stared glumly at the dark windshield, and he knew that he had to have a showdown with Hallie. He could not go on thinking one thing and saying another. It wasn't honest.

"It's like this," he said. "I don't think we're good for each other."

When she did not speak, he had to drive his will to continue.

His voice trembled. "We come out to places like this," he said, "and we get home late, and anybody that knows about us will figure that we're on petting parties or something like that. It isn't good. And we quarrel about things and . . ."

Hallie stirred, and her voice was a soft whisper out of the dark—a meek, sad little whisper. "What do we quarrel about—ever?"

All of the clear thoughts that he had about Hallie were suddenly cloudy. He knew in his mind that there was something wrong about himself and about Hallie and about both of them together. He knew that he wanted to get away from Hallie. He could see it and feel it and put some of it in words when he was alone, or when he was looking into the darkness. But when Hallie moved or talked, his thoughts became a jumble of static, and nothing came through the way he wanted it.

"We quarrel about my going to college for one thing," he said.

She turned slowly, so that her feet were on the floor. "I want to go home," she said.

Larry blinked. He reached instinctively for the ignition switch and stopped with his hand suspended in mid-air. It was not like Hallie to let him win, to drop an argument. He had a sense of bafflement, a sense that he had started something he did not finish and that would never be finished. Starting the car and driving home seemed a flat and unsatisfactory way to end everything with Hallie.

His hand wavered halfway to the switch, and Hallie's head went down into her hands. He could hear her crying.

"Hallie!" he said.

"Take me home."

She spoke between sobs, and she did not raise her head. He was afraid of her tears and still more afraid of the unknown. He was being drawn back into something. He could feel the emotional suction, and he was wary, half angry because he was more than half frightened.

"I don't know why you're crying," he said.

"You know! I trusted you. I didn't know what you wanted."

"I didn't want anything."

"You want petting parties. You feel that you have been wasting your time. You said that we come to places like this, and that it's no good."

"I didn't say that."

He was staring at her, wondering, trying frantically to remember exactly what he said. She pounded one fist on her knee.

"And because I'm interested in you! Because I hate to see you waste four years! Because I tell you what I'd do if I were a man . . . then, I'm quarreling."

His lips set hard. It wasn't like that. Maybe she thought it was like that, but it wasn't. He felt suddenly as though there were solid ground under him.

"You are a senior, and you don't want people to talk about you for going with a freshman," he said, "and that's why you don't want me to go to college."

Hallie turned slowly and leaned forward so that he could see her eyes and her half-parted lips and the soft curve of her cheek. He was looking at her, but she said softly, "Larry, look at me! You are being silly."

His heart was pounding so hard that it was choking him. Always, when they parked in the dark and lonely spots, there was something about Hallie that said, "Later. Some other time." All of Hallie was saying "Now"; he reached for her.

She melted into the circle of his arms, and her lips were soft. Warm lips. Her fingers traveled slowly up his arm and pressed against his shoulder blade. There was a far-away, roaring sound, and he did not know what it was. He lifted his lips from Hallie's, and her eyes opened.

There was a moment then, as he looked into her eyes, when he had a sense of looking through uncurtained windows. He knew Hallie, and he knew that presently she could escape from his arms and leave him still desperate. He knew the future, and he knew that there would never be four years of college for him. He knew that the rushing sound was the fast current of his own blood and that he would never escape from it. Never. Something inside of him cried out, but it was a soundless cry.

The lids dropped over Hallie's eyes, and her lips pursed. He kissed her again, but her body was already tensing against him, and the moment was all that she would let him have for now. He knew that he would never have more than moments. He would give her his dreams and his hopes and all of the things that he wanted to do, but she would give him only what she felt like giving. He would never escape from Hallie, but she could escape from him whenever she willed it. because the stream on which she floated was not deep, and it had no raging currents.

THE END

puddle, and he won't come in," was heard.

The feeling was gone then, because there had to be crackers and a glass of milk for the children, clean dry clothes for Jerry; there were chops to be broiled, the table to set. Jerry locked himself in the bathroom and had to be begged to unlock the door, "before Daddy comes home."

Carl came in from the garage, and Cath saw the weariness in his face break when he saw her. As he kissed her, he ran his cold hand up the nape of her neck and laughed at her when she shivered.

Small Catherine hung onto his leg until he bought her off with the funny papers, and soon it was time for dinner.

While Cath washed the dinner dishes, Carl helped Jerry build a block bridge along the living-room rug, and young Catherine criticized the whole operation, claiming that all men really have little knowledge about bridges or anything else.

By the time Cath was through, Carl had taken Jerry upstairs, protesting as usual about the unfairness of his sister being permitted to stay up longer, by virtue of her year and a half advantage.

At last Catherine too was tucked in, the light clicked off, and Cath walked slowly down the stairs, returning Carl's smile as he glanced up from the paper.

There were clothes to be mended, but she was content for a time merely to sit and look at Carl's strong square hands holding the paper. Suddenly the dark feeling of despair, of aloneness, came again, welling up through her.

Carl threw the paper aside and stood up. "Honey, this tired old man of yours has to drag himself back to the treadmill. We've got to submit our bid on the Canal Street job tomorrow, and Jordan wants me to check over the cost figures."

"Oh, Carl! That's too bad. Couldn't you have brought the work home?"

"I'd have had to hire a truck to bring the files I need. I'll be back by twelve."

She walked with him to the kitchen and, as he shrugged into his topcoat, she automatically noticed that the cuffs were frayed. His shoulders were slumped with weariness, and she wanted to hold him tightly, somehow to rest and restore him.

He turned at the door and looked at her, small wrinkles of concern between his eyebrows. "Are you okay, Cath?"

"Why, of course!"

"You've acted . . . well, sort of unworldly lately." He grinned. "You've been drifting around like Lady Macbeth."

She felt that her smile was more of a grimace. "I'm dandy, Butch."

"I guess the old differential creeps up on me, honey. That twelve years I've got on you. Anxious old buzzard worrying about his young and lovely wife."

She scowled with mock ferocity. "The differential is just exactly right, you oaf. A woman of twenty-seven is the same mental age as a man of thirty-nine."

He grinned. "I did sort of take you out of circulation in the full flush of youth."

She clenched a fist and lifted it. He scuttled for the door. "Okay, I'll be good! I'll be good! Don't whup me!"

After he was gone she walked back into the living room, wondering if Carl had somehow put his finger on what was troubling her, on the cause of her restlessness. There had been dancing and music and brightness, and in the middle of it all Carl had come along, with his steady eyes and gentle hands, and before long the world had become a place full of grocery bills and washing and cleaning and formulas and bitter fights with the man from the diaper service. Maybe that was it. Maybe the sense of loneliness came from the thought of time going by, each second a knife that neatly sliced off a small chunk of the only life given her.

The doorbell rang and when she answered it, Hilda Gardner, leggy and flustered, came in, pulling off her hat. "Gee, I'm sorry I'm late, Mrs. Hazard. Our clock was slow, and I didn't know it."

It was on the tip of Cath's tongue to say, "But, Hilda! It was tomorrow night that we arranged!" But a small feeling of adventure, of excitement began to glow in her and, instead, she said calmly, "That's quite all right, Hilda. Mr. Hazard has gone on ahead. The children are in bed, and I haven't even had a chance to change yet. By the way, Hilda, can you come tomorrow night too—at eight?"

"Why, I guess so."

Cath left Hilda on the couch doing homework and went up to her bedroom. She put on a dull green gabardine suit that brought out her pale blondness. She decided against a hat, took her old polo coat from the front hall closet, said good-by to Hilda and went out.

The feathery snow was still falling, and the touch of it on her face was gentle. There was something inside her that was akin to the night, and she tried to force out of her mind the small feeling of guilt. Carl wouldn't have to know. She'd be back long before midnight. Just a long walk on the quiet wet streets, an escape from the small house, a chance to be alone, to sort out the reasons for the thin sorrow and regret that she carried inside her—regret that seemed like a flat, plaintive chord, endlessly repeated.

Her heels clicked firmly on the wet sidewalk, and she swung along with her shoulders back, conscious of the youngness of her body, the smooth articulation of joint and tendon. It was, oddly, as though she had walked out of prison gates, from behind high stone walls, and soon a siren would jab the night and searchlights would cut through the overcast.

She walked five blocks down Henderson Street, turned right on the boulevard, past the silent automobile showrooms, the dead white glare of gas stations, down toward the heart of the city. As she neared an all-night newsstand, a man pushed out of the shadows and fell in step with her.

He mumbled something about buying her a drink. Without looking at him, Cath lengthened her stride and said clearly, "No, thank you." He turned away, and she was glad when she came into the theater section, the better part of the city.

She turned into the lobby of the Hotel Glenton and went through a little act of looking anxiously around the lobby as though expecting to meet someone, ending with a shrug of disappointment as she sat down in one of the deep chairs.

She sat and looked at her fingers and saw that her nail polish was chipped. She inspected her knuckles and saw that the skin had grown coarse. She found a small callus on one thumb and wondered which of the continual household duties was responsible.

She looked at her hands and pretended that it was very subtle make-up, and that she had been cast in a part where the director was very anxious to have her grow old in a realistic manner, and they had done a careful job on her hands, gently roughening the clear soft skin. In addition they had put two almost invisible parallel wrinkles across her throat, a few threads of white at her temples...

The game she played heightened her sense of unreality, heightened the feeling that she had been playing a part for several years, and that the real Cath, the Cath who danced and collected records and had her own battered convertible, was somehow buried cleverly underneath; at the proper moment, everything would be as it once had been. The children and Carl and the house were all parts of the stage design; she fitted them cleverly into the play, conscious always that this part was a challenge to her ability as an actress . . .

She realized that, without her having been conscious of it, tears had started to her eyes; she wondered why she was weeping. She snatched a handkerchief from her purse, blotted the tears, stood up and walked out into the night.

On the street, with people walking by her, she had a different feeling. It was as though she were a spy in the heart of the city, and she had to walk among them and pretend that she was one of them, though all the time she was completely different—of a different race, a different time, a different purpose. Should she fail to conform in every single particular, they would turn on her and point at her, and there would be a moment of tense silence before they took her away to some place she could not even imagine.

She stopped, looked into a store window where, in front of huge posters advertising Bermuda, were the plainest possible sport clothes, their mere simplicity attesting their supreme good taste.

She knew that she should tell the director that she was sick of this part, that it had gone on much too long and that tomorrow she would fill wardrobe trunks with expensive clothes and fly down to Bermuda to dream in the sun until all memory of the long part was gone.

It took a long time to walk slowly to the end of the brightly lighted area, and she turned and walked slowly back, stopping once more in the lobby of the hotel, glancing at her watch without seeing it, frowning as though she were furious at being kept waiting.

Once when she glanced at it, she noticed the time, and the small watch told her that it was nearly midnight. She stood up, thinking that there should be a long flight of stairs and that on one step she should leave a glass slipper . . .

The click of her heels was clear and definite as she walked back up the boulevard, turning left on Henderson.

A car cruised up beside her, edging along with her. She walked more quickly, lifting her chin a bit. The car horn beeped softly with a familiar note. She turned sharply, saw familiar outlines.

She hurried toward it with explanations on her lips that weren't uttered because Carl said, "You going my way, lady?"

She affected coyness. "And what way would you be going?"

"Oh, I thought I might go out on the turnpike and buy a beer or two. Come along. I'm harmless."

She slipped into the car, pulled the door shut behind her and looked at Carl. She saw his face in the dim light of a street light, set and calm, with mild good humor showing in his mouth. She had the odd feeling that he was indeed a stranger.

"My name is Carl," he said.

"I'm Cath. What do you do, Carl?"

"Oh, I'm a pretty dull sort. Work in a construction outfit. Wife and kids. Own about half my own house. Wish I had a new car, and a few new suits. Average stuff. What do you do, Cath?"

"Housewife. Cook and clean and dust. A nice husband, two children, a small house. Just average. Nothing exciting."

He laughed. "That gives us something in common. Just a couple of members of

what they call the backbone of America. We can weep into our beer."

He turned into the gravel drive of a roadhouse, parked in an empty space . . . They walked in, and he said, "A table in the bar? Or do you want to dance?"

"In the bar is fine."

The two beers were set in front of them. Carl looked at her, and she felt sudden fear as she saw that his look was, in actuality, the calm appraisal of a stranger. She weighed him as a stranger and saw that his eyes were nice. It was a face that anyone would like—but there was a deep weariness in it.

"It's a shame a good-looking gal like you has to be saddled with a house and kids," he said abruptly.

"Is it?" she said coldly. "That's a matter of opinion."

"I bet you get restless with that husband of yours. I bet you feel trapped and that life is passing you by."

"I do not!" she said hotly.

He grinned lazily. "Oh, come now! It can't be very exciting."

"How about yourself?" she demanded. "You're trapped just as much as I am. Don't you get restless?"

He took a sip of beer, set the glass down carefully. Then he frowned. "That's a tough question, lady. Really tough. You see, I'm older than you are, and if you don't like what I say, you can tell me it's so much resignation, that I've given up fighting. I had a tough time when I was your age. I felt trapped and restless and . . . well, sort of alone in the world."

"You did?" she said eagerly.

"Sure. I guess I never really got over it. I just realized what it is. You see, you're always alone. Everybody you know is really a stranger. Even that husband of yours. Time passes; you don't accomplish anything big. You just live. And always in your heart, you're alone."

She felt a lingering sadness. Gently, she said, "But what do you *do*? What *can* you do? How do you get over it?"

"I get over it with little things. You see, I love my wife, which is pretty much of an old-fashioned virtue, I guess. She's a good kid, and I get a big bang out of the first look I get at her in the morning and when I come home at night. I have two kids, as I told you, and sometimes little things they do, or the way the hair looks on the napes of their skinny necks . . . even the buds on a rose bush that I bought for a buck . . . little things . . . I'll never kill the world dead. I'm just going to be a guy who likes little things."

Their eyes met for a long second, and she was the first to look away. She finished her beer, and he said, "Come on, I'll take you home."

They didn't talk on the way back, and oddly, he let her out in front of the house. He went around the car, opened the door, and helped her out. He said, "Lady, I'm just a stranger to you. Maybe the next time you get all knotted up, I'll be around to help."

She went up the front steps, unlocked the door and went in. While she was paying Hilda, she heard Carl drive into the garage. After taking her coat off, she stood in the living room, until she heard him come into the kitchen.

She went to him, slowly at first, running the last few steps; then her arms were around his neck, her cheek hard against the rough fabric of his topcoat; his hands were firm on her shoulders.

"Where've you been, honey?" he asked.

It was hard to tell him. "I've been away for a little while, but now I'm home."

He held her face cupped in his steady hands, and with the air of a man performing a ritual, he kissed her wet eyes. First one, and then the other.

THE END

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gleaming like black onyx. It was filmed and grayish now, like a cataracted eye.

"Isn't it funny about styles?" Ellen said. "I'll bet when you first bought it——"

"I didn't buy it," I said in a low voice. "It was a present."

She sensed an unexplored alcove. "From whom?"

"My Uncle Ben."

She eyed me curiously. "You never told me you had an Uncle Ben."

My throat went dry. Somebody was watching me from the shadows—eyes too bright, a slight, hesitant cough . . . I tossed the jacket down alongside the rusty skates, the broken record player, the discarded music notebooks. "It was a long time ago," I said.

I'D PLANNED to work that evening, but I didn't get much done. I kept going back in odd stereoptican flashes to the place where that tux belonged—the sprawling gloomy flat in Chicago, off the Midway, where we lived with Grandpa and Grandma Gottlieb, and where Uncle Ben came to stay for a few months on his way back from Denver. There was a queer sort of alto music around it all: the gray Chicago winters, the gray university buildings across the Midway, a remembered fuzzy feeling in the head, like dust mice, that went with too much practicing and too little sleep. There was a sound of coughing in the night, and an ache of incurable longing . . . They were part of that reedy music in the head, in the heart—like an oboe sobbing in a swamp, or the shophar sounding on the Day of Atonement . . . And over it all the tiny picot edging of Uncle Ben's mandolin, a lost lonely sound—all the strange far legend of youth, encased now in a thickening wall of flesh, waiting to be dug up, exhumed and pored over, like ancient hieroglyphs . . .

It troubled me that I couldn't remember the girl's name, the one who'd made that tux so important. Her father had an office on La Salle Street—Somebody, Something and Somebody, Investment Securities. I could see it, the windows half green, the lower half, the letters gold . . . Mibs . . . it came to me suddenly. That was the nickname she'd used. It sounded odd now. Tinny. It didn't seem to belong. She lived in Winnetka—that belonged, and so did the big black car driven by a big Negro chauffeur in which she came into town on Saturdays to take her music lesson.

How was it our paths had crossed? Orchestra Hall? American Conservatory? I took lessons at the Conservatory, but I got a special rate and came at odd hours, mornings or evenings, when Professor Lubachek could fit me in . . . Laughter. That was it. I worked at Field's, Saturdays, in the misses shoe department. I was what was called an extra, to fill in, for the transient trade. Mibs came in one Saturday when her regular salesman was home sick. The assistant buyer turned her over to me as if he were making me a valuable gift. She was a "charge" customer. Her family had "purchased" at Field's for years, it seemed.

She looked the part, with her delicate oval face under a flat, expensive felt. She looked like an illustration for a story, the kind of story that could happen only to someone who played left half for Notre Dame and whose family had also "purchased" at Field's for generations.

I was nervous, waiting on her. It was something about Vici Kid that set us off—a fragile leather much prized by old ladies at the time, tanned from the sorrowful hide of unborn calves. We laughed about it, I remember; and I remember that she wore a five triple-A shoe and referred to her father as Dad—not Pop or Pa—and in her high sweet voice that too was part of the story, a particularly valuable and heart-squeezing part.

I don't know just what it was Mibs saw in me, for that matter. We were worlds apart, as the saying goes. Maybe it was what I saw in her, or thought I did, that made me radiant by reflection, like the story-book woodcutter's hut that became a castle every afternoon when the windows caught the sun. I read a lot of poetry in those days, and I really believed it was the proper language for what was going on inside me, the glimmery peaks and desolate valleys that turned the days to glory or to dust. Selling shoes and going to school and living in a gloomy, poverty-haunted flat had very little to do with it. Mibs listened well, and I talked a lot, I guess. And we laughed a great deal—because it wasn't that life was tragic; it was that there was so much of it, and all at once . . .

"Are your people all so intense?" I remember Mibs saying once and, when I drew back, rebuffed, glimpsing the ever-present shadow of that cool bronzed youth who carried the ball for Notre Dame, she took my hand and said I didn't understand; she liked it; it was just that she'd never before known anybody like me.

"I guess, with us, it's something to do with manners," she said, with sudden exquisite gravity. "Thinking the most important thing in the world is never to look awkward, never to make a fool of yourself. Sometimes I wonder. When I'm with you other things seem so much more important somehow . . ."

It seemed to me that what she said went very deep, 'way beyond the words. It seemed to me she really understood.

It was altogether a fragile thing, strung on nuances and overtones, Debussy rather than Bach. Mibs didn't take my working seriously. What could I make—a few dollars for an afternoon's work? It was much better to go for drives along the lake or for a sail at the Yacht Club; sometimes we had lunch at her father's club where she signed the checks. Once I called for her at the Conservatory. There was an empty studio, and I went in and played the piano while I was waiting. I lost myself for a while in the music; when I turned around she was there, her eyes very bright. Maybe it didn't just happen. Maybe, unconsciously, I'd planned it that way. After all, I couldn't carry the ball to victory in the Thanksgiving Day game. I had to use what God had given me, and I did play the piano well.

"Why didn't you ever tell me you could play like that?" she said.

"Like what?"

She came over and kissed me and held my hand tightly, and we made a date to meet in Paris after my concert there. It was very callow, and wonderful.

A few days later she asked me to a dance at the Opera Club.

"Mother and Dad are going to the opera that night," she said. "Aïda—they never miss it. They'll drop in afterward. I want you to meet them." I must have looked scared. "It's not going to be formal," she assured me. "Just dinner jacket."

I spoke to my father about it that evening. I didn't have much hope. Just a few months before he'd bought me a new piano. He was in hock to the installment company for the next ten years, and he went around the house looking a little green about it. Also it happened that Grandpa was having trouble with his newspaperstand just then. Competition had opened up across the street from him and was cutting into his business. There were decidedly weightier matters for the family to be concerned about than a tux for me. But I was without a sense of proportion at the moment. I needed that tux. I had to have it. It was terribly important. I said I'd pay for it myself, I'd pay it off by working an extra afternoon a week. I said a lot of things.

My father's voice was flat, with wry wonder at my gall. "Sure, sure," he said. "Tuxedos yet. That's all I got to worry about."

Then I lied. I said I had an opportunity to play for some very important people at the Opera Club. My father looked harassed. My Uncle Ben walked into the kitchen and stood there with his bony hands pushed into the sagging pockets of his shabby blue bathrobe.

"Maybe we could manage it, Sam," my mother said anxiously.

My father grew angry. "Sure. Maybe we could manage a limousine too. And a raccoon coat. Maybe I could split myself in half altogether." He turned to me and said, "You don't play with a suit. You play with your hands and your heart. So you'll play twice as good, and they won't notice you ain't dressed formal . . . Stop looking at me already!" he burst out. "There's worse tragedies in the world than your tux."

Well, I should have known, I thought bitterly. Against the Gorgon faces of *Jew* and *poor*, nothing fragile or precious could long survive. It was brought low again, the bright winging shape, lying there in the kitchen which had seen so many little deaths without requiem, without burial, and me never knowing where to turn with my despair and rage; because even then, seventeen, with a lot of things on my mind, a lot of confusion and darkness, I could see that my father hadn't stayed poor merely out of spite.

I WAS in my room next afternoon, doing some harmony, bitterly. I hadn't told Mibs yet that I couldn't take her to the dance. I couldn't bear to let go. I was still hoping for a clap of thunder and a faint acrid smell and a gentleman with an opera hat, and a tail over one arm, standing before me, holding out a tux. He'd have had my soul before he even had time to leer!

Presently I was aware that Uncle Ben had come into the room. I didn't look up from my music. He was always coming in—to chew the rag, "if I wasn't busy." Well, I was busy. I had harmony to do and practicing to do and homework to do and shoes to sell, and I was tired and sore and hungry for life and hungry for sleep and thirsty for knowing and for not knowing; in short, I was busy—too busy to talk, or to listen: I was too damn busy to live.

"See if this'll fit you," I heard Uncle Ben say in his slightly husky, hesitant voice. "It's size thirty-eight. The guy said it ought to fit."

I looked up, surprised to see him in street clothes. Usually he hung around the house in his bathrobe all day, smoking, picking at his mandolin, or just sitting. I saw the box he was holding and the label: Maurice L. Rothschild. My throat closed up with a sudden dry hope. He put the box on the bed and flipped the lid off and there it was—the sleek, plump, shiny miracle.

"Try it on," he said, rubbing his nose in the nervous diffident way he had. "They'll alter it if it don't fit. But the guy said it ought to fit. I brought him one of your other jackets."

I saw it now, in the box, under the tux—my blue serge jacket with the glaze effect and the frayed sleeves. I hadn't missed it. For a moment I sat looking stupidly at the box, at Uncle Ben; then I

came out of my trance, grabbed the new jacket and put it on. It fit. It fit as if it'd been made for me, to order. It was right up to the minute too—Opera Club or Union Club or Edgewater Beach or anywhere else—shaped slimly to the waist, with those thrusting lapels, shiny as a grackle's wing.

"Try the pants on," he said; "they may be a little long."

They were, an inch or so.

Uncle Ben took a card out of his pocket. "This is the guy in the alteration department. He said they'll alter it while you wait. And they'll have the right kind of shirt and tie for you. It's all paid for."

I was staring at myself in the glass. I couldn't believe it had happened. Uncle Ben must have misunderstood my expression and thought I was having an attack of scruples. "Don't worry." He grinned at me. "I didn't rob a bank."

I hadn't been thinking about that part of it at all, but now I felt I ought to have some qualms—or show some, at least. "I can't take this, Uncle Ben. Gee whiz, the way you're fixed——"

He shut me up, almost fiercely. "Don't be a chump. You got a chance to do yourself some good, with some important people. Don't start with the 'maybe I oughtn't, maybe I shouldn't' stuff. Don't be like the rest of this family. Take. Take. Don't let them push you into a corner where you got to sit by and watch the parade. Take your hunk of talent and make something of yourself."

I SAT and stared at the score in front of me. It was for a motion picture called "Lost Lady." Where was Mibs now? She would be a woman past thirty-five. Pushing forty, as they say. Her parents hadn't stopped in after all, that night of the Opera Club dance. I never met them. They went to Europe that winter. Mibs followed in the spring and stayed on at school in Switzerland. There were a couple of letters in which we tried to keep alive the little fiction of my Paris recital and our meeting afterward. Somewhere, unmarked, over the wide Atlantic, a moment of nearness, of glamour we'd caught that day in the studio, went glimmering.

Twenty years. Two decades. An era. It had turned the tux for which I'd lied into a dismal rag, a caricature of elegance. But it had left the lie intact, the guilt untarnished.

"Darling," Ellen called, "please give me a hand with this."

I went out into the hall. She'd collected the litter in a huge carton. "Just this once," she said, "then I won't disturb you any more. I want to get this stuff out of the way." She handed me a ball of twine, and I started to tie up the carton.

"I think I'll call the Salvation Army," she said. "They can always use things." The tux was on top of the heap. "There's still time to change your mind about this," she said gaily, taking hold of it. "I could have it cleaned, you know, and hang it away. We might have a masquerade to go to sometime—hard-time party."

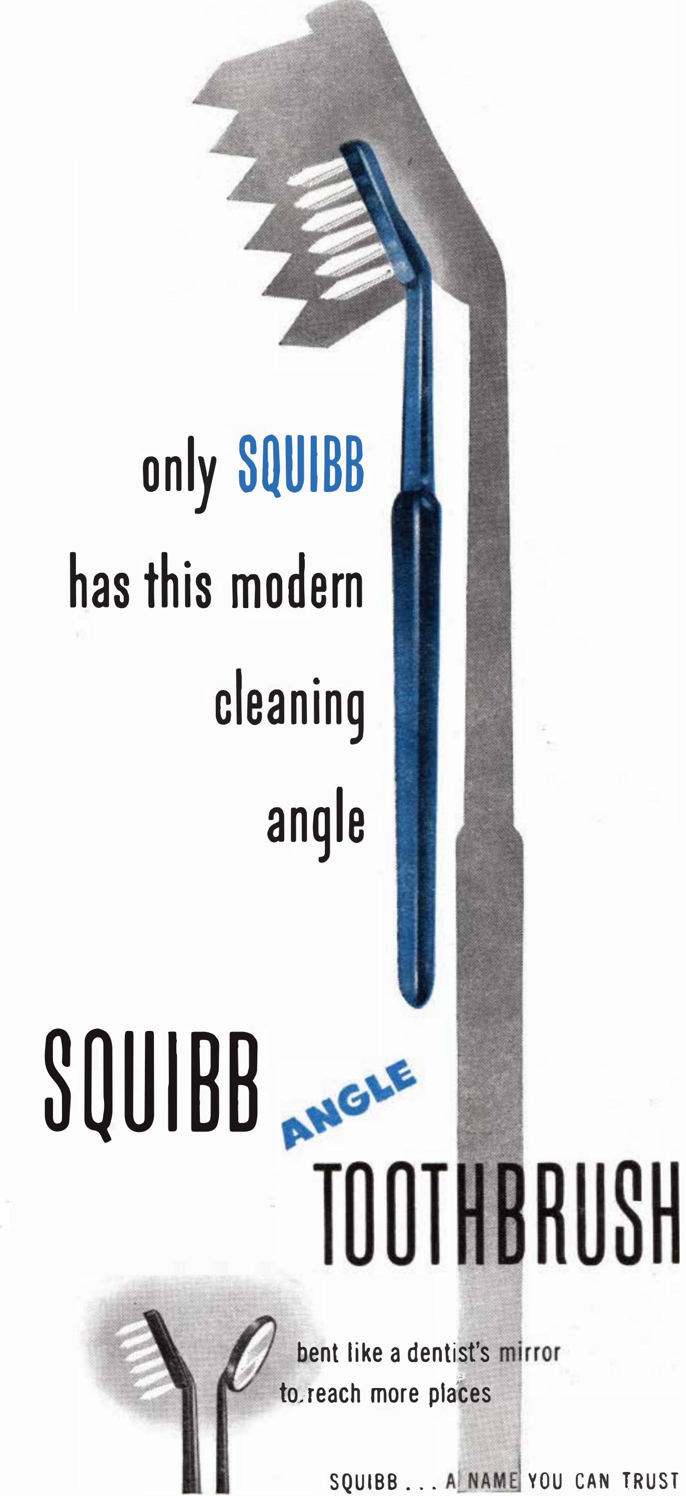
"Will you stop jabbering?" I said savagely. I yanked the jacket out of her hand and stuffed it into the carton. Then I felt rotten. I can never get any satisfaction out of losing my temper with Ellen. It's like slapping a child.

"I'm sorry," I said. I kissed her. "There's a smudge on your beautiful nose."

She wiped it off. "You're funny, you know?" she said, a little reproachfully. "Sometimes I don't understand you at all."

"That's because I'm an Oriental," I said. "The minds of Orientals are inscrutable." I finished tying up the carton. "Have them pick it up in the morning. And let's not talk about it any more, do you mind?"

I couldn't sleep well that night. I was



dancing with a girl in a room with colonnades draped in papier-mâché moss. The name "Opera Club" hung over the place like the congealed ta-da of an overture. There was a smell of mingled flowers and perfume around me, and the music of "Whispering" gushed into the room from a well of light in the center . . . The music stopped, and I was walking across the room to commandeer an ice . . . Then I was waiting in a foyer, beside a potted palm, tapping a cigarette against my thumbnail as if I'd been doing it all my life. Someone went by and jostled me; he turned to excuse himself, and we smiled politely at each other—a couple of men in dinner jackets.

I awoke. Something had nudged me awake, down there in the chilly vaults of the subconscious. I lay in the dark with an old sick feeling of guilt in the pit of my stomach. After a while I got up and lit a cigarette. Ellen awoke. "What's the matter?" she said, sitting up.

"Nothing. Go on back to sleep."

"Is it the score?"

"Yes, it's the score."

"Maybe you ought to put it aside for a few days," she suggested helpfully.

"Maybe I ought to get out my Rachmaninoff file."

"Now you just want me to baby you a little." She yawned. "You don't need Rachmaninoff. You don't need anybody. You're the best composer in Hollywood, and you know it."

She yawned again, snuggled into the pillow. I watched her for a moment as she rode out on a smooth sweet tide of sleep. Dear, beautiful Ellen. No ragged claws dredged the silent seas of her repose—no horrid shapes, or shrieks or sights unholy.

I DON'T know just when it was I started to cough. Hollywood climate is tricky for colds. In Chicago, where I grew up, winter announced itself long in advance with a hundred signs and portents. Even before the last fires had burned themselves out among the oaks and maples along the Drive, the Gray Lady was already brooding over the chilling waters of the lake; small boys were blowing on their hands, thinking about roasted chestnuts and snow and sleds; old people hammered on the radiators evenings and threatened their landlords with due process of law; and at the first sign of a sniffle Grandma Gottlieb had the hot tea and dried raspberries out, prepared for the worst. She was scared to death of colds.

Here the months slip by unnoticed; September into October into November. The stately chromo of Beverly Hills hangs unchanged in its shiny gilt frame. The golden girls and boys make lazy parabolas from the diving board at the Beverly Wilshire pool. In the yard the hummingbirds still dart in and out, twanging the delphinium like a lyre. Asters take the place of calendula; the avocados ripen; the whole world seems to be turning slowly, like a fatted calf, roasting pleasantly in the sun. It is simply preposterous to have a cold in such weather.

I moved into one of the spare bedrooms so I wouldn't keep Ellen awake with my coughing. I was worried. I didn't realize how much until I heard Ellen say, "Are you taking your temperature *again?*"

I took the thermometer out of my mouth, feeling foolish. I'd been keeping track for several days. Generally it showed normal in the morning and rose a few points, to ninety-nine six or eight toward evening. Uncle Ben's had worked that way too. I was sleeping badly, wrapped in a thin fuzz of semiconsciousness that would come apart at the slightest sound or movement, leaving me drenched in perspiration. Night sweats, another telltale sign.

I seemed all at once to have a great deal of information about t.b. at my fingertips—early symptoms, disguised symptoms, hereditary factors . . . Uncle Ben, I realized now, had given me all the facts. He thought our family had a predisposition to t.b., and he used to worry about my trying to crowd everything in—music and school and work and dates—burning the candle "on both sides" as Grandma used to say.

I could keep busy during the day, drive my mind past the waiting shapes and voices, the waiting stillness. It was the nights I minded. There was the thin tatting of a mandolin that followed me through the fitful hours, a lonely sound stitching futilely at the borders of silence. I prowled around the house, wishing someone had had the imagination to start an Insomniacs Anonymous service. Sometimes I'd tiptoe into the room where Ellen lay asleep, look down at her with an aching tenderness that embraced even her inability to carry a tune, aware at the same time that I wanted to shake her out of sleep and say, "Get up, damn it. You're my wife. I'm scared. You're supposed to do something about it, talk to me or something, not just lie there like a beautiful cabbage."

Then I'd go back to my bed and listen to the centipedes put their shoes on interminably in the dark, watch the shapes Nothing makes on the ceiling. And somewhere between sleeping and waking Uncle Ben would be there, standing in the doorway of my room or sitting on the edge of the bed, his hands in the pockets of the shabby blue robe, his eyes too bright, his voice a little husky, saying, "Guess you're too tired to chew the rag, huh? Guess you want to hit the hay?" And then I would be running, as it seemed to me now I had been running all my life.

I WENT to my doctor finally, convinced that I was going to die of t.b. I merely wanted his corroboration so I could make my plans. He thumped me fore and aft, made some tests and shook his head. "No t.b. Sorry." He sat back and grinned at me. "Any other fatal diseases?"

He'd just handed me a reprieve from death, and I was irritated with him. "You act as if I were some kind of a neurotic. Where I come from a cough and a temperature mean something——"

"They do. They mean you need a little more rest and a little more fun. Slow down. Take it easy. Where's the fire?"

I got into my car after I left him, drove furiously down Wilshire Boulevard and was handed a ticket.

"Where's the fire?" the cop said.

I started to laugh and felt better.

I turned off and drove toward the hills, into the safe wilderness of Beverly Glen. I was looking for a place on Mulholland Drive where I'd got my first view of the town a few days after my arrival in Hollywood. I hadn't been up there in years. I remembered the exquisite sense of proprietorship with which I'd first looked down, at the beautiful white houses tucked into the dark green folds of the hills, like Christmas-tree snow. It had all belonged to me that day as it has never belonged to me since. There was a contract in my pocket that read like a statistical fairy tale. Already, in my mind, I owned one of those stucco palaces nestling so proudly in the hills . . .

Well, I had had three houses since then. I'd done what Uncle Ben had wanted me to do. I'd taken my hunk of talent and made something of myself. If only he could have been here to see. Or Grandpa and Grandma. Or my Pop. If only one of them could have been here to see.

I stopped the car at the top of the hill and got out. There it was, rolling away at my feet, unchanged, the sun still shining, the sea still jeweled, the white city still gleaming frostily like the sugar on a wedding cake.

Suddenly, desperately, I wanted to be back in that flat in Chicago. I wanted to be back with sweat and ache and stumbling hunger, with a little old man who sold newspapers for a living on a windy corner at Harper and Sixty-third, who made change for a nickel and proclaimed that life was great and good. With my Pop who'd worked twelve hours a day in a shop to pay the installments on a piano for me, and my Mom, who'd stayed up nights figuring how to stretch the pennies so they'd last till the end of the week. With people, people—struggling and longing and hoping—with my Uncle Ben and his ruined life and his dream of a good life for me . . .

I'D FOUND him waiting when I got home that night of the Opera Club dance. He was at the window, smoking a cigarette.

"Uncle Ben," I whispered harshly into the gloom of the living room that always smelled a little of damp plaster. "What're you doing up?" It was after four. He looked terrible. "You shouldn't be up."

"I wanted to find out how you made out," he said. He followed me into my room. "Did you give them a run for their money?"

He laughed and started to cough at the same time. I stood uncomfortably, holding the jacket I'd just taken off. I'd had a wonderful time but it was all a little blurred now. Already it was a little difficult to believe that it had ever seemed so terribly, desperately important for me to have a dinner jacket. I hung it on the back of a chair.

Uncle Ben straightened up. He didn't mean had I played well. What he'd meant was, what kind of people were they? Were they just rich or were they really interested in music? Could they maybe fix up an audition for me with the symphony, or sponsor a recital for me, or something like that?

"They're all right," I said. "I'll tell you about it tomorrow." I started pulling off my clothes. I'd deal with my conscience tomorrow too.

"Yeah," Uncle Ben said, "you must be all in. You hit the hay. I'll just finish this cigarette." He sat down on the bed.

"You oughtn't smoke," I told him.

"I know." He grinned a little. "I'm liable to stunt my growth."

I threw my clothes on the chair and got into bed without washing or anything. I was dying for sleep.

"You ought to watch yourself, too, you know," Uncle Ben said. "This four o'clock stuff is okay once in a while. But don't make a habit of it. You don't get away with it. You only think you do."

I grunted and turned on my side.

"How was the tux?" he asked. "I'll bet you looked okay in it, huh? Good as any of them?"

"Yeah," I said sleepily. "Swell."

"Guess it must be a pretty swell place, that Opera Club, huh?"

"Mmm," I said. My eyes were clotting with sleep. He said something else I didn't hear. His voice went off into a kind of drone, and I wanted to brush it away—like mosquitoes. Then I heard his cough and started awake. I saw his too-bright eyes, his too-thin face. He stood up, pinching the end of his cigarette. He dropped the butt in his bathrobe pocket. "Guess you want to hit the hay," he said.

"Yeah," I said, "I'm dead. I'll tell you

all about it tomorrow, Uncle Ben." My eyes closed and sleep welled up around me like a tide. Just before I was swept out to sea I felt something, a light touch around my shoulders; I jerked awake again and saw him standing over me. I realized, fuzzily, that he'd tucked the blanket in around my shoulders. It made me feel trapped, hemmed in, and I wriggled free, pushing the blanket down. He was embarrassed that I'd caught him doing it; he coughed moistly, said something about "Army style" and went out quickly.

I suppose that for a moment, looking down at me asleep, he'd forgot the wonders time had wrought. I was a kid again, the kid he used to bring penny gifts and tell stories to and make little sketches for —drawings of creatures who weren't of this earth, or any other—gentle, kind, without urgencies, and without cruelties. For just a moment, as he looked down at me, I must have been that dumb kid again, untaught by the world's lore and the world's needs, who'd accepted him, thought he was fine, complete just as he was—thought indeed that he was someone down from heaven. He'd tucked the blanket around my naked shoulders and I'd pushed it away. And for perhaps an instant, after he'd gone out, I felt a little wrenching, deep inside, thinking of that lonely ship he was on, floating slowly, irrevocably, out to death.

And then I turned my face into the pillow and sank into sleep.

He died a few months later. He rented a room at a hotel and shot himself with an old service revolver he'd kept from the hitch he did in the Army. There wasn't anything theatrical about it. It seemed rather fine to me; the way Army people do it when they've come to a place from which there's no turning. He left a note, saying there was no point to it anymore—eating up money, being a burden to himself and everyone else. He wasn't ever going to get well, and there was no use kidding about it any longer. He wanted the family to know that he hadn't been unhappy at the end. Particularly he wanted me to know that he felt good about having done something useful at least once in his life. He knew I would understand. There was an informal little testament added to the note saying how he wanted his few effects disposed of. He had some books he wanted sent back to the sanitarium he'd stayed at in Denver. His mandolin went to a kid on the block who used to come in afternoons after school and listen to him play.

It's silly to say we were glad about it. But we did have a feeling, I think, that somehow he'd done better at this than he'd ever been able to do about living. All of us, I should say, except Grandma. She couldn't understand why he'd had to do it. If only he'd tried a little harder, a little longer, she cried inconsolably, if only he'd gone on taking care of himself, drinking more milk . . .

She was upset, too, of course, that Uncle Ben couldn't be buried in hallowed ground, being a suicide. She pleaded with the rabbi. He was sympathetic but adamant. There was no way. The judgment of the Lord is absolute. The path of righteousness is strait.

What Grandma never knew, because we arranged it so she shouldn't, was that Uncle Ben couldn't be buried at all. He'd sold his body for tubercular research, for fifty dollars, to buy me that tux.

THE END

"The Sweetness of the Twisted Apples" by Wallace Stegner, one of America's outstanding young talents, is the March "Blue Ribbon" story

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Sixteen *(Continued from page 62)*

you could already see he'd never grow old. Then there was the curly hair to which he obviously paid no attention at all, and his lean face had a knowing, dashing, devil-may-care look with little wrinkles of merriment about the mouth. He wasn't handsome, but something about him made you think he was; he wasn't young but he had the illusion of youth.

"Miss Mildred Richards," said Mr. Sanborn, "this is Al Matthews, our new co-worker."

Mr. Matthews shot instantly to his feet, as if Mildred were grown-up and a great lady. "Slave to you, sir! I've never been anybody's co-worker, and I never will."

Mr. Sanborn's chuckle was a deep, dull rumble. "Don't discourage Milly. She's coming on the paper in a couple of years."

"Good," said Mr. Matthews, and it seemed almost as if he meant it.

Mr. Sanborn gave a small snort as if he saw through the tremendous exhibition of energy Glenn and Bernice were putting on for his benefit. "Come on into my office. Too damn many busy bees out here."

Mr. Matthews coolly put his hands into his pockets and sprawled on the slippery leather couch in Mr. Sanborn's office.

"Now, Milly," said Mr. Sanborn in high delight, "I want you to take a good look at something you've never seen before—a real big-city newspaperman."

Mr. Matthews loosened his tie and yawned. "Nearly extinct species. Shall I stand up and twirl about, Miss Mildred, or do you like your journalists relaxed?"

You'd never know where you were with him, Mildred thought, for he'd always be laughing at you up his sleeve.

"You just stay where you are, Mr. Matthews. You look comfortable."

He immediately made himself more so. "Al to you. Mr. Matthews only to my enemies and managing editors who are about to fire me."

Mildred smiled, for this dingy office was the place where she always felt most at home because Mr. Sanborn had a way of making all things seem easy and pleasant; and now Al did too.

There was some quality they had in common: an utter lack of pretense, as if they were so competent they didn't have to bother; a surface lack of seriousness, as though they knew so much of life and the world that they could afford to laugh their ways through it.

Mr. Sanborn leaned back in his chair, unbuttoned his vest and pointed at Al with his pipe, as if indicating some stuffed and interesting specimen.

"I think he's just what the Argus's always needed, Milly. Isn't earnest: isn't eager. Simply doesn't give a damn about anything. May even be able to write a story that doesn't read as if it had been chopped out of wood. Answered my ad in Editor and Publisher, though I don't know why."

Al said, "Always wanted to work in a shop like this. Well, here I be."

Mr. Sanborn regretfully turned to his typewriter. "Didn't you say something about stepping out for a milk shake?"

"I did. Take pity on a stranger in town and join me, Mildred?"

That was one point about the Argus office, Mildred thought, as they stepped out into the hot glare of Washington Street: unusual things happened to you there. It was unlikely that she would be walking with a big-city reporter, an Eastern man, a man with more ease and wisdom and assurance than anyone save Mr. Sanborn. Yet here she was.

This was so utterly astounding that she firmly led him into the Dew Droppe Inne and ordered two double chocolate ice-cream sodas.

He lounged back in the booth as if he'd always been at home there. Mildred felt that he regarded her not as a little girl but as an equal and a contemporary.

"You know I've been trying to figure you out," he was telling her. "I guess you're the banker's daughter, and you live with your father and mother in a big white house on Shawnee Boulevard."

Was that why he'd been bothering to be so nice to her, or didn't he know that to live on Shawnee you had to be very rich and in society besides?

Her face held that dead serious look again. "I live with my brother and sister and Aunt Mattie on Maple Street next to Mrs. Parton's boardinghouse."

Al seemed actually pleased. "What do you know? I'm staying at Mrs. Parton's."

Mildred heard her own voice droning on as if some fatal compulsion drove her. "Mother's dead." Well, someone was sure to tell him, so she'd better do it, herself, now. "My father's up at Clinton."

Al drank his soda. "Is he?"

She clenched her thin hands together. "He's in the state penitentiary."

Al's expression didn't change. "Oh! Go up to see him sometimes, I suppose?"

"Yes." She was the only one who did go, and she could never get used to the prison smell or the wire screen or the gray, bewildered little man who was Pa.

"Not nice," Al said. "I've been in a lot of 'em, myself, and I never stopped feeling a little sick afterward."

That was just the way she felt, but she hadn't thought anyone else would understand. She looked sharply, but Al wasn't a bit different—now he knew.

He stood up. "Got to get back to the shop. Ed Sanborn might want me to do some work. Ed's a great guy." His hand touched her shoulder just for the slightest instant. "Don't ever forget, Sister, that they know Ed Sanborn's stuff in every newspaper office in the country."

She walked down heat-baked Washington Street, and she had a sudden, sharp awareness of the wide world beyond the low brick buildings, the dust-filmed trees, the blowing fields of corn.

There were strange and alien lands, and people who didn't talk or think or feel as they did here in Elkhorn.

Al had come from those dim lands beyond the corn, and he'd brought something of them with him: a different attitude.

To him, the fact that your father was in prison was a disagreeable circumstance, and nothing more. It sometimes happened, so what of it? He wasn't shocked or horrified. Yet he knew more of penitentiaries than anyone in Elkhorn did; they were simply places he didn't like.

The fact that Pa was up there in a cell made no difference in his opinion of her. She was so utterly grateful for this that she could almost cry. For nobody in Elkhorn felt that way, nobody but Mr. Sanborn and Miss Miles.

MILLY had been only eleven when they'd taken Pa away, but she could remember that morning as if it were yesterday. She'd turned the corner of Maple Street into Fillmore, and she'd had on her pink striped seersucker dress.

There were children playing in the vacant lot among the weeds: children she knew. They'd stopped and stared and then pointed at her: "Milly Richards's Pop's in jail! They hadda handcuff him! Milly Richards's old man's in the pen!"

And then, grown the more savage because she stood there so stunned and

helpless: "Jailbird! Jailbird! Jailbird!"

One of the tough boys from across the tracks had rushed out from behind the bushes, his red, freckled face working with delight. "Jail bait! Jail bait. All Milly is is jail bait!"

That had been the beginning; the rest was as bad. It still fell into sharp, jagged pictures in her mind.

Herself, stooping down in the dust to play marbles with a small boy, and an angular woman rushing out to the porch of the brown frame house.

"Chester Drew, you come in here this instant!" She could still see the glitter of that woman's eyes. "Go away, little girl. We don't want you on this block."

The sudden, cold clamminess of school as if all the warmth had gone out of the classrooms and the yard. The eyes that wouldn't meet hers, the clustered whisperings in corners. All the friendships gone, wiped out as if they never had been.

Going downtown, and the older people nodding knowingly. "Oh, yes, she's Tom Richards's girl. Mattie Richards had to take the three children in."

One day Mildred had found herself staring, dull and listless, in at the dusty window where the chipped gilt letters spelled out DAILY ARGUS.

Mr. Sanborn had come to the door, his vest unbuttoned, his tie hanging loose. "Haven't seen you for a long time, Milly. Come into the office and have a chat."

Mr. Sanborn hadn't talked about what had happened. He'd ignored it. He'd lit his pipe and drawled, "Seems as if you've always been hanging around the old Argus since you were knee-high. When you're eighteen or so, Milly, why don't you come down and work for the paper? I'll need a bright girl about then."

Mr. Sanborn had been a great help; he'd given her something to look forward to: the hope of being a real, separate person sometime and not just the daughter of *that* Tom Richards who was in jail.

For she was an outsider as the years spun on. People grew to be polite to her; the girls at school didn't shut her out of their games or their talk. But they never invited her to the parties they gave, and if they had her at their houses at all there was always a certain uneasiness.

It was forever there, the small gray shadow of Pa behind the dull red walls.

So she escaped into three worlds: the easy, careless one of Mr. Sanborn and the Argus, the world of her imagination, and the great golden land of books to which Miss Miles had led her.

She went into the small, squat, fieldstone library, and there was Miss Miles behind the desk with her almost-triangular olive-tinted face and her blue-black hair whipped straight back.

"Hello there, Mildred!"

Miss Miles wasn't one of those haughty librarians who hushed you. Miss Miles was a rebel after working hours. She wore long jade earrings; she smoked incessantly; she had been heard to swear with feeling.

Most of the town said she was bold and flashy and too big for her boots.

She picked up a book from the desk. "I think you're quite old enough to read this, Mildred. You're probably one of the few people in Elkhorn who'd appreciate it." That was the way Miss Miles had been from the first. She'd singled out Mildred when she'd found her hidden shyly in a corner, an open book on her bony knees.

She'd always talked as if she and Mildred were two special people who had a secret key to the wide world of written things. She'd never even mentioned Pa.

"Thank you, Miss Miles." The faded letters on the red cover said, "The Constant Nymph." She put it under her arm.

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and fast. And then Al standing there. "Hello, Mildred. Got a new book?"

She handed it to him, and he smiled. "You couldn't do better."

"Miss Miles gave it to me."

"Miss Miles has taste." He became suddenly brisk. "Al Matthews of the Argus, Miss Miles. May I look at your encyclopedia?"

Miss Miles's eyes seemed to have a new light in them. "Help yourself. Over in the west corner under the bust of Plato."

Mildred stood looking after him with a new, soft tenderness in her face. "He's an awfully nice man, Miss Miles."

"I didn't know there were any more of them left," Miss Miles said.

THAT evening the moon came up, pale yellow and huge. That evening Mildred sat out on the front porch with Thurlow and Anne. Her brother and sister were eight and nine years older than she, and though they didn't know it, they dimmed beside her. What was flowerlike in her face was coarsened in Anne, weakened in Thurlow.

Aunt Mattie didn't hold with sitting on porches after dark: she was invisible somewhere inside the house. Invisible or not, she'd see everything, hear everything, as she always did.

Thurlow said, "Well, I got the tickets for John Bagley's dinner."

Anne's voice was a whine of complaint. "We won't even get to meet him. They'll put us down at one of those nasty little tables near the door."

Pa's cell would be pretty hot and close up at Clinton tonight, and he'd never see the thin golden circle of the moon. But only Mildred was thinking about that.

Thurlow and Anne, as Young Intellectuals, were concerned with John Bagley, who was a white hope, an aspirant for the Republican nomination for President, and was actually going to visit Elkhorn on the twenty-first.

Mildred sometimes wondered why Anne, who worked in Brown's department store, or Thurlow, employed in the real estate office, bothered to be intellectuals at all. She was too young to see that they fiercely hungered to be identified with some group, and that the town's self-avowed intellectuals were the only set who'd accept them.

"Too bad," said Thurlow heavily. "I'd like to talk to John Bagley." Mildred caught sight of a tall shadow across the walk.

She came to her feet with a rush. "Al! Come on up, Al!"

She wanted to share him with Thurlow and Anne as she always tried to share everything, but it didn't go well.

Thurlow said pompously. "We were speaking of John Bagley. He's the most far-seeing man in the United States."

Mildred could tell that unholy light of amusement was in Al's eyes again. "John's all right."

Thurlow turned in monumental dignity. "That's an odd way of putting it."

Al yawned. "John's an odd sort of duck. My, but your moons grow big out here, Mildred."

That great golden disc was certainly worth talking about, but now Anne's thin voice cut in. "I suppose you find Elkhorn pretty provincial, Mr. Matthews?"

Al looked at Mildred. "I've already met three nice people here.

Even through the thick dusk, Mildred could tell that Al was laughing up his sleeve again. But he just settled back in the old porch rocker and began to talk.

Names ran through his talk, names everyone knew or had heard of: Al Smith, John Barrymore, Jimmy Walker, Mary Pickford, Admiral Byrd, Damon Runyon, Einstein, Booth Tarkington . . .

He didn't boast about them; he didn't even say he knew them well; they just ran through his words like gayly colored threads.

Aunt Mattie's voice said through the screen door, "Young man, did you know Calvin Coolidge?"

Al got to his feet. "I went up to Northampton to see him once. I was pretty young then."

"To my mind," Aunt Mattie said, "Mr. Coolidge was about the best President we ever had."

Thurlow's voice was loud. "That reactionary!"

"H'm!" Aunt Mattie sniffed. "That's only a word. Doesn't mean anything, does it, young man?"

"Not a damn thing," Al told her. "Good night all. I've got to run along."

His eyes must have been pretty sharp to see Miss Miles's tall straight shadow just turning the corner of the street.

Another shadow, a plumper one, came up the walk and materialized into Bernice Slade, society editor, women's-club editor and girl-of-all-work on the Argus.

"Well!" said Bernice, "I just met that Matthews man with Laura Miles."

Thurlow's voice was at its heaviest. "If you ask me, I don't think much of either of them."

Bernice sat down and tucked her skirt about her fat legs. "He won't be here long. He's just a tramp newspaperman."

Mildred felt sick, and in a second she'd start to shake. Only she needn't because Bernice was just jealous; jealous because Al was on such easy terms with Mr. Sanborn; because he was good in his line, and she never would be; because he'd walked into the Argus when he pleased and would walk out the same way if he wanted to. Whereas Bernice would never dare.

"And," said Bernice, "if he'd been any good in the East he'd never have come here anyway. You can bet he got fired off every job he had on the Big Time."

You could sense Thurlow rolling that over in his mind with utter satisfaction. "Just what I thought all along. While he was spinning lies about all the important people he knows. Just a smart aleck."

THE next noon, her hands were washing dishes, but her mind was wondering where Al was, what he was doing.

At that moment, he was in the editor's office at the Argus, sitting on the desk, staring at Mr. Sanborn on the couch.

"I don't give much for that sister and brother of hers, but Mildred Richard's a damn nice girl!" He snapped a match on his thumbnail. "What's her father in the can for?"

Mr. Sanborn lay back lazily. "Tell you that, did she? Thought she would. Tom Richards was a teller at the Shawnee National. The charge was embezzlement."

"How long's he serving?"

"Six to eight. Done five so far."

"Isn't that sort of stiff?"

Mr. Sanborn's eyes looked lidded with sleep, but they weren't. "Our upright district attorney was running for re-election, and the judge was one of those tough, vindictive buzzards."

"Pretty hard on Mildred, isn't it? She looks as though she'd been beaten."

Mr. Sanborn sat up. "You don't know how hard. You don't know a damn thing about what happens to you in a small town when your father is disgraced and goes to jail. You don't know a damn thing about small towns, anyway, do you, Al?"

Al said, "I don't like it."

Mr. Sanborn heaved himself farther forward. "Neither do I. Milly's always been fascinated by the Argus. She was always hanging around when she was a kid. She's going to have a job here the second she gets out of school."

Al watched his cigarette smoke spiral. "She'll be good. She's got brains."

Mr. Sanborn began laboriously to button his vest. He said to the ceiling, "I wish I could do something for Milly."

"How about putting pressure on the parole board?"

Mr. Sanborn shook his head. "Tried it. A bunch of holier-than-thou's."

Al nodded. "Like that. Who's governor of this state now?"

"Philip Carter. Know him?"

Al came off the desk. "Slightly. In Washington. Did a favor for him once. Not a very big one."

Mr. Sanborn's eyes were anything but asleep now. "I always liked Tom Richards. His wife was hopelessly ill at the time, and he must have been desperate. The poor devil didn't take very much, and I don't doubt for a minute he thought he'd pay it back. There were all sorts of extenuating circumstances. Chet Buroughs was in it with him too. Only Chet drew a suspended sentence. His old man had money. Tom got a raw deal."

Al said, "So?"

"So"—Mr. Sanborn's eyes examined the ceiling again—"it just happens that there's a bill coming up in the legislature that we're interested in. So you draw some expense money and go up to the capital. What you waiting for?"

ON THE blazing hot afternoon of the twenty-first, Mildred was walking down Washington Street when the taxi drew up beside her. "Want to ride out to the airport, Mildred?" Al called to her.

"You've been away," she said, as she settled on the worn seat beside him.

"Out-of-town assignment. Anything interesting been happening to you?

"Pidge Miller, the copy boy, took me to the movies. He's captain of the basketball team at school."

Al looked pleased. "Does that make him important?"

"All the girls think so. Why are we going to the airport, Al?"

"To meet John Bagley."

Mildred's breath drew in. "He *is* important, isn't he?"

Al had that amused smile again. "John hopes he'll be President."

Elkhorn's airport was a dreary, dusty place, but it was enlivened now by the mayor, twenty prominent citizens, damply hot but dignified, a long line of beflagged motor cars and the town's sole motorcycle policeman.

"Over here," said Al, and the plane came roaring in.

It stopped dead before them just as Al had known it would, and there was Mr. Bagley, the fair hair smoothed back from his high forehead, the baggy suit of clothes—exactly as he looked in all his pictures.

"Hello, Jock!"

"Al Matthews! What are you doing 'way out here?"

Al linked his arm through Mr. Bagley's. "I'm a small-town boy now, and this is Mildred Richards, my best girl."

Mr. Bagley held out a big, hard hand. "I'll bet they call you Milly."

"Yes, sir, they do."

"Well, it's no worse than Jock."

The mayor and citizens had broken into a slow trot and Al said dryly, "Better start looking like Abe Lincoln, Jock. Here comes the reception committee."

The mayor burst into a disjointed speech; the policeman's motorcycle began to sputter, and Mildred found herself beside the first long, open automobile with its big flag flying in front.

The mayor glared at her and at Al too. "*This* is an official car!"

Mr. Bagley put a hand under Mildred's

arm. "Hop in, Mildred. Come on, Al."

Mildred found herself beside Mr. Bagley, perched on the car's folded-back top. The mayor's face went a dull red, and the motorcycle's siren began to scream.

Down Shawnee Boulevard with the windows full of faces; turning into Washington Street where the sidewalks were black with people. A knot of girls from high school stared as Mr. Bagley waved and bowed. A spatter of cheers broke out, and Mildred caught sight of Thurlow and Anne, their mouths wide open.

There was the high-school band blaring away before the Muehler Hotel, and all of a sudden they were in the hotel's state suite. Mildred and Al and Mr. Bagley and no one else.

The suite was full of flowers, and there was a long table heaped with tiny sandwiches and bottles of soft drinks.

Al already had a sandwich in his hand. "Pitch in, Mildred. Pity not to take advantage of a free feed. Got a copy of your speech, Jock?"

"Open the brief case and help yourself." Mr. Bagley took off his coat.

Al calmly sprawled out on the sofa, "If you get to the White House, Jock, you'll have to stop wearing those suspenders."

They were livid green with red horses prancing all over them, and Mildred suddenly saw that Mr. Bagley wasn't a great man or a white hope; he was just like everyone else, only awfully nice.

Mr. Bagley went to the window and looked out across the town. "You know, Al, there's one man here I want to meet—Ed Sanborn."

Al bounced off the sofa. "That's my boss. Put on your coat and come along."

They opened the door to Mr. Sanborn's office, and he was standing there with a bit of paper in his hand. He held it out. "I guess this belongs to you, Milly."

It was a torn piece of wire copy, and it said: "The State Parole Board today——"

Mildred's voice was a choked whisper. "They're letting Pa out. *They're letting him out!* I've got to get home!"

When she came rushing up the steps of her house, Thurlow and Anne were both on the porch. They pounced on her.

"Mildred Richards"—Thurlow's voice was more shrill than pompous for once—"however did you come to be riding in the procession with John Bagley?"

"Mr. Bagley wanted me to. Listen——"

But Anne cut in. "Sitting there bold as brass right up beside John Bagley in the front reception-committee car, and John Bagley actually had his arm around her."

Aunt Mattie's voice came through the screen door. "What's so strange about that? I guess maybe Mr. Bagley knows a sweet, pretty girl when he sees one."

Milly turned desperately toward her aunt's half-hidden figure. "Aunt Mattie! They're letting Pa out. He's been paroled!"

There was an instant of dead, hot, steaming silence. And then it broke—horribly. "Well, he can't come back here!" Thurlow said in a shout.

"He certainly cannot." Anne's lips were a bitter line. "He's shamed us enough."

Aunt Mattie slammed open the door. "Tom's going to stay right here. He's coming back home where he belongs."

TUESDAY. Ten o'clock in the morning, and the heat already rippling in little waves off the grass. Aunt Mattie, in her best dress and hat, suddenly sagging down into the old rocking chair. "I can't make it, Mildred. I just can't go down there. Do you mind meeting Tom alone?"

"No, Aunt Mattie, I don't mind."

But she did. Going down the cracked sidewalk of Maple Street. Hay-foot! Straw-foot! Don't think of meeting Pa. Don't think about it. Don't think you're only sixteen, and you don't know what

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to do, and you won't know what to say.

A tall figure in crisp linen swinging in beside her. "Mind if I join you, Mildred?"

"I wish you would, Miss Miles."

Down Washington Street, and Mr. Sanborn standing in the door of the Argus office in his old alpaca coat.

" 'Morning, Miss Miles. 'Morning, Milly. Going down to meet the Corn King? Wish you'd tell Tom to drop by when he gets settled, Milly. I could use him here."

Al coming out the door in a rush. "How about half an hour off, Boss? I've got a friend coming in on the Corn King."

"Take your time," said Mr. Sanborn.

Hot, dead hush in the dusty little station as they waited for the Corn King.

Sam Evans trotted out, trundling the truck for the express. " 'Mornin', Milly. She's right on the dot today."

Mildred put her hands up to her eyes, and the long train came thundering in.

"Take it easy, Kid."

"All right, Al."

So many people tripping down the car steps—laughing people, happy people.

And then suddenly Pa, standing by the very last coach, bent, gray, bewildered, as if he were afraid someone hadn't come to meet him, yet half afraid someone had.

Milly ran down the platform. She flung her arms around him. She held him tight, and she could feel him tremble.

"Well," he said. "Well! Well, Milly!"

She couldn't say a word, and in a second she'd be crying.

"These folks with you, Milly?" Pa asked softly.

She hadn't done it right—any of it.

She let her arms fall, and Miss Miles held out her hand. "I'm Laura Miles. Welcome home, Mr. Richards."

Al stood tall beside her. Al was a solid rock. He'd always know just what to do. He was saying, "How do you do, sir? It's a real pleasure to meet Mildred's father."

Sam Evans came back, trundling his express truck. "Howdy, Tom," he drawled. "Nice day for August, ain't it?"

THE END

The Wooing of Hester Warren *(Continued from page 52)*

sisters to go on as they had. "I won't have them coming just to mutter and snicker behind their hands," Hester said. They refused all invitations and sold their car. Then they had the telephone taken out. A year later Emilie died.

Emilie and her serpent! Hester thought, and she sniffed. Then it occurred to her that she had picked up that sniff from Mr. Small, and she smiled. She was still smiling when she looked up to see a young man coming around the corner of the house followed by Mr. Small who was waving his arms and protesting. "Good morning, Miss Warren," he said. "I'm Bradford Morton. I guess you know my Uncle Amos."

"What do you want, young man?"

"Why, I'm from the Hartford Courant," said Mr. Morton, "and I was sent down to Saybrook to get a story from two lobstermen who claim a sea serpent tried to upset their boat. They've good evidence too: gold-colored scales knocked off when its tail scraped the gunwale. So I thought——"

"Did your uncle send you up here?" she asked sharply.

"Oh, no," said Mr. Morton. "He doesn't know I'm here. But I remembered when I was a kid—eight or nine years ago wasn't it?—your sister claimed—that is she reported having seen——"

"I know what she reported," Hester interrupted, "and it's not to be mentioned in any newspaper story. Is that clear?"

"But they're going to reprint the old story, Miss Warren," he said, "only we thought you might have additional facts and perhaps a snapshot of the cove where your sister saw the thing——"

Hester got to her feet. "I forbid you," she said curtly, "to make any mention of my sister in your paper. Good afternoon."

She went into the house, but when the reporter drove off she came out again.

"You suppose them men really see anything, Miss Hester?" said Mr. Small.

"Saw their own bad consciences probably," she said. "No, Horace, I wish you'd get it out of your mind that there can be anything in these stories."

Mr. Small said, "I wish't I could. But Miss Emilie wa'n't any crazy lobsterman —she wouldn't told a lie to save herself from burnin'."

"That's what made it so bad," said Hester. "Poor Emilie really thought she saw something."

Mr. Small faced up to her suddenly. "Well," he said, "who's to say she didn't? There's sarpents in the Bible—little ones and big ones. If they're in the Bible who's to say they ain't in the Sound?"

Hester smiled faintly. "Have you ever seen a sea serpent yourself?" she asked.

The old man frowned. "I been a drinking man in my time, and I see a lot of things that ain't in the books. But I always figured Miss Emilie really did see something, and if you'd backed her up instead of makin' out like she was crazy—oh, yes, you did, Miss Hester, and you can throw me off the place like you did that young newspaper feller for sayin' it, only it's somethin' that's been bilin' inside me for eight years, and it might as well come out. You done wrong, Miss Hester, and that's why you shut yourself up and won't see nobody. 'Tain't because you thought Miss Emilie was touched. 'Tain't any disgrace to have a weak-minded relative. If 'twas half the houses in this town would be boarded up, includin' my own. But here you are—thirty-five, thirty-six—not much more'n a girl——"

"Horace! Stop it!" Hester exclaimed. "You know that's one thing I won't discuss—with you or anyone. But if you're not satisfied working for me——"

"Course I'm satisfied," he said. "I just . . . Well, I got to get those tomatoes in."

Well, the whole morning had been pretty upsetting for Hester, but what had upset her most was hearing Amos Morton's name. She hadn't seen him in eight years, although from her bedroom windows she could see the old Morton house which stood on the shore just this side of the village. She didn't even know if he'd married, for she would never permit Mr. Small to mention any of her old friends. Mr. Morton had been considerably more than a friend. They were to have been married, but when Emilie had brought down upon them that swarm of curiosity seekers, he hadn't shown up very well. In fact, after the first few days, he hadn't shown up at all. Instead old Mrs. Morton had driven out and said that her son felt that in view of the notoriety the Warren family had achieved, the wedding had perhaps better be postponed.

"You mean," Hester had said, "that he can't stand the ridicule?"

"We don't feel," said Mrs. Morton, "that any ridicule attaches to Amos. It isn't he who has made these unfortunate statements."

"It isn't Hester either," said Emilie.

"I'm afraid I can't discuss it with you, Emilie," said Mrs. Morton. "You seem to me to have forfeited any claim to a rational opinion on any subject."

Emilie started to reply, but Hester got up. "There's nothing further to say," she said. "Good afternoon, Mrs. Morton." And when Mr. Morton phoned that evening she wouldn't speak to him. He came to the house twice, but she wouldn't see him, and she returned several letters unopened. After that she never heard from him again.

Well, Hester was restless all that day after the reporter's visit, and after supper she took the path down to the cove below the house. There was a dilapidated Victorian summerhouse overhanging the pale water, and she sat down on one of the benches and watched the sunset, and she didn't think about Mr. Morton, who had often sat beside her there, or about her sister Emilie, who had once sat there and thought she had seen something monstrous wind slowly up out of the water. She thought about her father and how he had taught her to swim and handle a boat there, and as the light faded she felt very peaceful, and she thought: I should come here oftener.

Then she looked across at the boathouse at the other end of the little beach, and she thought: I suppose that boat is all falling to pieces now. I must look at it sometime if I can find the boathouse key. And then she thought: I suppose Horace could patch it up for me, though probably the mice and squirrels have ruined the sails. And she began to play with the idea of going for a little sail.

Well, well, Hester thought, I must get back before it is too dark to see the path. She got up and was turning to go when a queer swirl in the water caught her eye. She leaned over the railing and looked. Again came the swirl, and in the middle of it something black and shining; then closer inshore a head broke the water. At first in the dim light she thought it was a horse's head, though it seemed a great deal larger than any horse she had ever seen. And then it reared up, up—three feet—six feet—eight feet above the surface, and she saw the crest and the double horn on the nose and caught a glint of burnished overlapping scales. She said, under her breath, "Good Lord!" and sank down again on the bench.

Now, in teaching her to sail, Mr. Warren had said that there were two things that everyone must have before he can be considered competent to handle a boat —the experience of having capsized at least three times and a profane vocabulary adequate to all occasions. Mr. Warren had also taught his daughter never to give way to physical cowardice. So she didn't run away, and as the monster came ashore and yard after yard of scaly body wound up on the beach, she swore as her father had taught her. "Fifty feet if it's an inch!" she said. "Oh, Emilie!"

The thing was rather more lizard than serpent—rather more like old drawings she had seen of dragons than either. It had little crocodile legs and broad wings or fins folded close to its sides, and there was a faint golden sheen to its body. It seemed to be doing something to the sand—heaping it up and patting and smoothing it with its tail. Then it curled up and seemed to go to sleep.

Hester didn't remember how she got back to the house. She locked the doors and windows and took two sleeping tablets and went to bed. But she was up and on the path to the cove before Mr. Small showed up in the morning. The beach was empty, and she was scared for a minute because she thought: If I've been seeing things . . .! But the sand looked worked over, and in the middle of the beach it was heaped up to make a little hillock. She poked at it with a stick and presently uncovered the egg.

It looked like a turtle's egg only it was

enormous—nearly a foot in diameter. Hester frowned at it for a minute and then heaped the sand over it again and went on to the boathouse for which she had found the key. A varnishy smell puzzled her as she opened the door, and then she was amazed to see that not only had the boat been recently painted, but all the gear had been overhauled and was apparently in perfect condition.

Now there were a lot of thoughts that Hester didn't particularly want to think, and she was glad to be able to turn her mind to something else. She went back to the house and said to Mr. Small, "Horace, I've just been down to look at the Vixen."

"The which?" said Mr. Small. "Oh, you mean that little soap dish of yours? Yes, I just give her a fresh coat. She ain't been painted in four years."

"It's more like ten," said Hester.

"No, ma'am," said Mr. Small. "I painted her four years ago last May."

"I never told you to," said Hester.

"Look, Miss Hester," he said, "you hire me to keep the place in shape. That boat's part of the place, ain't it? How come you was down there anyway?"

Hester didn't say anything for a minute. Then she said, "Well finish your job on the Vixen and get her into the water. If she's sound I might sell her," she added.

"You can sell her right there on the chocks," said Mr. Small, "if that's what you want. Or was you aimin' to—"

"To try her out?" said Hester. "Certainly. I can't put her up for sale unless I know how she'll behave. Get what you need, and let me know when she's ready."

HESTER kept away from the cove while Mr. Small was working, but each evening after he had gone she went down. The egg was undisturbed. Now the Vixen was itself just an oversized dinghy of the type known as an International 14, one of the earliest built. She wasn't a fast boat, but she was a pretty wet one, and there was a stiff breeze the morning Hester took her out for the first time. Hester dug out the old bathing suit she hadn't had on in eight years. Then, wrapped from chin to ankle in an old Shaker cape, she went down to the cove.

Hester found she could handle the boat as skillfully as ever. But inside the cove there was no steadiness in the breeze, and she thought: Nobody would recognize me even if they did see me, and she took the Vixen out into the Sound.

There was a stiff northwest breeze outside, and Hester got good and wet and had a wonderful time. It wasn't until she was pulling back for the boathouse in the tiny dinghy that she remembered she had left her cape in the Vixen. And there was Mr. Small waiting on the beach.

Ten years earlier Hester would have thought nothing of being seen in a one-piece bathing suit. But one who becomes a recluse does not merely remain stationary in time—she slips backwards. Hester thought now in purely mid-Victorian terms; she even moved and spoke like a woman twice her age. Now she shouted to Mr. Small to go into the boathouse, then went back for the cape.

"Why, Miss Hester," said Mr. Small when she finally stepped ashore, "you got no call to bother about me. Shucks, I'm down on the club beach every day, and you ought to see how some of the folks run around."

"That's all right for them," said Hester.

"'Tain't all right for most of 'em," Mr. Small said, "but it is for you. You always did fill that little green bathing suit out to where it should be—not too much and not——"

"That'll do, Horace," said Hester. "Did you want to see me?"

It seemed that a Coast Guard cutter

had sighted a strange marine monster off New London at dusk two days ago. They had fired several shots into it, and it thrashed about for a time and then sank. When they reached the spot they found only a lot of gold-colored scales.

"That young reporter feller brought me over one of 'em," said Mr. Small. "I thought you might want to see it."

Hester didn't look at it. "Please pull the dinghy up, Horace," she said. "I'm going up to the house."

But that evening she visited the cove again. As she walked onto the little beach she saw the sand move where it was heaped above the egg. It heaved a few times, and then out of it crawled a sort of lizard about a foot and a half long. It was a handsome creature. It was covered with gleaming yellow scales; its crest was a rich purple, and it stared up vaguely at Hester with pale blue eyes. Then it opened its pink mouth wide.

"Good heavens!" said Hester. "The thing's hungry! And if the mother was killed by the Coast Guard . . . I wonder what they eat?" She thought a minute and then went up to the house and brought down a can of sardines. She opened it and dropped the fish one by one into the gaping jaws. When it had eaten the serpent curled up in the sand and closed its eyes. Hester reached out and stroked its back. After a minute she said, "My gosh! The thing's purring!"

After that Hester sailed every day, and the sea serpent's child grew rapidly. By July he was ten feet long. He had become gradually attached to Hester—which was only natural, since she fed him with fish which she had Mr. Small stop for every morning at the fish wharf. When she appeared on the path from the house the serpent would waddle towards her eagerly on his little short legs and open his mouth wide and then, when she had fed him, he would curl up contentedly in the sand by her side and go to sleep and purr. She called him George, and he learned quickly to answer to the name.

Then she began to train him. He would swim beside her when she was out in the Vixen, gamboling in the water like a puppy. She taught him to fetch and to roll over and to play dead, with his long body just awash, and a dozen other tricks. At first he didn't follow her out into the Sound. Then one day she was beating back towards the cove against a sudden gusty northwest wind that was rapidly becoming a gale, when she felt a bump on the bottom of the boat. She swore one of her lesser oaths, for she thought she had struck a log. But then, although she was still steering the same course, the boat swung up into the wind and moved straight for the cove entrance as swiftly as a motor boat. "Well, good for George!" said Hester, as she eased the sail down.

After that George's training took a different turn. On days too calm for sailing she had him tow her around and steered him with raps on the hull—for, of course, beneath the boat he couldn't hear her commands. He towed the dinghy too—out to the Vixen and back.

One day, when George was towing the dinghy in, Mr. Small appeared on the beach. George, who had his head out of the water with the painter in his mouth, caught sight of the old man and, with an angry sound between a hiss and a roar, he went for him. But by the time the serpent got ashore, Mr. Small was astride a limb up in a big hemlock.

Hester shouted, "Here, George! Come here, sir!" She made him pull her to the beach and then lie down. "You startled him, Horace," she said. "But he's quite harmless. You can get down."

"I'm comfortable here," said Mr. Small. "Well, I told you not to come down here," Hester said crossly. "And now I suppose you'll go tell everybody in the village what you've seen."

"'Tain't for me to tell 'em," said Mr. Small. "That's somethin' you got to do, Miss Hester. I've known about him for a long time. I didn't suppose you was eatin' all that fish yourself." But pretty soon Mr. Small came down, and Hester made George shake hands with him.

Now the implications of all this sea-serpent business were something Hester didn't think about consciously. Eight years ago she had deliberately forced the notoriety Emilie's experience had brought them down into the subcellars of her mind. But now there was a feeling all the time of something she must do—some duty unperformed. In her dreams Emilie accused and pleaded. At last Hester had to face it.

Of course she could have taken George right down to the yacht club. But it wasn't just a question of proving that Emilie had been perfectly sane. She had to put herself in her sister's position—tell the same incredible story—expose herself to the same ridicule. . . .

Once Hester made her decision, she was determined to do it the hard way. She had learned from Mr. Small when the yacht club was to hold its regatta, and that noon, with white duck pants and a jersey over her bathing suit she sailed the Vixen over. George followed for a while, but she sent him back. As she walked up from the float to the house she thought that little had changed in eight years. She hesitated a moment and then went straight up to a group lunching at the end of the veranda.

Old Mr. Lawson recognized her first. He was her lawyer and the only one with whom she had communicated since her sister's death. "Why, Hester!" he said. "Have you come over for the race?"

She looked around at the others as they greeted her. There were Ruth and Seeley Partlett and the Greers and Florence Carey—Florence who had been extremely free with nasty cracks about Emilie. And at the far end were Mr. Morton and his mother—he stammering a delighted welcome, she only a trifle more like a wizened vulture and barely nodding. It was plain that they were all glad to see her and perhaps a little ashamed of having driven her away and then abandoned her.

They pressed her to lunch with them, but she said, "No, I'll just sit down for a minute. I have something to tell you. I guess you all remember the story Emilie brought up from our cove one night——"

"Oh, Hester," said Miss Carey, "there's no need . . . Why, we understood——"

"Excuse me," said Hester, "but that's just what you didn't do. Emilie was ill advised to speak, but she was not a liar, and she was not crazy. She saw what she said she saw, and truly I believed her, but I hadn't the courage——"

Mr. Lawson put a hand on her arm. "Hester," he said gently, "now is not the time——"

She smiled and patted his hand. "I'm sorry," she said, "but now *is* the time. For I have to tell you that I too have seen this creature." And she told her story.

Well, it was just as she had expected. They all looked uncomfortably down at the tablecloth and Miss Carey said, "Oh, come, Hester, you've been seeing too much of those Coast Guard boys."

Then Mrs. Morton got up. "Amos!" she said. "I'm leaving. I've had enough of this folderol."

But he turned his back on her and came around the table and swung Hester away from them. "Come along, Hester," he said. "The first race starts in ten minutes. Don't you want to see it?"

She felt suddenly free—the oppression that had weighed on her for so long was gone. She said with a smile, "If you've got the nerve to watch it with me, I should like very much to see it."

Old Mrs. Morton's voice at her side said, "If you'll take my advice, young woman, you'll first see a psychiatrist."

Hester looked at her without rancor. "Perhaps we ought to see one together," she said. But before Mrs. Morton could reply Arthur Hale came up. He was commodore of the club, and he greeted Hester warmly. "I see you've got your old fourteen in commission again, Hester," he said. "We've got eight of them racing today."

"Why don't you go in the race, Hester?" said Mr. Morton suddenly. "Art can waive the formalities and put you in."

"Oh, the Vixen's too heavy and old," Hester said. "What chance would I have?"

"In any case," put in Mrs. Morton, "the races are only for club members."

"Hester and her father helped to found our club," said Mr. Hale. "They're life members."

He looked hard at Hester, and after a moment she said, "All right."

"You haven't a crew," said Mr. Morton.

"I saw Horace on the beach," Hester said. "I'll get him."

THE fourteens were the third class to start, but Hester had half an hour, and she got across the line with the others. The first leg was a long windward beat, and in the light airs the Vixen began to lag at once. Hester watched the tall nylon Marconi sails of the lighter boats pull away from her and began to wish she hadn't come. Mr. Small said, "I told you we was outclassed. We better pray for a calm; then nobody'll finish."

"The wind's dying now," she said.

But, though the breeze grew lighter, it never entirely died. When they rounded the first buoy, the other boats on a long reach had almost turned the second one. "You ain't going to bother to finish, are you?" Mr. Small asked. "We'll look kinda foolish—like a little tail on a big dog."

"Nonsense! We're going to win the race," said Hester with sudden exultation. For they were off her cove, and she had seen a crested head lift above the water and turn from side to side. She gave a shrill whistle, and the head disappeared and presently there was a thump on the boat's bottom. "Now!" Hester said, and rapped twice on the hull. At once the boat began to pick up speed.

At first nobody noticed, though it took all their skill to trim the sails so that the wind appeared to fill them. But then, as they rapidly overhauled the other boats, glasses were trained on them, and as they sliced through the little fleet there were amazed shouts and hails from their crews.

Then the rest were behind them. A hundred yards from the finish line Hester signaled on the hull, and George stuck his head up above the gunwale. "Home, George!" she said. "Home at once, sir! And down—under water!" Then, as a providential puff filled the sails again, they slid across the line four minutes ahead of the nearest contestant.

A hail from the committee boat ordered them alongside. "Have you an engine in that boat?" someone called.

"Certainly not," said Hester. "I'll beach her and you can investigate."

The crews of the other boats, as they came in, joined the officials. Some of them claimed to have seen a propeller slick astern of the Vixen; others, who had glimpsed George's head, said there'd been some sort of engine attached to the gunwale. But nothing was found and their protests were useless.

Later that afternoon, Mr. Small brought

in a mess of peas for Hester's supper. "We ought to had money up on that race," he said. "You know we could make a pot buyin' boats and enterin' 'em in races, and then selling them."

"I don't think it would work," she said. "Those men knew something was propelling us. Go answer the doorbell."

It was Mr. Morton. "Hester, I had to come," he said. "I had to explain . . ."

"Isn't it a little late for explanations?"

"Eight years late—yes," he said, following her into the living room. "But you thought—you thought I'd let you down."

"Naturally," she said, turning on him. "You were ashamed of me."

"I was never ashamed of you," he replied. "But afterwards—you wouldn't see me. I had no chance to explain. And, Hester . . I saw the thing, too. The day after Emilie did. It was swimming in the Sound. I told Mother that—told her I was going to back up Emilie's story. She said if I did—well, she had a regular tantrum; threatened—oh, all sorts of things. And then she had one of those dreadful fainting fits—she has a weak heart, you know. Dr. Alison has warned me repeatedly not to cross her. So what could I do? If I could have seen you . So then I thought—if I just waited—maybe somebody else would see the thing. I don't know—maybe I'd have had the guts to tell . . I guess you were right —I did let you down. And today—I let you down again today."

Hester thought: It's queer, to take up just where we left off eight years ago. Those years have never been. And she said, "Yes, you did. But I let you down, too. And Emilie. I don't blame you. I never should have." She smiled at him. "We're an awful pair of cowards, Amos."

He saw her smile and started towards her, but she put her hands up and held him away. "No, Amos," she said, "we've got to play it out this way."

"But I'm going back down there," he protested, "and tell them——"

"No, you're not," she said. "You still have to consider your mother . . . Amos! Really you mustn't!"

Mr. Small was not a particularly honorable old person. An hour or so later he peeked through the living-room keyhole. Then he tiptoed out, shaking his head. "I hope that George ain't got a jealous disposition," he said.

Very little, of course, had been decided. Hester refused to let Amos corroborate her story or produce George.

"You can't win them that way," he said. "You'll just convince them you're crazy."

She said, "Perhaps. But don't you see that's the way I must do it?"

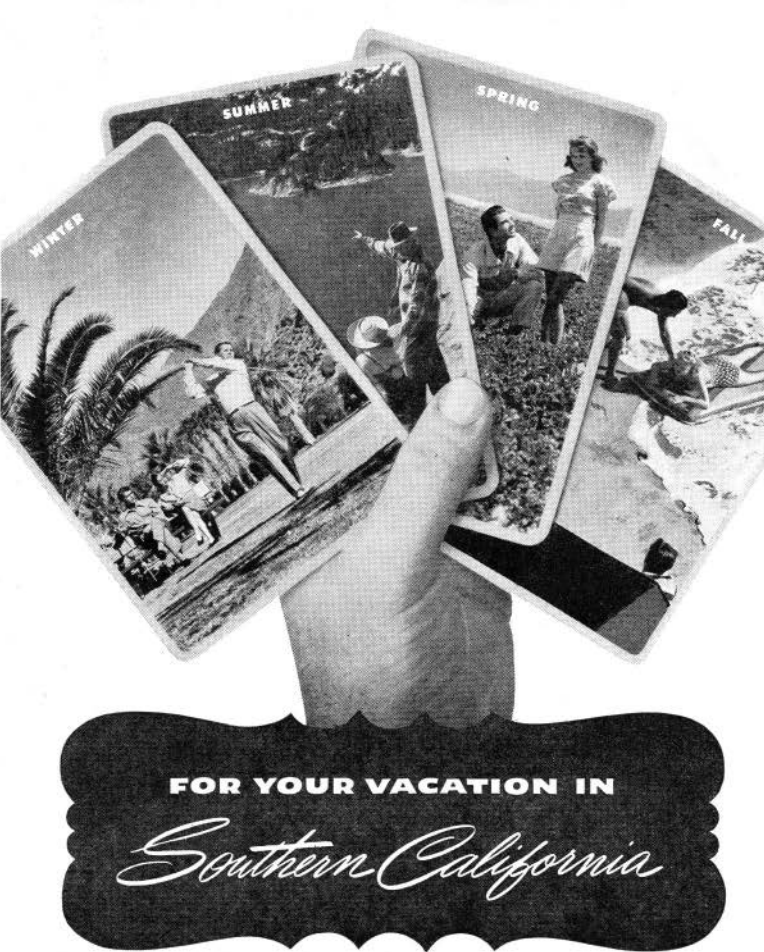
No, he didn't. But if she insisted, he'd wait. Only he was going to come and see her whether his mother liked it or not.

His mother liked it so little that she had another fainting fit two days later, and Dr. Alison again warned her son. After that Amos concealed the visits from her. But two or three times a week he sailed his boat into the Warren cove. He was introduced to George who shook hands politely and purred when scratched. But George was a one-man serpent. It was plain he merely tolerated Mr. Morton.

Hester continued to visit the club, and the odd thing about it was that, although she rather forced the sea serpent down their throats, they managed to swallow him without visible gagging. "Hester was crazy all right," they said, "but only on that one subject." She was harmless, and they were really quite fond of her. All except Mrs. Morton. She held out for psychiatrists and said so in front of everybody, including Hester.

Well, the summer wore on and George grew and grew, and now he was thirty feet long. One Sunday afternoon Hester

Pick a season . . . any season



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looked at Mr. Morton a long time and then she said, "Are you happy, Amos?"

"Perfectly," he said "at the moment."

"I know what you're thinking."

He said, "Yes, of wasting another eight years. You're what Hester—thirty-five? And I'm thirty-eight. And Mother is seventy-six——"

"And may live another twenty years," said Hester. "Yes. And you would never forgive yourself if——"

"Mother has to take her chance," he said curtly. "Actually I don't think her heart is as bad as Alison tells me."

"She thinks I'm crazy," Hester said. "No, Amos, we must think of some other way." And they continued to get nowhere with the argument until Mr. Small came to warn them that a storm was coming up. "I drove all the way out from the village to tell you," he said. "You better skid for home, Amos."

They glanced at the sky, but the bluff behind them cut off all save the south which was serene. They glanced at the oily-smooth water of the cove and then again at Mr. Small. "There's just time," he said. "Get George to tow you out. You'll catch a wind that'll get you back before the squall hits. But you wait five minutes more, and you'll be askin' me to drive you home, and your ma'll find out where you been and she'll skelp ye raw."

"That's no way to talk, Horace," said Hester.

"Hell," said Mr. Small, "Mis' Morton asked me not half an hour ago if Amos was down here. I says I ain't seen him in months. But she used to know my family. All the Smalls was liars. She just give a snort and went on down the street. Last I see of her she was dickerin' with Pete Birdsall for a ride in his so-called taxi."

"Heavens!" Hester said. "You don't suppose she's coming out here?"

"Let her come," said Mr. Morton.

"Oh, no!" said Hester. "Her heart——"

"It won't be any great shock to find me here if she expects it," he said calmly. "But she's giving a dinner at the club tonight to some of her cronies and was probably hiring Pete to come out for her. Right now she'll be sitting home on the porch watching the storm. She loves 'em. Come on—we'll take shelter in the boathouse. This won't last long."

The squall blew itself out, and the sun was pushing through torn clouds when they came out to swim to Hester's boat and go for a sail. Hester took the tiller and worked her way through the light puffs to the mouth of the cove. But once outside they saw what the land had hidden from them—a second and much blacker squall bearing down on them. It struck before they could head into it, and the boat was blown flat.

"All we can do," said Amos, "is stick with her. We'll be seen and picked up after it clears again."

But it didn't clear, and each heavy gust was driving them farther out into the Sound. The shore was invisible through the rain. Hester kept rapping on the hull in the hope that George might hear her, but he didn't show up, and at last she said, "We must be opposite the club by now, Amos. We'd better swim for it."

But she hadn't taken ten strokes before she began to wonder if she could make it. Mr. Morton watched her for a minute then turned toward her. "Put a hand on my shoulder," he said.

She shook her head. "Can't," she gasped. "Cramp in my foot already."

It was at this moment that something came up under her—something that felt metallic and as cold as the sea. It bore her up out of the water, and then she realized that she was astride George's neck and moving swiftly shoreward.

She had trouble turning the serpent around to pick up Mr. Morton. George's angry snorts said that, while it was his duty to rescue his mistress, the rule didn't apply to any casual admirer of hers. But at last Hester managed to haul Mr. Morton aboard.

George made directly for land. They had drifted well below the yacht club and were, in fact, just opposite the Morton house. The serpent, his head held high to keep his passengers out of the water, came ashore just under the veranda where Mrs. Morton was comfortably watching the agreeable fury of the elements. When she saw her son and his former fiancée borne towards her out of the sea on the back of that glittering purple-crested monster, she gave a piercing scream and fell back in her chair.

They phoned Dr. Alison and hung over her with smelling salts, while George curled up on the lawn and went to sleep.

Hester felt for Mrs. Morton's pulse. "I can't find it," she said unhappily. "Oh, Amos, you don't suppose——"

"I don't know," he said. "She seems to be breathing . . ."

"Of course, I'm breathing!" snapped Mrs. Morton, suddenly opening her eyes, "though how you expect me to do with that ammonia under my nose! Take it away!" She glared at Hester. "So you're not a lunatic after all!" she said.

Mr. Morton said soothingly, "Don't excite yourself, Mother. Dr. Alison is coming."

"Send the old fraud away!" she snapped. She got up and went to the railing. "Is that the creature?" she said. "Humph! Is he tame?"

"Why--er—yes," said Hester.

"Here you!" said Mrs. Morton, snapping her fingers at George. "What's his name? . . . George? . . . Here, George!"

The serpent stared at her a moment with his mild blue eyes then got up and slithered heavily towards the veranda. He rested his big horned snout on the railing and began to purr.

"Mother," said Mr. Morton, "you know your heart——"

"My heart's as sound as a bell!"

"But, Mother," he said, "you fainted."

"I didn't faint," she said. "I yelled. I have never fainted in all my life. I've used those spells to get what I wanted without argument." She turned to Hester. "When I was a child, one of those things—a smaller one—came up out of the water. We played together all one summer down by the breakwater. But it would hide when anyone else came, so when I said I'd seen it I was whipped.

"I believed Emilie. But I was sure she couldn't prove her story, and I knew what people would say—that my son was marrying into a family that had a taint of insanity. That is why I kept you two apart. Then when you said you'd seen it, Hester, I was unsure. Had you really seen it, or had your mind become unhinged by brooding for eight years——"

"Well, there's Hester's proof," Mr. Morton interrupted, pointing to George. "Are you going to keep on spreading this report that Hester is crazy? If so, I'm leaving here, Mother—I warn you."

"It depends entirely on Hester," said the old lady calmly. "Thousands of people have certainly seen these creatures. But it's only fools or saints that talk about such experiences unless they can prove them. I have no objection to correcting an injustice, provided it doesn't cost me the consideration of society. If Hester can assure me that this George will do what she tells him to. . . ."

When Hester climbed out on the yacht-club float that evening and walked up on to the porch, she saw Mrs. Morton at a table with her three friends. Scattered among the other diners were most of those who had been present when she had tried to tell them about George. "If any of you would like to see my sea serpent," she said, "he's down on the beach."

Nobody said anything. Several of them looked expectantly at Mrs. Morton. Conversation stopped but was immediately taken up again in a higher key. Nobody, of course, went to the railing to look.

"It's quite true," said Mrs. Morton suddenly. "There is a sea serpent at the edge of the water. I can see him from here."

Mrs. Jordan said severely, "Really, Sarah!" But Mrs. Morton got up and with a compelling claw on her friend's arm pulled her out of her chair. "Come along, Jane," she said with a malicious grin. "If I'm not mistaken, you had more to say about the Warren sisters' insanity than anyone else." She dragged her to the railing. "There now—look!"

Mrs. Jordan lay for a time where she fell. For at her screech the others had at last looked too. And there was George, lying half out of the water, his scales glittering in the moonlight. Hester whistled, and he raised his huge head and came slowly up the beach. Tables and chairs went over as the guests ran for the doors.

It was later that evening that Mrs. Morton suggested that George ought really to be best man at the wedding.

"Are you serious?" asked Hester.

"Not entirely," said Mrs. Morton. "I suppose when he came in we'd see nothing of Dr. Andrews but the tail of his surplice going through the window."

At this point she was called to the phone. When she came back she said, "That was Lawson. Some of them have talked it over. They want everybody to keep still about this evening. It would be bad publicity for the village. They say we must get rid of George. Then we'll pretend that it was all a hoax."

"I'm not going to get rid of him," said Hester. "I'm fond of him."

"They say if we don't they'll shoot him."

"That's outrageous!" Hester exclaimed. "He's harmless. He won't hurt anyone."

Mr. Morton left them for a few minutes. "I called Lawson again," he said when he returned. "I said we agreed not to talk and to keep George out of sight. But I said that unless they promised that there would be no shooting, we'd take him to New London tonight and have every newsreel photographer in the East there to meet him in the morning. They know what that would mean. In twenty-four hours curiosity seekers would trample this village flat."

"Excellent!" said Mrs. Morton. "I hope they refused."

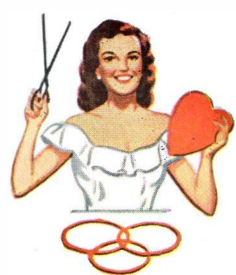
"Oh, no," he said, "they agreed."

And so the secret, like that of many other prodigies, was well kept. Which was just as well, for two days after the wedding George disappeared. Whether it was jealousy or an antisocial streak brought out by the wedding festivities no one knew. But once a year, on the day before the annual regatta, George comes swimming up the cove. The Mortons still sail the Vixen in every race they can get into, but after an unscheduled free-for-all race three years ago, when their boat was dismasted in a heavy blow and still managed to come in first, it was felt that there was something funny about it, and the Vixen has since been disqualified each year on various technicalities. Oddly enough, it never seemed to occur to the judges that George might have had something to do with her success. All of them had seen the serpent. But so incredible was he that he seems to have dropped entirely out of their memories. Which is of course the usual thing.

THE END

One ring for **purity**

a second for **body**



a third for **flavor**

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up, and where he had some connections which seemed to have disintegrated during the war. Laura Hough was one of the connections.

Laura had responded to the positive and negative qualities of Heraldton, too. Her life had been a series of comings and goings. Laura was looking for something. Ike O'Hare didn't know what it was, and Laura herself couldn't put it into words; she wasn't the kind of person who would even try. But, delicately balanced and carefully sealed somewhere deep inside her, there was a faith, a belief that the search for truth was worth while, was more than a phrase, more than a game. The faith was tempered by a wry, pervasive humor, just this side of cynicism, and shielded by an abstract kind of beauty.

Ike used to say she used her looks as camouflage. At one time Ike had thought he might marry her. Nothing was ever said about it, but somewhere in the process of going through the local school together and to Assembly dances and later to college house parties and to New York, the understanding seemed to take shape—at least in his mind. And Ike was not given to leaping at unwarranted conclusions.

But there was the war, and something that happened on one of his leaves. Laura stopped answering his letters.

There was no great pain in the realization that he wasn't going to marry her. It wasn't even a sharp or definite understanding in point of time. It was, like the agreement it replaced, implicit. The kind of thing a man's liable to drift in and out of half a dozen times in a generation.

IKE was tired. He had traveled across the country for five hot days by train. The last hour, from Grand Central to Heraldton, dragged interminably. The train seemed to linger endlessly at each station as it crawled toward his town: mechanically he still thought of it that way—as his town. The other towns along the route were just names, with successively stronger emotional connotations as the train drew closer to Heraldton.

He sat there in the living room that first afternoon talking to his mother. The job on the Coast seemed remote and unreal as he spoke about it, and yet being home didn't feel natural either. He knew it never would; he had known it for a long time. On the surface, it would have been an easy situation to get used to. The old patterns were laid out like snares ready to receive him.

"You've got your old room," his mother was saying. "Your school pennants are still on the walls, the pictures of the football teams." She always talked that way about those days when he used to collect things. Whenever he came home she reminded him about them, as if college and the war—everything since high school—was only make-believe, and someday he would come back and live happily ever after. He knew the collection of butterflies, pressed in cotton, would still be in the bottom drawer of his bureau alongside the old mail-order catalog with pencil marks beside items like sneezing powder and "magic" glasses; the autographed pictures of baseball players: Gehrig, Dickey, Lazzeri; the carved balsa models of the Spad, the Gee Bee, the "Winnie Mae."

Mrs. O'Hare, wearing a long green dress, sat on the couch. The room, cold and spacious, was rather sparsely furnished with middle-aged antiques. It was a good room to visit.

"Anson Packard is having a party tonight. He called to find out if you'd be home."

"Still the old party boy, eh? Didn't the Packards go to Maine this summer?"

"Anson's working in the city, so they decided to stay here."

MRS. O'HARE spoke of the surprising number of people who were still around town. Howard Chivers had brought back a wife and child from England. All three were living with his parents. Barney Thomas was working on the local newspaper. Ike kept nodding. He had spent a month in Heraldton after getting out of the Army; he had seen most of the people she talked of—seen them and realized that his fondness for them had been not replaced but somehow overlaid with the friendships he had made in the Army and in college.

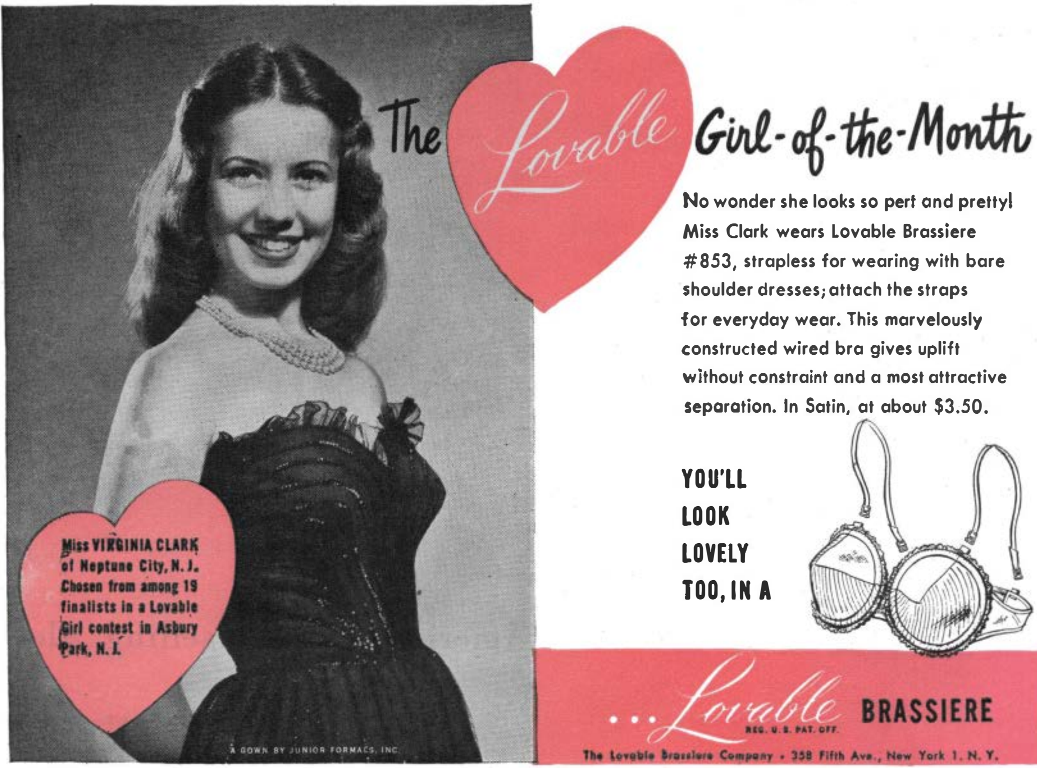
"They all ask about you." It was almost a reproach.

Then she started enumerating the people who had been or were to be married. She told him the names of the new babies, names like Jon and Susan and Peter, cute names, that looked well on the little announcements that were being sent out. She had saved a small stack of them on a salver, shuffled together with wedding announcements.

Leafing through the pile, Ike came across a card announcing Laura Hough's engagement . . . *announce the engagement of their daughter Laura to Mr. Paul de Kuyper Williams.*

The name was familiar, and Ike thought he remembered what Williams looked like. That was all. He'd seen him at dances, met him at a party.

But the card was strangely annoying;



he held it in his hand for a long time.

"Well, what did you expect?" his mother chided gently.

Ike laughed. "Nothing. I suppose any guy is a little sad when he comes across an old flame's wedding announcement. I guess he takes it as some sort of indignity to his charm or his ego or something. He feels a little left out in the cold . . ."

There was no difficulty imagining most of the girls passing into the state of married bliss. He could see them showing their rings to each other over bridge tables, pushing little wire carriages through the self-service store, knitting in cars while they waited for their husbands' trains.

But Laura wouldn't slide into the picture. She had a way of eluding categories—or perhaps she almost fitted too many. She had been a Phi Beta Kappa at college. She had somehow got to be a brakeman on the Pennsylvania railroad for a year and a half during the war. Before that she had worked on a leftist newspaper doing statistical research on wages and prices. She was interested in politics—not the women's-club angle of it; she wrote articles and talked at union meetings. And she fought with her father, who had retired from Wall Street before he was sixty.

"Why, you're a *Communist!*" her father had said once.

She had laughed at him. "No, just a grass-roots American radical."

But her revolt against the standards and hopes that Heraldton held out had an unreal quality. Because Laura liked the accouterments of gracious living. She liked fine clothes and saddle horses and riding in taxicabs. She wouldn't keep a budget, or ride on a subway.

She commuted to work in the city from Heraldton, and the fact that she lived in a community whose ideals she was in the process of rejecting had given her a patina of hardness; it wasn't shrewdness or insensitivity. It was a kind of defensive toughness, like a shell.

Ike hadn't seen her since that furlough, two years before. What had happened then was that he had kissed her, standing on her front porch after bringing her home from a movie, held her and kissed her. It had been the first time in years, and he had been a little frightened at the way she responded. Ike had felt very independent then, full of the paradoxical liberty one feels in the Army—freedom from the responsibilities associated with home and getting marks in school or earning a salary.

Anyway, the next night he had had a date with another girl, Ann Diamond, who had been seventeen or eighteen at the time. They were on their way into the city when they passed Laura walking home from the station. Ike waved. It was dreadful. His breath came hard, and he wished he could make himself very small; he hated himself for having asserted this independence and, a little, for the necessity of waving.

Legs Diamond—she had had the nickname at fifteen—was just then learning how to use her eyes and how to walk from her hips and how to wear long black gloves over her elbows. The discoveries delighted her.

As he put the card back on the salver now, Ike wondered if Legs and Laura would be at Anson's tonight.

"Mind if I take the car awhile?" he asked his mother.

"Why no, dear. Where are you going?"

"Thought I'd drop over and congratulate Laura."

THE Houghs lived half a mile away, in the next of the carefully pastoral clusters of white painted houses called developments. In a way he dreaded seeing Laura;

but there was a need, a compulsion to reassert his presence in town, to establish contact with the tribe again.

Driving into the Houghs' driveway, he sat for a minute looking at the big, hilly lawn. There were three people on the lawn: Laura, wearing denims, her brother Joe and another man, whom he recognized as Williams. Williams was making desultory shoving movements behind a lawn mower.

Joe Hough slouched toward the car; he waved. Joe was three years younger than Ike, world-weary and cynical. He'd been kicked out of two or three schools and had been medically discharged from the Army after a few months. Ike had always been amused at Joe's beautiful clothes; they were bought and worn in places frequented by the rich, but somehow Joe didn't seem to go with the clothes. You noticed the clothes particularly. His face was full, almost fat, and he had the sculptured, oversensuous lips of the budding voluptuary.

"Welcome home, stranger," he said. Ike took his hand. They walked back to where Laura was sitting, pulling weeds out of a narrow, fussy little flower bed. She didn't get up.

"How are you, Ike?" They looked at each other, and she looked away. He watched her pull nervously at the weeds with taut, frenzied tugs.

"You've cut your hair." Somehow it was all he could think of to say. She looked different. Her face had taken on a boniness; the faintly ironic repose that he remembered was no longer there. The short, wavy haircut served to pull her features apart, as if a frame had been taken away from a painting. Where there had been an almost Mona Lisa-like blandness and cohesion there was now disorder.

A few yards away Williams grunted and leaned over the handle as the lawn mower struck a twig. Then he came over to where they were sitting. He walked with a tight, almost mincing precision, pointing his toes inward. Ike looked up at the small-boned, conventionally handsome face.

YES, this was how Ike had remembered him: a golden boy; one of the three or four facial types that have come to be associated with the three or four most exclusive New England private schools. His subdued tweed sport coat looked as if it had been fitted to him in sections. As Williams sat down on the lawn, gently, fastidiously, Ike got an impression of perfectly manicured nails, of every hair in place, of a beautifully groomed child, spoiled, perhaps, but not in the way Joe Hough was spoiled, and not really a child. This boy wasn't attempting anything; he wasn't struggling. He didn't even look like a Young Man Who's Arrived. He looked as though he'd been there all his life.

They shook hands across Laura's jack-knifed knees. Williams's voice was soft, his enunciation casual and well-bred. For a moment they talked fitfully of who was around town. It seemed difficult to hit on a congenial topic. What seemed held in common now among the people they spoke of was only an aimless, drifting self-indulgence. The people they talked about were going back to college, because it was the most accepted way of passing time, or they were getting jobs by arrangement with their fathers. And in the evenings or on week ends, they drifted back to Heraldton, where all the paraphernalia, the handmaidens of laziness, were at their disposal—their parents' automobiles, full refrigerators and liquor.

Laura seemed to have made a peace, or at least a truce, with the pattern of

gracious living. "Laura's told me about you," Paul Williams was saying. "You were out working for pictures, weren't you? Writing or something?"

"I was," Ike said warily. He had gone out on a six months' contract. When they failed to pick up his option, he had come back to Heraldton. He wondered about it now. The deliberate attempt to satisfy the need for familiar things, to reacquaint yourself with old surroundings is liable not to work. Suddenly Ike was sorry he'd come home.

"What happened out there?" asked Laura. There was a nervous, impersonal sympathy in her voice; it was as if she were sticking up for him because he was a home-town boy.

"Don't be solicitous, for Pete's sake. I was dropped, fired." There was a cautious, respectful silence. "Not to change the subject or anything, I understand you're to be congratulated." That was the way people in Heraldton said things like that. Not: "I understand you're getting married"; but couching the acknowledgment in terms of the form that went with it, the politeness. It was almost as if the facts were ugly or trite in themselves, as if from sheer boredom one had to invent oddments of speech, little allegorical ways of saying things.

"Yes," she said. "Thanks."

"What say we go get a beer?" said Joe. "Toast the hero returned from the wars out in Hollywood or wherever it was."

Ike stood up. "And we could toast the newlyweds, or about to be newlyweds." Nobody particularly wanted a beer. But it was something to do.

The bar, some fifteen miles away, was new to Ike. It was a garish place, and they were the only customers.

Ike watched Paul Williams light a cigarette, tilt his head over to one side and extinguish the flame of his lighter by shaking it in small rapid arcs instead of snapping the cover over the wick.

He had an impregnability, an air of complete, detached contentment, as if he had already acquired all the knowledge necessary for him to continue along his way through life. And he looked as though the way were completely picked out. Which is probably why she's marrying him, thought Ike.

"What are you doing now, Joe?" Ike said. Joe said he was taking a training program at a big city bank. At the end of a year he became an assistant something.

Ike said, "I guess that's good. Go where the money is."

"It's kind of dull," said Joe. "And they have guys, college graduates, working there twenty years, still just counting money for maybe seventy a week." He made a face. "You musta made a dollar out on the Coast, eh?"

"Not as good as some by a long shot," said Ike.

"Joe may come in with us, my uncle's firm, that is," Williams volunteered. Joe looked embarrassed and smeared the little damp circle his glass had made.

Williams sat thumbing his cigarette lighter on and off as if he were sending a blinker message. It was a gold lighter, rectangular. There is fascination in repetition. The talk died as they watched the flame take its sudden shape, and as suddenly be snuffed out. Williams was signaling for silence.

"There's a ridge"—he stroked the lighter with a forefinger—"a bump, right here. Dropped it. Tried half a dozen jewelers downtown to get it fixed, but they hate to do hinge work." He ran his finger over the defect. "Best lighter I ever owned."

"It's a honey," said Joe. "I had a good one, went sour. Sometimes you get a lemon—like in cars."

"Funny things," said Williams. "When they go sour, the good ones, you get 'em fixed and they never work the same afterwards. I had one that never missed until I got a new flint one time, and the guy talked me into putting in a new spring . . . Pflooey."

Ike finished his beer. He wondered how long they could talk about cigarette lighters. But there were apparently so many larger issues that Williams took for granted that he could afford to spend an infinite amount of time on the small ones.

Ike looked around the bar. The bartender was talking to the waitress. She was pretty, and well put together.

So this is home. His mind had failed to retain the low spots. He had only remembered the best. Laura isn't really a part of all this, he was thinking. But as he looked over at her sitting there, toying with a cardboard beer coaster, she seemed strangely passive.

Like an angel of mercy, the waitress arrived to collect the glasses. As she leaned over, Ike saw Paul Williams's eyes flick to the low neckline of her uniform. Then he settled back in his seat and glanced surreptitiously down at the hem of her skirt, raised over the backs of her knees as she leaned forward. It was casual but thorough.

"Four more, please," he said.

Everybody looks at a girl, but the almost professional deftness with which Williams sized her up, like a slave trader appraising a girl as she came on the block, was appalling. Laura hadn't noticed.

"Are you going to Anson's tonight?" Paul was asking.

"I guess so," said Ike. That was another tenet of the Heraldton code: above all, no enthusiasm. "I've been asked by proxy."

Paul lit a cigarette and flicked the ridge on the lighter with his thumbnail. "Of course, I could keep the mechanism," he admitted, "and get a new case . . ."

There must have been twenty cars parked in front of Anson's house that night by the time Ike arrived.

It was with a kind of cold exhilaration that he turned the family car into the driveway, parked behind Barney Thomas's old coupé and walked across the front lawn.

It had been a long time.

The sense of belonging, of familiarity, was lost. In its place was a sort of perspective, enhanced by the fact of his arriving late and alone. But if they weren't his people any longer there would be a few to whom he'd be a big shot, a local boy who made good; and anyone who denies that it's nice to bask in that, for what it's worth, is pretending. There would be a few who hated his guts, and some he wanted to see again.

Passing out of the summer night into the brightly lighted living room, he met a couple he had known for years.

"Looking good, kid . . . Going back to school? . . . No, just loafing . . . Well, good to see you . . ."

Anson Packard grabbed his hand. "You know where the bar is, Ike. Where the hella you been, and how was it?"

Ike said, "It was a rat race. It's nice to be back."

The big room was noisy and crowded; the men had on sport coats, the girls wore starchy summer dresses. They sat in clusters, talking and gesturing in a series of private-looking consultations.

A huge record player stood in one corner; four couples danced languidly to the plaintive lyrics..

Honoria Lawrence sat on the fifth step of the staircase, looking wise and catlike. Ike hadn't seen her for five years. Smiling down at him with gentle raillery, her knees awkwardly angled to take refuge in her skirt, she chided him about Laura.

"She got tired of waiting, Ike. You stayed away too long."

"Maybe," said Ike. "Maybe not long enough." Together they looked over at Paul Williams; he was dancing with a girl Ike remembered vaguely. He held her very close, neither of them moving their feet much. Paul's steps seemed to be mere rearrangements of the gentle falling folds of his trousers. Over the girl's shoulder he was looking at Ann Diamond, sizing her up. It was the look he had bestowed on the waitress that afternoon: cool, unquestioning appraisal.

Honoria said something about the town Williams had been brought up in. It was one of the more fashionable towns in Connecticut, one of the towns whose very mention in Heraldton seemed to carry with it an almost tangible impression of the tweediest clothes, the biggest lawns, the convertibles with the most chrome plate. The cultural tradition—the right schools and cars and clothes and clubs—was richly imbedded.

"Do you like Paul?" Honoria asked.

"I hardly know him," said Ike. "No, I don't think so."

Laura was sitting by the door that opened out onto the lawn in back of the house, her legs stretched out in front of her. In the soft light she looked more appealing than she had that afternoon. She had on a dark green dress and her hair was brushed out.

"Just like old times," she said as Ike sat down. "Except that the younger ones are suddenly growing up. But they're playing the same records."

"Why aren't you dancing?" asked Ike.

"I was never much for dancing. You know that."

"You were never much for a lot of this stuff." Ike waved his hand at the room. "Conspicuous waste and all that."

Laura opened her mouth to answer, but just then Mrs. Packard descended on them like a flock of pigeons. "*Ike!*" she said. "So *good* to see you."

Mrs. Packard was somewhere past fifty; she was the first woman Ike knew who dyed her hair that steel-blue color which later became so fashionable.

He stood up. Smiling beatifically, Mrs. Packard reared back as if to get a better look at him, as if the sight dazzled her. "Ike!" In her voice were intimations of long-lost memories. "And here you are with *Laura. How* like old times!"

Ike smiled bravely. He had long suspected Mrs. Packard of pushing Anson into the role of incessant host. She had collected the younger generation at these parties, melodramatically put them in positions where they would be unable to avoid saying the most flattering things.

Ike said the things, and after she had gone he sat down and sighed.

"My, you do that well," said Laura.

"Yes, I suppose I do." He felt a small fury well up inside him; but it was impotent. "I've always thought of her as the shining example of Heraldton matriarchy. Suppose you'll grow up like that?"

"She does lots of nice things," said Laura. "And she means well."

"The hell she does."

"You still don't give anything away, do you?"

"I should think of nice things to say about that old harridan?"

Laura turned towards him candidly. "What are you saving them for, Ike, the nice things?" The irony took him by surprise. "Giving away only a little piece at a time, and with strings on it, so you can take it back when you want it?"

"Aah, relax, Sport. I said some nice things to you in my time. I never asked to have them back."

"Sport," said Laura softly. "I haven't

been called that in a long, long time."

Ike looked away from her. "Well," he said, "don't get sentimental. Gonna ask me to the reception?" He was looking over at Legs Diamond, sitting in a corner with Joe Hough.

"If you're around," said Laura.

From across the room, Legs Diamond passed her hand in front of her face, palm outward, and gave Ike a wide wink.

"What's it gonna be—striped pants and photographers?"

"Oh, why don't you lay off, O'Hare?"

"Okay, Sport." He got up. "See you around."

Walking across the room, Ike realized that he ought to feel relieved at Laura's engagement. But he didn't. It was odd. God knows he had been feeling guilty about her ever since that night.

"Hello, Legs."

"Ike boy!" She looked very gay and relaxed, sitting with her legs over the arm of a chair. "What brings you back to the fold?"

"I came to take you out to Hollywood," said Ike. "They want another Lucille Ball, and I told them I had just the gal."

She laughed. Legs would have loved to be in the movies, and she did look a little like Lucille Ball. She sat there swinging her legs, kicking them out from the chair arm while they kidded about Hollywood —wasn't Ike pretty young to be out among all that tinsel and had success gone to his head and did he really think she'd be okay in movies, and as a matter of fact she *had* been thinking of going to dramatic school in the fall. Finally Joe Hough stood up. "Well," he said, "when you catch up on your star-gazing I'll be out on the porch."

Legs raised her eyebrows at him as he walked toward the front door.

"Well, well, well," said Ike.

"He doesn't like you," said Legs. "It's good to see you again, you know." She was quite tight.

"Good to see you." Legs was a very uncomplicated girl; it was no strain being with her. After a while she asked him what he thought of Paul Williams. Ike shrugged, hesitant to commit himself, like a visitor afraid of saying the wrong thing.

"I never trust them that good-looking." Legs rolled her eyes. "That's why I've always liked you. By the way, I'm sorry about you and Laura—that is, I'm sorry if you're sorry." Legs wasn't fond of girls in general. "You still carrying a torch?"

"No, just a small spear." They both laughed. In Heraldton everyone laughs at his own jokes. "Let's go outside, Legs. I'd like to ask you to do me a favor. And lay off pitying me about Laura. You know what happened. You were there."

They got fresh drinks and walked out the back door onto the cool lawn. They sat on the stone steps that led down a little incline to Mrs. Packard's flower garden, faintly illumined by the lights from the house. A flagged walk ran through the garden, ending at a concrete bench.

They talked for a moment. A trifle reluctantly Legs agreed to do the favor. Then they went back to the living room.

HALF an hour later Legs Diamond was listening to Paul Williams, standing close to him, moving her head up and down in exaggerated nods as he talked. She held up her empty glass, clinked the ice cubes. Williams led her to the improvised bar.

Ike watched them get refills, then he cut in on Laura. After they had danced a moment, he steered her out to the lawn.

He felt restless and upset as they walked out. His mind was back on that evening he had kissed her; he recalled Laura walking along the road the next night, looking up stonily as he passed in the car with Ann Diamond; recalled the paralyzing, inward-sinking guilt that had come over him then.

He felt guilty now as they walked across the grass, but it was more or less academic. The whole situation seemed unreal. He felt as if he were acting a supporting part in a formally staged nightmare, a dream in which he was not emotionally involved—someone else's dream. There was a silence like the silences they used to encounter together: faintly untrusting, charged with unspoken associations. It was as if there were a door swinging on one hinge between them. They sparred warily back and forth, talking of the party, pushing the door to and fro, but gently, as if they were afraid it might fall from its hinge and leave them facing each other, with all the elaborate network of remembrances that they had in common laid bare.

"We know each other quite well, don't we?" said Ike.

They were sitting on the steps where he had sat with Legs Diamond; the steps were shaded by thick foliage, the trees were at the height of their summer lushness. Laura's face was a pale occasional movement in the dark beside him.

"In a way," she said. "And in a way not at all."

"I somehow never pictured myself sitting out here congratulating you on getting married to . . . one of the boys."

"No?"

"No. I figured you'd run off with some struggling young hod carrier who wrote poetry—or a stable boy or something."

"You mean I'm going into this without your blessing?"

Ike could almost see the sarcastic downward curve of her mouth as she spoke. He didn't answer.

"You don't like him, do you?" she went on with a kind of quizzical resignation.

"I guess he's not my type. I didn't think he was yours."

"I got tired of being a type."

"You don't think you'll be a type as Mrs. Paul Williams?"

"I suppose it's a chance I have to take. What the deuce . . . I don't have to explain this to you." She made a move to get up.

Twenty yards below them, down in the garden, two figures moved out of the shadows, walked slowly to the bench.

"Stick around, Sport," said Ike. "Please."

"Oh, Ike, I'm sorry it had to break up the way it did. You never gave much of a damn . . ."

"Yeah," Ike said absently; he looked down at the two figures in the garden. "I was never a very nice guy where you were concerned. Maybe it's something about you. You never got a fair shake."

"You feeling sorry for me?"

"Yeah," Ike sounded surprised. "I guess I am. Where will you live when you're married?"

"Not Heraldton. Maybe the city. I've got to get out of this town. I'm in a rut."

Inside the house a record ended on a long-drawn minor. The talk seemed worn thin; the party fervor had spun itself out.

Somehow the people who leave towns like Heraldton out of restlessness don't go up in the world, Ike was thinking. The suburban pattern is an end, not a beginning. When they leave they move out horizontally.

He leaned his elbows back on a step and looked up at the trees. "Out of the frying pan . . ."

There was a lull, a sinking in of what had been said. Below in the garden the two figures sat close together on the bench.

"These parties," Laura said after a moment. "They're the same as they were five years ago. But there was a spontaneity to them then."

"The parties are the same. We've changed. We're not so spontaneous any more, I guess."

Suddenly Laura leaned forward, looking down into the garden where the two figures sat, embracing now on the bench. There was a pale, glimmering movement as her hand went to her mouth. Ike heard a sudden, almost noiseless intake of breath. Then: "Well, well." There was a brittle, weightless quality to the words. "And with Ann Diamond. Isn't it Ann?"

"I guess it is."

Laura stood up and smoothed her dress. "I think I'll go in now."

"I'll sit awhile, Sport."

A moment later Ann Diamond raised a hand to her hair. Paul Williams stood up and pulled her to her feet. Ike could hear the murmur of their voices as they melted into the shadows.

Ike sat alone on the steps. He felt quite miserable. From inside the house came the melancholy strains of an old Artie Shaw record, the music deepened, enriched by the walls of the living room, almost as if given another dimension. It was one of the records that was first loved when they were all going to school, in the late 'thirties. So many of his recollections of Heraldton seemed to take their particular quality, their luster from those records.

He heard his name called softly. Legs Diamond came over and sat beside him.

Ike said, "You did well."

"Anything for a friend." She paused. "Why did you want me to do that, Ike?"

Still carrying a torch? He wondered. He didn't know whether he was or not. He only knew that he wanted to leave the party, leave Heraldton, leave the part of himself that judged and interfered in the lives of other people because he knew them too well and was restless. He shrugged.

Legs Diamond stood up. "It's a good thing you don't come around oftener, Ike boy," she said. "You and I could get to be a couple of first-rate heels."

"Oh, I don't know," he said.

IKE O'HARE left Heraldton a few days later. About a week after he'd gone he had a letter from his mother.

". . . You left an old jacket in your room. Let me know if you want me to keep it here or send it on to you.

"No news except that Jean Hendrickson had her baby, a boy. Both are doing nicely. And Laura Hough has broken her engagement to that nice Paul Williams. Everyone in town is upset over it . . ."

THE END

Interview With a Best-selling Author *(Continued from page 18)*

her sixth grandchild in the robes and attended the christening ceremony. Then she flew north—with the robes—to New Hampshire where her seventh grandchild was awaiting a turn at them. That over, she went to Louisiana, acquired a house in the Evangeline country, and began a study of the Louisiana rice industry—the background for her next novel.

She interrupted the rice-industry survey to make an extensive autographing tour through the Midwest.

When I saw her in New York, she was on her way to New Hampshire for a holiday dinner. She intended to return to the South by way of Illinois. A scene in her next book will be set in a small Illinois town in the grip of winter, and she wanted to prepare a description of a clapboard house in Illinois snow.

"I tire," said Mrs. Keyes, "but I'm never

bored. I haven't been bored for years!"

She said that her eldest son once told her, "Mother, when you die, at the age of ninety-eight, you'll have two regrets. One of them will be that you haven't finished the novel on which you are working at the time and that you don't know anyone who can finish it to suit you. The other regret will be that that little expedition into Mongolia that you have been planning won't come off."

A view of a river, an anecdote heard at dinner, the sight of an old lady on a dance floor, have proved to be sufficient in themselves to cause Mrs. Keyes to buy or lease a house in a remote part of the country, and plunge into work on a three-hundred-thousand-word novel.

Her book "The River Road" grew out of a trip over the old, almost abandoned road that rambles beside the Mississippi between Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

"I fixed up a lovely old plantation house; it was eight miles from the nearest source of supplies, but it was a fine house. I was so fond of it. That was in wartime, and we had to transport even our drinking water eight miles. With the gasoline shortage and all the other lacks, I can tell you that it wasn't any too easy to keep open house, never knowing whether I'd have twenty callers in a day or none. It was there, on the River Road, that I had to form the hardly hospitable habit of eating my dinner in the middle of the day. Supplies were so difficult to get I made up my mind that I really couldn't have dinner for everyone—that we'd have to make do in the evenings with light suppers."

"Do you always keep open house?"

"Oh, I *like* to," said Mrs. Keyes. "I believe in that way of living and always have. Then too, it's practical, because I usually choose a new scene for each of my books, and I'm dependent on my callers for information on local history and customs, on all sorts of topics. Since they are favoring me by coming to see me and talking, naturally I wouldn't want to seem choosy as to when they come. They have so much to teach me."

An evening at a Mardi Gras party led her to write "Crescent Carnival" and, incidentally, to move from Alexandria, Virginia, to New Orleans, where she rents the big Beauregard Mansion.

MRS. KEYES is a New Englander by inheritance. Married at eighteen, she spent the next thirteen years of her life on the Keyes farm, her fourth house, in New Hampshire. "I longed to get away from the quiet, the snow and the cows. It was lonely at first. My husband was away for four or five days each week. And then one baby, and another, and another."

"Why did you write secretly at first?"

To supply the answer, Mrs. Keyes went back many years. Her paternal grandmother had been born in a Vermont log cabin and had been so eager for an education that, with the first money she ever earned, she had walked miles through winter weather to buy a copy of Euclid. With it, she taught herself geometry.

"She was the Frances Parkinson for whom I was named. She taught me to read, using the Bible as my textbook; by the time I was ten I could read three languages. As my father was head of the Greek department at the University of Virginia, I had a large library to range through. But my mother watched my progress without enthusiasm. She was the daughter of a gay and social, even frivolous, New York family; while it was quite all right for me to speak French and German, she didn't intend that I should become altogether a bluestocking. My writing was discouraged.

"When I married, my husband was

Love-quiz ... For Married Folks Only

WHY DOES HE PULL AWAY FROM HER TOUCH?

A. **If her husband avoids her "love pats" . . . caresses . . . the answer may lie in her neglect of intimate feminine daintiness.**

Q. Could this neglect kill married romance?

A. **Yes. Proper feminine hygiene is necessary for complete womanly charm. That's why many doctors so often recommend "Lysol" brand disinfectant—for effective douching.**

Q. Why "Lysol," instead of some other disinfectant?

A. **Because "Lysol" is a proved germ and odor killer. Unlike many less dependable preparations, potent, reliable "Lysol" kills all germs it contacts.**

Q. And what about using salt or soda . . . or other homemade douching solutions?

A. **No weak, makeshift solution can begin to compare with "Lysol's" proved efficiency in contact with organic matter.**

LET "LYSOL" help *you* keep the wholesome, *complete* daintiness so important to married happiness. Always use "Lysol" in the douche.

Check these facts with your doctor

Many doctors recommend "Lysol," in the proper solution, for Feminine Hygiene. *Non-caustic, gentle,* "Lysol" is *non-injurious* to delicate membrane. Its clean, antiseptic aroma quickly disappears. Highly concentrated, "Lysol" is *economical* in solution. Follow easy directions for correct douching solution.

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concerned with business and banks. My efforts to write seemed impractical. So I wrote in copybooks, such as are used by school children. They are easy to hide.

"My husband's interest shifted from business to politics and he became governor of New Hampshire. Perhaps I am overemphasizing one aspect of that position when I tell you that at that time the salary was only three thousand dollars a year and that we had three children to support. In the attic of our house, Pine Grove Farm, was one of the first typewriters ever made. I pecked at it with one finger, turning out a typescript of my first novel, 'The Old Gray Homestead.'

"One day—I remember it so well—I was to be hostess for a picnic of the Grafton County Grange in one of our pine groves. My husband was away campaigning for his election to the Senate, and there was a great deal of mail that morning. I noticed that the letter on top of the pile was a thin yellow envelope, bearing the return address of the publisher to whom I had sent my novel, but I had so much to do that I simply left it there, unopened. Not until the picnic was over did I return to the house to open that envelope.

"It was an acceptance of my novel. I went back to the grove. It was lonely now, and beautiful, the sun setting behind the Vermont hills across the Connecticut River, the great pines green against the red sky. I stood looking at the trees and sky, the letter in my hand. I felt that I was at the beginning of a career, that this was my chance to do what I always had wanted to do—to write—and that this acceptance meant for me a more full and active life than I could otherwise have aspired to. I made a vow that nothing would leave my desk that was not in every way the best that I could do. It might not be as good as others could do, but it must be my best."

GOVERNOR KEYES became Senator Keyes, and in 1919 they left Pine Grove Farm and went to Washington. "The Old Gray Homestead" was published that year. Mrs. Keyes became Washington correspondent for Good Housekeeping Magazine and wrote "Letters From a Senator's Wife." She went abroad for Good Housekeeping and wrote a story about the Ruhr that brought her the *Croix de guerre*, reported on her presentation at the British Court, interviewed the wife of Mussolini, and spent a week as the guest of the Spanish royal family.

"It all made wonderful copy—it was a series of breaks. When I came back my editor said something about circulation being up eight hundred thousand and asked me where I'd like to go next. So I said 'around the world' and did it through a year and a half, then spent another year and a half in South America."

Since the death of Senator Keyes in 1938, Mrs. Keyes has largely devoted herself to fiction, but in her novels she makes full use of her experiences as a reporter. In 1939, after the outbreak of World War Two, she was returning from France on a French freighter.

The character of the ship's captain interested her, and she wrote an article about him that was published first in Harper's and then in the Reader's Digest. Later she fictionized this material and used it in a novel, "All That Glitters." It was on this same voyage that she conceived the idea for "Came a Cavalier," the first half of which is based on a diary that her traveling companion, Katherine McKiever, had kept during her service with the Red Cross in World War One. After World War Two, Mrs. Keyes returned to France with Miss McKiever.

Making the library of a Benedictine Abbey her headquarters, Mrs. Keyes spent nine months gathering material for, and writing the bulk of, "Came a Cavalier." The novel is a romance, the story of a New England girl who married a French baron. It covers activity in Normandy through two world wars. Her intention in this novel, Mrs. Keyes said, was to tighten the bonds between France and the United States.

"I don't care to preach about it. The people speak for themselves, and the incidents, the adventures, further make the point that there are French people we could love if we could know them; and, of course, I wanted to tell the French, and readers in all the other countries, there are Americans they would love."

Mrs. Keyes writes with a consciousness of world readership. So far her books have been published in ten languages in addition to English: French, German, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, Spanish, Portuguese, Czechoslovak and Rumanian.

"But do you realize that Hollywood has never bought one of my books?" she asked. She said that one book that plagiarized a book that she had written had been sold to Hollywood for a large sum and had been made into a very successful picture, but that that was the nearest her work had come to the screen.

"It seems to me," I said, "that your books are guides to elegant living. Are they consciously so?"

"Not elegant," Mrs. Keyes answered. "No, I do believe, of course, in a happy, healthy family life, with strong bonds of affection between the members. The gracious life . . . Gracious—that's the word. I am drawn to grace in living, kindness, friendliness, the open house—these things fill my books."

"What do you want—for yourself?"

"I often think," said Mrs. Keyes, "that I want more peace and quiet. Recently I was in Chicago. I'd been at an autographing party from twelve until six and came out of the store into the rain with only a few minutes to change for a seven-o'clock dinner appointment with old friends, the Charles G. Daweses. I didn't get back to my hotel until two in the morning. I knew I'd be awake at six thirty, but I counted on a little sleep. In the middle of the night, however, I received the news that there had been a death in my household, and I had to take charge—decide on the funeral arrangements, wire funds, settle everything that was left to be settled. And all this in addition to the emotional strain, the shock of the death of a person close to me. I was depressed and I thought: I must have more ease, more peace.

"But whether I really want peace and quiet I don't know. I must admit that I didn't want it when I had it."

THE END

Do You Love Someone Like This? *(Continued from page 51)*

happiness in a hopeless search for a cure that does not yet exist." He stood up.

Somehow Mrs. Grace found the words to frame a question. "Tell me, Doctor," she said, "even if we wanted to leave Peter alone in Chicago and forget about him, where would we leave him?"

"I don't know. Society has yet to figure out what to do with the victims of this ailment. Ordinarily, no insane asylum will take them, because they are legally considered sane and responsible. Practically no private sanitarium will take them, because they are too troublesome to handle. And private schools, as you already know, won't have anything to do with them. But leave him someplace and forget about him. Anyplace—except in your home." With that he left her.

For what seemed like hours Mrs. Grace sat in the chair, staring vacantly at the door. Finally a nurse came in and helped her to the reception room where Peter was waiting.

She looked at Peter closely. He was good-looking, alert, intelligent. His glands were all right. His mind was all right. But his emotions were as loose as confetti. He was hopelessly incurable, victim of a weird ailment the psychiatrists knew little about. This was her first born. Two normal boys had followed him.

"What did the doctor say, Mother?" Peter asked.

She did not tell Peter until years later.

As it turned out, the doctor's prophecies were maddeningly correct. She did take Peter to six other psychiatrists, and they did give her the same answer. They were more sympathetic perhaps than the first one, but no more helpful.

The school situation was the same, of course. Peter would last two or three weeks before the inevitable long-distance call telling of his latest hopeless escapades and antics. Would she please come and take him home immediately?

The climax came when Peter was fifteen. The inevitable call came from the school headmaster.

The night Peter was brought home from school he had a violent emotional outburst. Alarmed, Mrs. Grace called in her family physician.

"There's only one thing left, I'm afraid," he said. "I happen to have enough influence to be able to get Peter into the state asylum for the insane."

And it really required influence. Most authorities refuse to consider people like Peter insane or psychotic. After Peter was placed there, the Grace family moved to a large Eastern city.

Two months later Mrs. Grace returned to the Middle West to visit Peter. She found him despondent and depressed.

"Mother," he exclaimed, "if I stay here long I'll get just as crazy as these people. It's awful. Many of them get shock treatment or medicine, but they don't do anything for me at all. Isn't there anything they can do for me? Isn't there any other place I can go?"

"You see, Peter," she said, "there is no other place for boys like you to stay. Society just hasn't figured out what to do with you. We know you aren't insane the way the others here are, but because society has found no way to care for people with your type of illness, this is the only available place. It wouldn't be fair to you or to us to have you home before you can control your emotions. If you did something violent and hurt someone you would always regret it."

On the train going home Mrs. Grace recalled her words, "If you did something violent and hurt someone, . . ." when, in a Chicago paper, she read about a fifteen-year-old lad who had been diagnosed as a "psychopathic personality" and released from an asylum. Two days after his release he had strangled a neighbor's daughter to death. The boy had been released by the asylum's psychiatrists, who had decided he was not insane, in spite of pleas from the parents that he be held.

Mrs. Grace knew exactly how the young murderer's parents felt. There were countless other families all over the country with the same baffling problem. Some of these families she used to meet when she visited Peter at the various special private schools he had attended.

Temporarily Peter was being held in

check, but in six years, when he would be twenty-one, it would no longer be possible to hold him in the asylum against his will. He would then be free to do as he pleased. And she knew what that meant. Once a friendly psychiatrist had given her the case history of an adult psychopath. She remembered being startled when she looked at the picture of the young man. He was smiling brightly. He wore his clothes well. He was handsome, and he seemed to exude personality. But from 1939 to 1941 his activities were something like this:

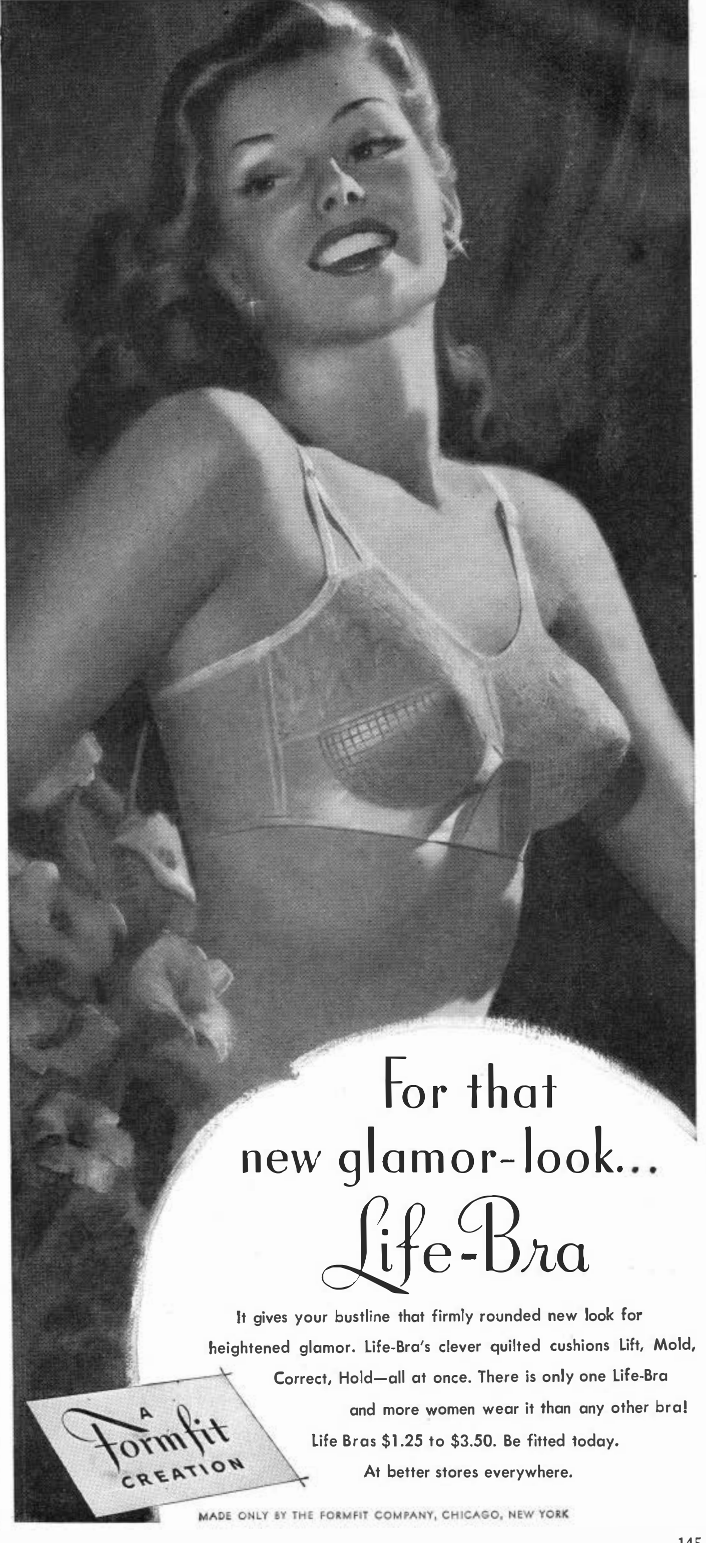
1939: Discharged from ——— College. Was found stealing from classmates, although his family sent him one of the largest monthly allowances on campus. Impregnated a homely waitress who worked in the college restaurant. Family bought off her suit for five thousand dollars. Parked his new convertible on the main street of his home town, walked across the street and drove off with a five-year-old car belonging to a stranger. The owner was disuaded from criminal action by the return of his car and five hundred dollars.

1940: Went to Washington seeking a commission. When he found he couldn't get it quickly, he went out and bought a uniform of an Air Corps captain. Entertained lavishly in a leading hotel and issued a rubber check to cover his debts. When it bounced the FBI picked him up for impersonating an officer. Family tried desperately to prevent the case from coming to trial. Failing in that they hired a prominent attorney from New York who simply laid before the Court the defendant's bizarre and mad actions for the past few years. The Court concluded the defendant was insane and ordered him to the state asylum. Stayed there three weeks until his case was diagnosed by a group of doctors, and he was ordered released as fully sane. A month later he married a drab-looking prostitute from a near-by city. After bringing her home he promptly abandoned her. An expensive settlement and divorce was later arranged.

1941: He was given a minor job in the family business, which was being converted to defense work. For two months he seemed to do very well, making a fine impression on everyone. When a number of expensive tools were found missing from the factory, nobody suspected him until his mother found a trail of pawnshop tickets all over the house. When he was ordered out of the factory the thefts ceased, but he started sulking around the family home to which his father had allowed him to return. In a few months it was discovered that he had made a maid in the household pregnant. She almost compelled him to marry her, but she was finally bought off. He then promised his parents on his word of honor that he would turn over a new leaf—just as he had promised countless times in the past. A week later he was arrested for assaulting a woman.

The details were vividly impressed on Mrs. Grace's memory. She had no reason to think that Peter would be any different when he came out of the asylum. The pattern of senseless mischief and endless amorality is typical of the psychopathic personality.

Then one day faint hope came to her. Perhaps somewhere there was a doctor



or a psychiatrist who *was* getting some results in treating a "psychopathic personality." For weeks she haunted the well-stocked library of the New York Academy of Medicine, checking every reference she could find on these strange cases. In the process she discovered a great deal about Peter's malady.

It wasn't a new disease. Back in the late eighteenth century, Pinel, a wise French physician, who did much to alleviate the horrible treatment of lunatics in those days, was the first to describe it. He called it "mania without delusions." A few decades later a British alienist described the ailment at greater length and called it "moral insanity" or "moral imbecility," names that were to stick until this century. "Moral insanity" stirred up bitter controversy among clergymen, judges and psychiatrists. The prevalent opinion was that the morally insane were merely depraved persons and should be held fully accountable for their acts, an opinion that is still held by the United States courts. Gradually the ambiguous "moral insanity" gave way to "constitutional psychopathic inferiority" or "CPI" and more recently to "psychopathic personality."

In particular Mrs. Grace was impressed by the work of Dr. Hervey Cleckley, a Southern psychiatrist who had written a definitive book on the subject of psychopaths, "The Mask of Sanity." The true psychopathic personality, as seen by Dr. Cleckley, emerges with these symptoms:

1. He is usually a very attractive person and makes a strong positive impression when you first meet him. He is alert, clever and has a superior intelligence.
2. He is free from demonstrable irrationality. He doesn't hear voices or suspect a world-wide plot against him.
3. He has absolutely no sense of responsibility to himself or others.
4. He has a total disregard for truth and cannot be trusted.
5. He shows no sense of shame or guilt about his misdeeds, and he is utterly incapable of learning from experience.
6. He lies and cheats, commits theft and fraud for ridiculously small stakes and takes much greater risks than the ordinary criminal will take.
7. He is incapable of true love or sincere affection.
8. He has absolutely no ability to see himself as others see him.
9. He shows no response to kindness or loving care.
10. He may threaten suicide frequently, but he almost never goes through with it.
11. He is incapable of following any sort of planned life. He seems devoted to an endless search for disaster.

Dr. Cleckley, who estimates that there might be as many as five hundred thousand psychopathic personalities in the United States, urges that they no longer be considered "sane and responsible" and that special institutions be set aside for their confinement and study.

In general, Mrs. Grace found psychiatrists are in considerable disagreement as to the origin of the disease.

Dr. Cleckley believes that its roots lie in the psychopath's inability to understand, appreciate or be moved by the facts and consequences that face him.

But in spite of the disagreement as to origin, Mrs. Grace found that leading psychiatrists do agree that the disease is not inheritable and that it can occur in any family, regardless of economic or social position. They further agree that: right now there is no sure cure; the law should be revised so that psychopathic personalities are no longer considered sane and responsible; and there should be separate institutions for the confinement and study and treatment of psychopathic personalities. (The main reason for the lack of a known cure is the lack of such institutions which, in turn, prevents scientific research.)

In spite of this general agreement on these last two important points, Mrs. Grace found that next to nothing had been accomplished towards these ends.

Nothing had happened, she realized, simply because no one had even made a start in the right direction. If the state officials and the psychiatrists who were aware of the horrible dimensions of the problem couldn't get started, who could? She thought about all the others she had encountered who had had the psychopath problem thrust upon them in one way or another. Which one of them could possibly start the ball rolling?

Perhaps it might be the lovely nurse she had met? The one who had been married to a psychopath for five years and had aged twenty years in the process.

Or perhaps the wife of that famous educator? Her psychopathic twenty-year-old son had called long distance one day to inform the family that he had taken one hundred dollars from the cash box of his employer and expected to be arrested any minute.

Or, perhaps it might be the parents of the thirteen-year-old girl who, upon her release from the asylum, bludgeoned her younger brother to death. She was sane, the asylum officials explained to the press.

No, none of these people were going to do much. They were probably too lost in their grief to think of preventing psychopaths from hurting others. But Mrs. Grace knew that she, at least, still had some time in which it might be possible to save Peter from himself. Something had to be done—and she had to do it.

One night she talked the matter over with her husband. They agreed that even though it would take a big part of Mr. Grace's income, it would be money well spent if, through Mrs. Grace's lobbying, even one institution were to be set up.

Early in January, 1947, she started. Her first visits were to the very psychiatrists who had examined Peter.

They gave her letters of introduction to various officials and psychiatrists. Some were skeptical; some were enthusiastic. All agreed someone had to begin the task. These psychiatrists knew that only if provision was made for the segregation and study of this group could they begin to seek the cause and the cure.

Mrs. Grace saw and spoke to leading United States Public Health Service officials. She drew some encouragement from the fact that Congress had passed, in 1946, the National Mental Health Act which would, in time, provide funds for laboratories and investigations into the roots of all mental ills. She visited directors of state asylums for the insane and secured their support for the establishment of separate institutions to house and treat psychopaths.

She spoke to senators and congressmen and psychiatrists and newspaper editors and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who devoted one of her newspaper columns to the fight Mrs. Grace was conducting singlehandedly. Mrs. Roosevelt was able to forward dozens of sympathetic letters from the parents of psychopaths who were ready to help in this endeavor.

And every two months Mrs. Grace would take time off to visit Peter. Each time he would ask her the same question. "When can I get away from these crazy people before I go crazy myself?"

And each time Mrs. Grace would have to reply: "Not yet, Peter."

Mrs. Grace started to attend, without invitation, psychiatric conventions of different states and meetings of state officials who dealt with juvenile delinquency. To the latter—who listened intently once they got over their surprise at being addressed by an outsider—she would point out how their work was being infinitely complicated by young psychopaths who, because of their intelligence and pleasing personalities, would frequently become the ringleaders of delinquents in institutions and would make their rehabilitation more difficult. She would explain how a comparatively few dollars spent in keeping the psychopaths away from the ordinary delinquents would pay dividends in faster rehabilitations and fewer remissions.

Her ideas were welcomed at gatherings of prison officials. They knew the trouble psychopaths could cause in any prison.

Mrs. Grace got her first real break when she persuaded the officials of a prominent school for problem children—one of the many schools Peter had attended—to make plans for an additional set of buildings where psychopathic children would be segregated and studied. The school expects to break ground for these new buildings in the near future.

Then one day she barged into a governor's conference on juvenile delinquency. She spoke so convincingly that two top state officials asked her to draft a resolution urging the establishment of that kind of institution in their state. She sat down and wrote it, and it was passed unanimously by the conference.

A few weeks later she discovered that the resolution had been seen and approved by high state officials. She was called to the state capital and was told that her plan for a special state institution for the study and care of psychopaths had been approved. Unfortunately, budget commitments would prevent it from coming into existence until 1950. If, however, Mrs. Grace was able to get one hundred thousand dollars from private or foundation sources to cover the new institution until the state budget could provide for it, they would be glad to begin at once.

Mrs. Grace was elated that something was going to happen—maybe not until 1950—but still it would happen. But she was considerably sobered thinking of the hundred thousand dollars needed to get the setup going immediately. She started calling upon charitable trusts and foundations and discovered that most of them were sympathetic, but they made up their budgets and grants about two years in advance and, if she could come back in 1949, why they might . . .

She is now working on a new tack for raising the money. She hopes to be able to talk with wealthy families who have had psychopathic sons and daughters in their midst and see if they can't raise the fairly modest amount among them. It's too early to tell what luck she will have.

People who have watched Mrs. Grace in action think she'll get it. After one state has set up a separate institution for the care and study of psychopathic personalities, other states will undoubtedly follow. It will be a milestone in the history of American psychiatry.

Mrs. Grace is still a one-woman lobby. There are still more people to talk to, more state officials to convince. But at last there is hope—hope after a long, dark night that began in the psychiatrist's office when she was told, ". . . forget you ever bore the child."

And the last time she saw Peter, Mrs. Grace was able to answer his old queries, lighter of heart than ever before, with, "It won't be too long now, Peter."

THE END

a very daring thing. She went out to the barroom to tell her husband it was time they went back to their hotel. In Hollywood, it appears, it is not proper for a woman to interrupt the conversation of assembled menfolk.

This segregation of the sexes was something I had not heard of, but it has since been confirmed by other witnesses. I have been told, of course, about the salary-bracket segregation. Although there are radicals who do not conform, I learn that there is not much social intercourse between movie folk who make two thousand a week and those lowly slaves who labor for a mere seven hundred and fifty.

Thus it would be in the worst possible taste to ask an actor who has not yet achieved stardom, or a minor executive, to dinner with a studio boss or a front-rank star.

The sex segregation feature explains a number of things about the Hollywood woman. Her rapid trading in of husbands, for instance, becomes easier to understand, and her strange habit of dining in full evening dress with an escort who wears sports jacket and flannels. I knew of this habit by hearsay; only now do I realize it is a symptom of her frustration.

Hollywood must be essentially a masculine outpost. The men who are concerned with the crude realities of manufacture and marketing constitute the local oligarchy. Their discussions on this lofty plane are not confined to office hours. Most of their biggest deals are planned in the domestic barrooms, at the men's side of the swimming pool, on the golf course, or at the gin-rummy table. Consequently, it is in the homes of the oligarchs that sex segregation is most rigorously upheld.

Lower down on the social scale, that is to say in the homes of the writing, directing and acting stars, the sexes are said to mix more freely. But in these circles the men begin to show signs of frustration just as much as the women. They recognize that the heads of studios have complete control not only over all the big business but also over their own artistic activities. It hurts their pride that, having once been men of standing in the artistic life of New York, London or Berlin, they are now impotent pawns at the disposal of these big shots. So, to give their egos a shot in the arm, they say to themselves, "Well, I may not be able to exercise free will in the matter of picture making but no one makes a better after-dinner speech." Or, ". . . no one knows more about Karl Marx than I do."

A fantastic situation arises; actors and directors, who in New York would be content to do their own jobs well and leave government problems to those with practical experience, find themselves discussing politics on public platforms. Some find a similar outlet in their own homes.

Apart from sex segregation, entertainment in the houses of the big shots has another interesting feature. I am told that undersides of their dining-room tables are fitted with invisible recording machines. The purpose of these, I gather, is to hasten the clinching of awkward business transactions on terms most favorable to the host. Let us assume that the host, A, is trying to bring off a deal with some other big shot, B, and can't get him to put his signature on paper. In the early stages A invites B to discuss the deal in his office where recording machines are in constant use. But the other fellow is cagey, he has been around and has just as many recording machines in his own office. So A embarks on a telephone campaign. He tries to egg B on to saying something which can be construed as a definite promise or commitment. But B still won't say anything because he knows that A's telephone is wired to a recording machine. So finally B is lured to a heart-to-heart talk with his knees under A's dinner table.

Of course, by now the machines have defeated their own ends, because all the local sharks are so microphone conscious that they will talk turkey only on the golf course or at the swimming pool. The next development should be a recording apparatus that can be concealed in a bag of golf clubs or a medicine ball.

Another of my indefatigable informants told me about the studio storyteller. My experience in England taught me that very little reading is ever done by high-grade movie aristocrats. Their ability to read has sometimes been questioned. But it was proved in England, over and over again, that they are capable of reading a three-page synopsis of a story provided it was typed with double spacing.

In Hollywood, the only reading material they consume willingly is a local newspaper called the Hollywood Reporter. Like all residents of small towns they are tremendously impressed by its flattering references to themselves and exult in its edgy comments about their friends.

But inside the studio they no longer need to read anything because of the studio storyteller whose job it is to read or improvise synopses of film subjects to the higher executives and to explain the more difficult passages. One such lady told my informant with justifiable pride that she had dealt with Tolstoy's "War and Peace" in half an hour.

"Yes, indeed," the lady revealed. "I

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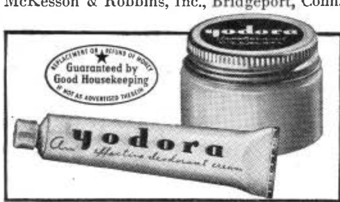

followed the story line throughout, gave the background of all the characters and summarized Tolstoy's entire philosophy."

Having listened with half an ear to his storyteller, the executive is then in a position to conduct story conferences.

A big shot in New York, who is even more powerful than the heads of studios in Hollywood, told me how he conducts his story conferences. He has two telephones. These put him in contact with two different writers in Hollywood; he is able to address both of them at the same time, and they separately address him.

But that is a story conference on the highest plane. There are, it seems, in Hollywood itself, story conferences on all possible planes, all equally uninviting.

THOSE who go to Hollywood as observers say that it is fine for the first three weeks. The bored residents welcome unemployed strangers from the big world outside and have a great reputation for hospitality. But if you stay longer than that they think you must be looking for a job and drop you from their visiting lists.

Those who go there to take up a long-term contract are, at first, made much of by their employers. They are given the right social entree and are made to feel that their own employers are the most kindhearted, efficient and painstaking people in the world. Here the employer's technique differs from what I came to expect in England. There I observed that the studio boss was nice to an actor only during the period of negotiation prior to the actual signing of a contract. At this point one could imagine the employer saying to his executive conunittee, "We've got his signature. Now let's give him hell!"

In Hollywood I understand this is not the case. They go on being nice to their contractees for quite some time. They make life as easy and comfortable as can be. They attend to their mail, find accommodations, launder their socks, act as a buffer in their relations with the press, buy their cars. The idea is to make their actors so completely dependent on the studio that they lose confidence in their ability to run their own careers. I know of several women stars whose contracts were about to expire but who rejected the chance to free-lance simply because they were so accustomed to having the little irritants of everyday life taken care of by the studio.

It is another story for those who arrive in Hollywood determined to remain free lancers. To avoid the calculated despotism of the big studios is quite a feat; it is a major triumph to survive the attentions of all the local parasites.

For the town, they say, is alive with oversmart operators who are, biologically and culturally, identical with the aristocrats. Though nepotism flourishes, and the offsprings and in-laws are steadily acceding to power, the ruling aristocrats did not become members of that body by an accident of birth. They arose from that floating population with noses acutely adjusted to business and political opportunism but without creative talent—aristocrats in the larva stage.

Some are from the garment industry or the fur trade; some manufactured trunks; some are lawyers or publicists; some made an early start in the agency business. Advertisement and litigation being its chief by-products, the industry is wide open for the lawyers and publicists. For the rest, the easiest method of getting a foot in the door is to buy, or otherwise acquire, an interest in a story property or an artist's salary. With these one is in a position to barter for other interests. The unwary actor or singer is a sucker for these predatory charmers and, before he knows where he is, he is apt to find his salary being carved into small slices.

The unimportant agent who has managed to sign up an actor before he has made good, is usually glad to sell his contract to one of the powerful agencies —a practice which suits all parties except the actor himself. The studios will do business with any agent rather than with an individual, but they are happiest when dealing with the big agents who are more than anxious to placate the studios.

The agent's proper function is to work wholeheartedly on behalf of his client. But it is not always good business to do the proper thing in this field, for the agent has a number of clients he is equally anxious to place. Suppose that in negotiating the services of one of them he holds out for terms the studio regards as exorbitant. He is not likely to interest the same studio in his other clients. And such is the solidarity of the major studios that, before he knows it, he will find himself barred by all the studios in Hollywood.

The big agencies do not make this mistake. A member of one of them said to me in an expansive moment, "Actors come and go, but studios go on forever. So can you blame us if we play ball with them?"

The heads of the larger agencies are enormously wealthy and consequently rate among the top-flight aristocracy. Likewise the big lawyers, who earn as much as their clients, can play for the same stakes at gin rummy and enjoy an intimacy with skeletons in studio closets that makes them indispensable. In due course they are on the board of directors.

An indefinable loyalty is to be found among these aristocrats and potential aristocrats. They would gladly outsmart each other in business deals, but they are all in business for the same end, the profitable marketing of entertainment—or in other words, the exploitation of the creators of entertainment. It is their common interest to prevent undue power slipping into the hands of the writers, directors and actors.

The relative importance of the aristocrats themselves is so changeable that they must be constantly on the alert. For it would never do to fall out with one who, though a small-time operator today, may next week be an important producer. This explains their readiness to buy off rather than prosecute one of their number who pulls an overly smart deal.

On this ground I no longer have to depend entirely on hearsay. One does not have to go to Hollywood to get wise to the machinations of the powers. The production of films may be localized, but the businessmen of the industry are just as active in New York. Their tentacles even reach out to the other side of the Atlantic and play footies with their British counterparts, as I know to my cost.

So I have come to the conclusion that to go to work in Hollywood is a dangerous undertaking. Can the social life of the place really be as terrible as it sounds? My friends insist that if one takes part in it one becomes affected by the local snobbery. But if one chooses to become antisocial one remains equally remote from the outside world where history is being made, and one is in serious danger of becoming a lotus eater or a mystic, as so many good people have become under the influence of that engaging climate.

But those who are determined to avoid the complications of business find, before long, that because of their neglect of these vital matters they have lost the power to control their own ventures and with it their artistic independence.

So I suppose there's only one thing to do if I go to Hollywood. I'll have to go into its jungle with fangs protruding and find a place at the top among the aristocrats.

THE END

they were ashamed. I got it from kids on the corner when I was nine."

Another said, "My father told me the first I knew about sex when I was twelve. He said you get tuberculosis from it."

Judge Bromberger turned to me and remarked, "I hear this repeatedly in this type of case. It is either, 'My parents failed to tell me anything about sex'—or 'what they did tell was all wrong.'"

One of the country's leading authorities on sex deviation, Dr. George W. Henry, conducted a ten-year study of homosexuality at the New York Hospital and stated at its conclusion: "Lack of sex education is one of the major causes."

The final toll of the blackout is sex crime. Can proper education stem its rampage?

Take the case of Bill Heirens, the seventeen-year-old college boy who killed two women and a six-year-old girl in Chicago. New York's Dr. Foster Kennedy was called to Chicago to study Bill Heiren's mind, to find out—if he could—what went wrong. On his return Dr. Kennedy told me, "If Bill Heirens had received a good, honest sex education he might still be studying at the University of Chicago."

Los Angeles, in 1937, set up a Sex Offender Bureau under Dr. J. Paul de River. What has been learned in ten years? "That the sex education of the child should begin young," Dr. de River declares. "That we must tell the truth to the child!"

J. Edgar Hoover last July decried the fact that sex crime is increasing faster than any other type of lawlessness, citing an 181 percent increase since 1937 in the arrests of rapists with previous records. High among the FBI chief's recommendations was this: "Parents should pay more attention to the sex education of their children."

One is led to the conclusion that ignorance has had its day. Could enlightenment possibly be worse?

But where to begin?

To talk to children you have to have words, and right there the sex blackout stops many a parent. Obviously the old four-letter words are out. An uglier collection of sounds has yet to be introduced into human communication. So what are you left with?

The clinical words.

At first they may sound pompous and awkward. You feel as if you're talking with a mouthful of ice cubes. Having lived in an era of shame and taboo, we naturally have no free-and-easy vocabulary. We just have to warm up the clinical words until we feel at home with them.

Even the most enlightened of us are apt to flinch a bit when we see some of these words in cold print. But we must constantly remind ourselves that there is nothing obscene about these clinical words. They are in just the same category as "carburetor" or "electrode" or any other scientifically descriptive term.

The United States Children's Bureau reminds us that "just because we were brought up in ignorance of the names of body parts like ovaries, penis, vagina, and other terms associated with reproduction, doesn't mean that we can't learn to use them naturally with our children . . . Children are entirely without self-consciousness about their bodies."

It is the parents who have the self-consciousness. It may take practice to use the right words freely and easily, to take the shock out of them. But every mother knows how quickly she learned in the obstetrician's office to use such words as "uterus" and "cervix" without blushing. And every man who goes to a hospital soon talks to the nurse about bowels, urine and other intimate matters.

Should it be any more difficult to use perfectly proper words, found in any dictionary, in talking to our own children? The correct words are not obscene. The sooner the child becomes familiar with them, the better.

But words alone aren't sufficient. The parent's attitude—the whole mass of feeling behind the veneer of words—is of crucial importance. If the parent hems and blushes, if he hesitates and tangles his tongue, if he becomes grim and hush-hush, the child is naturally going to suspect that something is rotten in Denmark.

The thing that may be rotten is the parent's own view of sex and its place in life. And this, in a vicious circle, the parent will no doubt have received from his own guilt-ridden and inwardly ashamed mother and father. Attitudes, the psychologists tell us, are formed from birth to age six, ideals develop from six to twelve, and behavior patterns emerge from twelve to eighteen. Parents, if the power of knowledge is what many wise men think it is, must revamp their own attitudes and pass on a fresh and wholesome outlook to their children in the first six years. How else can the vicious circle be broken?

The church is trying to help. A Catholic guidebook for young women frankly states: "Sex is neither startling nor disgusting; it is perfectly simple, because God made it. It only becomes complicated and repellent when men and women take it out of its setting in God's plan."

The medical profession tries to help, too. Dr. Thurman B. Rice, in a sex-education pamphlet issued by the American Medical Association, declares: "In times past, we have taught our children that sex is trash, and all too often they have then treated it as trash. In doing so, they were quite consistent. Now let us teach them that it is pure, even sacred, so there may be hope that they will again treat it consistently—or at least in a better way than they have treated it in the past."

Parents must free themselves of the idea that marital relations are somehow "not nice"—that sex is an atavism, a nasty legacy from the caves—that they do something shameful and revolting, completely unaesthetic, whenever they perform the act of marital union by which God endowed them with the power to give life.

Dr. Bradford Murphey, psychiatric consultant to the Denver public schools, is certain that we harm our children when we lead them to think that the love relationship of a man and wife is secretive and cheap. Kids ought to know that the only ugly things about sex are the abuses. How, otherwise, can they make a distinction between physical relations in marriage and the crass business that goes on in lovers' lanes?

This is the stuff of which children's ideals are made. The strength of tomorrow's families depends to a formidable extent upon how well we teach our children to distinguish between the nobility of sex in marriage and its debasement in cheap, insincere "affairs."

Children begin to ask sex questions almost as soon as they can put words together. At two and three they begin to wonder where babies come from. It is one of their initial curiosities, and a sign of good, healthy intellect.

"Just tell them the truth," says one expert.

"Answer the question just as calmly as if they'd asked why grass is green,"

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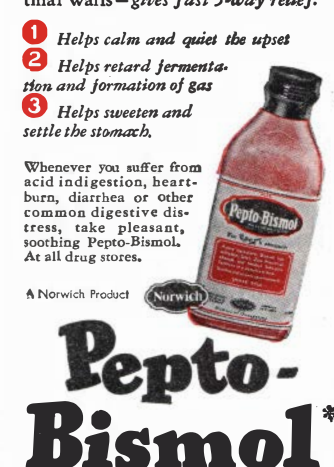

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counsels another.

"But," the puzzled parent persists, *"what* do I tell them? What words do I use? How do I say it?"

Probably the simplest guidance is provided by the New York Tuberculosis and Health Association. It offers the following samples of questions asked by children under six, with appropriate answers:

Q.—Where do babies come from? A.—A baby lives and grows inside its mother.

Q.—Where does the baby come out? A.—There is a special opening in the mother's body where the baby comes out when it is ready to be born.

Q.—How does a baby grow inside its mother? A.—First the baby is a tiny egg. The mother's body keeps it warm and gives it food. Every day it gets bigger and stronger, just as you are growing and getting bigger every day.

Q.—How long does it take the baby to grow? A.—It takes almost a year for a baby to grow from a small egg to a baby big enough to live outside its mother's body.

Q.—Why couldn't the baby have been a boy (or girl)? A.—Mother and father were not able to pick a boy or a girl. If a tiny girl egg grows inside the mother, the baby will be a girl. If a boy egg grows inside the mother, the baby will be a boy. One kind of a baby is just as much fun and as nice as another.

There is no saying, of course, at exactly what age the child will ask these questions. But the experts can tell you *precisely* when to answer them. The right time to answer questions is *when the child asks them.* Let his natural curiosity be the guide. And don't worry about repetition. Sometimes a child comes back every year or two, or every few months, with the same questions or slight variations of them. This means that the first, simple answers weren't enough. His healthy, growing intellect demands more detail.

For children from six to ten, the New York Tuberculosis and Health Association offers these typical questions and suggested replies:

Q.—Where was I before I was born? A.—You were inside of Mother until you were born. At first you were just a tiny egg. You grew for nine months before you were big enough to live outside of me. Then you were born.

Q.—How does the baby get out of the mother? A.—When the baby is big and strong enough to live outside of the mother, it is ready to be born. It slowly pushes its way out of the womb where it has been for nine months.

Q.—Where does the baby come out? A.—The baby comes out through an opening in the mother's body. This opening is called the birth canal or vagina.

Q.—How are babies fed before they are born? A.—The food the mother eats also helps to feed the baby. This is done through a tube that connects with the baby's navel.

Many parents can cope with the early questions, but their tongues seem swabbed in mucilage when *the* question comes up. It takes various forms: "How did Mommy and Daddy get the baby started?"

The Child Study Association of America comments: "It is not hard to tell the truth if you have answered the child's earlier questions frankly." It is often possible to satisfy a small child's curiosity simply by saying calmly, "The father must put a fluid or juice called semen from his own body into the mother's body. This fluid contains small cells or 'seeds' one of which may unite with the tiny egg in the mother's body. If this happens, the egg grows into a baby."

If the child asks for more details give them to him—if you can—without embarrassment or hesitation, but always using clinical terms to describe the sex organs or the sex act. If you are uncertain about these terms, and the dictionary cannot help you, ask your doctor to write them down for you. Stress gently the importance of confining sex relations to marriage. Say to him, "It is important that only married people have babies, because a baby needs a home and both a father and mother to love and care for it."

When boys and girls reach puberty (early teens) they should, if they have been given their information truthfully and unashamedly, have a sound idea of what life is all about. But they will need more details. By this time they have, no doubt, come into contact with the smut of the latrine and the back-of-the-barn, and it is crucially important that their truthful, idealistic view of sex be fortified.

Hence, for teen-agers, doctors and psychologists freely prescribe full intelligible information. How is this given? Let's look at the guidebook for boys of high-school age issued by the American Medical Association. It explains:

"Before a child can be conceived, it is necessary that the sperm cells shall be placed in the vagina of the woman. These cells will then make their way by a sort of swimming motion until they pass into the womb and even into the oviduct where they unite with the egg cell. . . .

"It is instinct that men and women of the proper age and development should attract each other sexually. Particularly is this true when the couple are in love. If the couple are married and both desire such relations, it is perfectly proper for the husband to have sexual contact with the wife.

"When the male organs inject sperm cells into the female vagina, this process is called sexual intercourse, or coitus. If, as a result of a particular act of intercourse, the sperm cells should find and unite with an egg cell, the conception of a new individual has taken place."

Some parents may want to memorize such passages. Some may find it easier to read the material aloud when the occasion arises. The best procedure, obviously, is to feel sufficiently at home with the true facts to wrap them up in your own words and speak them as fluently as you would words about trees, or airplanes, or music, or anything else.

Fear is the thing which ties our tongues. Mrs. Arthur A. Wearner, social-hygiene chairman for the Colorado Congress of Parents and Teachers, comments: "We only start lying when we come to the parts we're afraid to face."

For example, one girl of thirteen asked her mother, "Does a girl have to be married before she is able to have a baby?"

The mother, flustered and afraid to go into the matter of illegitimacy, replied, "Oh, yes!"

"This," Mrs. Wearner remarks, "might put a dangerous idea into the little girl's head. Suppose she grew up thinking there was no possibility of becoming pregnant—simply because she wasn't married?

"Far better for her mother to explain, 'No, a girl does not have to be married to become pregnant. Yet think of the tragedy of a baby coming into the world without a mother and father to care for it. Babies need mothers and fathers, and homes to live in.' This girl has given her mother a perfect cue to talk to her of the beauty of marriage, of true love, of the joys of family life. All the mother has to tell her is the simple truth."

What if a child fails to ask questions?

It usually means that something in his parents' attitudes or his early experience has already made him feel that sex is taboo. It is the parents' signal that they must broach the subject themselves, take the curse off it, and open the doors to wholesome curiosity. The parent who says, "My child is twelve years old and has never asked any questions," is saying, in effect, "My child is afraid to ask questions." Somewhere before the age of six, the normal child should ask not one, but many, many questions.

"Oh, can't I put the whole thing off until Johnny is fifteen? Then I'll take him aside and have a heart-to-heart talk," a well-meaning father may ask.

To doctors and educators this is like asking, "Can't I lock the barn after the horse has run away?" By the time he reaches adolescence the average child has already had his sex education, a tatty quilt of scraps picked up a random. The eminent educator, Dr. Benjamin Gruenberg, tells us that by adolescence children "are already conditioned to secrecy and evasion.

"Education in regard to sex must begin in infancy," Dr. Gruenberg insists. And virtually the entire medical, psychological and teaching professions are in agreement.

What is the position of the Catholic Church in all of this?

Father Charles M. Walsh, of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Archdiocese of New York, said to me, "Too many of our parents wave the children aside, instead of giving them true information. Or they get tongue-tied and give them the stork story. What a wonderful thing it would be if all parents were equipped to tell their children the truth! It is their job."

In a Catholic guidebook for parents, Father Daniel A. Lord declares: "It is a shame if children are allowed to come to adolescence with only half or faulty or imperfect or gutter-learned knowledge of the facts of life."

Catholic manuals, however, stress the religious aspects of human reproduction rather than the biological. Father Lord suggests that Catholic parents tell the story of new life something like this:

"God loved us human beings, so He produced us. Furthermore He gave to human love that same power of production . . . Each of the parents carries in his or her body a germ of human life. Because they love each other, they embrace and hold each other dearly and protectively close.

"The man gives to the woman the lovely germ of life that is in his body. This unites with the germ in the body of the woman. Through this union they themselves are united in the closest possible physical way. As a consequence of this union of these two germs, the 'fruit of their love' becomes the precious baby so dear both to the father and the mother."

Beyond the explanation of the "facts of life," there are marginal problems which send many a perplexed parent to the doctor, pastor or social agency for guidance. Take the matter of modesty—or nudity.

"My little daughter is four years old. I've always kept myself covered in her presence up to now, but lately she's expressing curiosity. I don't know what to do," says a puzzled father.

Most authorities agree that the human body, being not at all vulgar or repulsive, need not be treated with secrecy or mystery within the family. However, most of the experts would agree that each family ought to do what comes naturally. If it seems easy and natural for the mother and father to take baths and undress with the children around, there's certainly no harm in it. It won't make the children uncomfortable—that's certain. If it embarrasses the parents, let modesty rule.

"Parents should get over the idea that

something is 'wrong' if children walk in on them in the bathroom. The body and its functions should be treated casually—not as something to be hidden and ashamed of," say Dr. Bertha Shafer, director of the social-hygiene clinics at Northwestern University.

"But parents shouldn't go to the other extreme either," she counsels. "There's no point to flitting around the house nude just for nudity's sake. Parents should be casual, be natural."

All this helps children to make the distinction between family familiarity and the modesty of life in society. As they grow older they will develop their own modesty, based upon a healthy desire for privacy rather than on fear or taboo.

As a girl approaches puberty she needs to know about menstruation. The facts of menstruation are easy to relate. A girl with proper sex education up to the age of eleven or twelve can fit them into the pattern quite simply. Here's how the Child Study Association suggests the physical process be explained:

"An egg leaves the ovary every month and travels down into the uterus. At this time the blood supply to the uterus is increased, and the surplus is discharged through the vagina. That is the menstrual flow. When the egg is fertilized, however (and the woman is going to have a baby), the additional blood goes to nourish the developing embryo."

The thing studiously to avoid is any impression that menstruation is a sickness. It is quite the reverse. It is a healthy symptom of female maturity.

Parents must be alert, too, to prepare young boys for seminal emissions.

"This occasional overflow of the fluid containing sperm cells," Marion L. Faegre, of the United States Children's Bureau, explains, "occurs unconsciously during sleep; in some boys quite often, in others very infrequently. It seems to be set off by dreams, or by other stimulating circumstances, such as being too warmly covered, sleeping on the back, or wearing uncomfortable pajamas."

Boys who are not warned of this natural phenomenon may become seriously alarmed. Many have secretly gone to doctors to "find out what is wrong." Some have fallen into the hands of quacks, who milk them for "remedies." Parents can assure their sons that these nocturnal releases neither threaten strength or manliness (as used to be feared), nor, Mrs. Faegre emphasizes, "does this natural pouring off of the fluid stored in the seminal vesicle and prostate gland in any way affect a boy's health, physical or mental."

IGNORANCE and taboo have done harm in many of these matters, but perhaps the greatest damage has resulted from misconceptions about genital play and masturbation.

Genital play (handling of the sex organs) in children from two to six has sent many a harried parent to the doctor, full of horrendous fears. Yet it is perfectly natural. As Dr. Robert P. Knight, medical director of the Austen Riggs Foundation, has pointed out, this and other forms of sex play "are only a part of the child's curiosity and experimentation in the learning process" and "far more psychological harm is done by the parent's manifest shock and horror than by the experience itself."

Youthful masturbation (usually from ages twelve to twenty) is very common—some authorities say almost universal. It is to be discouraged, of course, because it is essentially an infantile act. But actually it is viewed with little alarm by the doctors of today. The alarming factors are the fantastic lies which have been spread

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about the consequences of this act, and the psychological damage these lies do. Doctors urge parents to add more affection and more satisfying activities to the child's world. The more gratifications he gets from the outside world, the less he must seek them in himself.

IN THE turbulent period of adolescence parents have to reckon with another problem—necking and petting. Before even considering it, they should realize that adolescence is probably the period of life's most agonizing adjustments. It is, bluntly, a *tough time* for most kids to go through. They aren't children. And they aren't adults. They are, as one observer put it, "betwixt-and-betweeners."

It is the job of sex education, many authorities believe, to reorient young people. Not necessarily to throttle them with "don't." But rather to tell them the truth —the truth about impulses which quite naturally make them want to neck and pet, the truth about abuses of these impulses, and the proper relation of sex play to love and marriage.

The possible consequences of uncontrolled necking or petting—a shabby, furtive act followed by the tortures of concealment and guilt, unwanted parenthood, and bad psychological preparation for future marriage and family life—these, too, are part of the "facts of life." Wise parents will talk them over with boys and girls in the rip tides of adolescence. Tell them the truth and let the young people decide for themselves when a good-night kiss is a sign of respect and affection, when a mauling is a sign of cheap exploitation.

Let them know that you understand their urges. Help them to see that the postponement of gratifications is part of grown-up life. Hold out to them the fulfillments which true love and marriage offer later on.

TRUTH, ever, has an antiseptic quality.

But are parents competent purveyors of the truth? Or are they too blocked, timid, confused and uninformed to give their children a sound sex education? Should the schools pitch in? Even when parents do a good job, should the schools carry the ball from there? Should they make sex education as free, open and aboveboard as education in honesty, perseverance, good manners and civic responsibility?

On these questions has turned a battle of nearly half a century. And the fur still flies. Those who want the facts may find them in the supplement to this article, which follows.

In New York, Edwin J. Lukas, director of the Society for the Prevention of Crime, has studied thousand of cases of young people who have grounded on the shoals of promiscuity, illegitimacy, perversion and venereal disease.

"As children know more, they will experiment less—and get into less trouble," he told me. "Knowledge of what life is all about in all its phases never hurt anybody."

The adamant truth is, of course, that children ferret out the facts of life anyway. Our choice is this:

We can leave their sex education to the smutty atmosphere of bull sessions and back alleys, where their information will be fragmentary and notoriously incorrect; where they learn with a shock what Mom and Dad have withheld from them and, by their withholding, have sullied over with the dross of secrecy, shadiness and shame.

Or we can tell them the truth, with neither shame nor mystery, always keeping one jump ahead of the gutter, so that when Jane or John hear a blob of dirty talk they can say to themselves, "Oh, I don't have to bother about that. Mom and Dad told me all I need to know."

SUPPLEMENT

Sex Education in Our Schools

In 1905 three pioneers—the late Dr. Prince Morrow, Dr. Charles Eliot of Harvard, and Dr. Maurice Bigelow of Columbia—brought forth the basic ideas for teaching "sex hygiene" in the schools. Hot opposition notwithstanding, the movement gathered force, and by 1912 the term "sex education" had emerged and was widely heard from stumps throughout the land. In 1913 the American Social Hygiene Association was founded, giving sex education a respectable, reliable and redoubtable champion.

In the 1920's a few schools, mainly in wealthy suburban communities, boldly spliced the new idea into their curricula. Winnetka, Ill., and Bronxville, N. Y., were the most ardent pioneers. Progress was slow in the 1930's. Ellsworth Buck of the New York City Board of Education waged a flamboyant fight in 1938 to get sex education into the New York schools, but the metropolis turned thumbs down—and has kept thumbs down.

In the 1940's, with the war's veritable riot of sex problems, the movement surged ahead. Cities like San Diego, Los Angeles, Denver, Cincinnati and Cleveland have comprehensive sex-education programs. State programs in Mississippi, Utah, Minnesota, Oklahoma, and New Jersey are streaming forward. One state, Oregon, has taken the unprecedented step of making "health education"—which includes sex education—a required course in all schools.

Today the term "sex education" is in disrepute, oddly enough, among the sex educators themselves. At a Washington conference in 1944 it was decided that this term is too limiting, that it makes sex education seem a thing apart. So most school programs now are labeled "Family Life Education," or "Health and Human Relations," or "Education for Parenthood." These titles, the experts feel, more aptly fit the *new idea* of what sex education really is.

This *new idea* is that sex education should be interlarded all through the school courses. It should never be a single course, hurling gobs of biology and embryology at the student and leaving him unable to relate this to the rest of living. The notion that a few hush-hush lectures can do the trick is passé. Today the experts talk of an "integrated program" that brings sex education into the English class, science class, home economics class, history class, and even the math class. Like education for honesty, it is to permeate all of school life and not be a separate fifty-minute course.

Just how is this done?

In English classes, suggests the American Social Hygiene Association, the study of such stories as "Little Women" or "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch" or "The Yearling" should "draw out in discussion what qualities went into making the fine, united, affectionate families portrayed in these books."

History is full of chances to stress family life—home-building, attitudes between the sexes, the importance of the birth rate in the story of nations. Home economics, while dwelling on cookery and needlework, should stress the wholesome family life without which the most succulent soufflé is meaningless. Even mathematics, says the A.S.H.A., can base its problems on household budgeting to show that "all the family share the responsibility for the business of living in a family group."

It follows logically that the facts of human reproduction are treated in biology class, along with plant and animal reproduction. Bodily care and cleanliness find their natural place in hygiene class, along with toothbrushing. Venereal disease is just another part of the science class, in which tuberculosis, chickenpox and other diseases are discussed.

The kernel of the new idea is to take the taboo off sex—as Chicago's Association for Family Living puts it, "to accept the fact that sex is a vital part of life from birth to death." Hence, let youngsters see wherein the sex life of the American home differs from that of the barnyard.

In nearly every community I visited in my research for Cosmopolitan the campaigners for sex education in the schools spoke volubly about "the Catholic opposition." The Catholics, as noted above, are ardently in favor of sex education in the home. Their feeling about sex education in the schools is quite the reverse.

Dr. Edgar Schmiedeler, Director of the Family Life Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, sums it up succinctly: "Sex education, or training in chastity, as it is better called, is first and foremost the task of the parent, and not of the teacher or the school."

Catholicism demands a different emphasis. As Father Charles M. Walsh, of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, told me, "We wish to teach not of sex, but *de sexto*—of the Sixth Commandment, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.'

"It isn't enough to tell young people not to be promiscuous. They must be given moral motivation. They must be told that promiscuity is a sin; that it is against the law of God.

"Venereal disease is not a problem of information. It is a moral problem. Catholic education seeks to develop the will. The trouble with sex education in the schools is that it puts man on the animal level. We, on the other hand, feel that sex is beautiful in those aspects in which it transcends the animal."

If parents are unable to see to the proper sex education of their children, the Catholic Church would reserve this duty to the priest or religious instructor. But in no case would it sanction "collective sex education" in public schools. Such education, Catholics feel, should be administered individually.

Protestants and Jews, generally, do not share Catholicism's opposition to school sex instruction. They have co-operated in many a "social hygiene" or "family life" program in schools and colleges. In fact, I visited one class at the Rochester, N. Y., Institute of Technology where the instructor was a Protestant minister.

Last summer the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, representing twenty-three Protestant denominations, invited clergymen throughout the country to attend a sex-education course at the University of Pennsylvania. The Rev. Seward Hiltner, of the Council's Commission on Religion and Health, stated: "If the churches are increasingly to make a significant impact upon the long-term problems of prostitution, venereal disease, and sex education in this country, it will be essential to have a number of leaders within the churches who are thoroughly familiar with every aspect of the situation."

In its battle-scarred forty-three years, sex education has made motley progress in the nation's schools. Today less than 5 percent of our schools have the "integrated" program which most sex educators thump for. Probably 40 percent have one-shot lectures by the school nurse or "pep talks on sex" by a visiting doctor. In some 35 percent, hygiene or gym teachers occasionally touch on the subject or give counsel to individual students;

the remaining 20 percent of our schools have no sex education at all.

Oregon's state-wide program got its impetus from Dr. E. C. Brown, a Portland bachelor, who died and left some half-million dollars to the cause of sex education. In 1945 the Oregon Legislature, spurred by the women's clubs and the parent-teacher associations, passed the law under which sex education has become part of a mandatory health and physical education program in all twelve grades of the public schools.

Mississippi, three years ago, took the plunge into sex education to combat juvenile delinquency. As one teacher put it, "We've got to go beyond just telling children to be good. We must give them solid information about the social and emotional problems they will meet."

In Salt Lake City last summer, 130 teachers took sex-education courses at the University of Utah, looking toward a first-to-twelfth-grade program in that state. The first courses have been launched in Salt Lake City's junior and senior high schools. The University of Utah Medical School, in a burst of originality, has also started courses for undergraduates in "Matrology" and "Patrology"—its coined terms for the arts of motherhood and fatherhood.

In New Jersey, a battleground for years, some eight hundred teachers have been trained in sex education, but only twenty-five are permitted to teach it. Parent-teachers associations are now lining up their members in a drive to bring sex education *officially* into the state.

In Denver the stress is on education of parents, who, though they routinely consider themselves experts in matters of sex, are sometimes profoundly uninformed. At Denver's East High School the sex-education program is a double-header. One day the parents have a lesson; next day, the children.

A few schools are dipping way down to the five- and six-year-olds. A Michigan school system was thinking of using plaster models to explain the wonder of birth to kindergarteners! At the Audubon, New Jersey, elementary school, informal sex education begins in kindergarten—with the kiddies getting their proper vocabulary for human parts and functions when teachers take them to the toilet.

Sex education has its whipping post. The campaigners have been lashed incessantly with the demands: "If children know too much, won't they experiment? Aren't you just inviting these kids to try their new knowledge? Why put such things into a child's mind, anyway?"

The American Medical Association meets these questions head-on. It tells us: "Parents are afraid that sex education will unduly stimulate the child and that he will be taught to use, or rather to abuse, his organs as a result. Quite the contrary is true. It is *unsatisfied curiosity* which causes the child to think about and to play with his genitals . . . The surest way to arouse dangerous curiosity is to cover or lock something up so that it becomes a mystery."

In Cleveland, I asked Mrs. Wayne Evans, chairman of the city's Social Protection Committee, about the effect of sex education on the bobby-socks and jitterbug fringe—the so-called delinquents.

"I'll tell you one story that sums it all up," she said. "After we started sex education in one of the toughest districts in town, a group of hoodlums came up and threatened another worker and me. They said that since we started educating the young girls, they weren't 'coming across' any more!"

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THE END

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for . . .?" I mentioned the endless name of his brokerage firm.

"No," he said, "I don't work at all any more. I'm catching up on my education. It was neglected."

I smiled.

"It was. Look here. Until two weeks ago I had never heard of Pico Mirandola or Piero della Francesca. Now I'm trying to distinguish them."

"Must you?" I said.

"Can you do it?"

"Well," I said, "Piero was, of course, a great painter, and Pico——" I hesitated and shut my eyes. "Pico . . . the only thing I remember was that he was a philosopher who justified the ways of God to Plato. I once knew a lot more."

Henry laughed. "Yes. You once knew a lot more. But you've forgotten. *That's what I want.* To know enough that I can afford to forget some of it."

"It's not hard," I said.

"I'm serious," Henry said. "Until—well —a few years ago, I only knew what I used. I thought that was all I needed to know. But it made a very small world."

"A rather classy one, as I remember."

"Yes," Henry smiled. "It was. I had every luxury I needed, then. Now I want —I hope you won't laugh—luxury for my head, a luxurious brain."

"Henry," I said, "you haven't lost your money, have you?"

He laughed. "No. I have more than ever."

"Then don't you worry."

"You won't take me seriously, will you? Come on, let's get some dinner."

DURING dinner I was, of course, puzzled, but more than that, I was beginning to feel an interest I had never felt in Henry Moore. I had told him he hadn't changed, but I was wrong. He had lost his casual, preoccupied air; he looked straight at me, instead of through me; everything seemed to interest him.

I caught him looking at me a couple of times with a frowning, puzzled expression as if he wanted to ask me something or tell me something, but he did not begin. I felt uneasy. I can't say why exactly. Perhaps it was because it is always disturbing to find anyone out of character, or maybe I was just tired. In any case, I had a bunch of notes to transcribe, so I determined to get away as soon as dinner was over.

I didn't, however. When we reached the elevator, Henry said, "Don't go yet. I want to talk to you. I've got to talk to someone——" He hesitated. "Please. I'll try not to take too long."

We went up to a balcony, off which was one of those inexplicable parlors that hotels sometimes have. It was deserted, and the chairs were comfortable. We sat down, and Henry moved a lamp so it would not shine in his eyes. I lit a cigarette and waited for him to begin.

IT WAS perfectly true (Henry Moore said) what I told you about the orphan asylum. My parents passed out of the picture—shall we put it that way?—before I can remember. I never had any other home. It's necessary to know that to understand what I did.

An orphanage is never an ideal place to be brought up, but I won't pretend that this one was in any way brutal. There was a certain municipal kindness about it, and I guess I was content enough until I was six years old. Then I was sent outside to the public school.

That was my first contact with the world and my first shock. The shock produced one violent and lasting emotion: envy. It took the form of envy of clothes; I never wore anything but secondhand ones until I was ten years old and earned enough to buy a suit.

Now in the normal way of things the violent emotions of childhood either disappear or are covered up by the love and security of the family. Mine could not be. I lived in a community of children, and you know they are evil.

They are made bearable—children, I mean—by contact with the civilizing influence of their elders. But if there are no elders to superimpose the ethics of the tribe upon them, they remain natural.

I didn't just envy; I went after money. I have, in one way or another earned money since I was eight. When I was ten, I had an enormous paper route on which I hired boys, who had homes and families, to do the work. For slave wages.

When I graduated from high school I won a chemistry prize of five hundred dollars. I hadn't much interest in chemistry, but I had plenty in the five hundred.

I left the orphanage and got a job and lived in a room in town. The job was with the Forst-Gornow Corporation—you know it?—a tremendous plant that supports half the city. I worked in the office for three years; then I left abruptly and went to New York. Including my chemistry prize I had saved a little over a thousand dollars. But the point was I had found out something in the office of Forst-Gornow that could be used if you knew how to use it. I did. Four weeks later I had sixty-two thousand dollars, and Forst-Gornow stock wasn't worth a quarter of what it had been.

Sounds incredible, I know. Well, you couldn't do it now, but it was perfectly legal then. There was no S.E.C. then.

My luck didn't hold. I lost thirty of my sixty-two thousand before I caught on to what made the market run. Again my orphanage background helped.

I had time to study. I wasn't like most of the young men in Wall Street. I had no debutante parties to go to, no class reunions, no clubs, and no hang-overs. Understand, my scruples against liquor are not moral; they're financial. You'd be surprised at the number of teetotaling multimillionaires there are.

Until I was made a partner in my firm —four years later—I lived at the Y.M.C.A. My private life was spasmodic and sordid, but I knew nothing else.

The week after I became a partner, I took a suite at a good hotel and hired, well—sort of a social mentor. He'd been to college, and he wore the sort of shirts I wanted but didn't know where to buy.

His name was Sam something, and he fixed me up. The right barber, jeweler, tailor, all that. He taught me how to play bridge, although in four weeks I knew more about the game than he did.

Most of all he opened my eyes to the hierarchy of wealth. I hadn't even known there were such things as stratas of society. I had just assumed that when you were rich you were rich, and that was that. I'd never heard of the Racquet Club.

Sam never gave me a bum steer. I remember I laughed at him only once, and that was when he gave me a lecture on the morals of the very rich. They were so like the morals of the very poor.

I sound like a roaring snob, don't I? I was. I invented a rich eccentric uncle in Oregon, a state I thought was safely distant. He was my background. I never accepted any but the best invitations. Fortunately I was handsomer than most; that opened a number of doors to me.

Why did I do all this? Fear. Fear in remembering that six-year-old orphan in the first grade. As most men fear death

and dishonor, I feared poverty.

I got away with it pretty well. You remember, during those years I used to see you, I was keeping up a good front.

Well, then came the war. I wangled a commission as a Lieutenant Commander, and after a year, to my surprise, I found myself at sea. I got hurt, and badly, in a very minor engagement. I was in hospitals for a year. I almost died.

I had to tell you that much about the early part of my life so you could understand what comes now. For now the interesting part begins. Were you ever so ill you did not care whether you lived or died? Have you ever had such long months of convalescence that you seemed actually to be returning from the dead?

I wonder if there is such a thing as a Lazarus complex?

Here Henry Moore's story was interrupted by a waiter who brought us a tray of drinks we had ordered. While they were being poured Henry asked me, "Do you ever read the Bible?"

"Not often," I said. "I sometimes look at it when I'm searching for story titles."

Henry smiled. "I never got to it myself until I was sick. I guess it was from reading St. John that I began consciously identifying myself with Lazarus."

"That's a new form of vanity," I said.

Henry waved a hand at me. "I was too weak to concern myself with vanity or modesty. Besides, the line that impressed me most was Martha's: '. . . by this time he stinketh for he hath been dead four days?' "

I nodded.

"I suppose," Henry said, "you expect me to say I had a spiritual awakening. I didn't."

"What happened?"

He frowned. "Well—I never gave it a name. Perhaps Egoistic Revelation would do. Understand, please, that it was no bolt of lightning. I had been reading my head off for months, everything from Plato to Freud. Gradually I became aware that something was happening to me."

I was puzzled. "You mean this Lazarus complex?"

"No, no," Henry said. "The Lazarus complex was only the conveyance, the means by which I traveled toward awareness. The Lazarus complex merely enabled me to see that I was coming alive from more than just a physical sickness, but it left me 'bound hand and foot with grave clothes. It was up to me to loose myself."

"You think you have?" I said.

Henry laughed. "It's not so easy as that."

"What about the Egoistic Revelation?"

"That," Henry said, "I am afraid will disappoint you. My Egoistic Revelation was merely a sentence I read somewhere: 'Everything was the matter with him, and he suffered from nothing.' "

Perhaps (Henry Moore continued) those words, "everything was the matter with him, and he suffered from nothing," can be impressive only to an egoist. To me they were a revelation. In other words, I had been dead, and didn't even realize the fact. Dead to the world, to its pleasures and opportunities and goodnesses. By finally realizing something was wrong, I could do something about it. What I am trying to do now is fashion a system of livable philosophy into a pair of dark glasses so I can tell where I'm going.

But, you see, I'm stymied by my lack of education. I don't mean schooling, you understand; by education I mean the habit, the necessity of thinking. You see I was always sure that the word "philosophical" meant "not taking things too seriously." But it means just the opposite.

Naturally, I had to find out first what system of philosophy was going to nourish me most. Materialistic? Ethic? Aesthetic? . . . I didn't think materialistic; it wouldn't be enough fun. Ethics should appeal to me most; Wall Street after all was an exercise in abstractions, and my mind is naturally inclined that way but—I had a strange feeling that the whole reason for my resuscitation lay in aesthetics. This was the new world, whose language I did not understand: music, poetry, painting, architecture . . .

Six months ago I hired a professor from an art school to guide my reading, answer questions. If things had worked out as I planned, I'd be at home now, deep in the study of Minoan vase painting.

They didn't, and that's why I'm here.

You see, in thinking to immerse myself in a system of philosophy, I naïvely supposed that I would find contentment, fulfillment, pleasure, all the things I had realized I was missing. What made me suppose I could ignore the material world and its ethical laws, I don't know.

You remember how the boys in the South Pacific used to knock Jap snipers out of palm trees by ramming a tank up against the trunk? That was how I was shaken out of my ivory tower.

I was driving down from the Columbia Library one day and I ran into a little girl and knocked her onto the sidewalk, unconscious. I lifted her as carefully as I could into the car and raced to the hospital. She had a fractured leg, but the point was she was already a cripple, and I had hit her bad leg.

Eight years old, she was. I had surgeons flown from Johns Hopkins; I had consultations by every bone man in New York; I . . . well the details don't matter.

My reactions to that accident were the most violent I had ever had in my life. I was, almost, in worse shape than the little girl. As it turned out, there was one element of luck about the whole thing. In the course of the operations the doctors were able to adjust her original lameness and she now can walk normally.

I wish I had been as lucky. What happened to me was this—I began to dream, bad dreams.

They had a curious sameness of pattern—not every one, but most of them. I think you could call them "walking-away" dreams. I was forever doing hurt or damage to someone and then walking away, offering no assistance. The amount of damage I inflicted seemed to have no relation to the feeling of guilt or depression I experienced on waking.

Well, the connection is obvious. The violence of the emotion I had undergone at the maiming of the girl had disturbed, far, far down in my unconscious, memories of other damages which I had done to other people earlier in my life. Apparently, in my new state of awareness—my sensitive, indeed extra-perceptive state—I could no longer suppress them.

I decided on a businesslike cure; if these things worried me, I must bring them out into the open. Elementary psychiatry. So I did. I made a list.

It was a curious and almost repugnant sheaf of paper to me, a list of the ills I had done to people.

I perceived, while I was about this, that a secondary good might come to me, aside from clearing away the block which was keeping me from studying and living: a good which would be of the utmost importance later on. For you understand that the list was not an end in itself; it was merely a schedule for action. I intended to do what I could to right the wrongs. But I perceived that if I were to enter this new world I had glimpsed, I would have to come with clean hands. I realized I could not fully enjoy the great works of man if I had not myself a cer-

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tain purity. I could not enjoy the new world of art, music, poetry and so on, if I came to it with my past sins unattended to.

That sounds like a very pat, dollars-and-cents calculation, I know, but it appeared sensible to me when I figured it out. The next step was difficult.

HERE Henry Moore got out of his chair and began pacing up and down. Finally he said, "You had never thought of me as particularly timid, had you?"

"Indeed, no," I said.

"Neither had I. I was never timid in Wall Street."

"I believe you were the reverse."

"Well"—he began pacing again—"I sat bravely in my library, making up my list and then—well—a kind of paralysis came over me. I could not go to someone whose name was on my list and say, 'I have done you a wrong, I want to do what I can to right it.' It was impossible. In the first place, it was so out of character. I began to fear that people would doubt my motive. But I had to make a start. So I began to rationalize. I told myself it would be easier if I got away from New York. I would be braver away from home. So . . ."

Then Henry Moore said what I had been expecting him to say; yet I find it hard to describe the excitement which the words themselves gave me.

"So," he said, "I combed my list, selected certain names, then got on the train and came out here."

"And you have begun to right your wrongs?" I said.

"I have begun," he said.

I HAVE been here a week (Henry Moore said). How much longer it will take, I have no idea. To do a proper job, of course, would mean the rest of my life, but I am not so ambitious as all that.

There are four names I am principally concerned with: Mattie Ingram, Philip Perrine, Jock Webster and Madelaine Foster. They were the chief sufferers.

When I planned this crusade I thought all I had to do was knock on a door and say, "Behold, here I am on my white horse." It never entered my head I wouldn't be able to find the door.

But that's what's happened. I have found only Mattie Ingram and Philip Perrine. There is not a trace of Jock Webster or Madelaine Foster yet. But I will find them. I can't give up.

Mattie Ingram was easy. She was living exactly where I had left her. I went to see her first because she was an old lady; she was kind, and she had loved me. I was trying to make things easy for myself. I thought she might forgive me.

You remember I told you that when I left the orphanage and got a job, I lived in a room in town? Well, the room was rented to me by Miss Mattie Ingram. She had a small, dilapidated house which had been left to her by her father. That was all he had left her too.

I lived there for three years, and with the small rent I paid, I supported Miss Mattie.

For a year I guess I thought of Miss Mattie only as the old lady I paid my rent to. It was not until the day which I had arbitrarily picked out as my birthday came around and Miss Mattie baked me a cake that I ever consciously recognized her.

That was the first time in my life anyone had ever baked me a cake, and I told her how grateful I was.

I remember she said to me, "Henry, I'm the one who's grateful. Without you, I'd be eating my heart out at the county home. You're keeping me alive here."

That was a shock to me. Then it began to make me feel a little pompous. I was seventeen. But I thought about her after that as a human being, as someone to be spoken to, laughed with, considered.

Soon after that I got a raise, and I gave her a little extra money for which she cooked me Sunday dinner. I suspect it was the only decent meal she ate all week.

I'll not try to describe her clothes. Most of her things were made over from dresses that had been her mother's; they had a patina from wear. But they were clean, well ironed, and they suited her.

She had a single ornament, which I first saw when those Sunday dinners began. It was pinned at her throat, and as I remember, it was very pretty. I had never seen anything like it before. I had to ask her what it was.

She laughed and touched it, I remember. "It's a cameo, child," she said.

And I had to say, "What's a cameo?"

"Well" she said, and she was a little vague, "it's a precious stone, and it's all carved by hand. It was Mother's," she said. "Father bought it off a man who came from Italy years ago."

It was her Sunday treat. In all the rest of the time I saw her, she wore it only at those dinners we had on Sunday. Those dinners were, I guess, the only times when she had somebody to talk to, when she felt a little happy. And so she dressed for them.

She was a sweet woman and a good woman, and she grew to love me like a son. I know that. And yet when the time came and I had to go, I left without even saying good-bye to her, left in the middle of the night, left her to starve or eat out her heart at the county home.

There are many explanations for it. Basically, I suppose, I simply refused to be stopped by considerations of human kindness. I thought they would tie me forever to poverty. My chance had come and I let nothing stand in my way. I went.

And I'm afraid in my new life in New York, I thought very little about Miss Mattie. It is only because, on last Thursday, I stood once again in her parlor, that I am able to recall in detail the facts of Miss Mattie's life.

I wonder if you can understand the embarrassment and the fear I felt as I walked down the street toward her house? It wasn't determination that made me knock on the door; it was a kind of impotent designation. I felt ill.

The door was opened by an old man.

"I'm looking for Miss Mattie Ingram," I said. "She——"

The old man turned into the house. He called, "Mattie, Mattie, there's someone . . ." and then he turned to me, "Come in, come in," he said.

I went in and stood awkwardly in the hall for a moment and then, down the stairs, just as I remembered her, came Mattie Ingram. Her face broke into a smile. "Henry," she said. "It's Henry Moore come back. Henry, you bad boy.' And she put her arms around me.

There was no doubt she was happy to see me. We went into the parlor, and she introduced me to the old man. His name was Earl Wood, and we sat and talked, the three of us, for a long time. Miss Mattie wanted to know everything I had done since I had seen her.

All the tales of my success in New York delighted her, and when finally I got to the story of how I had been hurt in the war, her concern showed in her face. Was I sure I had fully recovered? Was I getting the proper food? She went out to the kitchen right then and brought me back a glass of milk.

But I had not come to be petted and listened to. I had come—but you know why—only—well, I had trouble with Mattie. For when I got to the point of my visit, when I finally got her to listen, she—well, Mattie was very, very deflating.

"Henry," she said, "don't you think any more about it. Why if you hadn't pulled up stakes I never would have met Earl." She looked almost coquettishly at old Mr. Wood. "I'll admit I felt pretty bad when I found you'd gone. I couldn't understand it. But I made a sign 'Room for Rent,' and the first to come was Earl . . . Of course you know we're married."

I guess my surprise showed in my face.

"Oh, yes," Mattie said. "We've been married for twelve years."

Mr. Wood said, "I came in here a perfectly contented book agent, and before I knew it, I was a husband."

Mattie said, "Now, you don't mind it."

The old man laughed. He didn't mind.

Then Mattie said, "Henry, you did the best thing in the world for me. I've thought about it a lot. You did me a real kindness."

There was nothing for me to do finally but shake hands and leave. I had no real business there, for Miss Mattie Ingram had no need of me. She was perfectly happy.

Well, you can believe me, my reactions to that afternoon were mixed. I was delighted that Mattie was so well taken care of, but I felt a kind of frustration.

I decided the best thing I could do was get to another name on my list as quickly as possible. I tried the telephone book and, surprisingly enough, I found a number for Philip Perrine, who had been my chemistry teacher in high school.

I made an appointment to see him the next day.

I told you I had won a five-hundred-dollar prize in chemistry, and you remember that that had constituted half the money which started me on my way.

Well, the winner of that prize was determined through competitive examination. Now while I had no great bent toward chemistry, as I said, the money was necessary. So I competed.

Several days after the test, our teacher, Mr. Perrine, announced that the prize would go to a fellow whose name I have now forgotten. All I remember about him is that he was a retiring sort of guy, who came from a nice family and seemed to me to have plenty of money.

After the exam, we got our papers back, and I asked the fellow who had won if I could compare his paper with mine, as I wanted to see where I had missed out. He gave me his paper.

It didn't take me long to discover that he had, in fact, written an examination that was not nearly so correct as mine. On one vital problem he had missed completely. My paper was, without any question, the better of the two.

I didn't bother to go to Perrine; I went directly to the principal of the high school. And from our interview there developed one of those crusades which sometimes grow out of all proportion to the issue involved.

The principal read the papers and called in Perrine, who blandly stated that it was his opinion I had cheated; he had taught me all year and knew I couldn't write such a brilliant paper.

The principal asked for proof, but of course Perrine had none; whereupon the principal demanded that Perrine give me the prize. Perrine refused. The choice of the prize winner rested with Perrine. The principal appeared unable to act. But I was well used to fighting for myself.

I went before the board of education. I went to the mayor, and to a couple of newspapers, where I was well acquainted.

It was the newspapers, of course, that turned the trick. Right on the front pages they made me the defenseless orphan who was being defrauded of his rightful inheritance. Perrine, who was actually a quiet young man, they turned into a

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swindling pedagogue. The issues were democracy, justice, the American dream and a free school system. The campaign reached such a pitch that the mayor finally gave poor Perrine the choice of resigning or being fired. He resigned, and I got my five hundred dollars.

I say poor Perrine, because of course he had been right all along. I *had* cheated.

I can't say I looked forward to our appointment.

We met in his office at some chemical concern on the outskirts of town. I hadn't told him on the phone who I was, and he remained politely blank when I sat opposite him. I had to explain.

Then he said, "Henry Moore. For heaven's sake! That chemistry prize."

And then I admitted to him the truth.

"Of course you cheated," he said. "There was never any doubt of that. Well?"

I'm afraid I stumbled as I tried to explain to him why I had come.

"Henry," he said, "you needn't indulge yourself any further. Now listen."

He shut his eyes tightly, as if trying to re-see something long forgotten.

"I knew," he said, "during all that fuss, that I was right and everybody else in this city was wrong. Chemistry is not a matter of public opinion. It's a science, not a sentiment. I watched that rumpus grow with real amazement. In a small way, it was a piece of mob violence. The truth was of relatively no importance.

"So I decided that if a half-witted mayor and a couple of scatterbrained reporters could come into my classroom and tell me how to mark my papers, teaching was not for me."

Philip Perrine began to smile. "It was a very illuminating decision," he went on. "I found myself feeling happy for the first time in several years. I obtained a job in a chemical laboratory, and I soon recaptured the interest, and the joy I had once had in pure experimentation.

"Within a few years I discovered one of the methods of annealing wood by thermosetting plastic glue. I made money. And I made other discoveries, some quite useful. I made more money." He lifted his hand toward the wall behind him. "I built this pilot plant. It's all mine."

His smile broadened. "Henry," he said, "I guess I have never thought of you as a benefactor of mine until this moment. But it's true. If it had not been for you I almost certainly would still be teaching chemistry to adolescents. . . . Come and see what you've done."

We walked back into the plant . . . I was there over an hour, and I was mightily impressed. Perrine was very proud.

When I left he wrung my hand. "I'm afraid I've been boring you," he said. "In my pleasure at seeing you, I forgot you never had any interest in chemistry . . ."

With that, Henry Moore suddenly stopped talking. For a while neither of us spoke. Frankly, I am glad now I kept quiet, for I am sure I would have said something flippant which would have lost to me forever the confidences of Henry Moore.

Suddenly he leaned forward and put his head between his hands. "What does it all mean?" he said. I was somehow not surprised that his voice sounded frightened. "I'm scared, and I mean it."

I did not answer.

After a moment he looked at me and saw that I was watching him intently. He gave me a kind of woebegone smile. "The punishments of capitalism are many," he said, "but this is one I never heard of."

I smiled. "For once," I said, "I don't think you can blame capitalism."

Suddenly he looked at his watch and got up. "It's late," he said.

We walked down into the lobby. Henry made straight for the elevator, and I followed. While we were waiting, he began to look at me with a curious intentness.

"I'm doing it to you, too," he said. "I'm walking away one more time. I've kept you from transcribing your notes, made you listen to the story of my life. I've completely ruined your evening and your work—and I'm walking away."

I laughed. "I won't pretend to agree with you," I said. But the seriousness of his tone, and his stare, made me uneasy.

I was glad when the elevator came and I saw Richard, the night man. He was a hunchback, and I had come to know him well during my stay in the hotel. He was a happy, sly fellow, and he had a trick which must have made him a lot of money. He sold the early morning papers. He always had a pile of them on the car, and there was a dish with money in it, so you could make your own change. But the money wasn't just ordinary newspaper change, pennies and nickels, Richard kept the dish stocked with dollar bills and fifty-cent pieces, as a kind of urgent hint. It was a hint almost everybody took and while it made your paper pretty expensive, it made Richard a very prosperous elevator operator.

I put down fifty cents, and Henry Moore threw down a dollar. The elevator stopped first at my floor, and I got out "Let's see each other tomorrow," I said.

I don't remember now whether I had planned to go right to bed or not; in any case I didn't. I smoked a cigarette and wandered absently around the room, trying to recall what Henry's story reminded me of.

His problem was, on the surface, a set-up for one of those second-rate novels of regeneration; yet there was a difference in that so far as I could see, he was not seeking any future salvation. He was trying desperately to assort his treasures on earth. The ironies of the situation at present were naturally pure chance, yet, from his stare, from the tone of his voice, I was not sure just how stoically he would accept chance.

It is like a morality play, I thought that has no moral. Or at least not yet.

One thing I was sure of: whatever vision of the beauties of the world the Lazarus complex had shown Henry Moore, that vision was now of secondary importance. He was wallowing, luxuriating, whatever word you want to use, in a bath of repentence. He was playing God—or was it Jupiter?—yet I could not condemn him or laugh at him.

I liked him. And I felt sorry for him. I remembered what he had said at the elevator: "I am walking away one more time. I have ruined your work . . . I am walking away . . ."

It was at that moment I guess, that the idea hit me. The final irony of the evening. I turned to the desk and sat down

For a moment I just sat there, and then I began to laugh. Henry thought he had wrecked my work, spoiled my evening. If he could know. . .

It was all clear in my head, exactly what I was going to do. I picked up a pen and began to write quickly:

"I didn't see him at first," I wrote. "It took me a moment, coming from the brightly lighted lobby into the darkness of the bar lounge, to adjust my eyes; in fact I had to grope to find a chair.

"I dislike this fashion which seems to have swept the country . . ."

I stopped for a moment and laughed again. Ruined my evening, I thought. Hell, he's given me a story.

One country club looks much like another, so I will spare myself the effort of describing the Northlawn Golf Club. I had been given a card to it, so several days after I met Henry Moore I took him out there for dinner.

I had been seeing him constantly. We were no longer the casual acquaintances we had been in New York; we were—I know this is true—close friends, as close as either one of us had. Henry Moore needed me, and I became his friend.

Twice during those days he came out with me to the little memorial library where I was working and read while I took notes. That was only because he had momentarily exhausted every avenue of enquiry he could think of in his search for Jock Webster and Madelaine Foster. He appeared to hate to be alone, and when he was not actually on the hunt, he stuck close to me.

The fact that he had not found Jock and Madelaine, however, gave him a kind of inverted hope that when he did locate them, they would definitely stand in the roles of victims. It was to them he was looking for his salvation.

Madelaine Foster's story was not a very original one. She was the girl Henry had betrayed, if you will forgive the word. I am wrong to try to make light of it; Henry certainly did not. She had been an innocent girl, and she had been in love with him blindly, with that awful, sad joy of first love; but he, taking, enjoying and loving too, had not hesitated to break the idyl when the time came.

The tone of his voice was different when he spoke of Madelaine than when he mentioned any of the others. The others represented moral wrongs that he meant to right, but when he spoke of Madelaine you could hear tenderness.

For most of us, first love is wrapped in a holy haze, and whatever its circumstance, its pangs do not remain acute. But then I realized that for Henry there were no other memories of love to comfort him. Madelaine, so far as I knew, had been his only engagement in that most important of activities. So now, awakening to the opportunities of the world, he clung to his one experience, and mixed with his desire to right the wrong was, I am sure, a desire to recapture the glow.

Jock Webster was a more cut-and-dried case—a question of money. Most of Henry's life had been spent with money; consequently its manipulation was his criterion of good or evil. Jock had been one of his early victims.

They had gone to high school together and stayed friends afterwards. "Jock was one of those thin-haired blond boys," Henry told me, "who have a talent for getting other people to look after them." He married young, a girl called Marie, and his job was a sort of glorified office boy in a commission house. It looked to be a steady job, since agriculture is the principal concern of that section of the country, and people must always eat.

Well, Jock found a three-room house he could buy for himself and his "colorless wife," as Henry described her, a house that cost only a thousand dollars.

"He knew I had that much," Henry said, "and he asked me for it. I'm not sure why I lent it to him. Perhaps I had heard that old saw: 'Safe as houses.' At any rate I didn't take a mortgage. I made him give me a demand note. He was to save ten dollars a week to pay me back and—well, I suppose the reason I did it was that he offered me seven percent interest."

It was just five months later that Henry had to have his money.

But the reason Jock had borrowed the money from Henry instead of giving a mortgage, it turned out, was that no one would take a mortgage on what apparently was hardly more than a shack. And he had not been saving ten dollars a

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week but had been buying furniture.

So, everything went. "Everything," Henry said, "the house, the furniture, an advance on Jock's salary for months ahead, even some of their clothes. They were out in the street, and they didn't have a dime. But I had to have the money. I had to sell them out . . ."

Of course having dinner at the country club was an innocent gesture on my part. What happened would have happened sooner or later anyway. Perhaps it was best I was present.

After we had dined we walked out and sat in some comfortable chairs on a brick terrace, all alone, and looked out at the flat but rather pretty country. I remember I watched a man putting on a practice green, a man in baggy clothes, who was beginning to get paunchy. He was making long putts, thirty or forty feet, and when he missed—and he missed them all—he never tried to sink his ball from where it stopped; he always picked it up and tried another long one.

Suddenly, just as the light was beginning to fail, the man made one. He pranced to the cup, picked out his ball and kissed it, then turned and started walking toward the clubhouse.

When he got near enough, he could not resist saying, "Did you see that? I've been out there every night for four weeks, and this is the first time I——" But suddenly he stopped as if he had been struck dumb. He stared at Henry "My God!" he said. "It's Henry Moore."

Of course this was Jock Webster.

It took Henry a moment to find anything of the "thin-haired blond boy" in this middle-aged man. He stared back until finally he knew. "Jock," he said.

A chair was pulled up; I was introduced; and the talk began.

I sat and watched. It was almost impossible for me to make any connection between this rumpled man sitting across from me and the Jock who had been so carefully described to me. I did not see any mark on his face or in his manner of the catastrophe of the thousand dollars. Instead I saw a happy man, apparently pleased to see an old friend.

I glanced at Henry. He was wearing a set, hopeful smile, but his eyes were nervously running over Jock, appraising him, seeming to be looking for something. Suddenly I realized what he was looking for, a sign, some detail which would indicate Jock's present place in the world. It wasn't easy; the mussed clothes, the wilted shirt could have been worn by anybody. I tried to guess—was he a steward here at the club, or a guest?

Finally Henry said, "I've been trying to locate you, Jock."

Jock took a cigar out of his inner breast pocket. "Well, my name's a little different now," he said. "I'm Telford Webster now." He laughed, short and staccato "You gave me that name, Henry."

"I?"

Jock struck a match. "Remember the last time I saw you, I was a little short on cash?"

Henry nodded.

"You know what we did after you left? I slept in the commission house where I worked, and Marie got a key from the attendant at the Women's Club and she slept on the sofa. We had seven bucks a week to eat on, and no prospects.

"You remember me. I was a cautious, easygoing kid. But when you get to the place where you have nothing to lose you go off the deep end." Jock looked at Henry. "You know anything about the commission business?"

"Something," Henry said.

"One of my jobs was to write out the orders. I didn't take them, you understand. When they got to me they were all set and certified. I just wrote them out."

"Yes," Henry said.

Jock shook his head. "I don't know what first started me. I was desperate, and Marie was getting thin and pale. Suddenly one morning I found myself putting through an order on lard futures. One contract. To sell."

I guess I looked puzzled. Jock turned to me. "A lard contract is a carload, fifty thousand pounds. You can sell futures just the way you can in other things, wheat, you know.

"Of course there wasn't any Commodity Exchange Administration then, and if the house knew you, you didn't have to put up any original margin. That's how I got away with it. That contract I wrote was for me.

"Of course I couldn't sign my own name to it. So I thought up this fancy Telford." Jock smiled. "It's funny how when you get started, you can't stop," he said. "Nothing happened in the first contract, no questioning, so I began to put others through. Boy, it scares me just to think about it. Lard was hanging around twenty, and if she'd gone up a couple of points, I'd have been in jail.

"What I can't figure out now," Jock said, "is how, when the break came, I dared to stay in so long. There was a twelve-cent break, and I didn't buy till it had gone ten cents. That's five thousand dollars a contract, and I had a fist full of contracts. I was a rich man.

"Of course"—he pulled down the side of his mouth—"I had a little finagling to do with a fellow in our cashier's office, but . . ." He left the rest unsaid.

"It's a funny thing," he went on. "I guess that's what I was cut out for. Taking chances, I'm a gambler and a good one. Why, I own the land this golf club is on. It was just a hay field till I came along and took a chance.

"If it hadn't been for you, Henry, I'd probably still be making sixty bucks a week in that commission house. It was tough at first, but you did me a big favor. I've often thought about you."

For a moment there was dead silence. Then Henry, in a cracked voice that I hardly recognized as his, began to speak. "And I, Jock," he said, "have often thought about you. In fact—" he gave a little laugh—"I came here with the idea of giving you back that thousand dollars. I thought maybe you could use it . . ."

Jock's reaction was electric. He put up his hands as if to ward off a blow. "No" he said. "No. I wouldn't touch it. That was my lucky money. If I had that back, who knows, all my luck might change. No. You get superstitious, gambling. You can't help it. I wouldn't touch that money with a ten-foot pole."

In the car on the way back to town, Henry Moore did not say one word. At the hotel, we went directly into the bar. When the waiter came, I ordered a Scotch. Henry said, "A double for me."

When the drinks came, Henry swallowed his before the waiter had had time even to mix mine. "Another," he said.

The second he drank more slowly, but his third he gulped again. His fourth and fifth he drank while I was having my second single.

Five double Scotches for a man who never took a drink. I thought I knew what was going to happen.

I was right. Quite suddenly his eyes began to glaze. He put his elbows on the table and supported his head in his hands. He moved his lips, slowly, and I leaned close to hear what he was saying.

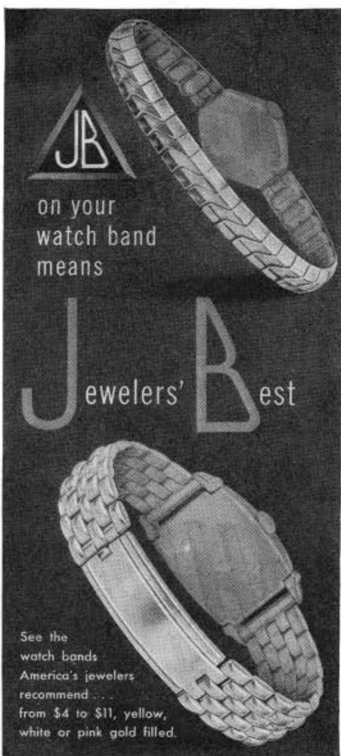
It was only a whisper, repeated over and over: "Madelaine, Madelaine."

Then abruptly he sagged, his head

slipped to the table, and he was out.
A waiter helped me through the lobby with him, and Richard, the elevator man, unlocked his door and helped me pull off his clothes. I covered him up, raised his window, turned out his lights.
Back in my room I decided that whatever impulse had told him to get drunk was a good one. His stockbroker's mind had had about all it could take. It needed a period of oblivion.
Henry's literal world of cause and effect had deserted him. I could not doubt that he was terrified. I remembered men I had known in Wall Street years ago, dependable, sensible men, the rocks of their families and community, but men who, when the ticker took on a life of its own and plunged without reason or principle, had thrown themselves from fifty-story windows or been carted off to asylums, or simply disappeared.
I was comforted that Henry was dead drunk. His room was on the tenth floor.

MADELAINE, Madelaine . . .
Everything depended upon her.
In the next few days she became as much a psychological interference to me as she was to Henry. For in her could lie salvation, or just as easily, defeat.
I was not honestly sure whether I even wanted Henry to find her. If she turned up happily married to some local millionaire . . . I would not let myself think about that. But there was the pattern: I was certain it could not be broken.
If she never turned up at all, if there were no Madelaine any more, Henry could always console himself with the thought that once, one time in four, his evil had been evil. But, though even that illusion would be something definite to hang on to, a suspicion of reality, still it would be finally no consolation at all. His point was not to be comforted by proof of his misdeeds.
Of course I hoped, as is my fashion, for a happy ending. Madelaine found, Madelaine beautiful, Madelaine in dire straights, Madelaine still in love with Henry. Curtain. At least that would allow me to finish my work and get home to California. But I had little hope of that.
Henry, during those days, was a sad man. He recovered from his double Scotches, of course, but not from the reasons for them. He stuck closer to me than ever, for he was lonely, painfully lonely. It is an awful thing for a man to tear up his past, as Henry had done, for he throws away the tremendous solace of his lifetime's routine. Henry now, in his confusion, had no innocent pastime to turn to; all he could do was think, and the dangers of that occupation had been made terribly clear to him.
Once he said to me, "Lazarus didn't know when he was well off."
But there was, of course, no turning back; if Henry was to stand and see in the white light he had chosen, he must go on. Terrified as he was, he knew that.

THE end came suddenly and shockingly, a week later. I was sitting in my room about nine at night when the phone rang. It was Henry. "I"—he seemed to be whispering excitedly—"I've found her Madelaine."
"Yes?" I said. "Yes. Where?"
"I'm at a bar," he said, and then very carefully he gave me the address. "Will you do me a great favor . . . will you please come here immediately?"
"I will."
"Promise? I haven't spoken to her yet."
"I'll be there," I said.
"Please," and he hung up.
I threw on my coat, picked up my key, and ran to the elevator . . .
It was a most ordinary looking barroom. I found Henry in a booth halfway to the rear, alone.
I sat down beside him. "Well?" I said. He pointed with his eyes. I looked. Madelaine . . .
My first fast thought was: It can't be.
Here was almost a caricature of her type, a 1927 movie version of the profession. A thin little face, plastered with pure white powder, curly black hair held with two black ribbon bows, a fancy shirtwaist and a too-tight satin skirt. And high-heeled shoes. She was reading a movie magazine and drinking beer.
Well, I thought, at last, at last . . .
Then Henry said, "Madelaine is too beautiful a name for her now. They call her Mamie."
I said, "But then are you sure?"
He nodded. "Oh, yes. Too sure."
"Has she recognized you yet?"
He shook his head. "Maybe she doesn't want to."
"Haven't you spoken to her?"
He looked away from me to the wall. "I can't. Don't you see, in a place like this the whole thing becomes absurd. And I'm afraid."
I got up automatically and walked to the bar. "A beer," I said. While the barman was drawing it, I said, "That's Miss Foster sitting there, isn't it?"
"Yes," he said. "That's Mamie Foster."
"Do you think she'd have a beer with us?"
He gave me a look. "I think she could be persuaded," he said.
He brushed the foam off my glass with his stick. "Hey, Mame," he called. "These gentlemen want to buy you a beer."
Mamie looked up in affected, pleased surprise. "Oh," she said, "that's very kind, I'm sure."
I ordered three beers, and Mamie came over to our booth.
I will not try to reproduce the acute banality of our conversation. Mamie was refined, and Mamie asked questions.
Were we strangers in town? She hadn't seen us around. Were we going to stay long? What had we found exciting to do? It was a dull town, wasn't it? Chicago was so much more alive. She thought maybe she might go and live there, but she didn't know. This was her home. She had been born and raised here and well—you know how it is—and so on and so on.
Henry was no help. He said not one word; he simply stared at her, and pretended to sip his beer. I had to do whatever talking there was on our side. I was watching, watching for the moment when Mamie either would recognize Henry—or admit she recognized him.
She looked at him oddly, I thought, several times, but I could not tell. It could easily have been because he was so handsome, probably so much more handsome than most of the men she knew. But it was to me she directed her talk, and her mechanical coquetry.
She had been to the movies that afternoon to a revival of a really lovely Jeanette MacDonald picture. She began to tell us the plot.
To my surprise, Henry stopped her, halfway through.
"Look," Henry forced the words out. "Haven't you some place we could go and talk that's more comfortable than here?"
Mamie looked at him, open-eyed. Then she looked at me, and then, in what must have been her normal, everyday voice, she said, "The both of you?"
From that moment on I liked Mamie. She had been trying, in however poor a way, to please; she had kept a conversation going; she had done everything in her power to make the evening pleasant.
She looked at me, and I nodded.
"Well," she said, "I have an apartment a couple of blocks from here. We could . . ."



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We did. As we walked out the barman called. "Mamie," he said, "you owe me for those first two beers."

"I'll pay you tomorrow," she said.

"You'll pay me now."

Henry took out a bill and walked toward the bar. Mamie and I went out onto the sidewalk. She made a movement with her head. "That one," she said, "him and God Almighty. Thick as thieves."

In the apartment, the one lamp Mamie turned on had a bathing beauty as a base. I sat on a day bed that was covered with a disheartening material. Henry took the easy chair.

Mamie left us and came back in a moment in what I guess was a hostess gown; anyway it was yellow and it trailed on the floor.

"This is more comfortable I guess, isn't it?" she said, and she curled up on the other end of the day bed from me. "It's practically a party. If we just had some champagne it would be a party. I just love champagne," she said, "don't you?"

"Yes," I said. "I like it pretty well."

"I just love it."

I had a feeling that this sort of conversation would go on forever. I racked my brain for some way to pass the talk to Henry, to get him started.

"Let me show you something," Mamie said and got up and walked toward the other end of the room, where there was a bureau. She pulled open a drawer and started to rummage, and I saw her reach up and turn on a lamp

Then it happened.

On the bureau, in a good leather frame, the sudden light showed us a picture of a young, white-robed nun. The face was serene and beautiful, and the eyes were happy. It was a lovely face, and it might, in other, better times have been Mamie's.

I understood immediately.

Henry spoke. "Who's that?"

Mamie looked around. "Oh! Why, that's my sister Madelaine. She's a nun." She took the picture, wiped it with her sleeve and gave it to Henry. "Isn't she pretty?"

Henry nodded. "Madelaine," he said.

Then I said, "What's your real name, Mamie?"

"Mary. Why?"

"I just wondered."

Mamie looked back at the picture in Henry's hand, "She's so good. She's a teacher, you know. She was always crazy about children, and now she has a whole class full. But isn't she pretty?"

"Madelaine," Henry said, and then a strange thing happened. He began to smile. It was a wonderful smile, it began as a grin and spread wider and wider until his whole face was lighted up. "Madelaine!" he said happily.

He stood up, and handed the picture back to Mamie. He seemed suddenly very tall and in possession of himself.

"Mamie, Mamie," he said, "you're a wonderful girl. You've been very good to us; we've had a fine time. But we've got to go. Here." He pulled out a fifty-dollar bill. "Buy yourself some champagne."

He started to leave. I followed.

At the door I turned back. Mamie was standing in the center of the room staring at the bill. "Somebody's crazy," she murmured.

Henry was halfway down the block before I caught up with him. Now he was laughing out loud. "It's too good," he said. "It's too good."

"What?" I said.

But he shook his head and laughed.

We found a cruising taxi and started back to the hotel. Henry could not stop laughing. Finally he managed to say, "What a pretentious coincidence. Really.'

"Yes," I said.

"Think of the care with which they have been set up, one after another, until now this."

I smiled too.

"I'm not very quick," he said, "but I get the idea." And off he went again.

At the hotel he stopped at the desk and found that a couple of planes left for New York within an hour. "Get me on one of them," Henry said.

He took my arm, and we went to the elevator. "Come watch me pack," he said.

It didn't take long for him to get his clothes into his bag. But before he closed the lid he turned to me. "Could it be that by my rebirth I have been made a kind of antithesis of Lucifer, thrown out of hell into heaven, eternally to be punished by having my misdeeds turned into good?"

I smiled.

"Now consider this. Of them all, only Madelaine has used her good fortune to help others. The happiness of the first three was selfish. If Madelaine's had been so too, the pattern would have been senseless."

Suddenly he lifted an arm. "But no, no. Hers wasn't. And I begin to see . . ." The look in his eye was almost hysterical. "I am safe now, and at peace," he said. "I can tear up the list I made. They will all be the same, I am convinced of that —all happy and prosperous. But"—he closed his bag—"could it be that they have all been blessed because of their connection, through me, with Madelaine?"

"I'm afraid that's hazy reasoning," I said.

"Perhaps," Henry said. "But the fact remains, I'm a powerful man."

A shiver ran through me. Did he really think so? We started for the door.

"Write to me," he said. "Promise."

At the lobby, Richard took the bag and started for the taxis. Henry stopped at the desk and then went back to the elevator for his last newspapers. We shook hands. Henry said he would wire me from New York. I watched till the taxi disappeared. I would miss Henry.

Back in the lobby there was excitement. Richard, the little hunchback elevator man, was standing by his car wringing his hands. "It was Mr. Moore," he kept saying. "It was Mr. Moore. He was the only one went near. I could see."

I went over. "What's the matter?"

He pointed into the car. "Look at my tray. All the money I've got, I keep it there, every cent I've got, my salary, everything all my money . . ."

I looked. The tray was empty.

Henry's last newspapers, I remembered.

I got into the elevator and Richard took me upstairs. There was anguish in his face: "What am I going to do?" he said. "All my money."

At my floor, I put my hand on his shoulder. "Don't you worry," I said. "You are on your way to heaven, I think."

I walked quickly along the corridor to my room; I needed to sit down. I pulled a chair to the window and then sat in it, looking out over the dark city. So soon, I thought, so soon he has begun.

I sat for a long time, watching the lights of the automobiles on a boulevard a mile away. I watched them idly, I am afraid, for I could not do what I wanted to do. I wanted to take all the events of the past two weeks and fit them into the illogical, helter-skelter, meaningless pattern of everyday living.

But I could not.

Finally, as I made ready for bed, I spoke aloud. "Beware," I said. "A force for good is loose in the world. Beware."

And as I went off to sleep, I thought: Henry Moore, what will become of you?

—THE END

Aphrodite in Pine Springs *(Continued from page 72)*

lecture you. What good would a lecture do? Let's say that you're suffering from shock right now, and aren't quite sure what you're doing. I just want to tell you this, Steve. The police are not going to give up easily. They're looking for a car with a dented fender on which are traces of human blood. I wouldn't drive your new car if it isn't in good shape.

"And Steve—I'm going to wait to hear from you until tomorrow before I do anything. I wouldn't lift a finger to help anyone who hit a man and deliberately drove off and left him to die. But I find it hard to believe that you did that—did it deliberately. I'll wait twenty-four hours for any explanation you may have to give."

"T. R.," said Steve desperately, "you couldn't really, you couldn't——"

The doctor's face hardened as he walked out.

But out in the night, clearing now, he asked himself if he really could turn Steve in. It would probably kill Henry, and what it would do to Caroline didn't bear thinking of. But then—hadn't Vladek died already? No one pleaded for him.

An accident. Must Steve be sacrificed because of an accident, on a night like this? *But why didn't he stop?* The doctor cried it to himself. He saw Vladek's face again, heard the painful breathing. *Why didn't he stop?* Even if Vladek was past saving, Steve couldn't have known it! To leave him to lie alone, dying, bleeding to death on the road. How could he?

T. R. went down the steps of the Thacher house to his car and drove home alone.

He put the car away, came in through the kitchen and stumbled up the back stairs without putting on a light. Coming into the bedroom he collided with a chair.

"Teddy?" said Meg's voice in the darkness.

"No, it's a burglar," he said and swore.

"A burglar in a very bad temper," she murmured sleepily. Then she was blessedly quiet, sensing that he was too tired to answer questions.

Dear Meg, he thought, I love her. He meant to say it out loud but yawned instead. But when he got into bed her arms were there, and he fell into the gulf of sleep with his head on her shoulder.

He woke before seven to a bright windy day. Lying in bed, he wondered why he did not take more pleasure in the sunlight and the shiny blue sky. Henry, he remembered. Henry is very ill. And that's not all. Steve is—— He got up out of bed without finishing that sentence.

A shower made him feel better, and breakfast fixed by Meg in the kitchen smelled wonderful. T. R. was quiet and preoccupied. Meg held her questions back while they ate. Only as he sighed and pushed his chair back from the table did she say, "Ted, is Henry worse than you thought? Is that what's worrying you?"

T. R.'s hand went up and rumpled his hair. Meg pursed her lips watching him. That was a gesture of real worry. But he said, "No, Meggy, he'll be all right. He's a tough old boy, you know."

"Then what is the matter?" she asked. "Is it that accident case? Hayne couldn't be involved, could he?"

"Hayne just found him!" he snapped. "Why should you think anyone is involved?"

"Oh, I don't," said Meg. She studied him for a minute, then asked, "Who is it?"

T. R. got up from his chair and stalked out of the room, roaring, "God pity the man with a nagging wife!" Meg followed him with a cup of coffee, and he stopped on the steps to drink the coffee and to kiss her. She said nothing, but her eyes were eloquent.

"Shut up," he said, kissed her again and left, shouting over his shoulder, "I'll be at Henry's and then the hospital; back at ten for office hours."

Stopping at the Thacher house, he felt a moment of panic. He knew that he would rather be stopping almost anywhere else in the world. Firmly he rang the bell, nodded to Reuben, and ran upstairs to Henry. Henry was awake. His eyes reached for the doctor's and clung to them, reaching for the answer to the question which absorbed him. "Am I going to die?" asked Henry's eyes. "Am I going to die?"

"Well, old man," said T. R. with a grin, "you gave us all a scare, you old faker. How are you this morning?"

"He's fine," said the nurse. "He had such a good sleep!"

"That's fine," said T. R., reaching for Henry's pulse. He could feel the eyes clinging, and he tried to think, to concentrate, a message to Henry's brain: No, no, you're going to live.

At that moment, Henry's mouth opened and writhed, and T. R., leaning forward, heard him say, "Steve. Where—Steve?"

"He's asleep, Henry," he said. "He'll be in as soon as he wakes up. You just——"

But Henry shook his head. "Steve," he said. He reached for T. R.'s arm and tried to pull himself up.

"All right, I'll get him," said the doctor. "I'll be back in two shakes."

He went out grimly, knocked on Steve's door, and when the boy didn't answer, went in. Steve was sleeping on his back. His face was relaxed, and he looked about fourteen years old. T. R. stood watching him. The boy looked so heartbreakingly innocent. What's happened to him? the doctor thought.

I'm guilty too, he thought; I lost my temper at him last night. He may be so angry at me that I've already lost all chance to help him.

Steve opened his eyes. For a second he looked at the doctor blankly, innocently, and then his face grew wary. "Your father wants to see you," T. R. said briefly. "He's been asking for you."

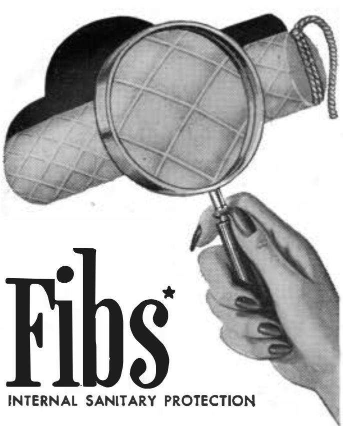
"Is he—is he—worse?"

"No. Just a bit worried about everything. I'll tell him you're coming."

When Steve came into the sickroom, his father had lost the urgency to see him. Steve took his father's hand and sat down by the bed. He was not calculating now—he was young and proud, and the doctor, though still angry, was sorry for him too. I want to get out of here, T. R. thought furiously, and said, "Tell your mother I'll call her later this morning."

All the way down the stairs and out the door he kept repeating to himself, "I'm not going to think about Steve, not now, not yet." But even during his busiest moments at the hospital, he could feel the problem waiting below the surface of his mind. The morning wore on. He was tired. The burned men in their hospital beds and the headlines in the Pine Springs Tribune about the fire were reality, were the obvious truth about all that had happened last night. Neither Sergeant Thompson nor the district-attorney's office had yet called him about Vladek's death, and the paper contained no mention of a man found dying on the highway.

Back from the hospital, twenty minutes late for his office hours, T. R. found half a dozen patients waiting for him. Again there was no time to think. The problem of Steve's guilt need not yet be permitted to rise into the clear light of this brisk bright day. But at twelve o'clock, as the last patient left, T. R. knew he could



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escape no longer. Now, in a moment, he would have to face the problem of what Steve had done. He groaned and decided that he would first call Sergeant Thompson and see what the police were doing. He reached for the phone.

Miss Grimes, his nurse, opened the door. He put the receiver down and said hastily, anxious for privacy, "Go to lunch now, Jane."

"Thank you," said Miss Grimes. "But, Mrs. Thacher's outside. She just came in."

Damn, thought T. R. I've let Caroline worry all morning. "Send her right in and go along," he said to Miss Grimes. "I won't need you." He started to the doorway. "Caroline, I was just——"

But it was not Caroline. Pale, grave and beautiful, Angela Thacher stood in the doorway. After a moment she smiled and came in.

"Why Angela," said T. R. "Come in. I thought it was Caroline. How are you?"

"Thank you," said Angela, and sat down in the old leather chair next to the desk.

T. R. remained standing, staring down at her, while a profound uneasiness crept over him, an uneasiness that was a purely physical thing. Angela's skirt hid her knees, her ankles were crossed decorously, and her eyes were on the gloves she was drawing off. But no man could sit in the same room with Angie and not be aware of her. After a moment, T. R. neatly relegated his awareness of her to the realm of science. What is it, he wondered; how does she do it?

To his dismay, she looked up at him just then, and he saw that she was aware of him too. Her look was so utterly direct, so curious, that he was stunned and almost blushed. He sat down and said, "Well, Angela, what can I do for you?" The words sounded absurd, toneless and meaningless, after her look. But having spoken them, he did hear them and began to wonder really what he *could* do for her—why she was here.

"Why," she murmured softly, "I—I haven't been feeling awfully well lately." Then she looked at him again and smiled.

A professional consultation indeed! He wanted to laugh. Well, if she wanted a medical going over, she was going to get it. He pulled on a bluff professional manner as if it were a sweater and said, "For goodness' sake, Angie, you don't look as if you were ever sick. What's wrong?"

"It's my head," said Angie, shaking it a little. "It hurts so." She glanced at him again, but T. R. had drawn a sheet of paper toward him and was writing busily.

"What are you doing?" asked Angela.

"Writing down your history."

She considered this. "Good heavens, you don't want all my history! Or do you?"

"Only medical," said T. R. mildly. "Now where do you feel this ache? Is it localized—always in one place? Or is it more general? Kind of all over?"

"More general."

"Is it dull or sharp?"

"But that isn't all I have wrong with me," said Angela indignantly. "My heart bumps and flutters so that often I can't go to sleep at night. And I get so tired!"

"That's too bad," said T. R. gravely. "Does this go on all the time?"

"Oh, yes."

"Head ache now? Heart pounding now? Sleep badly last night?"

"Yes, I did. But then—I was so worried about Henry and poor Caroline. How is he? Have you seen him today, Teddy?"

T. R. grimaced at the pet name that only Meg and the elder Thachers used. But she'd heard Caroline call him Teddy, he supposed. He tried to imagine her lying awake and worrying about her husband's half brother. "He's doing pretty well, Angie."

"Really? I'm so glad. But it will be a long siege, won't it?"

"Well, that depends."

"Of course. It must be so hard for an active man. Will he be able to work again, to run the paper actively, I mean?"

"Angela, I don't know. Why——"

"Goodness, I'm so sorry for him! It's lucky Steve's able to take over, isn't it? "Steve seems such a nice boy, I'm sure he'll do an awfully good job. That is——" her eyes flickered over him "—he *will* be running the paper, won't he?"

"Why shouldn't he be?" was all the doctor could find to say.

"I certainly hope he will be," said Angie. "I wouldn't want anything to happen to Steve. Would you?"

"Why should anything happen to Steve?" asked T. R. His voice was very quiet, because if he hadn't controlled it, he would have shouted.

"I don't know," said Angela. "Why should it? I'm sure you'd look out for him, wouldn't you?"

"Angela," said T. R., his voice cold with fear, "what do you know about Steve?"

But Angela's face was a pretty mask of surprise. "Know about Steve?" she asked. "Why, I don't know anything about Steve. I just meant that Steve is so lucky to have you, not just as a doctor, but as a friend, to turn to in any scrape, to depend on for help. And he is just a boy, isn't he? A nice boy, but—just a boy." And the invitation came back into her eyes. He's not like you, they said. You—you're a man! You . . .

"Angela," said Dr. Scoville crisply, "you didn't answer my question about your headaches. Are they dull or sharp?"

"My headaches? Why, I suppose you'd call them dull." She shrugged. Her eyes said: All right, we'll go through with this boring routine if you want. But isn't it silly?

As a matter of fact, it was silly. She answered all his questions promptly, but there was almost no substance in her replies. She contradicted herself without the slightest embarrassment. Even as lies her replies were curiously empty and unrevealing. His efforts to find out something about her were so unavailing that he discovered himself wondering wildly if she had ever really been born, inhabited a real place, played with real dolls, gone to a real school, grown up and had real boys mad about her. The truth about Angela Thacher? No one, he thought, would ever be able to find it out. He was ready to believe her a phantom figure—Aphrodite in Pine Springs—at once new-risen from the foam, and ageless.

He gave up, finally, knowing that he wasn't getting anywhere. And she, of course, knew it too. She smiled at him cheerfully. "Aren't you going to examine me?"

"No," said T. R. firmly and a little too hastily. "All you need is a light sedative."

"I think you ought to examine me," said Angela, and stood up. "I'd feel better." She took off the jacket of her suit, unzipped her skirt and pulled her blouse off over her head.

"Angela," said T. R., not moving from behind his desk, "you put those clothes back on!"

Angela had her slip half off. It was a very pretty slip—white satin and lace.

"Angie!" T. R. really roared it now. He got up and came around the desk. He picked up the clothes she had discarded in one big hand and took her shoulder in the other, saying, "Go inside there and get dressed."

"Oh," said Angela, "you're hurting me," and she fell back against him and lifted her face to his. Her skin under his fingers was very smooth.

Meg's voice said from the doorway,

"For the love of Pete!" She came into the room and shut the door.

"Meg," said T. R. desperately, pushing Angela away, "this isn't what it seems!"

"I didn't think it was," said Meg. "On the other hand, it certainly isn't what I expected when I heard you roar. Why are you hugging Angela? Would some-one mind telling me?"

Angela laughed throatily, disturbingly.

Meg said, "Don't do that, Angie. He has an awful temper. Don't make him any madder than he is."

Angie switched her tactics. Since seduction was no longer possible, she became the woman wronged. "Mad!" she cried shrilly. "Mad! How'd you like to have the clothes ripped off your back, right in the office of a doctor you'd gone to consult! He's mad! I'll—I'll sue!"

"Why don't you go put your clothes on now, then?" asked Meg mildly. "Wouldn't it make you more comfortable?"

"You needn't think you can get away with this?" Angie cried; she snatched up her clothes and went into the examining room. The door banged behind her.

T. R. let his weight sag against the desk and said, "I could kill that woman."

"I know," said Meg sympathetically. Angie was banging things around in the examining room. There was a sudden shattering of glass.

"My God!" said T. R. and started for the door. "I'll kill her yet!"

But Meg caught his arm. Angie came out, fully clothed, slamming the door back against the wall. Her face was white, and her eyes burned with fury. "You'll hear from me!" she said, and went out, banging every door she went through.

T. R. sat down at his desk and put his head in his hands.

"She won't do it," said Meg comfortingly. "Do you want a drink?"

"She might. Yes."

She went out and came back in a few minutes with two Scotch and sodas.

"You having one too?" T. R. asked.

"You don't think you're the only one who needs a drink after that, do you?" She took a sip and sat down on his lap.

"Meggy!" he said and put his arms around her. "You're a darling. Oh Meg."

"That's all very well," said Meg coldly. "And I'm a wonderful sport, I know. But as a matter of interest, just what *were* you doing in here when I came in? Hm?"

"Shut up," he said. "If you're a good girl I'll tell you all about it when my blood pressure goes back to normal. Good Lord, she might really sue, you know. Meg, that's a dangerous woman. Do you suppose she does things like that often? Yes, I'll tell you what kind of things in a minute. That's a good drink. Thank you."

They sat quietly till T. R. finished his drink.

"Now," said Meg, "tell me all about it."

"Well," T. R. began, "she came in and I thought it was Caroline——"

"No, no," said Meg. "Start with last night. The accident. What you were worrying about and wouldn't tell me."

"But that hasn't got anything to do with——" He stopped. "Steve!" he said. "She was pumping me about Steve! All right, Meg. Last night——" And he told her what the man Donald Hayne had found dying had said, how he had accused Steve Thacher of running him down, and how Steve had admitted, almost flaunted, his guilt. Then he went on to Angela's visit and repeated her questions about Henry's chances of recovery and her hints that Steve needed the doctor's protection.

"Well," he finished, "I cut her off and got her back on her symptoms—all non-existent, of course—and all of a sudden, as I was just about to get rid of her, she asked me to examine her. I said, no, it wasn't necessary. Well, she started to strip. I give you my word, Meg, I was so stunned that I couldn't move. I sat there and thought: She's not crazy. She's trying to frame me. And that made me so mad that I yelled at her, and you heard me. You got in here mighty quick."

"Jane Grimes told me Angie was here said Meg simply, "and so I kept my ears open." She got up and wandered around the office. "Now why did she do it? Why does she have to have something to threaten you with? So you won't tell the police about Steve?"

"But why should she care about Steve?"

"He's a nice-looking boy."

"His looks are hardly enough to make her try to frame *me*."

"No they aren't, are they? So obviously she must have been doing more than look at him."

What in the name of heaven, thought the doctor, makes nice women so coarse-minded? He said aloud, "Steve? Steve and Larry's wife? Meg, that's impossible."

"I've thought so for a long time," said Meg soberly. "I know it isn't nice—maybe that's why I try to joke about it. I told myself it was impossible too. And then I'd find myself watching them again and looking for—for a lack of evidence, so that I could tell myself all over again that it was impossible. And then I got to thinking: Why do I have to reassure myself all the time? If there was nothing there, I wouldn't be thinking about it and wondering and hoping it to be wrong. No, Ted, it's not impossible."

"Maybe not impossible that he's—attracted to her. She's—she's got that inescapable pull. You can't help feeling it. But his uncle's wife! Steve wouldn't——"

"I wonder how much he can help himself. And anyway, how do you know he wouldn't? Do you know all there is to be known about Steve?"

"I don't believe it," said T. R. stoutly. "You're sure you're not—well—imagining things a little, Meggy? You're fond of Larry—sure, I am too. And Angie—well, mightn't you be a little, er, jealous——"

"Jealous! Fond of Larry! Really, Ted, I never heard such nonsense! Because I'm trying to tell you something you don't want to believe, you throw up to me that I was once engaged to Larry and so can't be trusted to have any judgment about him or his wife! I never knew anything so silly! If it isn't Steve that brought her here—if she isn't trying to protect him, to find out what you're going to do, and to stop it if she doesn't like it—if it isn't Steve, what *is* she trying to do? Why did she make a pass at you?

"I'll tell you one thing more. You remember I told you I saw Angela shopping yesterday. Well, after we'd chatted for a minute or two, she said she had to get home and went on. I waited for a package and then left, a little after Angela. Just as I came out, a yellow car drove away. If it wasn't Steve's, it was its twin. He'd been waiting for her."

"Meg," said the doctor, "you don't *know* that. Did you see Steve?"

"Well, no. I couldn't see anything but the back of the car. All right, have it your way. Men! If it was up to men and their theories about not doing anything till you have all the facts, we'd all be living in caves today."

T. R. stood up. "As long as it was a cave with you, Meggy, I wouldn't care." He hugged her hard.

She yielded to the familiar warm embrace, her exasperation blowing away on the wind of the old deep love that didn't need words for expression. "Come have some lunch. I'm hungry. Why don't you talk to Steve afterwards?"

An hour later T. R. put down the phone with a gesture of angry frustration. Steve was not at home, and Caroline was wor-

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ried about him. The office had seen him for an hour and then he had vanished.

Now that Steve couldn't be found, T. R. began to feel again how urgent it was to reach him. I've *got* to talk to Steve! I've got to break down his story! If he ran away, there must be a reason. I can't judge him; I can't either go to the police or decide once and for all not to go, without knowing the reason.

Actually, his telephone conversation with Sergeant Thompson was reasonably comforting, for the police knew nothing yet and were too busy investigating the causes of the fire to be enormously concerned with finding the car which had hit Joe Vladek. "There's an alarm out," Thompson said, "and any suspicious cars will be picked up and the drivers questioned. We're playing it quiet now in the hope that whoever did the job'll drive the car that did it, and we'll find it. But if we don't get anywhere we'll advertise, and we may turn up a witness. You'd be surprised how there's usually someone around to see most anything that happens. Only he don't know, most often, that anything's happening at all. Well, so long, doctor. Be seeing you."

T. R. put his mind resolutely on what Thompson had said. Witnesses. Now there was an idea. He himself had only seen the place of the accident at night and in passing. He would go out and take a look at it and try to discover what the visibility might have been last night in the storm. He told Meg his intention.

"Mhm," she said, "That's a good idea. You might look around for Steve, too."

"For Steve! There?"

"Well, he must have seen even less of the place than you did. Don't you think he might want to go take a look?"

"No," said T. R., "I certainly don't!" But he looked at her uneasily.

"He's either there, I should think," Meg went on as if T. R. had not spoken, "or else he's with Angie. And I think he's not with Angie—not now. Because he must already have talked to her today, and she'd tell him to keep away."

"Have talked to her?" asked the doctor blankly. "What makes you think that?"

"How do you imagine," said Meg sweetly, "that she happened to come here and talk all around the subject of Steve being in trouble? You told Steve what you knew last night at eleven o'clock. At noon today Angie appears and knows about it. How? He talked to her."

"I'm not sure she knew. I'm not sure that Steve and Angie are——" He stopped. He didn't want to say the word.

"Aren't you?" asked Meg.

He went to get the car out. And driving over to the highway, he knew he *was* sure—knew it by the ache in his heart. Steve. And Angie. Once he put it together, he knew it had to be that way. Steve and Angie. Why had Steve told her about the doctor's ultimatum? Because she had been there. He thought of Steve's voice protesting that he had been alone. The very tone, echoing, told him that Steve had been lying.

Hayne's house was screened by a tall hedge. T. R. turned into the entrance to the drive and stopped. Here was the place.

He struggled to recreate what had happened. They were together here, he thought. Coming into town, I suppose, because Vladek was on this side of the road. What were they doing? Was he kissing her? Is that why he's so guilty? Was it simply because she was there that he didn't stop? Was he afraid of facing the police with Angie in the car? But—he could have explained their being together, I should think.

He turned back onto the highway, noting carefully that the long curve of the road offered no excuse for Steve's failure to see Vladek. But of course in the sleet it would have been different. He drove slowly along the road. Hayne's hedge ended. There was the roadhouse he had phoned from last night. Witnesses! he thought. Could anyone there, or leaving there, have seen what happened? He put his foot on the brake and peered toward the parking lot at the side of the restaurant. The yellow car was standing there.

In went T. R.'s car, the doctor thinking: My God, he can't be that much of a fool! To drive the same car here and park it within sight of the place! It's a coincidence, it's someone else's car, it's—— The license plate was Steve's.

And when T. R. came through the door, Steve lifted his head and stared at him from a booth in the corner.

T. R. walked over to him slowly. He could see Steve brace himself, covering uneasiness with unconcern.

"Steve," he said, "what are you doing here?"

"What difference——" Steve began and then stopped. "I wanted to look, to see where it—happened," he went on in a lower tone. "What's it to you?" he asked.

"Never mind," said T. R. Meg had been absolutely right, he realized, about Steve's whereabouts. "Look," he said, "I thought I told you not to drive that car."

"You told me a lot of things," said Steve. "Who do you think you are, anyway? The car's all right. Go take a look at it. See if you can find any dents in the fenders. You won't find a thing."

The doctor looked at Steve's hands, laced around his glass. "I didn't know you were a mechanic."

"Not me," said Steve. "It was all done when I looked at it this morning. You may not think I'm a good mechanic, but I guess you'll admit Reuben is. He did it last night."

"Reuben," said T. R. heavily. "You couldn't even cover up for yourself. Reuben fixed it for you."

"Sure," said Steve. "Why shouldn't he? He's *really* fond of me, Reuben is. He doesn't blather about moral responsibility in order to pry into my affairs. He's just willing to help me and trust me to know what I'm doing."

"I'm glad you appreciate Reuben," said T. R., "though my guess would be that his greatest affection was directed toward your father. Then when he overheard what you told me last night his first idea was to save your father pain by getting you out of a jam. Reuben's a pretty wise old man. I doubt how much he trusts you to know what you're doing. As a matter of fact, I wonder how much you trust yourself. Do *you* think you know what you're doing? If you do, you've had a pretty unpleasant shock, I imagine."

Steve put his hands on the edge of the table and pushed himself back, his arms rigid. "What do you mean?"

"Why, I should think a dead man—and a possible police investigation—would be a pretty cruel interruption to the path of true love. Didn't——"

But the doctor was unable to finish. Steve stood up, his fist went back—and was caught neatly by the bartender.

For a second the tableau held, Steve transfixed with fear and fury—held easily by the burly barkeeper—glaring at T. R. who was jammed against the side of the booth by the table. Then the bartender pulled Steve's arm down and said to the doctor, "Tell your friend to have his next fight someplace else. And the pair of you get out of here and never come in again. I might of knew you was mixed up together after the trouble I had with each of you last night. Get out." He pushed Steve away toward the door.

The doctor put down five dollars and

followed Steve to the door. The boy stumbled and looked wildly around for a minute as if uncertain where he was. T. R. took Steve's elbow, steered him to the yellow car and put him inside.

Then he looked at the front fenders. They gleamed back at him smoothly. Reuben *was* a good mechanic. He turned back to Steve. The boy was slumped over the wheel and did not raise his head.

"Can you drive?" asked the doctor.

"Sure," said Steve uncertainly.

The doctor swore. Well, he'd have to take a chance. They couldn't talk here. "Get started, then, and drive to my house. I'll be right behind you. Drive slowly."

They crawled out onto the highway. Steve's car swayed a little and then settled down to steady progress.

In front of the doctor's house Steve crawled slowly from behind the wheel. T. R. took his arm without looking at him and walked him up the steps to his office. Miss Grimes looked up, started a smile and then gave up the idea. T. R. stopped without letting go his grip on Steve's arm. "Any calls?" he asked.

"Nothing urgent," Jane said.

"Okay. I'm still out if anyone does call." He opened the door to the inner room and propelled Steve into it, shut the door, walked the boy across to the big chair where Angie had sat that morning, and put him in it. Steve's head went down in his hands.

T. R. sat down behind his desk and looked at him. After a minute he said, "Steve, maybe I've been riding you too hard. I'm sorry."

"Yeah?" said Steve suspiciously. "Mighty sudden change."

"Most changes are," said the doctor. "Look, let's talk about it from your point of view for a minute. You want me to just shut up and not say anything? On the chance the police won't find any evidence to tie you into Vladek's death?"

"That's right," said Steve.

"And you believe that if I do that, everything will be all right? The whole business will just blow over?"

Steve didn't answer for a second. Then he said, "Sure. Why shouldn't it?"

"I'm asking you," said the doctor. "Will it?" There was a long pause. "As I told you, I've suppressed evidence which would certainly have led to your questioning if not to your arrest. I've lied to the police. Suppose that becomes known?"

"You don't think I'd talk about it, do you? Why——"

"No," said T. R. "I don't think you'd talk about it."

"Then how——" said Steve. But his eyes wouldn't meet the doctor's and he couldn't go on with the sentence.

"You know damn well," said T. R. softly, "that she'd talk if it suited her. You may be—in love with her," the doctor went on, "but even you know that she'll play this for herself. She's a threat to me, and I don't like it. She's also a threat to you."

He waited. Steve was silent.

"Look," said the doctor patiently, "that bartender knows something, doesn't he? What did he mean by your making trouble there last night? There hasn't been anything about the accident in the papers yet. But when there is—does he have something he could tell?"

"No!" said Steve. "He couldn't have seen a thing! I'll swear to that!"

"All right, I believe you. But if another witness made a statement—— Could ths bartender swear you were in there last night making trouble, drunk maybe?—just before Vladek was killed? Could he swear that you weren't alone—and that this other witness would be in a position to know what *had* happened? Think it over Steve. It's twenty years for manslaughter hanging over you. Take your time."

"Damn you," said Steve. "You're not thinking about me. It's your own skin you're worrying about!"

"All right," said the doctor. "But while it will be inconvenient for me, it'll be a good deal worse for you. You——"

Steve put his head down in his hands again. T. R. waited silently.

At last he said, "Why don't you tell me what happened? Then we can plan."

"I——" Steve began and then, as if not trusting himself to refuse in words, shook his head.

"Steve," said the doctor, "You've got to tell. I've told you I'm in this almost as much as you are. You've all but admitted that you know you won't have any peace until she's kept from making trouble. You've got to talk!"

"I won't tell you," said Steve. The words came out with great effort, as if he were at the end of his strength. "Nobody can prove anything. You're trying to trap me again. Well, you can't do it. You don't know anything about what happened, and you aren't going to find out from me." The bravado of the words was contradicted by the weary tone in which they were spoken.

Time for shock treatment, thought the doctor, and said, "Angela was here this morning."

Steve did not move, but T. R. could see the words go through him like an electric impulse. The doctor pounded his advantage home. "She was with you," he said. "She persuaded you to go on after you hit Vladek, because she was afraid for her reputation if you were seen together." He took a deep breath and plunged into a lie—the big lie that would help him break Steve down. "She told me so," he said.

"She what?" said Steve.

"She told me so."

Steve gave him a long level look and then surprisingly he grinned. "Like hell she did," he said. "You're bluffing, T. R."

ANGELA was frightened—frightened and depressed. She was gazing blankly out of the window, wishing she was somewhere else.

She knew it was wrong to fall into this daydream of escape. She had come to Pine Springs with a job to do—an exciting, interesting job, too, that she had been looking forward to. She had a real taste for conspiracy, a deep chuckling pleasure in deception. She'd enjoyed being sweet to Caroline Thacher and Meg Scoville and all their dull middle-aged friends. She'd enjoyed flashing a look at one man after another and feeling sure, from the dizziness in their eyes, that she could have anything she wanted from them. At least she had been sure at first.

At first! When had it begun to go bad? When she was sure of Steve? It had been easy to become sure of Steve. And it was the simple way to handle the situation. Obviously no frontal attack on Henry was possible. But Henry was old, and Steve was his heir. And Henry was righteous, while Steve was a young man with a few wild oats still to sow. To help him sow them was not only to get a hold on Steve's affections but also to gain a weapon against Henry.

That it was fate and not Angela herself who had actually used that weapon against Henry should have reassured her. But it didn't. It frightened her. She didn't want any help from fate. She would much rather be left to herself, to contrive and maneuver events in a meaningless world where she was master, than to acknowledge the existence of any shaping force, friendly or not. Friendly today—hostile tomorrow. And last night, both.

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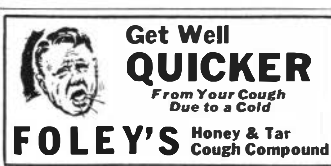

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Henry was out of the way—that was true. But also, a man was dead. Most inconveniently, a man was dead.

Why, why, why, if he were going to die, had he lived long enough to tell that busybody of a doctor that he had been struck by Steve's car? Why hadn't he died at once? I thought he was dead, said Angie to herself, biting her lip.

But she hadn't. She hadn't thought at all. For once in her life she had been truly terrified—terrified because the thing was right there, the hideous broken body. It was lying right there on the road, and she would have to see it if the car stopped. She remembered Steve shouting; she had shouted back, and struggled with him. Then swerving and swaying, the car went on.

On into nightmare. Into grotesque horror. She shut her eyes and saw again that figure springing up ahead of them, fixed in the lights of the car, the slow movement of his head turning toward his fate, his mouth opening, his hand half-raised. And she felt the car hit. The memory had not lost its edge. It sickened her anew every time it swept over her.

But what am I going to do? she thought. That is the important thing. A man was killed. It's a complication. How can I turn it to use? How can I make it work for me instead of against me? I must think!

Steve admitted doing it, she began again. Now what does that mean? He did it because he thought it would keep the doctor from talking. But will it?

And if he tells the police and they arrest Steve, what does that mean—for me? Larry doesn't know anything about running the paper. Bolton won't like the scandal. No, they mustn't arrest Steve. Besides—the grotesque, the macaber nightmare closed down again. Twenty years for manslaughter! The Thachers wouldn't let it happen. Bolton wouldn't let it happen. But could the Thachers stop it? Would Bolton try? Of course, of course they would! But the palms of her hands were wet with perspiration.

She had thought it would be clever, this morning, to go straight to the doctor. If she could not persuade him to be silent she could compromise him, and then she would have something to threaten him with if he would not be silent for Steve's sake. She'd almost succeeded, too. But his wife had come in too soon. Damn the woman. Instead of shrieking and making a fuss, she had been amused.

She stared out at the bare trees whipping about in the windy afternoon and saw, nosing around the hedge into the drive, a yellow car. Steve! Why, how dared he come here? As if she did not have enough burdens of her own to bear without carrying his too. She bit her lip, waiting to see Steve's figure get out, hating him, frightened, alert. It was Meg Scoville who got out of the car.

STANDING on the flagged terrace, ringing the doorbell, Meg was deciding that she should not have come. Her impulse was so likely a bad one!

But something had to be done! T. R. and Steve could not be left to sit and glare at each other forever. She had gone in to try to make peace, but neither would yield an inch. In the face of Steve's silence, the doctor became angrier, surer, reconstructing what must have happened last night in greater and greater detail, badgering Steve for corroboration.

What shall I do with them? thought Meg, her patience exhausted. She looked at her watch. Four o'clock.

Hatless, in her old fur coat, she ran out. Strong habit forbade her taking her doctor-husband's car. Without a qualm she got into Steve's convertible and backed it out of the drive. I'm being nosey and meddling, she thought, but someone has to stop this! I don't want Steve in jail! I don't want Caroline and Henry hurt. And Ted—dear, darling Ted! He's caught in the knot of his own logic. He and Steve can go on shouting at each other and getting nowhere for hours, days, weeks! Most of all, I don't want Ted involved. *Someone* has to untie the knot, get Ted over the hump, give everything the push it needs to start running along sensibly again.

Out of the drive, through the windy afternoon, through the cold light she drove. She was going to Angela. She was going, in a way, to attack a disease at its source.

She left the car in the drive. Getting out she glanced up. Something flickered at a window. There she is, thought Meg. Her nerves tightened; she felt herself grow tense. Then looking neither to right nor left, she walked steadily to the door and rang the bell. What am I going to say? she thought. Perhaps I shall only make it worse, make her decide to tell that she was with Steve when he——

The door opened. Caught in her moment of indecision, almost ready to turn her mission into a social call if it were possible, Meg looked at Angela. She did not speak, and Angela met Meg's eyes with silence, composure and impassivity. Who are you, what are you? asked Meg's gaze. And Angela looked back and gave no sign, no sign at all.

And yet Meg felt a spark leap within her. Why, she thought, why—and a wave of knowledge broke over her. What was it she knew? She wasn't sure. And yet, she was certain that in that moment when she looked at Angela, she had learned something—she had found a key. Her thoughts tumbled about in her head, shaking down into some kind of pattern. Of course, she said to herself, anticipating the conclusion she could feel awaiting her, of course!—and became aware that Angie was speaking to her. Speaking in a tone whose apparent affection was only a cloak for venom.

"Why Meg, my dear," Angie said, throwing the door wide, "do come in. How right you were to come to me. I'm glad you did. I didn't really expect—— But come in, come in, and we'll talk it all over. That's the best way, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Meg mechanically, "that's the best way," and she followed Angela's swaying, graceful figure down the hall to the living room. Walking behind that lithe grace, Meg felt herself clumsy and middle-aged; and yet, in spite of it, secure, rooted, and curiously content.

"Sit down, won't you," Angela said carelessly, sinking down on an overstuffed sofa and picking up a cigarette. "That chair's about as comfortable as anything. Nothing's really very luxurious. I ought to apologize for this house. Larry built it twenty years ago for some girl who didn't marry him. It really is a horror. I must find out sometime who she was. Oh, cigarette?"

"Thank you," said Meg, taking one. "You needn't apologize to me though. I was the girl he built it for."

"Not really," said Angie after a moment, and she laughed, politely incredulous laughter. Meg, who had felt rather a mean triumph a moment before, now found a slow surge of anger rising within her. "Isn't that interesting," Angie went on. "Apparently we appeal to the same types of men. Larry—your husband——"

"Don't!" Meg said sharply. "I didn't come here to—to talk about——"

"About your husband?"

"No." Meg got a grip on herself. "I came to——"

"But I intend to talk about it, you know," Angie cut in, her voice edged with bravado. "I might talk about it to a number of people. Why shouldn't I?"

"Because they won't believe you," Meg said, but her lips felt cold.

"Oh, I don't know about that." Angela leaned back on the sofa and revolved one foot slowly on the end of her long slender leg, admiring the effect as she did so. "That kind of thing has happened to me before, of course. I ought to have realized that he—your husband—was the type. Very inhibited, of course; anyone can see that. And so, instead of being pleasant and flirting a little, he bottled up all his feeling for me until I came in this morning, and then he just couldn't contain himself. I blame myself, in a way. I should have been more careful. You know, it's hard to be like me! There are lots of times, really, when I wish I was just plain and comfortable like you, without this glamour, this—— It's not easy. You shouldn't envy me."

"I don't," said Meg quietly. "I don't envy you at all." She saw a flicker of uncertainty cross Angela's face at her words, and heard Angie plunge on in spite of it, her voice hurrying now. Meg did not listen. She gazed at the cigarette in her fingers, let the voice sweep over her without hearing the words. This is a child, she was thinking, a bad child: a child who refused to grow up, striking at the world because she has hurt herself. Neither good nor bad nor true nor false means anything to her. She knows what she wants, what she thinks will make her happy, and that's all.

I can deal with children, thought Meg. This is a child. "Angela," she said after a while, "stop talking nonsense. Every doctor's wife learns quickly that some of her husband's patients are a bit off-balance emotionally or mentally as well as physically. I knew perfectly well, even before T. R. told me, that you were trying to compromise him. It was a stupid thing for you to do."

"How dare you——" Angie began.

"Stupid," Meg went on, "because it made me begin to wonder about you, about your reason for doing it. And once I did, it was perfectly apparent." She waited a minute, looking at Angie, but Angie could not afford to speak now. She was waiting too. "Blackmail," said Meg.

Angela started to get up. "I won't sit here," she cried, "and be insulted——"

"There's nothing insulting in facts," said Meg. "This is what you did. If you did it, you certainly can stand hearing me talk about it. It's not news to you that a man was killed by a hit-and-run driver during the storm last night. A doctor—my husband—got to him before he died, while he could still talk. The man told my husband that the car that ran him down belonged to Steve Thacher."

"How awful," said Angela quickly, "but I don't see what this has to do with me."

"So my husband asked Steve whether it was true or not—whether he had run over a man and gone right on without stopping, leaving him to bleed to death on the highway. And Steve said he had."

"It's shocking, it's terrible, but——"

"But he hadn't, Angie. He wasn't driving the car. You were."

There was a little stretch of silence before Angela could cry, "What utter nonsense! I hardly know Steve. It's absurd to say that I was with him last night!"

Madge looked at her steadily. "You *were* with him," she said. "I saw you drive away with him after I met you shopping. Don't deny it."

"All right. I was with him. That doesn't prove anything. It was his car. He was driving."

"He was drunk," said Meg. "He couldn't drive."

"He was drunk, but he drove anyway.

That's why he hit that man."

"Angie I know you did it!" Meg cried. "You haven't got one scrap of proof!"

"But Steve," Meg said, fighting desperately, reaching for any weapon, "he's protecting you now but what makes you think he'll go on if the case comes to trial? It's twenty years—twenty years in jail. He's infatuated with you now, but why should he ruin his life for you?"

Angela shrugged "I can't imagine," she said, "but men do. You have Steve's car. Where is he? Does he know you're here?"

"No, he doesn't. He's at our house, arguing——" She stopped.

"Arguing?" said Angie. "He's not going to say a word about me, and you know it, Meg." She looked over at Meg and smiled, smiled enchantingly, since she was actually thankful to Meg for this assurance of Steve's silence. She was like a bad child who has got away with something and is ready to forgive the parent who had tried to thwart it. "Besides, why should there be a trial? You don't want the police messing around you and your husband and the Thachers, and you know it. And believe me, they'll mess if they once get started. Because I promise you, Meg, that if you drag me into this, I'll dish out more dirt than you can imagine. You needn't think I'll be the only one to suffer—or that I can't hurt more people than just Steve. I'll smear all the Thachers, and I'll smear you if I can manage it. And I think I can. There must have been plenty of scandal when you broke your engagement to Larry. Perhaps sometimes you regretted it——"

In mid career her voice died. Meg, looking up to see what had stopped the tirade, saw Angie staring past her. Even before Meg's eyes reached the door to the library, she knew what she would see. His big, soft, handsome figure for once awkward and ungainly, Larry Thacher stood looking at his wife.

When he spoke he had complete control of his voice, and his words were an echo of all the thoughtful inconsequentially charming things that he had spent his life saying. "Meg dear, I've often wondered, too, if you ever regretted it. I'm sorry about this." He shut the door behind him and crossed the room to his wife. "What were you doing with Steve last night?" he said.

"What do you think I was doing?" Angie asked. Leaning back, lifting her chin, she challenged him. After a minute Larry turned away without answering. Then, realizing the truth at last, he collapsed into a chair, his head in his hands.

Angie's voice seemed extraordinarily harsh, its vitality almost brutal. She jerked her head toward Meg. "Did you hear all she was saying?"

"Yes, I heard it all," said Larry.

Angie laughed. "Listening outside doors! I thought you were a gentleman. Mr. Laurence Thacher, eavesdropper. Did you enjoy yourself?"

"Larry," said Meg, knowing perfectly well that she could not help him, yet wanting to offer some comfort, "Larry, she's like a child; she isn't really responsible for what she does. She doesn't realize——"

Larry said, "That may be true, but it's no good to me, Meg. If she isn't responsible, who is? I think maybe I am. I think I must have known about this all along—without wanting to know it. I think I have always known what Angie is. And shut my eyes. "It wasn't worth it," he said. "You're not worth it, Angie." He sounded more surprised than shocked. "Why did you come back here with me?" Larry asked suddenly. "It was after you knew I was broke. Why? I was deeply moved and touched when you did. Don't try and tell me you came for my sake. And you didn't know Steve then."

But Angie would not answer. Larry studied her as if he were really seeing her for the first time.

"I wasn't sure you'd come until that day you arranged for the tickets when you had lunch with Mr. Bolton——" His voice hesitated again, and then he pronounced the name another way. "Bolton! It was after we met him you changed your mind about coming! It was Bolton you—expected to see here. My God! My father's friend. You—you—— And the money! You didn't win that money, did you? You'd never gamble enough to win that much! Bolton gave it to you! Didn't he?"

"None of your business," said Angela.

Larry laughed shortly. "Bolton. And Steve. And how many others?" But Angie did not answer. It was as if in retreat from himself that Larry went on. "And now she's killed a man—here, right here in Pine Springs—got Steve to take the blame and even dragged T. R. in. And I brought her here. What shall I do, Meg? She shouldn't stand trial, you know. She'll do what she says. She'll hurt everyone she can. Henry, Caroline—they don't deserve it. Steve—you mightn't think I'd feel any compunction about what she might do to Steve, but I do. He's my brother's son, and I brought this woman here to ruin him. She'll ruin all of them and the Thacher name too. She'll undo every decent thing that Henry has done in this town. She'll make Henry's whole life useless. Bolton!" Larry turned back to Angie. "Is that what he was paying you to do? Ruin Henry? And you decided that Steve was the quickest way to do it? Is that right?"

Angela's sullen, mutinous face was so full of anger that her answer was clear even though she did not speak. Her eyes met Larry's now. He turned away. Turned away as one does from too bright a light, too agonizing a memory.

"Meg," he said, his voice an appeal now, "what shall I do with her? Tell me!"

"I'll tell you," said Meg slowly, "because we're all in this together now. It isn't just your problem any more. I don't believe the innocent should suffer for the guilty. You're right, Larry, she can't go to trial. We'll have to let her go free. But Larry, she can't go free here in Pine Springs. Will you take her away?"

"Why, yes," said Larry. "Of course I will. Is that all, Meg?"

"All!" said Angie, laughing hysterically. "All! Take me away just like that! Well, I won't go. How do you like that?"

"Yes, you will," said Larry quietly.

"How can you make me? You don't dare even accuse me of killing that man, far less try to prove it. So how can you make me go? I'll stay here, and——"

"No," said Larry, "you won't. Because if you try to stay here, I'll sue for divorce and name Bolton as corespondent. I don't think in that case, he'd want you to stay, do you? But if you come away tonight you can divorce me."

Angie stood up in one fluid movement. "Bolton!" she said. "But I never——"

"Never?" said Larry. "That's ironic, isn't it? But I'll sue just the same."

"You're unfair," she cried, twisting the belt of her dress with her long beautiful hands. "I—I never said I'd tell about Steve, or anything. She was threatening me, and I was just trying to protect myself. Larry, it wasn't just for myself that I was doing this for Bolton! It was for you too—really, really! And now Henry's sick—don't take me away! Someone has to run the paper, and it would be so easy if you just took it over and—— I'd be good. Larry, why should I want to stay here except to be with you?"

"Possibly," said Larry, "because you imagine that time and scheming and a bit of blackmail might allow you to make

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yourself Mrs. Eli Bolton."

"That's not fair! You've no reason to say that! Oh, I know I've been bad about men—— But all the time it's you really. Look, it's such a chance! Don't take me away! I promise I'll be good! I promise!"

He turned his back on her, but Meg heard the agony in his voice as he said, "Go and pack your bags. We're leaving on the night train."

"Larry, I promise! Just a chance, that's all I'm asking! One chance to-——"

"No, not one chance. Go and pack." For one long minute the tableau held. Then Angela whirled and flew from the room. Her feet were like blows on the stair treads, and the tempest of her anger could be heard screeching across the upper floor.

Larry looked across at Meg. "You know," he said in a tone that was almost conversational, "if she hadn't gone then I might have——" His voice trailed off, and he held out his hands. They were writhing together. Meg saw them at Angie's throat. They caught . . . wrung each other . . . the moment passed . . .

Meg said gently, "Thank you, Larry, for this. Perhaps—later sometime you'll come back——" She did not finish the sentence, nor did Larry even seem to know she was there. So she walked swiftly from the house he had built for her twenty years ago.

She drove Steve's car home mechanically, trying to ignore the scraps of the scene she had witnessed which kept floating before her eyes. Larry's hands . . . Angie's childish rage . . .

She imagined Angie and Larry waiting for the night train in the drafty echoing station, climbing aboard, sitting opposite each other in their section, avoiding each other's eyes, chafed and tormented by the hate and memory that still bound them together. She shuddered and turned her mind resolutely to practical things, to what she herself still had to do.

When she got home, T. R. and Steve were gone. T. R. had left her an indignant note, "Where in hell are you? Will take Steve home and see Henry. Why not say when you go out, ask permission to borrow cars? Home to dinner."

Upstairs she could hear the children's voices. "Mommy?" Billy shouted, "Mommy? I washed my own self. Mommy?"

"Yes, my darling," she called, "you're my angel lamb." Her voice sounded thin in her own ears, crying across the gap of the afternoon. Even with the warmth of home and love around her, the core of her heart was still chilled. She kept seeing Larry's shoulders, worst of all, his hands. She kept hearing Angie's feet on the stairs. She thought of the man who had died last night. She thought of Steve's stubborn bent head, of T. R.'s angry face, of Caroline and Henry.

It's over, she tried to tell herself, it's over. Angela is going, Steve will get over her, Henry's beginning to recover, Caroline's worry will ease.

Steve will have more responsibility and with it will come more maturity. What he needs is pressure, a weight to carry. In two or three years he'll marry a nice girl and settle down, and no one will ever know about last night, the storm, and Angela. No one but us.

And yet it was not over, as long as the knowledge remained. For Meg could see quite clearly that an older Steve—publisher of the Pine Springs Tribune, married and comfortable and one of the town's leaders—that Steve would never forgive them, T. R. and herself, for their knowledge.

So she stood for a moment on the precarious peak between past and future, seeing what was to come and still clasping, for one last moment, what had been—and what had almost been.

Then Billy called again, "Mommy, Mommy, where are you?" and her feet flew upstairs as the present took hold of her, and the old, the unhappy, the dead, stepped back for a time from her life.

THE END

Hawaii—Eden of the U. S. A. (*Continued from page* 11)

tidal wave. If my commercial instincts were sounder I would have set up in business at some busy crossroads, with a price scale of a nickel-to-look and a dime-to-touch.

South of the Royal Hawaiian are the film stars, tinkling glasses and monkeys on the beach. To the north, beyond flowering hedges and spreading banyans, are the apartment houses and shops of the suburb of Waikiki. Very flossy shops these, and precarious places for a man to enter with his wife. Here are Chinese jade, Japanese kimonas, Californian sun suits, New York evening gowns—all with Fifth-Avenue-plus sales tags, for Hawaii must contend not only with inflation but with freightage charges covering thousands of miles. Nor are the islands' high prices limited to imported luxury goods. Eggs—$1.35 a dozen—give a general idea.

The main thoroughfare here is Kalakaua Avenue. Eastward, it bears out past Diamond Head to the so-called Kahala Coast, where are located Doris Duke's much-publicized Shangrai La and the homes of many less spectacularly—but solidly—wealthy Honolulans. Westward, it leads through half-built-up, Los Angeles-like suburbs into the city proper.

Downtown Honolulu is a good place to cash a traveler's check or to buy a plane ticket—and get out of in a hurry. It is hot, drab, old-fashioned; and the sea, beaches and rioting flowers seem three thousand rather than a mere three miles away.

Ordinarily dull, Honolulu, however, is not without its occasional excitements. Every other Friday morning, for example, the air is rent with the blatting of foghorns, normal activities come to an abrupt halt, and everybody troops down to the pier to watch the Matsonia sail for the mainland. By everybody I mean *everybody*. The band tootles; *leis* and *alohas* fill the air; hordes of small brown boys dive for quarters (it used to be nickels), and what seems to be three times the population of the territory squeezes itself aboard for an orgy of fond farewells.

Hawaii, of course, has long prided itself on its *aloha* technique, but in prewar days there were too many ship sailings for any one to be the sole center of attraction. At the moment, however, the Matsonia is the only big passenger liner in service, and its biweekly comings and goings are staged with all the pomp and frenzy of a five-million-dollar movie spectacle.

The amazing thing about it all is that the emotion thus blatantly churned up is not at all *ersatz*. Everyone from sugar tycoon to shine boy embraces, waves, distributes *leis*, buys drinks, weeps copiously, and has a wonderful time.

One day we visited Hana, on the green island of Maui—the twentieth-century feudal fief of the Californian-Hawaiian tycoon, Paul Fagan. On the map Hana is a pinprick of a village. In actuality it is an immensely various and complex domain of jungle and volcano slope; pasture and cane field; mills, schools, churches, hospitals, a ranch, an inn. Between the ranch stables and the Mormon tabernacle rises the gleaming white tile of an ice-cream plant. And down the road a way is the beautifully tended jungle-girt baseball field on which Mr. Fagan's San Francisco Seals conduct their spring training.

The pretty girl who brings us lunch at the inn has an ancestry that reads like a cocktail recipe: one part Hawaiian, one part German, one part Portuguese, one part Korean. When she is finished waiting on table she will hurry over to the nursery school to take on her afternoon group, and still later she will put on her beads and *ti*-leaf skirt and return to the inn to dance the hula for the evening's guests. At a near-by table the chairman of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association is deep in conversation with one of President Truman's kitchen cabinet.

A bit later Mr. Fagan is driving us to the beach in his station wagon, when a short, swarthy man goes past on a bicycle. He waves, and we wave back and then look questioningly at our host. "Oh, that's Johnny," he tells us. "He's our Eskimo."

Racial pride and prejudice, to be sure, exist in Hawaii, as elsewhere. The light skins look down on the dark skins, the Occidental on the Oriental, the pure-blooded on the mixed-blooded. The native Hawaiians, in particular, are extremely race-proud, and, to judge from the number who claim royal descent, the Kamehamehas must have been patersfamilias of truly heroic productivity. But at least discrimination has been largely confined to the more superficial social aspects of living. On the deeper levels of human freedom and tolerance, white man and brown man, Chinese and Japanese, Puerto Rican and Filipino, Californian and Korean have managed to live together amicably, even during the taut and trying years of war.

Two often-heard words in the islands are *kamaaina*, meaning old-timer, and *malihini*, meaning visitor. The average *malihini*, to be sure, considers himself a *kamaaina* as soon as he has worn his first *lei*, gulped his first *poi* and learned the words to the first verse of "Little Brown Girl." The old-timers, on the other hand, are apt to think of even Captain Cook and the clipper-ship sailors as outsiders. And in a way they are right, for these, no less than the pleasure-bound tourist or the war-bound GI, were mere transient visitors to the archipelago. Perhaps the truest definition of a *kamaaina* is a person who loves Hawaii enough to stay there.

Among the native islanders—and indeed most Polynesians—an outstanding characteristic is a notable aversion to hard work. This, as the early missionaries pointed out, was no doubt bad for their souls; but it was to prove equally bad for their pocketbooks, for presently they looked around to discover that their white visitors, through superior diligence (and perhaps a smattering of other virtues), owned Hawaii, lock, stock and barrel.

This is not to say that the white man's record in the islands has been a particularly heinous one. On the contrary, as things go in the world's outposts, it has been outstandingly clean. It has simply been a question of the modern world's catching up with Hawaii, and Hawaii's being a very un-modern world indeed. The profit motive is as foreign and uncongenial to the Pacific Islander as a blizzard at the Pole. Is it running a great business? Let the *haole* do it. Drudging in field, factory or office? Let the Chinese and the Japanese and Filipinos and the Puerto Ricans do it.

So it has been the *haole* who makes the money—and who runs things in Eden. More particularly a very small clique of *haoles* who came early, sowed diligently and have reaped abundantly. Pre-eminent among these are what have come to be known as "The Big Five"—a group of long-established, family-owned business houses which control more than half the basic industry and finance of the islands. They are sugar planters, sugar sellers, exporters and importers, landlords, bankers, underwriters, factors and traders, all rolled into one. And it is virtually impossible to do anything in Hawaii, from smoking a cigarette to financing a railroad, without "The Big Five's" having a visible or invisible finger in the pie.

What it all has amounted to, over the years, can perhaps best be described as a beneficent feudalism. Recently, of course, there have been great changes. The war, governmental controls and the organization of labor have deeply affected—and are still affecting—the economy of the islander; and, although the long-established families still hold great power, it is much less than it formerly was.

But Hawaii is still Hawaii, with its own very special way of doing things. At the time of my recent visit there was a strike in the pineapple industry. The newspapers blazed with charges and countercharges. Labor organizers and government conciliators raced back and forth between Honolulu and the mainland. There were threats of violence and of a general tie-up of all industry. But the great gathering in front of the Dole cannery looked far more like a picnic than a picket line. Guitars strummed. *Leis* festooned the placards and the shoulders of their carriers. Dogs yapped, children laughed, and *alohas* filled the air. The strike was serious, the strikers determined—even angry. But it is hard to keep the face grim, the fist clenched for long in the soft-scented climate of Eden.

One thing that immediately strikes—and often surprises—the newcomer to Hawaii is that it is so completely and undilutedly American. The islands are remote, their setting exotic, their people a mixture of many races and nationalities. But this is no mere "possession," no colonial domain on the familiar pattern, in which a stronger nation imposes its politics and economics on a weaker, but remains forever a stranger and outsider. Hawaiians are not merely wards or dependents of America. They *are* Americans, and it is as unthinkable for them to want to break away from us as it would be for the inhabitants of Texas or California. One of the surest ways to offend a *kamaaina* is to talk of coming from or going to "the States." "You mean 'the mainland,'" he will correct you gently. "You see, we too, are part of the States." The islanders are proud of their Eden, but they want it clearly understood that it is Eden, U.S.A.

"Part of the states" Hawaii may be, but it is still not *one* of the states, and it continues its dogged struggle to become the forty-ninth. The great majority of its people want statehood, and their reasons are obvious. The opposition—and it is a powerful one—comes from two sources. First, there are the political conservatives, both in Honolulu and Washington, who fear that free elections would result in control by the Oriental—more specifically, the Japanese—elements in the islands. And secondly, there are the Army and Navy, who see in statehood a possible lessening of their authority in an outpost they regard as their own preserve.

Meanwhile the sun shines, the white beaches glitter, and the glasses tinkle pleasantly on the verandas facing the blue sea. It is a confused and fretful and unhappy world which we inhabit. But in Eden, at least, it is a very lovely one too.

THE END

James Ramsey Ullman, author of "The White Tower," has written a short story with a Hawaiian setting for next month's Cosmopolitan

The Woods-Devil (*Continued from page 48*)

it far off and high, a growing roar above the forest. Abruptly it snatched at the clearing, whirling the snow in eddies, and the serried pine tops bent in rhythm. Because his impulse was to hurry in and close the door against it, Nathan stood for several minutes, his face straight into it, letting the cold and darkness and emptiness sink into him.

Indoors, he eased down his log and took off his sheepskin coat and cap, baring his mop of brown hair. He sat down beside Viney, his eight-year-old sister, playing with the endless paper people she cut out of the mail-order catalogue. The wind made hollow bottle noises down the chimney, and the driven snow made a dry *shish-shish* against the log walls.

"Listen to that," said Nathan's mother. "The almanac was right. We're due for another cold spell. 'A stormy new moon. Keep a good fire,' Father Richard says for the ninth. 'Colder. Except snow,' it says for the tenth."

Nathan's voice had a manly note. "It's getting colder all right, but it won't snow. It's too darned cold to snow. A fellow'd soon be stiff if he didn't keep working."

"Is the ax in?" his father asked.

"Yes." Nathan fetched it and put a keen shining edge on it with the whetstone. Then he ran a greased rag through each of the rifle barrels. He could feel his father's approving gaze on his back as he sighted through each barrel into the firelight. "Bright's a bugle," he echoed his father's invariable comment.

Then he sat waiting, his hands clasped tightly between his knees, for what he had known must come.

"NATHAN," his father said presently, and the boy went over and stood dutifully by the bunk. "Do you think you can cover the trap line tomorrow, son?"

"Yes, I guess I can."

He was prickling with trepidation. The wind shook the cabin door as he spoke, and he thought of all that lay up in the far pine valley—things to be felt if not seen or heard.

"It's a long ways, I know, and it's mortal cold"— his father's voice was drained and tired, and for a moment Nathan glimpsed the naked misery and worry in his mind—"but money's scarce, son. We've got to do what can be done."

"I don't mind the cold or the snow." Nathan looked down at his feet until that look should leave his father's face.

"I'll be laid up three, four weeks, maybe more. It's four days since we laid out the line. Varmints may have got most of our catch by now. You've got to go, Nathan. . . If you start at daylight you can make the rounds and back by night."

"Shucks, yes." Nathan forced a smile.

When he dared lift his eyes, he saw his father's face had hardened again, coping with the problem.

"You needn't try to bring in the catch," he said. "You can hang some of it on high boughs, then reset the traps. Main thing's to find what kind of range we got in there. Later on you may have to spend a night in the valley. Think you'll be ascairt to sleep alone in the deep woods?"

"Not me." Nathan's tone discounted all concern, but misgivings quickly crowded in. "Anyhow I'd have an ax and a rifle and plenty cartridges," he said.

His father managed a smile. "Might have to sleep in there once every week till I'm up again. So you'd best look at that log cache we built to store traps in. It's plenty big enough to sleep a man."

Pride filled Nathan. This was real man's work he was detailed to do.

"You'd best eat now and turn in early," his father said, "so's you can start at dawn."

"All right."

"You're a brave boy, Nathan," his mother said. "You're the provider for this family now." He flushed hot all over and looked surlily away. "What a blessing it is you're big enough to cover the line while your father's down. Last year you could never have done it."

"He's near about as good as any man now," Nat Stemline said. "Knows the woods and critters 'swell as I."

Nathan grew more stolid than usual. holding himself against the rushing tide of feeling. He wished he were all they said of him, but he was not. Inside he was filled with fear whenever he thought of the Little Jackpine Valley where they had laid out their trap line. For three days the vision of the valley and what he had felt there had lurked before his mind's eye, filling him with dread, even when he put his mind to something else.

Methodically Nathan ate the man's share of food his mother set before him on the hewn-log table. Soon after, he climbed the sapling ladder to the small quarter loft. He lay still pretending to sleep, but long after the lamp went out he was grappling with his thoughts.

Now and again he could hear his father stirring and knew that he too was thinking the same thoughts: How were they going to get through the winter? Why, of all times, had he run his trap line up the Little Jackpine just the day before his accident? Nathan wouldn't have minded covering their old line along the lake shore, but the valley. . . Yet he dare not show his fear or his mother might stop him. It was all up to him. . .

Dawn had not yet come when Nathan descended the ladder. He built up the fire and made coffee. He ate a hurried breakfast, then took down his old wool sweater to wear under his sheepskin coat.

"Make sure you don't forget anything," his father said. "Have you got plenty cartridges . . . matches? Belt ax? Bait?"

"Yes, Pa."

"Best take my rifle," his father said. Nathan took down his father's finely balanced rifle with its curly-maple stock and held it proudly in his hands. It was a far better weapon than the old Sharps Nathan usually carried.

"I wouldn't take the sled," his father was saying. "It's heavy, and I want you should be back by night. Be right careful, won't you, son?" he called as Nathan lifted the latch.

THE COLD bit deep. It was scarcely light in the clearing. The storm had died down in the night and there was no wind now, but the air cut Nathan's cheeks like a razor. It was colder than anything he had ever known.

After twenty minutes of tramping he thought of turning back. His face and hands were numbing, his joints seemed to be stiffening. Each breath was an agony. He snatched up some of the hard dry snow and rubbed it against his stiffened face till a faint glow of feeling came. Then he ran for a long way—beating one arm, then the other, against his body, shifting the rifle, till his thin chest was heaving. His face was again like wood. He was terrified, but he would not give up, would not turn back.

He covered the three miles to the mouth of the Little Jackpine in a daze. He did not know what he could do with his numbed hands if he did find a catch in the traps; he could not even use the rifle if occasion arose. He would have cried had he been a year younger, but

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at fifteen you do not cry. He started into the valley.

The Little Jackpine lay at the foot of old Shakehammer Mountain, and through it a small stream rushed and snarled like a wildcat, its bed choked with almost inaccessible jungles of down-logs and windfalls. It was an appalling wilderness.

Both Nathan and his father could read the silent speech of place and occasion, and what the valley had said to them had been vaguely antagonistic from the first—almost a warning. Nathan remembered how they had threaded the valley bottom, single file, silent. The breeze had droned its ancient dirge in the treetops, but not a breath of it stirred along the stream bed. The hiss of the water created a hush more intense than utter silence.

He remembered how he had spat in the boiling waters to show his unconcern, but it hadn't done much good. Several times as they headed homeward Nathan's father had stopped abruptly in his tracks to look behind and to all sides.

"Queer," old Nat had muttered. "A full hour past, I had a right smart feeling we were being watched and followed. I still got it."

"I had it, too, Pa," Nathan had said. "It's mighty fearsome back yonder, ain't it?"

"It ain't a bear," Nat had evaded the question. "May be some young lynx cat, figurin' he'd like to play with us. A lynx is a tomfool for followin' humans."

They had backtracked to the top of a rise to look, but they saw nothing. Then the valley had struck its first blow. A perfectly ordained boulder, that had lain poised for untold years, had toppled at the exact moment to crush Nat's leg as he scrambled down a rocky ledge. . .

Nathan passed the spot, but he did not pause. Something seemed to listen behind each tree and rock, and something waited among the taller trees ahead, blue-black in the shadows. After a while it seemed warmer, perhaps because he was climbing. Then he came to the first trap and forgot wind, cold and even fear.

A marten, caught perhaps two days before, lay in the set. Its carcass had been partially devoured, its prime pelt torn to ribbons as if in malice. Roundabout in the snow were broad splayed tracks, but wind and sleet had partly covered them so that their identity was not plain. But they told Nathan enough. Neither fox nor wolf had molested this trap. Neither was it a bear. Nathan knew what it was, but he wasn't admitting it yet—even to himself.

He stood up, his eyes searching for a glimpse of the secret enemy, but the valley gave back nothing. Except for the mutterings of the balsam boughs far overhead, the stillness was complete.

He moved on between the endless ranks of trees, and again he had the feeling of being watched. At intervals he stopped to glance back along his trail, but saw nothing. The trunks of the dark trees watched him as he came and slipped furtively behind him as he passed.

The next trap had been uncovered and sprung, the bait—a frozen fish—eaten, and the trap itself dragged off into the brush and buried in the snow. It took nearly half an hour of floundering and digging to uncover trap and clog. Hard by was another set, and there Nathan saw a thing that made his skin crawl. The remains of a porcupine lay in the trap and the creature had been eaten—quills, barbs and all. Blood was spattered all around, blood from the jaws of the eater. Only a devil could have done that. Beneath a spruce he saw clearly the despoiler's trail—splayed handlike tracks like those of a small bear, each print coming to a peak of fierce claw marks.

These were the tracks of a giant wolverine, the "woods-devil," bane of all hunters and trappers.

For long minutes Nathan stood in the dusky shadows fighting down his fear. He had heard about the evil fortune that fastens upon trappers molested by a wolverine. Then he thought of what awaited him at home—that stricken look on his father's face—and his fear of that was greater than his fear of the valley.

He hung his sack of frozen bait on a high bough. Useless to reset any of the traps now, for the creature he was pitted against could smell cold steel, unbaited, through two feet of snow, and in sheer devilishness would rob and destroy wherever it prowled.

Nathan plodded on again, his chest hollow with hopelessness, not knowing what he could do.

The snow grew deeper, and one after another he came upon six more sets that had been robbed. Each had held a catch, and each ravaged pelt meant the loss of food and clothing to the family. At the seventh trap a cry broke from him. Scattered about in the snow were tufts of fluffy black fur with long silver-white guard hairs showing here and there. That trap had held a prime silver fox, the greatest prize known to trappers, worth a whole season's work to any woodsman. And the woods-devil had destroyed it.

The boy whimpered as he crouched there in the snow. Then anger flooded him, drove back the tears. He rose and began the endless plodding again, peering into every covert for the dark skulking shape. He did not know the size of a wolverine. He'd never even seen one. He recalled old Laban Knowls's tale of the wolverine that had gnawed his walnut rifle stock clean in two and scored the very rifle barrel. And Granther Bates told of a woods-devil that had killed his two dogs, then gnawed through a log wall to rob him of his grub cache.

It was afternoon when Nathan neared the farthest limit of the trap line. Of the twenty-odd traps he had visited, only two had been unmolested. Abruptly he came upon a fresh trail in the snow: the same handlike tracks and demon claws, no more than hour-old. Grimly he turned aside to follow their twisting course.

He was descending a steep wooded slope, when on a sudden impulse he doubled in his tracks and plunged back up the grade through deep snow. As he reached the crest a dark humped shape took form beneath the drooping boughs of a spruce—a ragged sooty-black and brown beast, some three and a half feet long, that lumbered like a small bear; lighter colored along its back and darker underneath, in direct contrast to all other forest beings. It saw him, and its green-shadowed eyes fixed those of the boy beneath a tree some hundred feet away. The black jaw dropped open, and a harsh grating snarl cut the stillness. The utter savagery of the challenge sent a shiver through Nathan's body. His rifle flew up, and he fired without removing his mitten. The whole valley roared. In the same instant the wolverine disappeared.

Nathan rushed forward, reloading as he ran. Under the spruce there were several drops of blood in the snow, but the wolverine had vanished completely. Because of his haste and the clumsiness of the mitten he had only grazed the animal; he'd lost his one big chance.

Panting, stumbling, sobbing, the boy plunged along the trail, bent low, ducking under the drooping limbs of the trees, sometimes crawling on hands and knees. He saw other drops of blood. That gave him heart. He had a lynx eye; his father had often said that. He would follow on,

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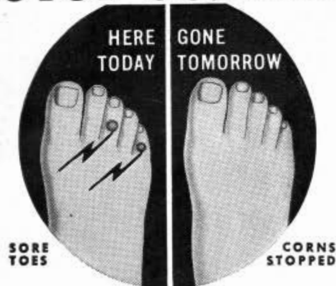

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to the very Circle if need be; he would not miss a second time. His one hope now was to settle with the beast for good and all.

Down along the stream bed the trail led, twisting through vast tangles of windfalls, writhing masses of frost-whitened roots and branches that seemed caught in a permanent hysteria. Twice he fell, but he thrust the rifle high as he went down to keep the snow from jamming its snout. He plunged on again; he did not know for how long, or how far, but he was aware at last of the beginning of twilight. And the end of light meant the end of the trail. Victory for the enemy. The way had grown steeper. He was coming to the narrow throatlatch of the valley's head. A place where hundreds of great trees, snapped off by storm and snowslide from the slopes above, had collected in a mighty log jam, a tangle of timber, rock and snow that choked the stream bed from bank to bank. Countless logs lay crisscrossed helter-skelter with two- and three-foot gaps between. The great pile was acre-large, fifty feet high, rank with the odor of rotted logs and old snow.

Into this maze led the trail of the woods-devil. . . Nathan skirted the pile. The trail did not come out.

Trembling, he squeezed his way between two logs into the great jam. The wolverine might be fifty yards inside, but somehow it must be ferreted out. In and in Nathan wormed his body, pausing to watch, to listen, his rifle thrust carefully before him. Then down and down into the twisting chaos of dead and dying trunks, led by his nose, for the rank odor of the devil's den now filled the air, coming upward from the very bottom of the jam; fouler than any skunk the taint was.

Nathan stopped short, his body tensing like a spring. To his ears came a harsh and menacing growl, but from what direction he could not tell. He waited but could see nothing. He loosened the safety on his rifle and wriggled forward again, and again the air was filled with that ominous challenge. This time it seemed to come from behind him. He whirled in panic, but there was nothing. His terror mounted. The creature was watching him, and he couldn't see it. And might not there be *two* of them? Then movement caught his eye, and he glimpsed a soot-dark form in the shadows.

The boy wriggled on his belly along a slanting log, maneuvering for a shot through the intervening timbers. He braced himself, craning far downward... Then in the very instant he took aim he slipped on the snow-sheathed log. The gun roared; the shot went wild; and, as Nathan caught himself, the rifle slid from his ice-slick grasp. It clattered downward, striking against log after log before it lodged at the bottom of the jam, snout down in snow, its barrel clogged, useless.

In that instant all the craft that has made man master of the wild fell away, and Nathan was reduced to first principles. The wolverine clambered slowly upward. Inexorably it advanced upon him. He screamed at it, but there was no vestige of fear in the beast's make-up. Nathan's hand went to his light belt ax; he did not give ground.

With a panic shout he leaned and swung at the low flat head but missed because of hindering logs. He swung again and again, and the blade struck but with no apparent effect, for the creature's advance never checked. Its small implacable eyes brimmed with a blue-green flame.

It lunged suddenly for Nathan's dangling legs, and he flung himself up and over the log, slipped on the icy sheath and grasped desperately for another log; slipped again to bring up eight feet below. He flung round with a cry of desperation expecting to meet open jaws, the demon almost upon him. But the thing was logy. Its power lay in its indomitability—a slow, irresistible power.

In it came again, above him now. He stood upright, braced on two logs, to meet it. He was crying now, sobbing and unashamed; the last tears of childhood poured out.

He struck again, yelling with every blow of the belt ax, but hack and cut as he would the beast bore in and in, maneuvering along the undersides of logs to avoid the ax blows, always coming on.

Then Nathan slipped again, avoiding the traplike jaws. He fell, clear to the bottom of the jam, biting snow as he screamed. He was on his feet again before the creature above released its clawhold and dropped upon him like a giant slug.

An arm flung up over his throat, he jerked back blindly. Spread saber claws tore open his heavy coat. Then the ax fell again, blow after blow with all his strength; he shouted with every blow. No longer cries of terror, but of war.

The thing would not die. The jaws clamped on Nathan's leg above the knee, and he felt his own warm blood. Then his hand found the skinning knife at his belt, and the blade sank in the corded neck—turned till the clamp of jaws released. . .

Up out of the abatis Nathan climbed till half his body emerged from the top of the great jam, and there he rested—panting, spent. He whimpered once, but there were no tears now. Instinctively his eyes lifted skyward. Overhead, as night drew on, had come a great rift in the leaden canopy of cloud, and a few stars shone through. He fixed his eyes on the brightest star until chaos left them; now his vision steadied, as if his head were higher up than ever it had been before, in a realm of pure air. His brain was almost frighteningly clear.

The trickle of warm blood down his leg roused him. He pressed his heavy pant leg round his wound till he felt the bleeding stop. Painfully he turned down into the maze of logs again and brought up the rifle. Then down again to struggle upward, dragging the woods-devil by its short and ragged scut. He laid it out on the snow and pulled out his bloody knife. He wasn't tired now; he wasn't cold; he wasn't afraid. His hands were quick and sure at the skining; even his father had never lifted a pelt with smoother, defter hand. Darkness shut down, but he needed no light. There was no hurry. The head he cut off and left intact, attached to the hide.

He thought of the prideful fancy that made the far northern Indians covet some garment made from a wolverine's skin as an aid to craft and bravery. Maybe his mother would make him a cap or some mittens of the devil's skin. Oh, there would be talk in the cabin tonight; they would sit at the table long after their eating was done, as great folk were supposed to do. He'd recount all the details of the day and the fight before he brought in his trophy to show.

He rose at last and rolled up his grisly bundle, fur side out, and moved away through the blackness of the trees, sure of tread, for he had the still-hunter's "eyes in the feet." The reflection from the snow gave a faint light. He limped a bit.

Off in the black woods a wolf howled dismally, and Nathan smiled. Never again would the night dogs make his skin crawl. Never again would he be afraid of anything above ground.

A boy had gone out from the cabin that morning, but it was a man returning under the bright pollen of northern stars.

THE END

Movie Citations *(Continued from page 12)*

research wringer that last spring turned "Katie for Congress" into "The Farmer's Daughter." Naturally, when queried, more people reacted to the words "The Farmer's Daughter" than to "Katie for Congress." But what does that prove? This most delightful comedy was about a girl named Katie who ran for Congress, but its box-office intake was hurt because quite a few people were disappointed that it wasn't something about a traveling salesman, while others stayed away because they thought it was!

I don't think "Night Song" is that misleading as a tag. It fits the story very well. The laugh comes in, though, from the fact that RKO—which is releasing "Night Song" and released "The Farmer's Daughter"—did film the original Bessie Breuer novel called "Memory of Love." But that one they called "In Name Only."

Last winter when Harriet Parsons (uh-huh, that's my baby) was given an original by Dick Irving Hyland to produce, she took over the rights to Miss Breuer's nostalgic three little words, but the research boys felt that "Night Song" would do better. I'll give them a private bet that if they were research girls they wouldn't have said that.

However, I'm sure that under any name, "Night Song," like Mr. Shakespeare's rose, will ring sweetly on the box-office bell. My clever daughter, aided naturally by John Cromwell's splendid direction, has given it all the elements of success.

The story is adult and sound. The backgrounds are San Francisco—its colorful night clubs and historic Market Street, its Nob and Russian hills; and New York—its Carnegie Hall, Rockefeller Center and Fifth Avenue. These settings are the real McCoy, just as such personalities as Eugene Ormandy, the conductor, and Artur Rubinstein, the pianist, are present as their real selves.

It is an actual original concerto that is played by the real New York Symphony Orchestra as part of the action. (It was composed by Leith Stevens, and it is very lovely.) That's the cultural side; but my kid, smartly, induced Hoagy Carmichael to compose and sing a travesty on the current mystery-story craze called "Who Killed 'Er." This, in effect, means a bit of music for both the highbrow and the lower-brow audience, exactly as the casting offers appeal to both the younger and the more mature crowd.

Hoagy and Ethel Barrymore romp—and I do mean romp—through the plot, backing up the stellar performances of Dana Andrews and Merle Oberon. The queen of the royal family of Barrymore plays Merle's worldly-wise but romantic aunt with glow and acidity. There was a time when I thought she overacted in movies. But I certainly don't think so now. To her credit, she quickly caught on to the movie technique, and I think it's wonderful news that she wants to stay in Hollywood the greater share of her time. As for Mr. "Stardust" Carmichael, I think he's one of movies' most distinctive personalities, with his wry, wicked glances and his no-account voice which is, nonetheless, so appealing. He's never been more happily cast than he is here as the leader of the small swing band in which Dana Andrews plays the piano.

I don't believe Dana Andrews could give a bad performance if he tried. His great virtue as a star is that he can convey, along with his charm, such a sense of being one of today's angry men. There is always this overlay of modern reality about all his portrayals, and it is perfect in "Night Song," in which he plays a blind man. A veteran, who has returned from the war unscathed, he is embittered by the irony of losing his sight in a peacetime accident. When Merle Oberon encounters him, he is a thoroughgoing hater of everything in general and of himself in particular.

The late unlamented "fellow travelers" of Hollywood would have screamed themselves into a lather over Merle Oberon's playing a rich girl who is also a nice, sensitive human being. We all know there are many such girls, but the Red boys would die rather than admit it.

Merle is such a tiny person physically that I am always amazed at her ability to project the greatest spiritual force. But she can do it—whether it is the force of love, as here, or the wild force of her never-to-be-forgotten Cathy in "Wuthering Heights." She's called upon for many moods in this picture—tenderness, chic, humor and warmth—and she easily supplies them all.

For its romantic suspense between two delightful people, for its laughter supplied by its two "character" stars, for its fine music and charm, I award "Night Song" the Cosmopolitan Citation for the best picture of the month.

"TISA" is a honey, produced by Milton Sperling, directed by Elliott Nugent from a play by Lucille S. Prumbs and Sara B. Smith. Who the latter ladies are I wouldn't be knowing, but I salute them as writers who have a real flare for creating vital, interesting people.

Set against the lusty days of New York's 1900, I'll admit "Tisa" has some overlong speeches scattered through it about what is America, and some disturbingly 1947 dialogue like "drop dead." By way of solving its plot, Teddy Roosevelt appears all too patly, murmuring "Bully" through his overprominent teeth. But these are trivial flaws you will quickly forget because of the lively story and the glowing performance of Lilli Palmer in the title role.

I'll wager all the tea in China that this film was originally contrived as a starring vehicle for the stage's Sam Wanamaker, making his first bow as a movie actor. As the brash, glib young Mark Denek, always giving notice that he will eventually be a senator and an adviser of the President, Mr. Wanamaker grows on you as the picture progresses. He is not a handsome man. His eyes are small and close-set, and his nose is too large. But he has a way with lines. His voice is superb, and his sincerity lights up every scene. And that's a mighty good thing, for he is cast in one of those annoying roles of a character who bores everybody in sight. I do wish playwrights would stop inventing such characters. Their danger is that they are apt to bore the audience too. I know they bore this correspondent.

But not even a wooden Indian could fail to respond to Mrs. Faludi, the boardinghouse keeper, who dons and discards husbands like so many aprons; or Mr. Grumbach, who runs the sweatshop and tries not to have a heart; or the sensuous, really cruel Mr. Tescu, the steamship agent, who smoothly exploits the young immigrant girls who give him their pitiful savings as down payment on the tickets which are supposed to bring over their relatives from "the old country." Stella Adler makes Mrs. Faludi as folksy and warm as fresh-baked muffins. Akim Tamiroff blusters through as Mr. Grumbach, and Hugo Haas does the role of Tescu in great style.

None of that competition, however, keeps Lilli Palmer, with her sex-hungry

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eyes, her firm jaw and luscious mouth, from stealing the picture as Tisa. She knows she is a fool to love Mark Denek, and while he shoots off his mouth, she works, by day in a sweatshop, by night at the boardinghouse where—oh, for the good old days—she does all the dishes for fifteen cents in wages. She gets herself into Mr. Tescu's clutches when she tries to borrow back her own hundred dollars to give to Mark, anonymously, for his payment on his law course. All Tescu demands is that she sign a paper and be nice to him. And all the paper does is sign away her father's freedom and nearly railroad Tisa back to the old country. But it all comes out very nicely in the end, thanks to Teddy Roosevelt; and you'll come out of the theater remembering this most distinctive foreign actress to arrive here since Bergman.

I know that I gave Miss Palmer a Cosmopolitan Citation for the best supporting player in "Body and Soul." Now I am delighted to give her another Citation as a star—the best feminine star of the month of February.

There's an old rule of show business that the ladies get first billing. For that reason I mentioned Lilli Palmer's performance in "Tisa" ahead of Barry Fitzgerald's in "The Naked City"—though actually this Fitzgerald performance ranks second to none. As magnificent as he was as the little old priest in "Going My Way" or the ironic old doctor in "Welcome Stranger," I declare he is better here. And that is because the role of Lt. Dan Muldoon of New York's Homicide Squad offers him a very full range of pathos and comedy, of wit and wisdom. He's a worldly little man in this one, with a soft heart but a very hard head. He's intent on solving a murder, and nothing is going to stop him.

To digress for a moment, I want to say that one thing I never expected to see was a picture with a poetic mood produced by Mark Hellinger. My friend Mr. Hellinger produced last season's hard-hitting "The Killers," followed by the harder-hitting "Brute Force." Yet "The Naked City," concerned though it is with the theme of Hoagy Carmichael's song in my daughter's movie—that is "Who Killed 'Er"—is done with such a lyric love of New York that you can practically reach out and touch it.

The action takes place all in one day—starting at one o'clock in the morning, ending at one minute before one the next morning. As the camera roams over the sleeping city, you see a girl killed. You don't know why or by whom. Neither does Lt. Muldoon know, when the case is turned over to him; nor does Don Taylor as his young assistant, James Halloran, who wants to do very honest work, but who is more anxious to get back to his wife and child whom he loves so much.

Dorothy Hart, as Ruth Young, knew the murdered girl, but she has no idea who killed her, and her fiancé, Howard Duff, says the same thing. But small Barry plugs on, and so, reluctantly, does young Don. The net begins to tighten. Strange coincidences start bobbing up.

Since the whole picture was shot in New York, using mostly radio actors, it is virtually a cast of all new faces. This helps to maintain the vivid suspense. Loving murder mysteries the way I do, I know a lot of the tricks of that trade, but I couldn't spot the real murderer until just before the end when even a bat can see through the situation. There is one scene wherein Don Taylor goes calling on a really sinister strong man that will positively make your spine crawl.

I was fascinated by every moment of "The Naked City," with its taut holding power and its three love affairs. The most powerful one is really that of its producer for our own New York—but in the purely fictional realm, the love of Don Taylor for his young suburban wife and of Dorothy Hart for Howard Duff are written in clever contrast.

Incidentally Mark is building himself up quite a stock company. Besides sharing Burt Lancaster's contract with Hal Wallis, he has the three young principals of this picture under lock and key. All three of them look like embryonic star stuff to me, particularly Taylor, a handsome boy who is like a young Jimmy Stewart, without being so orffly, orffly coy.

Compared to the artistry of Barry Fitzgerald, they look like babies. Against the genuine background of New York's Homicide Bureau, its files, its desks, its lighting, he never resorts to any spooky tricks of action or voice. Yet he makes you both respectful and afraid of Lt. Muldoon, even while you are charmed by him.

Barry will be sixty next month, and he makes no bones about it. He's a bachelor by choice and a fine actor by grace of his native talent. I suspect that ten years from now I'll still be giving him Citations —and I'm delighted to give him one right this month, for the best male starring performance in February.

And so I come to "Albuquerque," a Western that has an honest-to-goodness strong story, and which stars three clever, easy-on-the-eyes players — Randolph Scott, Barbara Britton and Catherine Craig—with George "Gabby" Hayes added for comedy and Lon Chaney along to do the dirty shooting.

I guess it isn't possible to make a Western so bad that it won't have some audience. Believe it or not, in these days when studios yell they can't make the simplest picture for less than a million, there are Westerns being turned out for less than twenty-five thousand dollars. They play forever in every part of the world, since the costumes in them never date, and you can figure out what all the shootin's for, even if you don't speak one word of American.

When, however, a plot, a cast and one or two million are tossed into a wide-open-space drama, a hit is assured. Paramount has underwritten "Albuquerque" very neatly by tossing in around a shade over a million and by buying a yarn from Luke Short, who is currently the pet author of the horse-opry circuit.

One thing that distinguishes "Albuquerque" is that the girls in it aren't just insipid sticks. You are in suspense about angel-faced Barbara Britton's real motives right up to the final scene. The struggles in the picture are about the transporting of ore from the mines, and naturally there is villainy on horseback and fighting in the saloons over this. But a really sturdy love story between Randy Scott and Catherine Craig (who in private life is Mrs. Robert Preston) is also developed, with the suspense coming about through Miss Britton's dubious actions.

I loved it. I like views of our Western plains — particularly when they are in color, as they are here—and the twang of Western speech. I like action and big-scale heroics. If you do too, I guarantee you'll have fun and a right good time.

I'm giving the Cosmopolitan Citation to Director Ray Enright this month for the best directing job, because he got such sincere and straightforward performances from his actors, and because he maintains such excellent balance between bullets, bad men, the most handsome virtuousness on Randy Scott's part and the most snarling lowdownness from Lon Chaney. That's mighty nice going, Mr. Enright, and I thank you for it.

THE END

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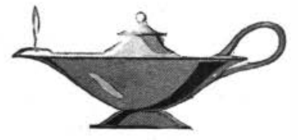

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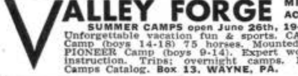

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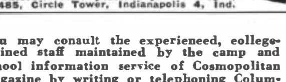

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What's Wrong with Youthfulness *(Continued from page 27)*

at the temples—romantically gray. And Pop does not have Mom's problem with clothes. For example, he does not have to buy artificial bosoms if a youthful lift is lacking, as Mom does—or to strap himself down, as she does, if maturity enlarges her figure. Pop's clothes are, basically, two cylinders and a box, in which he is able to age in various ways before the fact shows.

But Pop has the box and the cylinders cut to give the impression of litheness. He picks collegiate patterns and materials to enhance his young look. His chief evidence of youth, however, is in behavior. Being "a boy at heart," the middle-aged American male—in *his* millions—stays passionately a sophomore to the end of his days. His first devotion is to sports. Three world catastrophes and the bewildering dawn of the Atomic Age have not touched his juvenile determination to remain a rooter. He knows more about ball players and game scores than he knows about the whole rest of the modern world, if exception be made of the small corner of production which he calls his "business," "job," or "profession." Sports keep him young, he says.

His idea of a suitable men's gathering is a sophomore's. He gets together with "the boys" for a few drinks, some horseplay, and a loud, if off-key, session of sentimental songs. They are the same ones he sang in school and college. When, as a young lad, he stayed out late, he used to try to sneak past Mother, and her reprimand, to his room. He still does (and calls his wife, "Mom," in, perhaps, an unconscious effort to feel young at her expense).

He loves to dress up—even as any woman; and when he dresses up, he does not merely exhibit himself at a party or in a night club. He parades on the streets of his cities. Furthermore, his young heart delights, even though he be well past fifty, in such pranks as squirting water pistols at people, dropping sacks of water from hotel windows, and poking strangers—girls, especially—with electric shock-sticks. At conventions, the middle-aged American by thousands may be seen engaged in these wonderfully youthful pastimes. He mourns his "dear, dead college years," and firmly believes that his school days were the happiest in his life. He devotes all the leisure he can wrest from life to schoolboy pursuits. By the millions, he hunts and fishes, not as an adult male who understands and conserves Nature, but in the mood of an adolescent with a .22 who pot shots every robin and woodpecker he sees.

Men, every bit as much as women, are zealots of the youthfulness cult. They struggle as preposterously in gymnasiums to stay young as do women in beauty institutes. Apologists for this nationwide delusion claim it is beneficial to physical health and to mental health. No protest is made here against such methods, measures, recreations and activities as benefit health—although the overweening effort of multitudes of middle-aged men to stay young has cost them their lives by straining their hearts and their arteries. But the idea that an orientation toward a nonexistent youth is beneficial to the mental health of adults is an appalling blunder, in view of our psychological knowledge.

What *is* youth? Is it the "golden era" which so many people insanely, hopelessly attempt to recapture? Hardly. Youth is the period in which human beings long constantly to grow up. Looking back, we regard that longing as foolish; but the folly lies in the false sentiment of our backward look. For the most difficult and painful era in all of life is adolescence—the passage from childishness into maturity. It involves, indeed, so arduous a process that millions never complete it. Perhaps most people never complete it in this nation, where the incentive is to stay young. Youth is also the callow time of life—the era of uncertainty, of nonexperience, of naïveté, and of irresponsibility which occurs because the capacity for responsibility has not yet been developed. Youth, normal youth, for all its seeming freedom, is life's most arduous period, forever beset with the necessity of inner growth.

All the cosmetics on earth cannot remove one day from the calendar of one adult. And self-deceit, as anybody will admit, is the stupidest form of escape from reality. The grown person trying to "stay young" is twice deluded. His masquerade fools no one but himself, and he will ultimately have to face the fact of its sham.

The pleasures of young people—the sports and games and parties—are gauged to their inexperience and intended, not to be carried intact into mature life, but to serve as practice for the pleasures, the social activities, the cultural hobbies, the different sports of truly grown-up people. Children are *happy* to the degree that their parents are *happy*. If the parents spend their lives batting around like a bunch of bobby-soxers and drugstore cowboys, their children never learn how to be really happy. They find themselves, instead, competing with their parents in ridiculous rivalries for everything from ice-cream money to the use of the family car. Such children grow up like their moms and dads with marshmallow whip for gray matter.

Their bodies, that is to say, grow up. But their minds never mesh gears with those capacities which make life interesting to genuine adults. They fail to develop reason and judgment, imagination and criticism, introspection and a sense of values. These qualities, incidentally, depend not upon "education" but upon the individual's inner development of himself or herself. Myriads of Chinese and Hindus who never saw the interior of a high school are more mature than any American stuck with youth-infatuation. Peace of mind is the reward of real maturity; anxiety and neurosis the cost of arrested adolescence.

That's the individual calamity. The national calamity is that the marshmallow minds—no matter how "successful" they may become financially—are zeros as citizens. They cannot tell a principle from the words of a popular song. They do not know whether they are operating on the basis of a reality or a prejudice. The wiser citizens have to carry them—socially—in the same way that babies are lugged around.

The reader will say I'm a sour puss bent on taking the joy out of life. What joy, I inquire? To me, it seems that a great deal of very adult thinking, criticism, sacrifice, planning and effort will be the lot of the United States before any genuine joy can be restored on this earth. To me, it seems that the only happy people left on the American campus are those undertaking just such hard, grown-up jobs. I am not trying to rob life of elation. On the contrary. Nobody has yet managed to be, at the same time, both happy and slap-happy. Happiness can last a lifetime. But brief, indeed, are the days of the slug-nutty. It is time for us all to grow up and enjoy it.

THE END

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 (Continued from page 28)

our preparedness, as Kaiser Wilhelm had discounted it twenty-five years before when he ordered the rape of Belgium.

We learned nothing between those two wars. Have we learned nothing yet?

Suppose, in 1939, we had been prepared to say to Hitler, "If you fire one gun in this one world where we and our neighbors desire to live in peace and harmony, and hope to follow the bright upward path of human evolution, we shall move against you with swift and terrible vengeance." Suppose we had said, "There are, in this advanced time of civilization, ways and means for settling all differences wisely, safely, peacefully. We shall use our might to preserve peace. We maintain our might only to preserve peace."

Do you doubt that those honest, simple words from a strong and prepared United States would have halted that frothing little paranoiac in his tracks?

In 1942, I saw a report which had been sent by a Japanese agent in this country to his military war lords. Our desire for peace, he admitted, was an honest one. But it was, he said, a poor, weak thing, a beggar forced to cringe and plead and no flaming Angel of Peace. Our words, he wrote, were the empty mouthings of fools who could delude themselves into believing anything they wished to believe. Having studied our refusal to prepare for war, he told his masters it looked like a winning gamble to attack us.

So you and I sat on what we thought was a peaceful Sunday afternoon and heard the radio shriek that the Japs had bombed the American territory of Hawaii. How *dared* they! For so long we had said they wouldn't *dare*. They dared, all right.

Then the sons of America went forth, and many were killed and maimed at Wake, at Midway, at Guadalcanal and Bougainville, in the Marshalls and the Gilberts. They were a screen behind which we prepared, behind which we trained an army and a navy and an air force and built ships and planes.

Remember?

Need they have died, those men who fell—as my brother fell at Rabaul—if that Japanese agent had written: "Beware the great and peaceful United States; she is prepared to prevent war"?

Will Congress give me an honest answer to that question?

We do not want war. We have never wanted war. But war can be, has been, forced upon us. We have proved that we will, in the end, fight for certain ideals and principles and causes. We have proved that we can win. But if you believe, as I do, that foresight could have prevented the need to fight at all, we have won at a shameful cost.

Someday there will be no more wars.

Until we have grown spiritually into that peace which passeth human understanding, there is only one way to insure peace, and that is to be stronger, swifter, surer than those who want war.

Anything else is saying, "Peace, peace," where there is no peace; it is pretending the winds and waves have obeyed us while the tempest still roars. Throughout all history there have been those who wanted war. Can we be sure there will not be again?

There has been talk that the women of this country, the mothers of this nation, are against preparedness, against some form of universal military training.

I do not believe this to be true. If it is true in some cases, I sincerely believe it is because the mothers' love of peace has misled them. It is not the objective itself they are against but the methods offered. They cannot see that it is better to send their sons to prepare for a war that will never come to us if they *are* prepared, than to have them dragged once more from their homes by a voice shrieking of treacherous attack or immediate danger.

There is much talk too, Mr. Congressman, of the dollars and cents in terms of taxes, which it costs to prepare, to train, a citizen army and navy. How cheaply do you think we can buy peace?

Do you possess one cent, down to your very last one, which you wouldn't pay gladly so that we shall never again wait and watch and listen in the dark night for the news from our sons—my son—fighting on Christmas Day in the Bulge with Patton, our brothers—my brother—going ashore in that yard-by-yard battle with death at Iwo Jima?

We should question many of your expenditures, Mr. Congressman, but the one to prevent that waiting and watching I promise you, in the name of every American mother, we shall not question.

Why, only three years ago we were on our knees, saying, "Dear God, stop this war. Stop it—stop it. We don't care how tough the going is afterwards; we aren't afraid of hard times; just stop the killing and the dying and the shooting. Some of our sons won't come home even now. We know that. But stop this awful war before we are completely bereft. Give us peace, Almighty God, and we promise to guard it, maintain it forever—no matter what the cost. Only stop this war now."

We said that on our knees with our hands uplifted. Didn't we? Didn't you?

Who dares compare the cost of peace to the cost of war?

Believe me, you and the other gentlemen of Congress, there isn't one woman in America who would not give all she has or all she hopes to have to prevent war. And it is to prevent war, not to wage it, that we must prepare.

Years ago I read in some book a letter written by George Washington to his troops right after the end of the Revolutionary War. The exact words I don't have, but they went about like this: You will now desire surcease from all High Endeavor. But I warn you that if you yield to this you will lose the fruits of that same High Endeavor. You and you alone can protect the freedom and peace of that victory for which you fought so gloriously.

The women of this nation will not shrink from further high endeavor if you of Congress will show us that it is to preserve peace.

The American Legion has trumpeted warning—the fathers and brothers of those who will come under whatever form of universal military training you can work out for us. They have said: "Prepare as we did not. Stand behind the United Nations, demand of them an international law, first, and then the means to enforce that law. But until the day when, with one great shout to heaven, we can ALL lay down our guns, carry that which will allow you to say to the Beast of War, 'Back. Back. Growl and lash your tail, bare your teeth, unsheathe your bloody claws. But take one step forward, and I shoot you down as I would a mad dog.'"

It is the custom of the Royal Air Force when they go into combat to leave behind a letter "To Be Mailed in Case of My Death." That one which came to me in September, 1943, contained these words: "I have come to be sure, Mom, 'that a man's life only means, what the eager spirit gleans.' I am doing what I know had to be done. Make it count; that's all we ask."

Surely we have not grown so ignoble that we shall stumble and falter and fear to stand tall and mighty against God's blessed sun, so that such men need not have died in vain.

Is there any sacrifice in a preparedness program compared to the sacrifices we were forced to make when war was let loose upon us?

They tell you people want to forget about the war; they don't want to hear any more about it; it's unpopular to bring it up. If that is true, which I myself do not believe for a moment, then it is the duty of every man in your position to refuse to allow us to forget.

So now, Mr. Jackson, I come to the practical purpose of this letter.

No bill for universal military training, no program for preparedness, is upon the agenda of Congress.

Yet it is manifestly the duty of Congress to give us preparedness. In your hands rests our destiny at this very moment.

You are the men selected by our millions to frame and enact those laws under which we shall have the best democratic life and government. You are trained and able men, and it is your duty and your privilege to inform us, lead us, act for us, that we may stand the guardians of peace for ourselves and, if possible, for what science and progress have made One World.

Get on with it!

Certainly there are differences of opinion. It is for you to resolve them. Some like the Taft bill; some like the Universal Military Training bill; some want the age younger or older; some favor an emulation of the Swiss plan of citizen military training; some believe in raising the benefits of voluntary military service in a standing army; some believe only in conscription.

But there is always a solution. A Right Way. Find it, and find it at once.

The delay in solving this vital problem is a disgrace, a danger. You of Congress have no right to bog down, to stall, to quibble and duck and side-step this. In the end the people of America will despise you for your vacillating weakness. There are no statues to those who tried to please everybody.

There is on record no crisis in which the American people have not risen strongly to support the right as God gave them to see the right. If there is a weakness in Congress, it is to underestimate the strength of our ideals, the intelligence and heart and soul of this nation. I tell you that flatly. There has been too much fear of calling upon this country to take its stand with honor and integrity, too much shilly-shallying in talk and work as though we were a lot of self-indulgent weaklings. We are not. We never were.

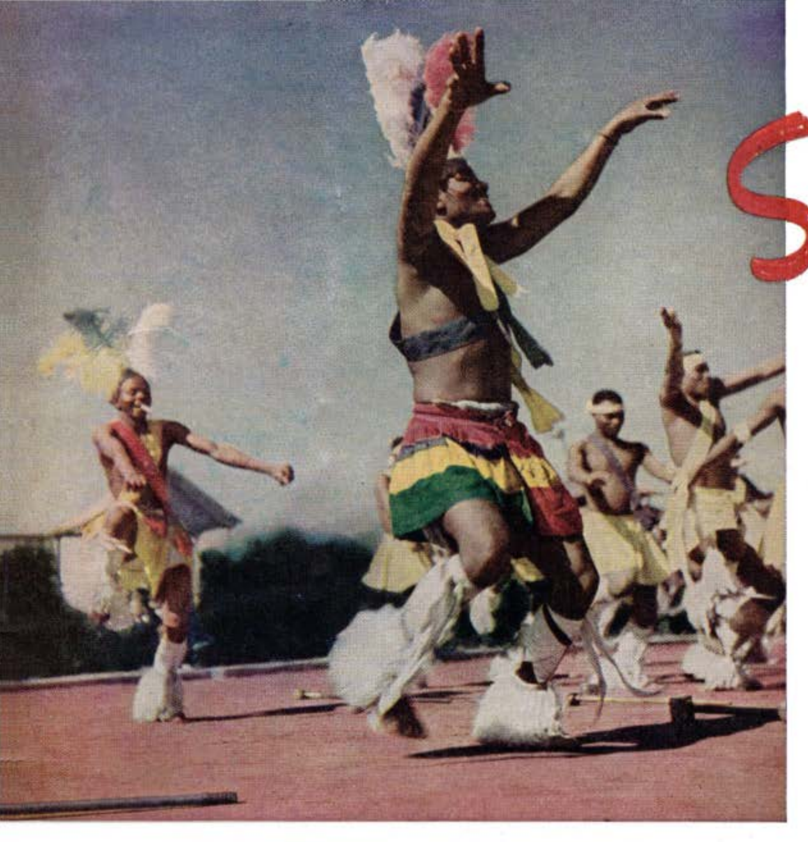
Show us the way, and we will be as strong and splendid in peace as we have been in war.

Do otherwise, and you will defeat yourself and betray democracy.

To evil and those who desired evil, the Prince of Peace said, "Not peace, but a sword."

Forge that sword, you of Congress. Forge it now; let us hold it in our hands as a sacred trust, so that we are prepared to say, "No more war." For this we, the living, and they, the dead, shall hold you accountable. We can be efficient in war. Let us now be efficient in peace. We can unite for war. Unite us now for peace. That's your job.

Yours sincerely,
Adela Rogers St. Johns



Swing Shift
at an African Copper Mine

1 **"I got quite a shock** when I visited what I'd heard was a *modern* African copper mine in Namaqualand," writes Warren Morgan, an American friend of Canadian Club. "Jungle natives, in war regalia, were doing a blood-curdling dance near the mine. My Afrikander host must have noticed the puzzled look on my face, for he laughed and said, 'These men work in the mine. They are just enjoying a day off.'

2 **"The weird music** from the primitive flute, or *ipayipi*, would never get on our Hit Parade—but our music sounds strange to them, too. When I played swing records on my portable, they looked completely bewildered.

3 **"The next day I went into the mines,** and I found it hard to believe the men were the same primitive dancers I had watched. They operated pneumatic drills and electric dump trucks with the skill of an experienced hand in Butte, Montana.

4 **"The intense heat** of molten slag, added to the tropical temperature, made this the *hottest* picture I've ever taken. Even the natives, accustomed to great heat, give the slag pit a wide berth. It's like a red hot sun.

5 **"Later, I joined my friend** for 'Sundowners' and got the greatest surprise of the trip when he brought out my favorite whisky—Canadian Club. 'You must have been in the States lately,' I said. 'Not at all,' he replied. 'Canadian Club is popular down here, too.' "

6 **"Almost everywhere,"** world travelers write, "Canadian Club is a prized treasure." Why this world-wide popularity? Canadian Club is *light* as scotch, *rich* as rye, *satisfying* as bourbon. That's what made it the largest-selling imported whisky in the United States.

Imported from Walkerville, Canada, by Hiram Walker & Sons Inc., Peoria, Ill. Blended Canadian Whisky. 90.4 proof