NOVEMBER

REDBOOK

MAGAZINE

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HIS EYES SIGNALLED:

"You're the Song in My Heart!"

UNTIL. ALAS. SHE SMILED!

Protect your own bright smile. Let Ipana and Massage help guard against "Pink Tooth Brush"!

SHE HAD ALWAYS HOPED it would happen this way—soft lights, smooth music, his eyes speaking volumes: *"You're beautiful,"* they said, *"beautiful"!*

But then—she smiled! And his eagerness gave way to indifference. For beauty is always dimmed and darkened under the cloud of a dull and dingy smile.

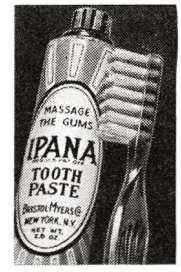
DON'T TAKE CHANCES with your own priceless smile . . . with your own happiness. Give your gums as well as your teeth the daily care they need. And never ignore the warning of "pink tooth brush"! The minute you see that tinge of "pink" on your tooth brush—*make a date to see your dentist.*

And take the advice he gives you.

WHAT "PINK TOOTH BRUSH" MEANS. "Pink" on your tooth brush may not mean serious trouble, but let your dentist decide. Chances are he will say that your gums, denied hard chewing by the many soft, creamy foods we eat today, have become tender, weak from lack of exercise. And, like so many dentists these days, he may suggest "the healthful stimulation of Ipana Tooth Paste and massage."

FOR IPANA, WITH MASSAGE, is specially designed not only to clean teeth thoroughly but to help invigorate the gums. So, massage a little extra Ipana onto your gums whenever you brush your teeth. The pleasant "tang" you'll notice—exclusive with Ipana and massage—is evidence that gum circulation is increasing—helping gums to become firmer, healthier.

GET A TUBE OF IPANA TODAY! Start the healthful dental habit of Ipana Tooth Paste and massage . . . and see how much it helps your gums to become stronger, your teeth brighter, your smile more radiantly lovely.



Get the new D. D. Tooth Brush, too—specially designed with a twisted handle for more thorough cleansing, more effective gum massage.

IPANA TOOTH PASTE

NOVEMBER
VOL. 76

REDBOOK MAGAZINE

1940
No. 1

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

REDBOOK'S NOVEL OF THE MONTH

REDBOOK'S NOVELETTE OF THE MONTH

REDBOOK'S ENCORE OF THE MONTH

TWO SERIALS

SIX SHORT STORIES

FIVE ARTICLES

NINE SPECIAL FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

Cover: Natural-Color Photograph by Ruzzie Green

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

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The Redbook School Directory will be found on pages 124 through 128

"I didn't grow up 'til I was thirty-four . . .

and there are countless women like me"

"Up in a dusty attic, beside a hope chest crowded with lovely things and Warren's old love letters about me, I sat facing a truth that no woman likes to admit:

"I was 34. I was lonely. I was single . . . and rapidly getting further back 'on the shelf.' Through my fingers I had let slip the little pearls of happiness, the warming jewels of love that make life worth living.

"It hadn't always been so. In college I had been popular, and later in business, men had found me interesting. Then, at 27, in the same year that Warren married another girl, romance stopped for me with appalling suddenness.

"Men would ask to call—and rarely come back. I had a feeling that even acquaintances of long standing were avoiding me. I simply couldn't understand it. I was still attractive, yet relentlessly I seemed to be crowded back into this new, drab existence. Out of pity, old school chums would occasionally ask me to their homes for dinner, to meet their husbands, and admire their children. Perhaps, being true friends, they should have told me what my trouble* was. But alas, *good friends never do tell.* I had to learn the bitter truth from my doctor—as blunt and forthright a man as I ever knew. To this day I can't thank him enough . . . his advice gave me a fresh, new start.

"So at 34 I grew up . . . grew up with a vengeance too, trying to make up for the lonely years my stupidity had brought me. It has been a sort of second blooming, with gay new friends and attractive men providing the sunshine. One of them is in love with me . . . so it begins to look as if my hope chest won't be so hopeless after all."

How's Your Breath?

Don't be so foolish as to take it for granted that your breath is always sweet, as countless women do. In fact, you may be offending at this very moment *without even realizing it.* Remember: *halitosis (bad breath) is one of the most common social offenses—and seldom notifies its victim of its presence. It's a barrier to friendship, success, love.

Why not take the easy and wholly delightful precaution which is the standby of so many popular and fastidious people? Simply rinse the mouth with Listerine Antiseptic, night and morning, and before business or social engagements at which you wish to appear at your best.

Breath is Sweeter

Some cases of halitosis are due to systemic conditions, but most cases, say some authorities, are caused by fermentation of tiny food particles on tooth, mouth, and gum surfaces. Listerine Antiseptic quickly halts such fermentation, then overcomes the odors it causes. The breath becomes sweeter, purer, less likely to offend. Lambert Pharmacal Co., *St. Louis, Mo.*

For Halitosis (Bad Breath) Use

LISTERINE

NEWS ABOUT REDBOOK

For the third time this year Miss Katherryn Hernan appears on our cover. Our women readers will be interested to learn that her black satin gown is a Hattie Carnegie original, and that her new-length black suède gloves will "sweep the country" this winter. It would take Mickey Rooney's annual earnings to buy the jewelry Miss Hernan wears. It comes from Edwin H. Tompkins.

SEVENTEEN months ago, in our June, 1939, issue, Hendrik Willem Van Loon informed our readers that it was his firm conviction that "somewhere a man was sitting" who knew how to solve the problems besieging poor humanity. It seems that Mr. Van Loon was wrong. He was talking of "a" man. He has discovered by now that there were and are at least five hundred men "sitting somewhere" in the United States who could and would, at the drop of a hat, save the world. We said five hundred, but by the time this issue reaches the stands, we will probably have to revise our estimate. For not a day passes without Mr. Van Loon's getting a letter from someone, somewhere in America, informing the genial Dutchman that he and only he is the man Hendrik Willem is looking for. . . .

Starr Paret is another REDBOOK author who continues to receive letters dealing with a piece she wrote for REDBOOK in the year 1939. It was a short story entitled "Incompatibility," and it appeared in our February, 1939, issue. Nearly two years later men and women are still writing to Miss Paret to tell her how deeply they were impressed by her frank and honest presentation of a great marital problem. Unlike Mr. Van Loon, Miss Paret is not asked to finance her correspondents. All they ask from her is another story as fine and memorable as "Incompatibility." Their wishes will be fulfilled next month. Our December, 1940, issue will carry a novelette by Starr Paret.

Likewise in our next issue: a new serial by Philip Wylie, a complete book-length novel by W. R. Burnett, continued novels by Howard Spring and Harlow Estes, with short stories by Susan Glaspell, Nathan Asch, Elmer Davis and many others.

●

OUR NOVEMBER FASHION CREDITS

The clothes shown in the illustrations for "Adrienne Makes Her Choice," are from Russeks. In our complete novel, *Lillian* is wearing a dinner gown from Chez Rosette, while *Kate's* little frock is from Lanz.

PHILIP WYLIE

STARR PARET

W. R. BURNETT

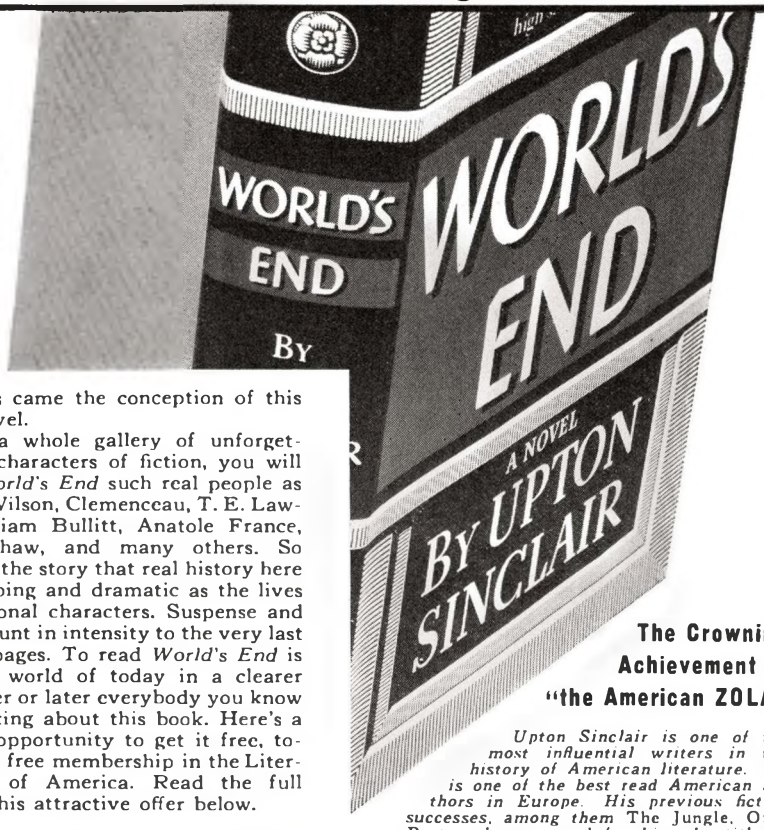
TOMORROW'S EXCITING LITERARY EVENTS ARE IN TODAY'S REDBOOK

Free

TO NEW MEMBERS OF THE LITERARY GUILD

..the magnificent new historical novel of and for our generation

A 732-page masterpiece the whole civilized world will be reading–talking about–arguing about!



THE great historical novel of the hour —an irresistibly dramatic story of the war years and later—the period which created the beginning of the world conflagration now raging. Upton Sinclair's "World's End" is one of the most fascinating novels the Guild has ever offered —a story of people and experiences you will never forget. But it is more than that. It is a picture of our world—yesterday, today, and tomorrow; a gripping record of the most critical period in the history of civilization.

"I saw the rise of Mussolini, and of Hitler, and of Franco," said the author. "Then I saw Munich and said to myself 'This is the end; the end of our world.' Will it be the World's End by fire and sword which the prophet Isaiah predicted more than twenty-five centuries ago?" Out of this came the conception of this epochal novel.

Besides a whole gallery of unforgettable new characters of fiction, you will meet in *World's End* such real people as Woodrow Wilson, Clemenceau, T. E. Lawrence, William Bullitt, Anatole France, Bernard Shaw, and many others. So powerful is the story that real history here is as absorbing and dramatic as the lives of the fictional characters. Suspense and interest mount in intensity to the very last of its 732 pages. To read *World's End* is to see our world of today in a clearer light. Sooner or later everybody you know will be talking about this book. Here's a wonderful opportunity to get it free, together with free membership in the Literary Guild of America. Read the full details of this attractive offer below.

The Crowning Achievement of "the American ZOLA"

Upton Sinclair is one of the most influential writers in the history of American literature. He is one of the best read American authors in Europe. His previous fiction successes, among them The Jungle, Oil!, Boston, *have earned for him the title of "the American Zola." World's End is conceded by critics to be the best book Sinclair has ever written.*

Why the Guild Offers You This $3.00 Book FREE

THE principal reason is to encourage immediate acceptance of our offer of *free membership* in the Guild so that we can demonstrate the extraordinary book values which you get as a Guild Member. When you realize that you will have the privilege of getting many important new $2.50 to $5.00 books, fiction or non-fiction whenever you want them, for only $2.00 —we feel that you are practically sure to join the Guild at once.

How You Save Up to 50%

The Literary Guild selects for you each month an outstanding book from the forthcoming lists of the leading publishers. Although the publishers' editions sell for from $2.50 to $5.00, if bought individually at retail, Guild members pay only $2.00 for these same books, in handsome Guild editions. Guild selections are delivered to members *on approval*, the same day the publishers' edition is placed on sale.

Magazine "Wings" Free

Guild members receive free the famous Guild magazine WINGS, which contains articles about the current selection and its author, and includes a special contribution by the author. It is profusely illustrated. WINGS is also an invaluable guide to all important current reading, for each month it reviews about 30 new books, any of which may be purchased through the Guild at the established retail price.

WINGS also contains an advance description of the book to be selected the following month. If you do not want that book, merely notify the Guild not to send it when the time comes. On the other hand, if the selection sounds interesting, you may have it sent for your approval. Guild members are not required to purchase a book every month. As few as four selections within one year keeps your membership in force.

Other Advantages of Membership

Members who purchase four Guild selections within the six-month period between January and June, or July and December, are rewarded with a free Bonus Book worth $3.00 or more. Full details of this popular plan will be sent you upon enrollment, also details of the new $10,000 prize contest for Guild members. The Guild Service starts as soon as you mail the coupon. A copy of "WORLD'S END" will be sent to you immediately. Send no money—just the coupon. But you are urged to act at once—this offer will soon have to be withdrawn!

$10,000.00 CASH PRIZES FOR GUILD MEMBERS ONLY

USE YOUR FREE COPY OF "WORLD'S END" to write a slogan and win $5,000.00, $1,500.00, $1,000.00 or one of 25 $100.00 prizes. Rules are easy and simple. Entry blank and details of this contest sent you immediately upon enrollment.

JOIN NOW – CONTEST CLOSES SOON

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY

FREE: "WORLD'S END"

Literary Guild of America, Dept. 11R.B.
9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N. Y.

Please enroll me as a member of the Literary Guild and send me a free copy of "WORLD'S END." I am also to receive free each month the Guild Magazine "WINGS" and all other membership privileges. It is understood that I will purchase a minimum of four selections of my choice at only $2.00 each (regardless of higher retail prices) within a year, and that I may purchase, if I wish, any other books in print at the established retail prices.

This enrollment entitles me to participate in the $10,000 Slogan Contest, AT NO COST TO ME.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State.....

Occupation.....

For plan serving Canadian members, write to Literary Guild, 388 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ont.

LITERARY GUILD OF AMERICA, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N. Y.

OUR READERS Speak

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

We Are Accused of Disillusioning Bachelors

Dear Sir:

I enjoyed Elizabeth Seifert's and A. J. Cronin's stories, but I am tired of the ceaseless round of clinics, hospitals, internes, nurses, surgeons and patients. I feel that I am sinking in a sea of test-tubes, microscopes, fluoroscopes, dissections and operations.

I believe that bachelors who read these stories stressing gynecologists, obstetrics, deliveries, curetting and Cæsareans, will no longer think in terms of orange-blossoms, and "Oh, Promise Me."

Do leave your readers a few illusions, please!

Willa Freeland Morris,
Borderland, West Virginia.

At Long Last!

Dear Sir:

At long last, you have given us a murder mystery, in which only the villains are murdered! This is much better than having a lovely blonde or some nice kind old gentleman the victims. Thanks to Rufus King and REDBOOK for the swell murder mystery, "A Lonely, Lovely Lady."

Mrs. W. H. Birklead,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

A Committee of One

Dear Sir:

If you are feeling happy and contented with yourself and the world, don't read the August issue of REDBOOK. I read every story and every article, and after reading "Today Europe, Tomorrow the Whole World!" and "Prelude to a Tyrant," I had the biggest desire to appoint myself as a committee of one to wake up America. My blood simply boiled when I read "The Gestapo is Always Right." After reading more of the articles, I noticed the title of a story "Everything Will Be All Right!" And I couldn't see how that could be possible.

Mary E. McDowell,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Franz Hoellering and "Our Jalna"

Dear Sir:

A writer from California claims in your August issue that "The idea of your printing a story like Franz Hoellering's in the same issue as 'Whiteoak Heritage' is an insult to Mazo de la Roche. . . . As a writer," goes on the letter, "Miss de la Roche is tops, while Mr. Hoellering is—oh, well, let's skip it."

Let's NOT skip it! If all the world were a great big Jalna, we would be living in Utopia. *But,* since conditions are what they are, dare we, ostrichlike, hide our heads in the sand without frankly looking the situation in the face?

My husband and I thank Franz Hoellering for opening our eyes to conditions abroad.

We ask our three teen-age youngsters—one of whom had hoped to take his doctor's degree in Germany "some day"—to read Hoellering's stories; and together we are more grateful for the good old U.S.A. where self-respect still flourishes; where love is still at par value, and sincerity a request number. May she long stay a democracy! She will, too, so long as we refrain, *en masse,* from wishful thinking and keep constantly on guard against snakes in the grass.

Then, and then only, will our Jalna be safe for domesticity.

Mrs. Homer McLaren,
Springfield, Illinois.

That Other Heartbreaking Miracle

Dear Sir:

If we must have war stories, and perhaps magazine publishers cannot evade what the whole world is seething with, let us have more like "That Other Heartbreaking Miracle" in the August REDBOOK. Although deepest sorrow is there, and the horrors of the Hitler-made hell-on-earth, there is beauty too, and a faith and hope that will not perish, but will eventually restore freedom and peace to the human race.

Stories like this do not leave us utterly depressed, and feeling nothing is of any use, but give us hope that somehow, sometime, all this suffering will help mankind.

Chrystal Phillips,
E. Holden, Maine.

A Mother's Prayer

Dear Sir:

Pierre Van Paassen scares the mother's heart of me almost to death. His "Today Europe, Tomorrow the Whole World!" I read word for word to my twelve-year-old son.

Only six years more, and my son will be of age to go to war. I am teaching him the creed of Patrick Henry: "Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! . . . Give me liberty or give me death!"

Mildred Watkins,
Crane, Texas.

Another Voice from Texas

Dear Sir:

Today as I read Franz Hoellering's story, "The Gestapo is Always Right," I silently thanked God that my little son, in whose veins flows German blood, will grow up far from the terrible grip of the Nazi régime.

"Heil" to REDBOOK for printing these timely stories which every German-American should have a chance to read.

Mrs. W. W. Seidlitz,
Sterling City, Texas.

A New Mexican Nightmare

Dear Sir:

I had a nightmare last night, and the ghosts I saw were named Van Paassen, Van Loon, Franz Hoellering, and the Ex-Crown Prince, so I'm blaming it all on you. First you frighten us out of our wits; then you desolate us. Is there no comedy, no humor, no laughter left in the world?

A. Reno,
Artesia, New Mexico.

We Agree with You, Sir

Dear Sir:

Is there not some way we can get REDBOOK and your enlightening articles by Van Paassen and stories by Hoellering into the hands of our small but noisy isolation group?

Our President and the great majority of our statesmen of both parties are anxious to keep us out of war. But we can't avoid dire danger by shouting: "It doesn't exist." The threatening "Scourge of Europe" is very real.

Philip Shaver,
Healdsburg, California.

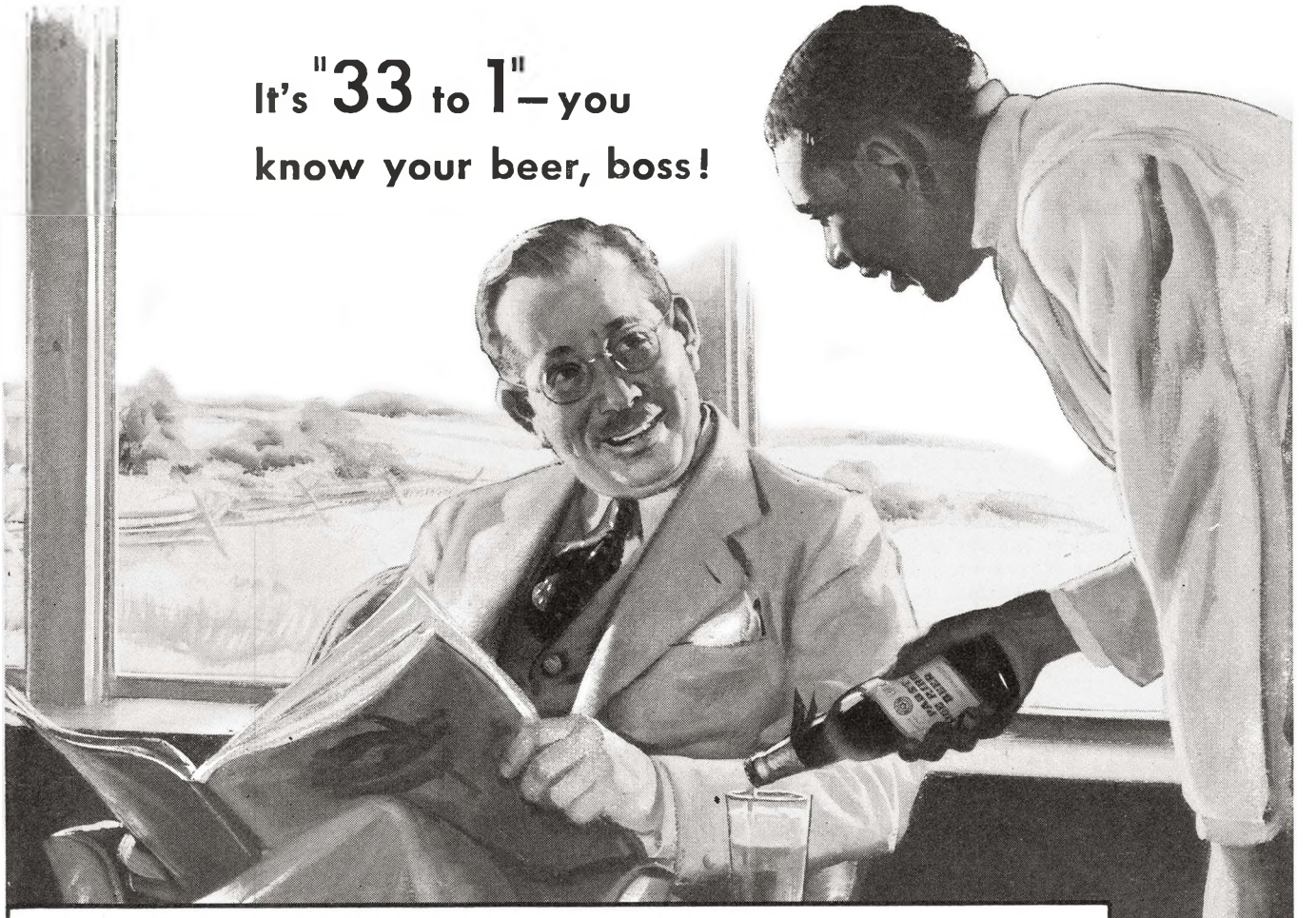
Who Is the Biggest Sap?

Dear Sir:

I have just read "The Gestapo is Always Right" (August issue). Please give me the following information:

Who is the biggest sap—Franz Hoellering for writing it, REDBOOK for publishing it, or I for reading it? It must be I, because Franz sold it to you, and you sold it to me. But darned if I can get cents (certainly not sense) out of it!

Ruby Dawson,
Atlanta, Georgia.



Blended 33 Times to Make One Great Beer

It takes 33 separate brews to make a single glass of Pabst BLUE RIBBON!

You know it's *blending* that makes fine wines, coffee, and tobacco so good. And those who drink Blue Ribbon can tell you what blending does for *beer!*

Try a glass of Pabst Blue Ribbon today. First enjoy the *look* of it—the clarity, the sparkle, the billowy head. Then enjoy your discovery of what beer flavor and beer smoothness can be!

In that glass—and in *every* glass of Blue Ribbon—is a blend of not two, or five, or twelve . . . but *33* separate brews from 33 separate kettles.

Each brew is as fine as choicest ingredients and Pabst's 96 years of experience can make it. Then all 33 are brought together in perfect balance.

An expensive way to brew? Of course! But that's what makes Blue Ribbon *America's premium beer,* with a smoothness that is unique... and a goodness that never varies.

Sometime today, have the pleasure of meeting Blue Ribbon.

It's the **BLEND** *that Betters the Beer*

Try Pabst Blue Ribbon *and Prove it*

First in the Homes of America—and the Largest Selling American Beer in the Rest of the World!

Swing your partner!

Have the time of your life!

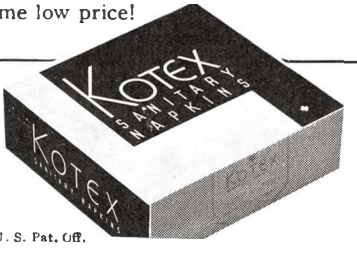
Your fun need never be marred by the dreadful thought that "revealing outlines" tell your secret! For Kotex ends never show! They're flat and invisible . . . entirely different from napkins with thick, stubby ends!

And for *safety's* sake, a new, improved kind of moisture-resistant material is now placed between the soft folds of every Kotex pad!

Excess baggage is costly on a plane trip! And excess bulk is uncomfortable in a sanitary napkin. Unnecessary, too! Kotex has a soft, *folded* center (with more absorbent material where needed . . . less in the non-effective portions of the pad). Naturally, this makes Kotex less bulky than pads made with loose, wadded fillers!

Kotex* comes in 3 sizes, too! Unlike most napkins, Kotex comes in *three* different sizes — *Super* — *Regular* — *Junior.* (So you may vary the size pad to suit different days' needs). . . . All 3 sizes have soft, *folded* centers . . . flat, form-fitting ends . . . and moisture-resistant "safety panels". And all 3 sizes sell for the same low price!

"You scarcely know you're wearing it!"



FEEL *its new softness*
PROVE *its new safety*
COMPARE *its new flatter ends*

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

DeMirjian

Bruno

IN TUNE WITH OUR TIMES

TWO SURE-FIRE HITS

NOTHING is supposed to be more hazardous or foolhardy than an attempt at predicting what Broadway show will become a howling success, and what Broadway show an ignominious flop. And yet, every year for the last six years, REDBOOK has managed to make a one-hundred-per-cent-correct forecast. Are we that marvelous? No, not marvelous, but merely shrewd. We just take it for granted that George Kaufman, Moss Hart and Cole Porter cannot do wrong. The moment we hear that Kaufman and Hart have written a new play, or that Porter is about to finish a new musical comedy, we decide, sight unseen, that there we have two sure-fire hits.

And now that we have let you in on our great secret, be prepared for the following announcement: We go on record with the prediction that "George Washington Slept Here," a new comedy by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart, and "Panama Hattie," a new musical comedy by Cole Porter, will be two great successes of the theatrical season of 1940-'41. Messrs. Kaufman and Hart concentrate this time on debunking the gentry who claim to own the "one and only" house in which the Father of our Country slept while in Pennsylvania. Mr. Porter remains his inimitable self, and concentrates on tunes more than on the plot. "George Washington Slept Here" enlists the services of such experienced troupers as Bert Churchill (who was last seen on Broadway in "Alias the Deacon") and Jean Dixon (who scored her great triumph in "Once in a Lifetime," written by the selfsame Kaufman and Hart). The young lead is played by Peggy French, whose picture appears above on the left. The very surprised young lady on the right is Betty Hutton, who will play the young lead in Cole Porter's "Panama Hattie." It goes without saying that Ethel Merman, who has played in all the big Cole Porter successes, will likewise be seen in "Panama Hattie."

Hawaii Holds A Plebiscite

Photographs by
PAN PACIFIC PRESS

Honolulu nestles in the shelter of volcanic mountain ranges on the island of Oahu. A few miles away is the nation's greatest naval base, Pearl Harbor.

Hawaii produces one-sixth of the sugar which we consume each year.

Waikiki Beach at five a. m., the Royal Hawaiian Hotel in the background.

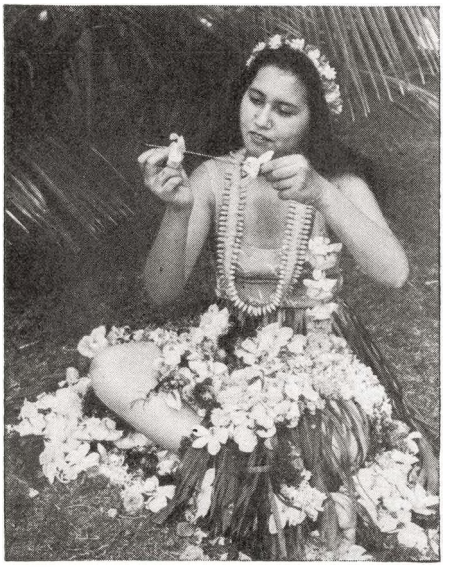
Pualoni Mossman (Hawaii's Miss America) offers a flower lei to visitors.

Hawaii not only supplies the pineapples which the United States consumes, but furnishes 80% of the world's supply.

The University of Hawaii, America's westernmost university, enrolls annually over four thousand students.

A Hawaiian housewife with an armload of cabbages, onions, tomatoes, etc.

Fred Schumacher, Clem Gomes and W. H. Wright, Territorial representatives in Hawaii's legislature, prepare for the opening of the governing body of the Islands.



This Hawaiian dancer demonstrates the fine art of making flower leis.

Bette Davis is trying to learn throw-net fishing from the Islanders.

Mr. and Mrs. George Vanderbilt of New York make their home in Hawaii.

STATEHOOD PLEBISCITE.

464 [SERIES E-249.—ACT 243.

OFFICIAL BALLOT
BALOTA KAUOHAIA
GENERAL ELECTION
KOHO LAULA
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5th, 1940
POALUA, NOVEMABA 5, 1940
STATEHOOD FOR HAWAII
MOKUAINA NO HAWAII

If you favor Statehood for Hawaii make a X with a black lead pencil in the space under "YES". If you are against Statehood, make a X in the space under "NO".

Ina e makemake oe e lilo o Hawaii i Mokuaina e hana i kahapea (X) me ka penikala eleele iloko o ke kowa malalo o ka "AE". Ina e kue oe i ka lilo ana i Mokuaina, e hana i kahapea (X) iloko o ke kowa malalo o ka "AOLE".

	YES Ae	NO Aole
Do you favor Statehood for Hawaii?		
Makemake anei oe e lilo o Hawaii i Mokuaina?		

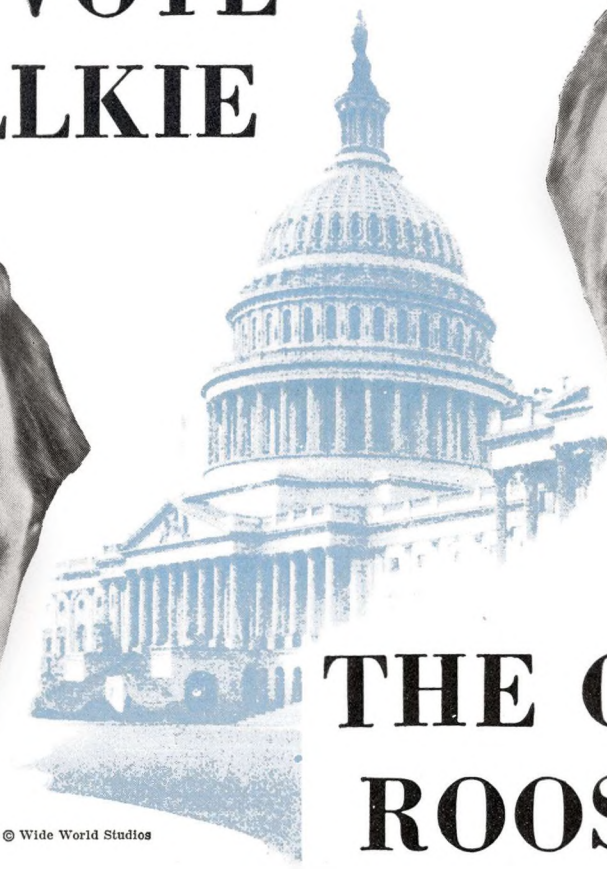
WHILE some 135 million men and women residing in the continental United States will be deciding on Tuesday, November fifth, whether the boy from Indiana should replace the country squire from Hyde Park in the White House, 415 thousand residents of the Hawaiian Islands will be engaged in a plebiscite without precedent in American history. They will answer yes or no to the following question: *"Makemake anei oe e lilo o* *(Please turn to page 80)*

Photograph by Tom Webb

VAN PAASSEN'S BATTLE

THE far-from-cheerful photograph of Mr. Pierre van Paassen is a true picture of the present state of mind of the author of "Days of Our Years." One of the very few observers of World War No. 2 who has called the turns with uncanny accuracy, he sees nothing ahead but "blood, tears, toil and sweat." By nature and inclination he is a jovial fellow, but it so happens that he possesses a pair of keen eyes. . . . What frightens him most is not what he has seen in Europe, but what he sees in America. He sees millions of otherwise intelligent men and women who refuse to face facts, who pretend that this war is no concern of ours, and whose faith in the Atlantic Ocean reminds him of the French faith in the Maginot Line. He does all in his power to awaken American public opinion. His articles on the Nazi designs on the United States, which we published in REDBOOK, have caused national comment. His lectures—he is about to begin a transcontinental lecture tour—will be certain to bring enlightenment where it is badly needed. All in all, not unlike that fellow-countryman of his, Hendrik Willem van Loon (both men, strangely enough, were born in the same village in Holland), he is engaged in a personal battle with Hitler. Let's hope he wins!

I WILL VOTE *for* WILLKIE



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THE CASE *for* ROOSEVELT

by

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

I AM supporting Willkie and McNary and the Republican ticket generally this year, largely because I do not believe in a Presidential third term. I do not believe in a third term—not because I dislike or seriously distrust Mr. Roosevelt, for I am not one of those who pound on the table and damn "that man in Washington." Mr. Roosevelt deserves a considerable place in history. He should stand out among the first half-dozen in our Presidential front row: Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln and the first Roosevelt. If President Roosevelt is defeated in November, probably he will have to stand back of the line for a few decades, somewhat discredited by the fact that he sought a third-term nomination so clumsily. Personally, I believe he did not seek it with ambition prepense, but drifted into it, and for the first time in his life, committed publicly and rather brazenly a political *gaucherie* of the first order. President Roosevelt did not realize when he snuffed out McNutt by inviting him into his official family, that he was clearing the field of strong men. He did not do what he did to Garner, cover him with the oily smear of political contempt, in the definite consciousness that another contender was being deftly garroted. The President tossed Wheeler into the garbage-can as a Democratic presidential possibility in the same gay, inconsiderate Pierrot whimsy which motivated him in his relations with all possible Democratic nominees. Now, what the President forgot or ignored is this: A man gains something in growth and stature by merely being a Presidential candidate seriously considered for six months. None of Mr. Roosevelt's Democratic partisans was allowed to develop. His Democratic rivals remained undersize, because he seemed to feel that no one at first was quite up to the gigantic stature which he assumed. So he had in May, when the big show opened in Europe, a Democratic field of squirming, dancing midgets; and naturally he saw what the country saw, that he was the only man fit for the Democratic nomination, and he *(Please turn to page 91)*

by

ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT

THE American who in early September—these lines were written on the second—is ready to say how he is going to vote in November is not only foregoing some of the fun of citizenship but is dodging some of its obligations. He is, therefore, in that respect—like most of us in some respect—a bad citizen. To be sure, it may well be, for all I know, that a sufficient majority of my neighbors so strongly object to entrusting our government for a third term to any executive, however brilliant and devoted—if Franklin Roosevelt had been any less than that, his name would not now even be up for consideration—that they would cast their vote for a pig-in-a-poke in November rather than reelect him. But I have no such objection to a third term, and this article merely seeks to express the late-summer thoughts of one voter who, before he could conscientiously lend a hand to so hazardous an exchange in November, would need to know considerably more about any proposed substitute emerging so abruptly from obscurity. He certainly would need to know more than he now does about this Mr. Willkie who has been produced from a hat—and a silk one at that—like a rabbit in a conjurer's trick.

Here then are the early-campaign musings of one who has nothing much to go by but the variegated Roosevelt record on the one hand, and on the other, the Republican notification-ceremonies so craftily staged under the Indiana sun. On that occasion the effort of the Willkie managers to impart to their glossy metropolitan candidate a homey, small-town flavor was a bit of old-time shenanigan too unimportant to deflect the attention in so anxious an hour from the acceptance speech itself. In that speech I found nothing to allay my uneasy suspicion that, by a dazzling bit of professional salesmanship, a pretty commonplace article was being hopefully palmed off on the American people.

It is instructive to note that in that acceptance speech Mr. Willkie offered himself not as a successor to Harding, *(Please turn to page 90)*

Faithful to its policy of presenting both sides,* REDBOOK *has invited William Allen White and Alexander Woollcott, two of America's foremost journalists, to debate the great issue that is now facing the nation.

ADRIENNE

Makes Her Choice

JIMMY WITTENDEN had protested. Vigorously! He had declared: "I will not have my home cluttered up with refugees! God knows I am sorry for them, and I will board them out—in moderation; but this is the only home I have—"

He was on the veranda of that home, which was a pleasant place in Jersey, and his eyes roved about the hedged-in lawns, the leisure-inviting wicker chairs, as if already he suspected invaders in ambush.

"It's only one refugee," said his sister Myra, mollifyingly.

This was one of the summers when she was keeping house for him—Jimmy Wittenden had been a widower for ten years; and this scheme, her brother reflected, was precisely the sort of thing that Myra's softness of heart always let him in for. One year it had been Uncle Theodore. One year it had been a sick poet. Now it was a French orphan.

Because Myra had gone to school with Susie Peters, and Susie had married a Frenchman in Paris who had a brother who had a child, he—Jimmy Wittenden—was about to have that child thrust upon him.

"How will you like it," he demanded, "when it gets to yowling?"

"If you'd *listen,*" said Myra, "you'd know it wasn't a yowler. Adrienne is twenty-one."

"Twenty-one!" Jimmy's indignant gaze, still searching his grounds, lighted upon the ginger-colored head of his son on the tennis-court, dodging before the net like a bright balloon against the onslaughts of a vigorous young blonde in amazingly short shorts. "Do you think that is anything to do?" he protested. "To bring in an unknown young girl—a French girl? Jay's only twenty-one. . . . He doesn't want a strange girl in the house. She'll be around his neck."

"She won't be around his neck. Susie writes she's beautifully brought up."

"I'll bet she can't speak English."

"Susie said she spoke it perfectly."

"Susie! Susie writes! Susie sends you a letter from Cannes asking if we'll take this niece of hers that we never heard of before—at least *I* never did; and the same day you get the letter you get a cable saying the girl is already on the way!"

"So we can't do anything about it, can we, except to make a home for her? You know we wouldn't have refused, even if we'd had time to. Why, the child is in danger over there—they were all huddled in Cannes, trying to get across the frontier, and then came the chance to get the girl on that ship—"

"I know, I know. It's hell for them. . . . Of course we'll take her in," said Jimmy Wittenden with one of his quick capitulations. "We'll do the best we can for her. . . . But she's your responsibility, Myra. I know nothing about girls. Get her into some school. I'll foot the bills."

"She's through school."

"H'm. Then marry her off as quickly as you can. Though they've got thick ankles."

"W*ho've* got thick ankles?"

"French girls," said Mr. Wittenden. "I remember them. I noticed it when Jean and I were over there."

"You shouldn't have been noticing things like that on your honeymoon," said Myra. She urged: "Anyway, no matter what she's like, you'll take care of her, won't you? She hasn't anything or anybody except her Aunt Susie, over there with the refugees, and Susie hasn't a sou left. It's hard for this child to come to a strange land and enter a new life. We ought to do everything we can to make it easy and help her forget the horror she's been through."

"I *am* making it easy for her," said Mr. Wittenden. "I'm practically adopting her, aren't I?" He drew a long, resigned breath. "I'll do the best I can," he declared.

But Jay, the ginger-headed son, made no such capitulation. "I don't give a hoot what Aunt Myra keeps about the house," he told his father, "but I want it understood that I'm not going to drag her around."

"You're going to behave like a gentleman," said Mr. Wittenden crisply.

Jay grinned friendlily at his father.

"Look—I've got a heart interest." His lean, snub-nosed face with its gray, light-lashed eyes, was singularly engaging. "I can't take any time off from Sally Benster."

Sally was the blonde young siren in the short shorts.

"No dice," said Jay emphatically. "No foreign entanglements."

Nothing his aunt could say softened his attitude of mordant skepticism about the coming girl. "A female Frenchie," he scoffed. "Won't it be jolly? 'Have you the umbrella of my aunt? No, I have not the umbrella of your aunt, but I have the pencil of my uncle.'" Strolling through doorways, he developed a habit of drawing back and saying, *"Pardon!"* ceremoniously, with a French accent, to an invisible presence.

Myra surveyed him with misgiving. She told Jimmy: "You've got to make Jay behave decently to that girl!"

"Oh, he'll be all right once she gets here."

"He'll ignore her. He won't do a thing for her. And she'll expect some consideration."

"She's getting a home," said Jimmy practically, "and that's consideration enough."

NEITHER male Wittenden was at the pier to greet the stranger. Myra Wittenden went alone. It was a Saturday, one of the few bright Saturdays the season had yet produced, and Jay was spending it in athletic contests with his charmer, while Jimmy, disliking docks, had deliberately concocted an errand to some property of his in the vicinity; however, he was home before the station-wagon drove in, and when he heard it coming, he hurried to the door, moved by kindly hospitality and a justifiable curiosity to know what Providence and Susie Peters had visited upon him.

Following his sister up the steps was a small, slight girl with a pale face framed in a narrow scoop of black brim. Jimmy's first impression was of slenderness and pallor, and then he saw contours—a lovely breast, a snug waist; and he saw eyes, eyes of deep unbelievable violet under dark curled lashes, shining out of a demure, provocative face.

The smile with which Mr. Wittenden had provided himself became an altogether different smile. His voice rang with cordiality. "Welcome to your new home, Adrienne!" He added quickly, "I'm Mr. Wittenden," for the girl's lifted eyes held a clear inquiry.

"But—so young a Mr. Wittenden!" said the girl. She said it artlessly, with a sincere astonishment that Jimmy's forty-four years applauded.

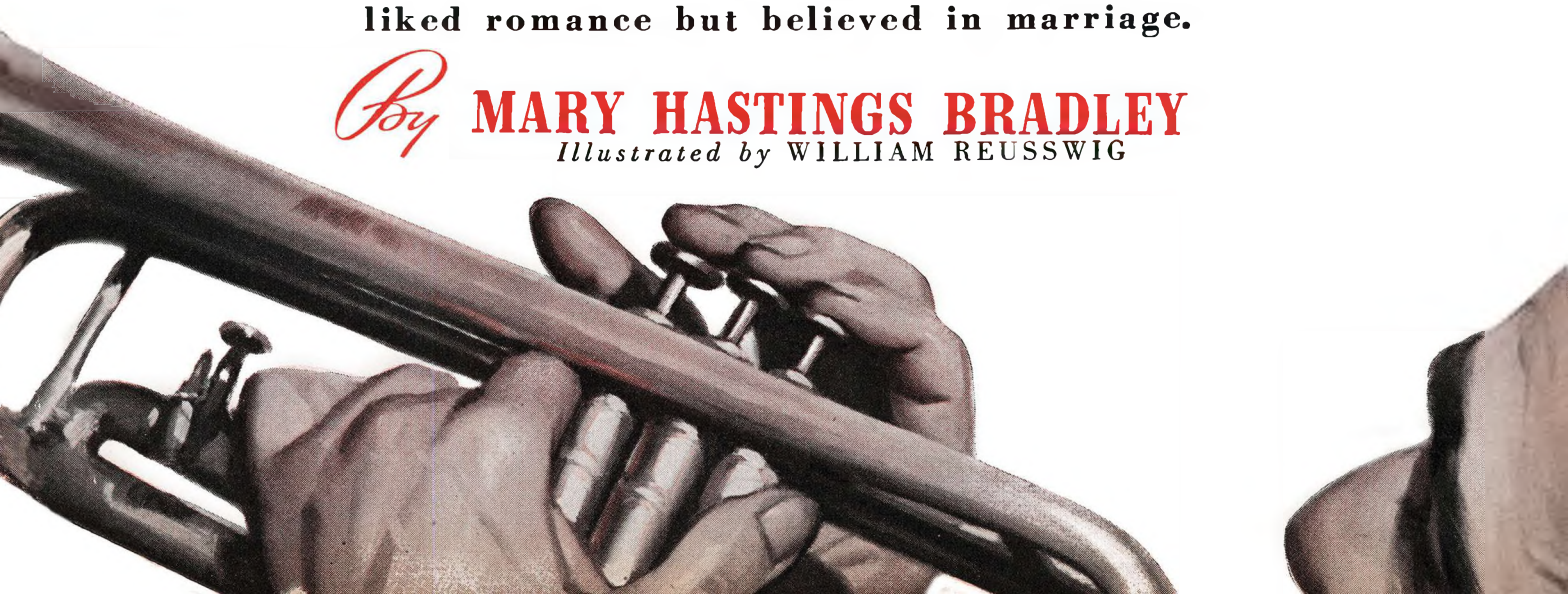
Her voice was engaging, low and sweet, and the slight hint of hesitation, the foreign inflection, held piquancy.

With heartiness Jimmy shook her hand. "I hope you're going to be very happy with us."

The story of a charming French girl who liked romance but believed in marriage.

By **MARY HASTINGS BRADLEY**

Illustrated by WILLIAM REUSSWIG



Adrienne smiled at him; and Jimmy, who had foreboded sadness and homesickness, was delighted by the sturdy good sense of that smile. "I should be a very silly girl not to be happy here," she told him, and her frank glance swept him and his handsome house and his green lawns with honest appreciation.

Over her head, Myra was beaming in triumph. "We shall be happy, having you," she declared, and carried her off upstairs.

Jimmy wandered out to the pantry. "I think I'll shake up some cocktails," he told the cook.

Ella chuckled. "She's a right pretty young lady, Mr. Wittenden." Ella was wonderful. She knew everything. She saw through doors and heard through walls. She knew all the feminine voices that called for Jay, and hung up, leaving no names. She chuckled again. "Just you wait till Mr. Jay gets an eyeful of that young lady! Miss Sally Benster, she going to find Old Man Trouble on her doorstep, sure 'nuff!"

JAY was slow in getting his eyeful. The family had given up waiting and were already at dinner when the young six-footer strolled negligently in. "Gosh, I'm sorry," he said contritely, at sight of the third head. "I'd forgotten!" He grinned placatingly at his father. "Went clean out of my bean, Dad."

He saw his father wasn't showing any annoyance, and he reflected cheerfully that might be one good angle to having this Frenchie about—the family couldn't use mealtimes for hectoring or reminding him of anything. Not that they were hard to take, Dad and Aunt Myra; but there was a certain disposition on their part to improve the fleeting moments they had of his society, with discourses about speeding and late hours and leaving things around.

Jimmy was saying, "Adrienne, this is my son Jay," and Jay went about the table and shook hands with the girl, on whom he now bestowed the entire attention of his clear gray eyes.

"How do you do?" said Adrienne, her lovely voice spacing the words.

Jay said: "So this is Adrienne!"

It was a successful line with all new girls, and he had not meant to use it on her, but it said itself, with spontaneous astonishment. Just for an instant their eyes met. Then the young man sat down and looked at her only covertly. A new girl, of course, was nothing in his life. Definitely, nothing. And he had seen prettier girls, scads of times. Girls that were real knockouts. Girls that had everything.

This girl wasn't a knockout. But she had something that kept you looking. Those eyes—the way her hair sprang from the temples and the way her cheek curved—and the way that figure of hers sort of ebbed and flowed, in and out. . . . She kept you listening, too. She didn't make an act of her Frenchiness, but it was there, spicy as a clove.

A shame, how Dad kept on asking her about conditions in France. She hadn't come over here to talk about conditions in France; she'd come here to forget. Well, not to forget, exactly, but to begin again. She was saying: "I know so little, really. I was at school." And Jay cut in, "What sort of school did you go to?" and she told him. She told him about the long lessons and the little walks, two by two, and never being allowed alone in your room except to dress. She had been at school quite a few years. Ever since her parents had died. "Before that," she said, "there was a *gouvernante*. Oh, several *gouvernantes*. Always, Mamma changed."

"Why was that, my dear?" Aunt Myra asked; and Adrienne said tranquilly: "Oh—it was Papa. He was incorrigible, Papa." She might have been speaking of a little brother with a penchant for stealing jam.

Myra's eyes rounded a trifle, and Mr. Wittenden chuckled. "Jay, why the dickens didn't I get a *gouvernante* for you?"

A tingle of Parisian sophistication crisped the New Jersey air.

"Jay?" said Adrienne tentatively. She pronounced it like the *s* in pleasure. *Sjay*. "That is a name new to me."

"Short for *James*," said Myra. "My brother's name is *James* too, though he's called Jimmy."

"Try that," suggested Mr. Wittenden, and Adrienne said, "*Sjeemie*," very carefully, and Jimmy Wittenden chuckled again, and Claude, Ella's husband, passing the rolls, chuckled companionably. Myra started to correct the pronunciation, but Jimmy said, "Let it alone," and Jay agreed with him. What did Aunt Myra want to do—take the fun out of the girl's speech?

They went on to other words, and once away from the subject of France, the dinner became a very jolly dinner. There was coffee on the lawn, and liqueurs, in honor of the occasion, and Jimmy took Adrienne over the grounds, explaining just what the place was like when he had bought it, and what alterations he had made. Adrienne listened with polite, attentive nods, and Jay fidgeted in his long wicker chair and thought restively that this French girl had certainly got to Dad—why, the old boy was throwing out his chest like *Tarzan*. He was going to bore her stiff—a young girl like that. "I put in this wall here, and built this little greenhouse!" And where Dad left off, Aunt Myra would carry on. Something ought to be done about it.

Ten minutes later he did something. He caught up with the pair in the kitchen garden, by the asparagus-bed, and said abruptly: "Look! Do you like to dance?"

Obediently, literally, Adrienne looked, and Jay had a startling vision of eyes like sparkling amethysts. *"Oui, monsieur!* I mean, 'Yes, Mister.'"

"Hi! You don't say, 'Mister.' Not alone like that. Not the way you say, *'monsieur.'"* Jay stumbled over the pronunciation with a grin that invited her to share it. "I mean, they used to say it, stone ages ago, but it was slang. *Argot,* to you. . . . What I'm getting at, is that there is a dance at the club tonight, and I was going to look in. And if you'd like to go—"

"I should adore!" said Adrienne. The amethyst eyes flashed rapture at him, and then uncertainty. "If your aunt permits."

"Huh? Oh—she won't mind."

"I thought you had a date," said Mr. Wittenden.

"Oh, that?" Jay was nonchalant. "I'll take care of that."

His father began, "If you've made an engagement," but Jay told him: "I'll ring up Bud or Skilly—we'll make it a foursome. Skilly's nuts about Sally."

Yes, and twenty-four hours ago Jay had been a determined wedge between Skilly Knowleford and Sally Benster. Mr. Wittenden eyed his son in some surprise. He suggested: "Perhaps Adrienne's too tired."

"Oh, no!" said Adrienne. "I should adore. But only if it is *convénable*—if it is what you approve." Her look consulted the older man very earnestly.

"That part's all right," Jimmy told her, a little stiffly. "Young people go to these things by themselves. The American way. And if you think you'd like it—"

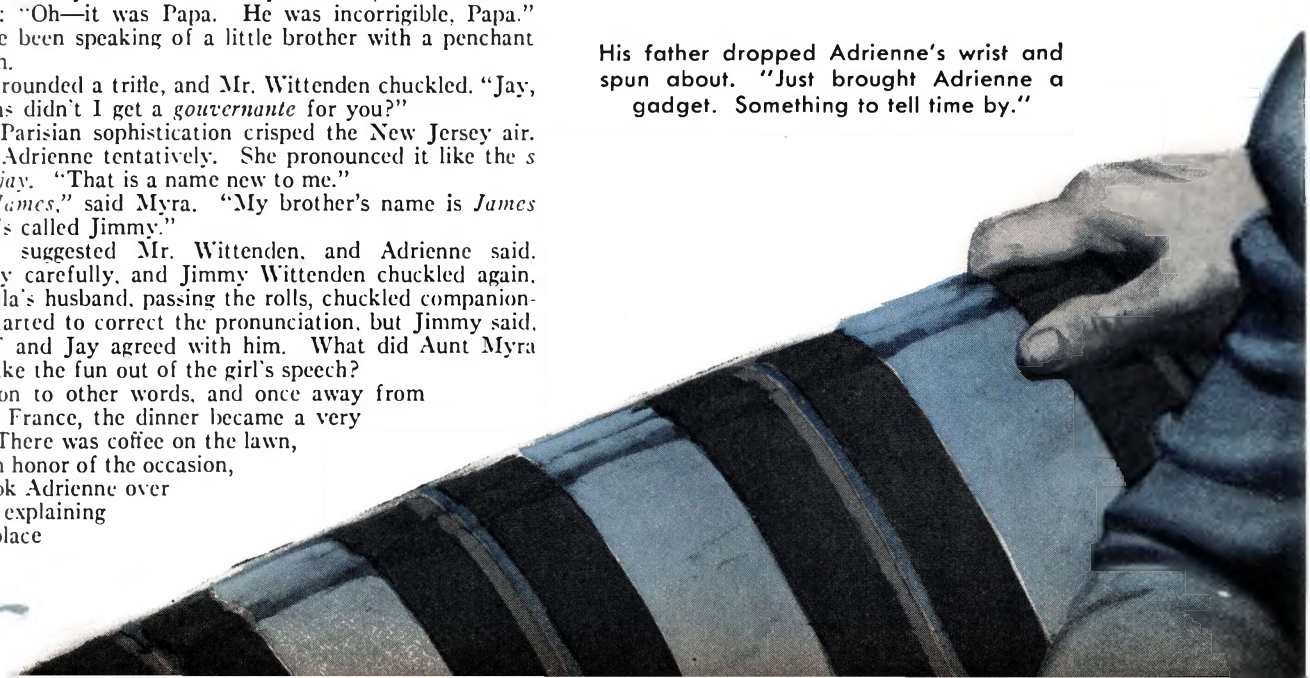
Adrienne said that she would like it very much indeed. Then she looked, a little shyly and ruefully, at Jay. "But perhaps I am not very good at the dancing—you will find me stupid, no?"

"I'll show you everything I've got," said Jay, hearteningly, "and I've got quite a bit. . . . You come on and get into whatever you have to get into, and I'll be ready whenever you are."

"But first, please, I must ask Miss Wittenden," said Adrienne.

So she asked Miss Wittenden and Miss Wittenden was enthusiastic and hurried off to advise about what to wear, and Ella was set to pressing, and Jay went to the telephone and made sure of Skilly Knowleford, who had been going stag, and then he called Sally Benster and said: "Look! Skilly's dragging along—you see, there's a girl at my house that's got to go—a girl from France." As he said it, he wondered he had not realized before the glamour of that implication.

And so an hour later the two young people went off in Jay's car, Jay looking very handsome in white flannels and a dark coat, his ginger hair just drying back into curls from its slicking down, and Adrienne looking very French and demure in a sheer black that fluttered about her feet, and clung, almost too tenaciously, to



His father dropped Adrienne's wrist and spun about. "Just brought Adrienne a gadget. Something to tell time by."

rounded contours. Mr. Wittenden and Miss Wittenden looked after them.

"It was sweet of Jay to take her," said Myra. Then her kind face grew troubled. "I hope he doesn't forget all about her, though. Boys are so careless. And that cutting-in system is cruel. . . . She may have a hard time of it."

"I think we ought to look in," said Mr. Wittenden promptly. "What do you say, Myra—shall we get into our things and go over? Or, if you don't care to, I will. Just to keep an eye on her, you know."

So it was that sometime later young Jay Wittenden, moving rhythmically to the syncopations of Buddy Brown's Swingtime Players, keeping himself and the girl in black with him well under the shadows of the balcony that encircled the hall, perceived his father, very glossy-shirted and black-broadclothed, a white carnation in his buttonhole, bearing down upon him from behind a column.

"Cut, son," said Jimmy Wittenden gayly.

LATER he said, with just a touch of self-consciousness in his offhand manner: "I thought she might need a little help. With Sally on your mind—"

Jay stared at his parent. What help, he wondered, did his father imagine that he could give? Was it any help to a girl to be whirled off by a middle-aged man and kept fox-trotting and waltzing, removed from all young *(Please turn to page 81)*

Bobby's CURRENT EVENT

A CLAUDIA AND DAVID STORY

by **ROSE FRANKEN**

The nurse looked down. "I'm sure everything

BERTHA didn't like her day off any more than Claudia did. "She's a kleptomaniac," Claudia confided to David, on a Thursday morning at breakfast.

"A what?" David caught her up.

"She thinks the minute she's out of the house, everything'll go wrong."

"You mean a megalomaniac," he said.

"I guess I do," Claudia conceded, unabashed, and David pointed out that it made quite a difference to a person's reputation.

Bobby came in ready for school, and as usual, in a rush. "Where's the newspaper?" he demanded breathlessly.

David lowered the stock-market page. "Who wants it?"

"Come here and let me button your coat right," Claudia ordered. "You've got two buttonholes on the same button!"

Bobby pulled away from her. "I can't wait," he told her desperately. "I'll be late, and I have to have the newspaper. I have to find a current event for social studies—"

"Goodness," Claudia murmured. "Yesterday an egg, tomorrow a feather-duster."

Bobby didn't know what she was talking about. Claudia said she was talking about a chicken. "It's the same with you," she said. "Next thing I know, you'll be asking for a latchkey."

"And not getting it, if Mamma has anything to say about it," David put in.

All this seemed beside the point to Bobby. "I have to have a current event," he reiterated.

Claudia reached for the front page. "What would you like? We have a nice fresh assortment of the latest wars this morning."

"Let him find his own," said David. "Look here, young man, why didn't you do this last night, instead of leaving it for the last minute?"

"Because I had to have my hair washed, and get right into bed afterward—" Bobby's voice cracked with resentment.

"That's true, he did," said Claudia.

"You baby him too much," David held forth.

Claudia made the flat lips of utter exasperation. David glanced up and caught her at it. "That's woman's most winsome facial expression, and why men leave home," he remarked.

"All right, and it's man's most irritating remark, and why women leave home. *Baby* him. Certainly! Why not? What's the great rush of growing up, anyhow? What's he going to do when he gets there? Be shot down in some insane war?"

"What does *t-o-r-s-o* spell?" Bobby interrupted, peering over the paper, and breathing heavily.

"Here, son," David hastily interposed. "You don't want that current event. I'll find you one."

Claudia snickered. "Don't baby him," she mocked.

THE unjust part of it was that she didn't baby the boy at all. Naturally, she felt he was too young to do practically everything that he did do, but she nevertheless made the effort to look as if she approved. For one thing, she had permitted him to join an afternoon Group twice a week, headed by a brace of baffled college graduates, all dressed up in masters' degrees and no place to go. David wasn't crazy about the idea of supervised play, but he felt that these were nice clean lads, poor devils, and that it was a great deal better for Bobby to learn the rudiments of baseball than to hang around a baby-carriage every afternoon.

Bertha agreed reluctantly. "Only, we don't let him go more than Thursdays and Saturdays," she stipulated. "Enough is enough."

"Thursday's your afternoon out," Claudia reminded her.

is being done," she said. "The doctor will be with you presently—"

Illustrated by ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

"That's why it's good," Bertha explained. "You have plenty to do with Matthew, and fixing supper."

Claudia felt that she ought to argue the point. "By rights, I should look forward to Thursdays and taking care of my own children," she confessed to David.

"Who said so?" David replied, being his most satisfactory self.

"All the best books on child study."

"How do you know? You've never read one."

"That's nothing to brag about," said Claudia severely.

"Does a cow?" asked David.

"Please don't call me a cow."

"It's a compliment, you ninny. For my money, a cow knows all the answers." He shrugged. "But go ahead and read a book on child-study, if it'll make you happy."

"But it won't," Claudia complained. "That's what's wrong with me. I have no theories."

"No theories is all right with me," said David, looking pleased.

Bertha, too, was pleased that the only talent Claudia showed for motherhood was being a mother. Claudia gathered that Bertha's particular bench in the park discussed at length the many domestic complications that invariably arose with the adoption of intensive intelligent parenthood, and Bertha took no pains to hide the fact that she thanked her lucky stars that Claudia didn't go in for lectures and parent-teacher meetings. True, neither Bobby nor Matthew was afflicted by the prevalent problems of thumb-sucking, sleepwalking or nose-twitching, but Bertha was convinced that their normality was due to their mother's complete abstinence from all intellectual pursuits.

"I must never," Claudia said, "let Bertha see that I'm anything but an utter moron."

"Which won't be too difficult," said David, like *Jekyll* and *Hyde*.

The scheme worked beautifully. Although Bertha acknowledged that Claudia had performed most creditably, the supreme function of womanhood, she regarded the result in the light of a typographical error, and reshaped her duties to embrace the full charge of three motherless children. Her afternoons off, especially, were fraught with all the anxiety of leaving the household without adult supervision, and if it weren't for seeing one of her married daughters, who was having Trouble, she wouldn't have gone out at all.

ON the particular Thursday to which Claudia referred, some mysterious exigency concerning the same daughter compelled Bertha to be in Jersey City at two o'clock. "I have anyway time to call for Bobby at school and send him upstairs," she discovered after she'd settled Matthew for his nap. "And everything is ready for his lunch, only to put the gas under. Also," she added, "both children had their cod-liver oil, so don't worry."

Claudia relaxed. This final bit of superb generalship was in truth a load off her mind. "Then everything," she assured Bertha happily, "ought to be clear sailing."

Bobby announced his arrival, a short while later, by a succession of brutal attacks upon the bell. Claudia's vision of clear-sailing vanished abruptly. She raced to the door, and told him for heaven's sake to stop that—the baby was just falling asleep.

"I came home alone," he proclaimed loudly, oblivious of his mother's chill reception. "Bertha didn't call for me. I came home alone. I crossed the streets all by myself, and I came home alone. Bertha didn't call for me."

"In other words, Bertha didn't call for you, and you came home alone." Claudia tried to rule the bitterness from her voice. For all his high I.Q., he was apparently a half-wit.

"You don't believe me," he broke in upon her truculently.

"Don't believe you, what?"

"That I came home alone. I did, though. Bertha didn't call for me. I came home all by myself, alone."

He was a poor liar, like his father. He could scarcely keep back the give-away laughter that crowded up in him, his shoulders hunched in imbecilic mirth. "I did, honestly I did," he insisted.

"Oh, don't be a fool," said Claudia bluntly. She knew, as soon as the words were spoken, that she shouldn't have said them.

He looked at her, nonplused by her unvarnished candor. "You didn't see Bertha bring me, did you?" he argued stubbornly.

Claudia was reasonable. "Look, darling," she said, "believe me when I say you really are a fool, won't you?"

He made no reply, but his lower jaw retreated in sheepish acknowledgment. Graciously, she changed the subject. "Now run and wash," she suggested with a friendly smile. "Your lunch is ready."

He started to move obediently toward the hall, and then stopped. "Idonhafter," he announced triumphantly.

Claudia winced. "*I don't have to,*" she corrected with emphasis on the consonants. "What do you mean, you don't have to?" she caught herself up sternly. "Since when don't you have to? You most certainly do have to."

"But she said I didn't. She said I was clean."

"Who's she, the cat's mother?"

"What cat?" asked Bobby, interested.

"No cat—skip it. Who said you didn't have to?"

"Bertha did. She went in with me while I washed in school. She said you wouldn't have to bother if I was all finished washing when I came home."

This fitted perfectly with Bertha's megalomaniac tendencies, but Claudia nevertheless drew him to the window, and scanned his face. "I don't know whether that's freckles or dirt." She rubbed at the offending area. "I guess it's freckles. . . . Do you mind eating in the kitchen?" she continued pleasantly. "You're going to, whether you do or not."

"I'd rather eat in the kitchen than any place else," he said with a note of deep contentment creeping into his voice.

"Me too," said Claudia.

"Why?" he asked curiously.

"I don't know. More homey, I guess."

"Are you and Daddy going to eat in the kitchen tonight, with Bertha out?"

"I wouldn't be surprised." She placed a tray of steaming food on the white porcelain table. "Come along."

"It's hot!" he bleated, backing away from it.

"Next time I'll cook it in the icebox for you."

HE approved the sally with a faint grin, and began on his chocolate pudding. Claudia removed it. "No sir. Meat and spinach first."

He lifted a morsel to his lips—"What kind of meat is it?" he asked suspiciously.

"Calves' liver."

He shuddered violently, as if with ague. "I hate calves' liver. Why do I have to eat it?"

"It's a State law, didn't you know it? Calves' liver once a week. Matthew loved his," she added brightly.

"Matthew can have mine too," he said.

He sounded like David, and Claudia giggled. Bobby struggled against a self-conscious smirk of pleasure at this delayed appreciation of his wit. He began to act silly, and Claudia told him not to gild the lily.

"What lily?" they asked in unison, and then they both laughed.

"Look—" She abruptly got back to business. "What about eating? The Group will be here for you, and you'll still be pushing food around your plate."

He speeded up sporadically, loading a fork with spinach, only to unload it before carrying it to his lips.

"You're not fooling anything but the spinach," Claudia mildly enlightened him. "Also, it's not honorable to hide your liver under the potato-skin."

"I like potato-skin. I like the Group too," he remarked with catholic inclusion. "Don't you?"

"Yes, I like it," Claudia admitted.

"All mothers like it," said Bobby.

She glanced at him. There was simplicity in his face, and simplicity in his statement, like the line drawing of a genius. "*Touché,*" she murmured.

The telephone rang. "That's Daddy," he exclaimed. "Can I talk to him?"

Claudia hesitated. David and she did not belong to that vast army of grown-ups who revel in the sound of little voices over the telephone. They had long since made a pact that they would never permit their children to pick up the receiver to defenseless callers.

"Must you?" she now asked Bobby doubtfully.

He weighed it. "No," he acknowledged.

"I THINK Bobby's going to be a very satisfactory person," Claudia told David at once.

"Do you?" said David. "Why?"

"Oh, I don't know. He just shows signs."

"That's fine," said David. "It'd be hell to live with a child you didn't like."

"Yes, wouldn't it? I hope Matthew turns out to be one of us, too."

"I hope so," said David.

"Your father," Claudia told Bobby when she returned to the kitchen, "is a very satisfactory person."

"What does *satisfactory* mean?"

"Sugar and spice and everything nice. Now run in and rest on my bed while I wash up these couple of dishes."

He said, "All right," without putting up his usual argument that only sissies had to lie down after lunch. She felt his forehead. He seemed normal. "Be sure to take your shoes off!" she called after him.

She found him, a little later, lying in the middle of the big bed, his face averted. She picked up one shoe near the doorway and another by the window. "That's a fine way to kick off your new oxfords without untying the laces," she commented.

"I must never let Bertha see that I'm anything but an utter moron," Claudia said. "Which won't be too difficult," said David.

"They have knots in," he returned virtuously.

"And why have they knots in, pray?"

"They get in," he said.

She noticed that he refrained from turning toward her, and that the back of his head looked guilty. She walked around to the other side of the bed, and caught him unawares.

"Heavens," she said, peering at the unpleasant grime that festooned his mouth and chin. "What's that dirt on your face?"

"It isn't dirt," he denied indignantly. "It's gum."

"Why is it plastered all over your lips?"

"It's bubble gum," he said.

Memories flooded back on her. Bubble gum. . . . No need to ask him where he had learned about it. It was bound to have happened sooner or later.

"Run spit it out," she said gently but firmly.

He stiffened. "I won't," he said flatly. He looked a little frightened, a little uncertain, as if he were trying out a new and shaky pair of wings. He seemed, suddenly, to be soaring away from her. For a space they had been close in spirit, but now they were apart again. She was sorry. She tried to bridge the gap with sober logic.

"It spoils the shape of your lips; and besides, it oughtn't to splatter—you don't know how to use it."

"I do so," he broke in eagerly. "You ought to see how good I can do it! I'll show you, look! I'll blow a bubble for you, and you can see how good I am!"

"Shh!" she said. "I'm not deaf."

"Just one bubble," he pleaded in a hoarse whisper.

She looked at him. He was so ardent. She didn't have the heart to refuse him. "Just one," she surrendered.

BOBBY sat up straight and squared his shoulders. His jaws began to work. Then, with a great deal of facial contortion, a small weak bubble appeared through his lips, wavered for the barest instant, and collapsed.

"Wasn't that good?" he asked smugly.

Claudia shook her head. "Not really."

He bridled. "It was a bubble," he defended. "And it didn't splatter."

"It was too little to splatter. I could blow a bubble three times that size."

He became all male, and laughed out raucously, in derision. He was David, telling her that she didn't know how to use a can-opener, or push the lawn-mower.

"So you don't think I know anything about bubble gum," she challenged. "If I had a piece, I'd show you. A fresh piece," she hastened to qualify.

For answer, he dug into his pocket, and withdrew an unopened package of the dynamic confection. Misgiving assailed her. What right had she to have been so cocksure that she could remember the involved technique of producing bubbles?

"Try it!" Bobby invited in malicious glee. "Go on and try it!"

There was no turning back now. She slipped off the silver paper, and popped the gum into her mouth. It was just as she remembered it—deliciously like bad perfume, and at once limp and tough.

"You have to chew hard!" Bobby instructed.

"Am I doing this, or are you?" she retorted smartly.

Bobby chewed along with her, tossing off a small bubble or two, the expert against the novice. "It's easy!" he gloated.

Claudia's jaws were getting tired. She tested the gum tentatively with her tongue, aware that Bobby was watching her with David's wicked grin. Panic filled her. She was a fool to have let herself in for this. Yet she mustn't fail. She must wait until the crucial moment when the gum was ready to blow. She closed her eyes. The years slipped away. . . . She heard the metallic clatter of the ice-man's tongs; she saw the lamp-lighter going down the street with his high-taper; she knew the joy of hitting the edge of somebody's stoop in stoop-ball. She was six, chewing bubble gum on the sly. . . .

Her lids flew open to find her son's gaze upon her, wide with amazement and respect. She knew that she had not failed. It had been a handsome bubble, and it hadn't splattered.

"Do it again!" he urged her excitedly. "Show me how you do it—do it again!"

She did it again. It was apparently something you never forgot—like riding a bicycle, or floating. Bobby's eyes were filled with growing reverence. Once in a great while David had worn that look—right after the babies were born, and when she had her appendix out.

"You see, Bobby," she pointed out, with importance, "when you start to blow the bubble, you have to take it very easy—"

THE bell rang. "It's the Group," said Bobby, and there was a tinge of annoyance in his voice.

Claudia glanced at her watch. "Oh, dear," she said, "I'm afraid it is."

Their eyes met for an instant, full of regret. He clambered down from the bed with a sigh. Claudia loved his sighing. She wanted to give him a great hug, but she thought better of it. Bobby wasn't a kissing child. She said instead, quite casually: "Better get cleaned up while I open the door."

"We've been held up a little," she apologized to the young man who stood on the threshold. Her smile was secret, as if she had stolen love, and it lay precious and hidden against *(Please turn to page 102)*

The author of "Days of Our Years" shows that, without any overt act of war against us, the shadow of the swastika is already exercising an enormous economic pressure on the family life of *every* American. We are no longer the complete masters of our destiny.

HITLER and the

"'Heil Hitler. This is America speaking.' Before long you will be greeted with this salutation when you turn the dial to the United States wave-length. Those who are belittling our Fuehrer today will listen to him and obey him tomorrow."

One of Dr. Josef Goebbels' key adjutants recently concluded an address to German editorial-writers in Berlin with these words. The challenge climaxed a lengthy exposé of the future of America, an exposé which the editor of the Frankfurter *Zeitung* called brilliant and illuminating. Since then it has served the entire controlled press of Germany as the official Nazi party line, to be followed in its attitude toward the United States.

"If you turn your dial to the United States today," the spokesman for the head of the German Propaganda Ministry said in the course of this talk (he forgot to mention that listening to foreign broadcasts is a punishable offense in Germany), "you will be literally bowled over by an avalanche of lyric oratory. Stentorian voices will boom and fire at you such expressions as 'democracy . . . freedom of the press . . . freedom of religion . . . freedom of economy within the nation and between the nations . . . peace . . . social progress . . . justice.' Don't be deluded. The Americans are not futile sentimentalists. They are hard-headed business men who use all this balderdash as a smoke-screen. Behind their childish prattle is one dominating thought: Business.

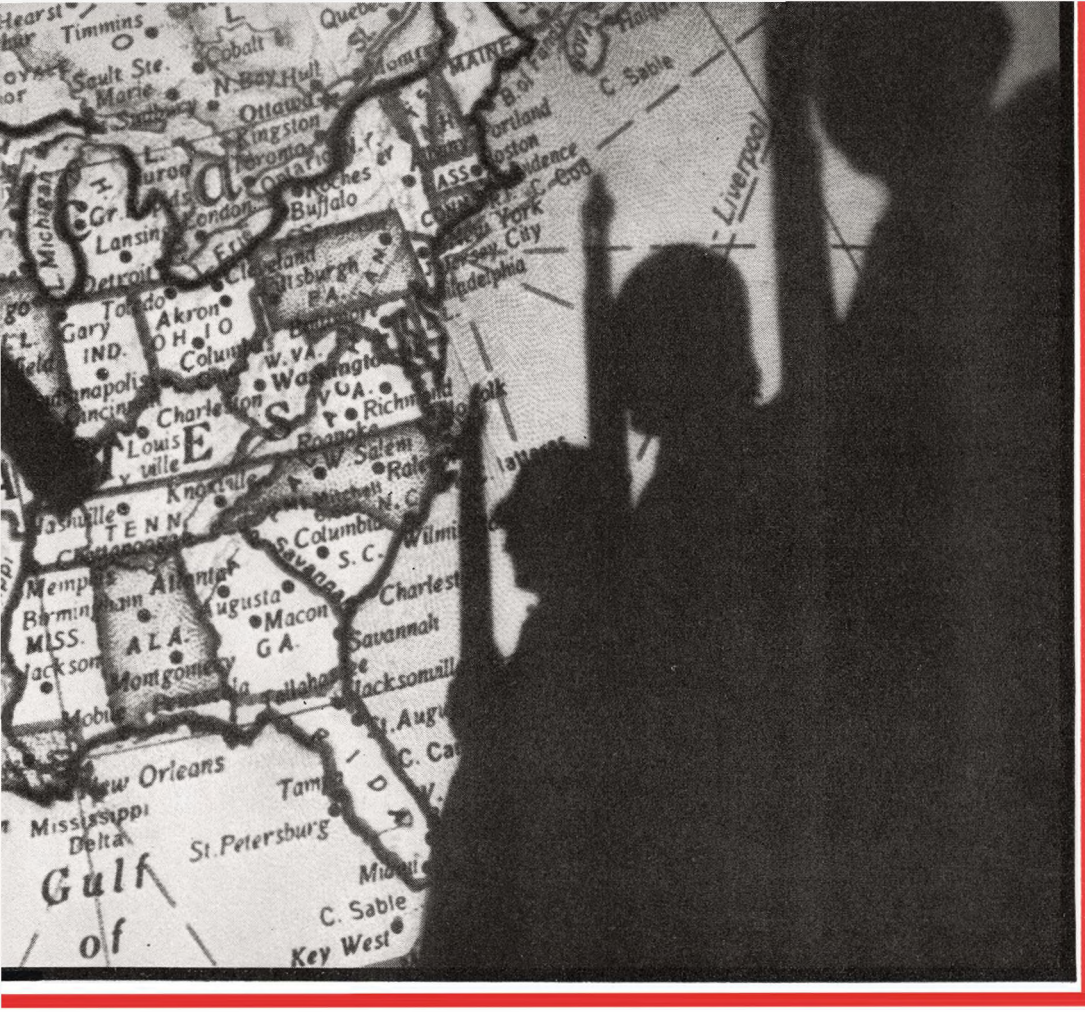
"The time draws near when economic pressure will compel them to change their vocabulary. As we apply more pressure, economic and political pressure, their tune will change. They will realize that they need Europe, the new Europe, much more than Europe needs America, if they want to keep their business going. *Unser Motto ist, mehr Druck.*" ("Our motto must be: More pressure.")

Without any overt act of war against the U. S. A., the Hitler government is already exercising an enormous economic pressure on the family life of every American. Without any flagrant breach of international law against our country, the Nazi leaders have initiated a grueling war of nerves against the American people. We are no longer the absolute masters of our own destiny. For we are caught in the vise of a continually growing danger to our national security. That vise is manipulated in Berlin.

Our national budget grows in direct ratio to the increasing menace of Germany's world-conquering ambition. We are in the position of a fighter who has to keep in constant training, to sacrifice all the pleasures and the leisure of life and be ready to step into the ring at a moment's notice. The nerve-racking part of this situation is, as John F. Kennedy has said, that we have not the slightest notion when Mr. Hitler will ring the gong for the first round. Hitler and his geopolitical advisers are carefully watching our reactions in this long-range preparation against an invisible opponent. Germany's plan against the Western Hemisphere calls this phase the testing-phase of the United States. Hundreds of experts in the Wilhelmstrasse are daily clocking and tabulating the reactions of the average American, of business leaders, pedagogues, youth-organizations, labor and the churches, to the tightening of the vise. It is against this chart of American readiness and preparedness to withstand the Nazi pressure that the plans for attack on the Western Hemisphere are constantly measured and perfected.

Every day we are becoming more involved in the struggle that the madman of Europe has unleashed, not against any single country but against Western civilization. Surely, yet almost imperceptibly, the swastika-shaped shadow of the European war is creeping over the map of the United States. Inexorably the tentacles of the monster that has gobbled up one independent nation after another are reaching out for what the master strategists of Nazidom consider the chief prize and final goal in the titanic struggle of the continents.

The Nazi danger to America has passed the speculative stage. It directly affects the lives of millions of American citizens today. No longer is the war in Europe a sideshow, the developments of which we can watch, with varying degrees of interest and emotion,



by

PIERRE van PAASSEN

Pursuit of Happiness

from the safe distance of our grandstand. From an impersonal headline in the newspapers, the war has been transformed into an integral part of our everyday life. It is influencing more of our daily actions than we imagine. It has come home to us. It is knocking at the door of every American, whether he lives in a fashionable New York penthouse or on a Nebraska farm, in a New England fishing-village or in an Ohio mining-town.

How does this foreign pressure manifest itself in the private life of the average American citizen?

The very same frenzied armament expenditures which have turned one European country after another into a poorhouse are being forced upon the people of this country. The specter of ever-growing taxation, which in Britain amounts to confiscation, is staring us in the face. WE ARE ALREADY LIVING UNDER A WAR ECONOMY.

At no time during the first World War was our taxation as high as it is today. One dollar out of every five of income earned during the year 1940 by workers and producers will go toward national defense. As the United States defense program expands—and it inevitably must, to counteract the intensification of the squeeze play that the little corporal from Munich is putting on against us—our tax load will grow heavier. We shall infallibly move toward the British scale of war taxation, which has just reached one dollar and seventy cents out of every four dollars of income. But even that may not suffice. Hitler poured in the neighborhood of seventy billion dollars into the making of his war-machine. Our defense expenditures for this year call for only ten billion dollars.

YET I doubt whether the mass of people in the United States sense the connection between the heavy taxation that weighs them down, and Hitler's Nazification of Europe. As prices of cigarettes, alcoholic beverages, automobile fuel and other commodities rise, does the average American realize that the blue U. S. revenue stamp actually has been imposed on him by the brown swastika? Or take Mr. and Mrs. Jones, who until now, on an income of nearly fifty dollars a week, were exempt from income-tax, but whom the new tax bill has made taxpayers: do they understand that the tragic collapse of the democratic nations in Europe has a bearing on their reduced family budget?

There are millions of American boys and girls whose dream of a college education will go unfulfilled as long as our nation's resources will be needed to build ramparts against the Hitler threat. Because of Germany's world-conquering ambition, multitudes of young men and women may never have an opportunity to follow the professions for which they have prepared. Careers are being shunted into new and unaccustomed tracks. Business plans which have been maturing for years are being pigeonholed. Inventions that have been nursed for a lifetime will never see the light of day. And many an artistic talent that promised to enrich our culture will never know a blossoming.

Reluctantly we are compelled to answer Hitler's decree for more pressure against America with sacrifices at the expense of our normal American way of life. Unwillingly, against our deep-seated attachment for peace, we are being forced into a peace-time war economy.

How are we going to stand the gaff?

That's what Berlin wants to know, in order to play the more effectively its double game of making life highly uncomfortable for us on the one hand, and on the other, presenting to us a most attractive picture of the advantages of appeasement. General Haushofer's staff of planners is on the *qui vive* for any symptom of weakness on our part, any indication of a readiness to compromise with a Nazi-dominated Europe. "The Americans can be softened up more easily than the French," is the new slogan of Germany's international propaganda machine. And there is no denying that Goebbels' plant for the manufacture of public opinion is working effectively on a twenty-four-hour shift.

A special news-service for American *(Please turn to page 87)*


JUST

FOR US and Nobody Else

By PETER STIRLING CARDOZO

Illustrated by R. G. HARRIS

IT wasn't that I wanted to forget anything. I wanted to remember. If we had never come back I might have wanted to forget, but now we were on the boat and her hand was in mine and we were walking around the deck—and I wanted to remember. We stood at the bow and watched the water as it sprayed away from the boat. I felt a few drops on my face and it reminded me of walking home from school with her one day. It had rained earlier in the afternoon and the new-cut grass lay limp and wet on the lawn. The sky was clear, but raindrops trickled lightly from the trees as the wind eased through the branches. And then I remembered riding bicycles and our first dance together. I remembered going to the movies and sitting in the bleachers for baseball games. There was our first kiss and then there was graduation, with blue serge suits and white silk dresses. Later there was a lonely beach with rolling sand dunes and tall green grass—and there was always Kitty.

Her hair was brown and her eyes moved about quickly as if in time with my heart. We lay with our elbows buried in the sand, our chins cupped between folded fingers. We looked out over the ocean and watched a small boat dragging in the fish-laden nets. We talked and the wind blew the sand over our legs. It was a blanket, and we let our fingers touch beneath the folds.

We listened to the cry of gulls circling gracefully overhead. There was the shrill voice of the sandpiper on the wet beach and then our hearts seemed to explode, leaving our ears deaf to the rest of the world. . . . There were no tomorrows; everything was today.

I said that I wanted to remember; never to forget!

In the morning it was summer and we wanted to cry out our blossoming along with the roses in the neatly trimmed perennial beds.

"But not like that," she said. "Not all in a row, one like another. . . . We'll be different."

I nodded because I loved her. Her head was thrown back and her smile became a laugh of wildness.

"You and I and the clouds," she said. "Changing shapes and appearing in all places."

Life was the ocean, deep and swelling. We must not drown, only dance on the waves with the white-caps. That summer we stayed in the bay. It was all so new and we had to be sure. There was a boat, a small catboat with a gaff rig. In the stillness of the early morning we listened to the boom creaking as it pulled away and watched the sail lift and fill with wind. We sat in the stern and took turns at the tiller. The sun rose out of the water and we seemed to be rising with it. Far out in the bay we ran before the wind and the bow nosed down into the water.

Kitty lay stretched out on the deck. She let her hand trail in the water. And then it was for the first time that the world seemed poised. All was still, before she jumped to her feet. There was that look of wildness in her eyes as she rose up on her toes and sprang lightly into the water. I brought the boat about in time to see her head appear. She shook back her hair and cried out in little yelps as if there she had found the ultimate in happiness.

"Come in," she said. "It's wonderful."

I dropped the anchor and eased the sail. The water was cool and we played like porpoises, snorting and diving, before we pulled ourselves up on the deck to dry. I could feel the sun evaporating the water on my back, when she said, "Let's really swim."

She stood on the deck, tall and firm. She looked at me a moment; I felt my heart pounding heavily and I wanted just to sit there and look at her until I could find words to tell her how beautiful she was. But then she sprang forward again and disappeared into the water.

We swam out away from the boat and she called, "Isn't this better?" and I said, "It's fine." Soon we were holding on to the side, our legs kicking out behind us. The water foamed and then as suddenly it subsided and became a blanket of calm. Our hands touched and with them we drew nearer to each other. The water seemed cool and slippery.

"We'll take our boat and sail around the world," she said. Everything was like that. It was our boat and our love and our life. Kitty wanted adventure. At eighteen we all wanted to reach out for the moon; but Kitty would always have her arms stretched out for it.

"In the fall I'll go to college," she said. "I don't want to. It will mean standing still and doing things as everyone else does them. I want to be different." She was quiet for a moment and then she said, "In another year you'll be graduating. I don't want to be there without you. Oh, Nick, it would be so lonely."

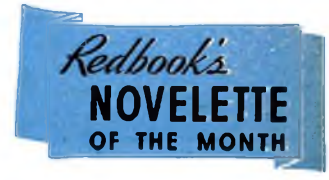
We talked of ages. Kitty was a realist. Eighteen was too young. That summer I was twenty and I felt that I was a man. The world could no longer keep its secrets from me. But Kitty knew better. She said:

"I want to be twenty-three. I want to be twenty-three and stay that way forever."

"But aren't you happy now?" I asked.

"Yes," she said. "I'm happy. I'm too happy." She looked out through the window, down across the hills to the main road where the headlights of the cars darkened in silent salute as they passed each other. "I want to be sad, too," she said.

THAT night I couldn't get to sleep. It was hot and I lay there and thought about Kitty. I thought I was a man at twenty, but she was truly a woman. I was frightened because I loved her so much. I knew that I would always want to be with her, but I felt a heaviness when I wondered where she was going. . . .



In the fall we drove up to college. It was a small college high up in the hills of the country. There were hard granite mountains made soft with pines and firs. There were criss-cross paths with tall elms and red brick buildings. We rode up together in our car—although it was really Kitty's. She said, "Let's drive around," and I took her on a tour of inspection before we stopped at one of the girls' dormitories. When she got out, she leaned over and kissed me and then we were standing at the door with her suitcases. There was a wave of nervousness in the air. Boys and girls were milling about. There were suitcases and tennis rackets and hatboxes sprawled on the porch. People waved and said, "Hi!" Up on the top floor a phonograph record blared out with rhythm. I was daydreaming, but Kitty was talking. She said, "We will be different, won't we, Nick? We will be free!"

I just nodded and then I was back in the car, driving down the main street. I kept thinking over what Kitty had said. There had been that look of wildness in her eyes. It was the look of a colt, daring the world to tame her. There were times when I couldn't understand Kitty—but I wanted to, because I loved her.

Kitty was in my arms and I was carrying her over the threshold. She said, "We are right, aren't we, Nick?"

I went back to the private house where I had lived for my first two years. I unpacked and cleared up the rooms and then it was evening and we had supper together. Kitty was quiet and I wanted to know what the matter was. She said, "There are too many rules." I tried to explain it to her, but there was that far-away look in her eyes and she kept talking about the wind in her face and driving to the end of a sunset. She said it was life that she wanted. We walked up on Observatory Hill and sat there watching the stars. There was a coolness in the air and from down in the valley came a smell of wood burning in a fireplace. We sat close together and Kitty talked on, squeezing my hand hard, as if she could force her thoughts into me that way.

THAT was the night she told me about her father. I knew her mother had died a few years ago, but she had never spoken of her father.

"He's still alive," she said. "They got a divorce when I was very young. Mother wouldn't talk about him, but my nurse told me. He was a writer. He wrote poetry."

Kitty had a perfect picture of him in her mind. He was the epitome of everything that was young and romantic. He was tall and slim, and his voice was warm and soothing.

"I talk to him in my dreams," she said. "At night when I'm sad and crying, he takes me in his arms and comforts me. Some day I'll really go to him." Her voice trailed off into the night. "Some day I'll really know him."

I said something about his being a pretty fine person and Kitty said, "We'll both find him, won't we?" There was that look of wildness again.

"Find him?" I asked and then Kitty was telling the rest of the story. She had always wanted to see him. As she grew older her mother had refused to tell her where he was and then two years ago her mother had died. Now she wouldn't know where to look.

"Oh, Nick, I want to see him so badly! You will help, won't you?"

I kissed her and said, "Yes," because that's the way it was with everything. As far as Kitty was concerned, it was my heart that ruled my head.

That night I went down and had a cup of coffee by myself. Far off in the background there were other people and a nickelodeon with blaring music, but I didn't hear anything. I was thinking about my future and Kitty and all those little things that made up life. I wanted to be an artist and that would mean settling down and working and then after five or six years maybe I could really think about Kitty. That was me talking, the *me* who had worked in a drugstore every summer so I could save up enough money to go to college. That was the me who knew the world was made up of cold hard facts. And then the music was soft and sweet. It was "Night and Day" and that was Kitty whispering to me. That was Kitty making my heart jump out of place. That was Kitty making the world seem anything I wanted it to be.

Sleep came hard that night, for the thoughts were piling up on top of each other and then crumbling down quickly. But in the morning there was registration and books to buy and classes to attend. The college was in session.

Kitty and I had one class together. It met after lunch. I tried to take notes, but there was Kitty sitting next to me and she was sketching in her notebook. There were pictures of sailboats and there was a boy and a girl—and I knew it was foolish to try to concentrate.

We went to the football games and the movies and then at night we studied together. We started off studying, but Kitty would let her eyes drift out of the window. I'd say, "Get back to work," but she said that she couldn't work. She wanted to dream.

"Oh, Nick, it's holding us back," she said. "We wanted to be free and here we are doing the same things day in and day out. We're like a dog chasing its tail."

And then she would talk about her father and places like Bermuda and Hawaii. I'd been studying psychology that semester and Kitty had what the textbooks called a fixation. She would never be satisfied until she found her father. And for some reason she felt that he was living her dream-life. He was walking on the beach at night. He was swimming in warm blue waters and he was free to feel the world hard and real all about him. He was everywhere and Kitty wanted to be with him.

As the weeks went by Kitty was becoming more and more restless. I advised her to join a sorority, because I hoped that would make the college seem more filled with life for her. But Kitty said, "The girls are silly, Nick. They seem so young," and I knew that she would never join.

And then there were more football games and Christmas vacation and when we went back there was a lot of snow and Kitty liked to ski. She liked to hurl herself down the trails and feel the wind blowing through her. All that winter Kitty seemed happier at college, but after the snow melted, there was the rainy season and I discovered that Kitty hadn't forgotten her dreams. She was still talking about her father and far-off places. We stayed up late at night and tried to talk everything out; and then one day it was spring and we were walking together and she said, "Let's go away."

I said, "Fine. Shall we start off with the Big Dipper and then spend the summer on the moon?"

"I'm serious," she said. "Let's just get in the car and drive."

She didn't say any more, but I knew what she was thinking. She wanted to keep driving and never come back. I said, "All right. We'll leave in an hour."

Kitty took the car to

"We'll take our boat and sail around the world," Kitty said.

the dormitory and in an hour she was back. "I signed out for the week-end," she said.

I wanted to know where and she just answered, "Home." If the authorities had ever found out about it they would probably have said that she had lied. But she wasn't lying. The world was Kitty's home and she felt closer to it when she could speed the car over the black macadam roads.

I kept telling myself that I was a fool. It wasn't right. I said, "We shouldn't do this. You're a wildcat."

But she just smiled and when she did the corners of her mouth turned up and that meant she had won. "Anyhow," she said, "I'm not a wild *cat*, just a wild Kitty."

And then the suitcases were in the rumble seat and Kitty was pressing the accelerator hard against the floor as the road spun out like yarn that is dropped from an old lady's lap.

IT was nearly dusk; she drove the car off the highway onto a narrow dirt road that curved and twisted high up into the hills. Near the top there was a fence and we left the car and climbed the rest of the way. The sun was still hot but there was a breeze and the branches swayed back and forth. We lay down in a clearing at the top. Kitty folded her arms under her head. She said. "The wind in the trees reminds me of the waves rushing up the beach."

Far down in the valley we could hear a clock striking and then a dog barking. We just lay there for a while and then Kitty said, "You do love me, don't you, Nick?" I turned on my side and let my hand play with the collar on her dress.

"You know I do." I said, and her eyes darted back and forth for a moment and then she said, "Let's get married."

I didn't say anything for a moment—and then I said something about wanting to. But I added: "We'll have to wait."

She looked up.

"It's the money, isn't it?" she said, and I didn't answer. But that was it. There was a trust-fund for Kitty—and for me there was—well, we called it "blind future."

Kitty sat up quickly and put her arms around me and then my lips were on hers. After a long moment, she drew away a little and we sat there holding on to each other as if there, high up in the hills, the world were coming to an end. Kitty talked. She whispered first and then she laughed. There was her dream again. We would start out and drive until the road turned and we would turn with it.

And then she cried. She didn't try to stop. . . . She wanted to cry, because here within arm's reach was everything she wanted—the sunlight, the branches softly swishing overhead, the wind blowing in her hair and for some reason there was me. Kitty kept on talking and laughing and crying and then as if it had been a miraculous transfusion, I felt her wild dreams surging through me. My blood felt warm and the veins were standing out on my arm.

We stood up and I smiled softly at her. It was hard to smile, for the tears were streaming down our cheeks; and then we were holding each other again. . . .

We went back to the college town and got our license and told Arthur

and Krista. He was our favorite professor and we wanted them both to be the witnesses. On our wedding day, there were some early crocuses on the lawn and we picked them for a bridal bouquet. We laughed, and then we were at the minister's house. He was a young man and Kitty said, "I'm glad about that. He'll understand. He'll know we're doing the right thing."

I squeezed her hand and smiled, for we were standing in front of the window and the earthly smell of a spring evening was in the air. The minister came over to us and began to read the ceremony. Every once in a while I felt the pressure of Kitty's fingers, and then I was saying, "With this ring I thee wed,"—and we were man and wife.

After we had left, Kitty said, "Let's go back to the hill," and we did. There were the stars and the trees, tall and stately, to watch over us. Far off across the hills the rising moon was full and bright. The wind whispered through the trees and from nowhere we were hearing the strains of "Lohengrin."

Kitty said, "For always and always," and I said, "Yes, darling . . . and all ways."

For a moment we just stood there, holding tight with locked fingers, and then Kitty was in my arms and I could feel her fingers pressing hard into my back. The air was cool and Kitty's lips were soft and warm.

It was our night and we rolled ourselves up in the blanket. We lay on our backs and looked up at the stars for a long time, talking about tomorrow and the day that would be a year from tomorrow.

HOURS later it was three o'clock; Kitty's head was on my shoulder and my arm was around her. I watched the rise and fall of her body as she breathed in sleep. She was my wife. This wasn't just something to laugh about when the sun came up in the morning. This was Kitty and Nick, and it was for always and all ways.

Kitty stirred easily and then she was awake and we were walking down the hill to the car. I drove back and Kitty sat close to me. Every once in a while I would lift my arm over her head and pull her in close to me, but Kitty didn't say anything. She kept staring out into the night. We drove over the bridge and still Kitty hadn't spoken. For a moment I didn't want to ask her, but then I said, "What's the matter, Kit? Why so quiet?"

I looked down for a moment. Kitty's lips were trembling and then she spoke. "Oh, Nick," she said, "I'm always quiet when I'm happy." She tried not to cry and then she said, "There just aren't words!"

In town we stopped at the diner and sat up on the stools and had a cup of coffee. We sat far down at the end of the counter and we talked about the morning. There would be a pause and we would look at each other and smile and then we would let our knees touch. The coffee was hot and it felt good, for the night air had been cool.

We drove back to the house where I boarded. It was cold and I started a fire and we sat up close to it and watched the flames lick up the sap that oozed out of the wood. Ever since we had left the hill, Kitty had been trying to tell me something . . . or maybe now she was trying to ask me, but it was there and I said, "Yes, Kitty. We will leave." I could still feel her dreams surging through me. "We'll go out and feel the world all around us."

THAT morning we did leave. Kitty went to the dormitory to pack all of her things; then it was eleven o'clock and I was driving around the campus. The bells were ringing in the tower and I watched the steady stream of boys and girls as they went from one building to another. I told myself this was all a dream. We weren't really going. I was driving over to get Kitty and in a few minutes we would be sitting in class together. Tonight we would have supper together and we would go to a movie and then we would park the car by the pond and talk more about days that meant tomorrow.

But now I was in front of the dormitory and this was today and it wasn't a dream. I didn't get out at first. I just sat there and felt my heart beating quickly. Ever since I had met Kitty I had been afraid—afraid because I loved her—afraid because I didn't know where she was going. Now I knew and I *was* sitting there waiting for her. Something deep inside of me said, "Go back. You have work to do. You are going to finish college"—but I didn't, for Kitty was walking down the path and her eyes were moving quickly again. She just looked at me and then she said, "Oh, Nick," and I knew that I would never go back, would never leave her.

As we drove along, the grass seemed to be getting greener. The buds on the trees turned into bright green foliage and then there were bright splotches of yellow forsythia. The sky was softly blue and the sun was warm on the back of our necks.

Kitty laughed and said, "We're going out to meet the spring." I laughed with her, but I was thinking again. It was Kitty who could cash the large check every month and the best that I could do was to help her spend it. She had tried to say that it was our money, but I wouldn't let myself believe that. The road straightened out and with it my thoughts became more ordered. I knew that I could paint. Some day, some day soon, I would begin to sell my water-colors and then my money would be Kitty's and she would be paid back. . . .

When darkness fell we were still miles from New York and we decided to stop for the night. There were some tourist cabins on the right and Kitty said, "Oh, Nick, let's stay there! It will be fun."

I swung the car off the road and we waited for the man to unlock the door. I knew what she would say and I knew she wanted me to ask her, so I said, "Why will it be fun, Kitty?"

"It will be fun because we're young. Things like this are just for us and nobody else. We're married, we love each other, and we're on a flight of youth."

We'd both said it so many times we knew it by heart. If the Hippocrates oath was for doctors, this was the creed for all young people in love.

That night we sat on the porch and smoked cigarettes before we went to bed. I wanted to know *(Please turn to page 97)*

"Hooray!" said Rourke. "That's the boy, Danny!" "Sit down," said Casey, "—and hand that man his hat."

LUCKY PASS

by

PARKE CUMMINGS

Illustrated by CHARLES CHICKERING

"HERE'S our seats," said Casey.

"Way up here?" said Rourke. "It's a mile away from the field we are! We can't see the game from here. There's empty ones down yonder; let's be moving down."

"Rourke! This is no movie; this is a football game. These are reserved. It's printed on the tickets: Section twelve. Seats twenty-four and twenty-five. Row double Z."

"So you think I'm ignorant?" said Rourke. "There's no double Z in the alphabet. Double U, yes—but no double Z."

"Look for yourself, Rourke, look for yourself—and sit down. The folks behind will be wanting to see."

"Behind! Only birds behind us up here, I'm betting."

"You to complain," said Casey, "—looking a gift horse in the mouth! Remember that Danny gave us these tickets. It's not everybody has a nephew on the squad. You should be more appreciative."

"I'm appreciative," said Rourke; "only I don't like these seats. Where's Danny?"

"Down there, kicking the ball. Number 72."

"It's not only the seats and the letters that are too high around here. The numbers too. Seventy-two men would not be playing at once."

"Only eleven," said Casey, "only eleven on a side at the same time. But in football you have lots of substitutes. One man cannot play all the time."

"And why not? Now if I was in there running with the ball, making tackles all over the place, I'd have no substitutes. Not me. I'd play the whole game."

"You'd go out on a shutter—you, weighing a hundred and fifty-seven."

"A lot of weight that is," said Rourke. "And all of it muscle."

"Rourke, the lightest man on the team weighs a hundred and eighty-one. The left tackle is two hundred and thirty-eight."

"More high numbers. That's more than Aunt Mildred weighs."

"To play football," said Casey, "you've got to be big—and brainy."

"Ah, brains! If I was down there playing quarterback—"

"You're not. You're in Row double Z, Seat twenty-five. —And most of twenty-six too. Do you not see you're crowding that girl?"

"I wasn't noticing," said Rourke.

"Well, notice the field now. The game's going to begin. The other side's going to kick off to us. Do you see the ball?"

A SHORT SHORT FOOTBALL STORY

"I see it—I'm not blind; over by third base it is."

"Third base! This is no baseball game."

"It's by third base, I'm telling you. Haven't I seen plenty of baseball games here?"

"All very well," said Casey, "but the field is marked out for football now. It's on the forty-yard line the ball is."

"I'm believing you," said Rourke. "And where's Danny?"

"On the bench. He's not playing yet."

"Not playing! Didn't we come to see him play? Who is it has his job?"

"Danny plays left halfback," said Casey. "Wait till I look at the program. Here it is. Wiesnowski, left halfback."

"What?"

"Wiesnowski. Look for yourself."

"A misprint it is, I'm betting."

"No misprint," said Casey. "Wiesnowski, left half. Thorwendson, right half. Guisillupi, quarterback. Jablonyitch, fullback—"

"Casey," said Rourke, "I can't believe my ears."

"It's the truth I'm telling you. Karlpflugger, left end. Pasatsky, left tackle. Riley, left guard—"

"What? Say that again?"

"Riley, left guard."

"That's better! Watch Riley, Casey. Watch him close. The star of the game he'll be."

"Riley's a substitute for Eisenstein," said Casey. "Eisenstein's the best guard in the country. An all-American. But he got hurt last week, and Riley's taking his place."

"Casey," said Rourke, "I'm ashamed to know you."

"Facts," said Casey, "are facts. . . . Look! They've kicked off! There goes the ball."

"A poor kick it is. A very poor kick."

"A very short one. It's to Riley."

"Ah! To Riley! Come on, Riley! A touchdown!"

"Quit screaming," said Casey. "Do you not see he fumbled the ball? The other side fell on it. It's their ball."

"No wonder he fumbled," said Rourke. "A ball that shape is hard to catch. It wasn't his fault. It bounced off his chest. Footballs should be round like baseballs."

"It does no good to talk. The other side has the ball on our twenty-four-yard line. That's bad. Very bad. They may get a touchdown. Look! There they go!"

(Please turn to page 93)

FAME *is the* SPUR

by HOWARD SPRING

the author of "My Son, My Son!"

The Story Thus Far:

JOHN HAMER SHAWCROSS never forgot the funeral of the Old Warrior; and he always kept the saber which the Old Warrior had cherished as a memento of that strange dreadful day when he, a young Manchester workman on holiday with his sweetheart Emma, had been one of the rioting crowd ridden down by the dragoons; Emma had been killed by this saber; and he had wrested it from the hand of the dragoon, and struck back with it. . . .

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

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

"What sets of men?" the boy asked.

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

So young John now had to himself the little room he had shared with the Old Warrior; and later he sometimes invited his friend Arnold Ryerson to study there with him in the evening. Thus it happened that when young Ryerson's father died suddenly, leaving his family in need, Gordon Stansfield went to his own employer, the leather-worker Birley Artingstall, and through him got the boy a place in one of the shops owned by Birley's rich brother Hawley Artingstall.

Gordon Stansfield was like that—as his wife, John's mother Ellen, could well attest. Ten years before, a young woman with a baby and a wedding-ring, but without a husband, she had been discharged by her employer, and was on her heart-broken way to drown herself when she stumbled into a little chapel meeting conducted by the lay preacher Gordon Stansfield. Gordon had taken Ellen and her baby home to his sister Millie and his own little house; and when Millie died a few months later, Gordon and Ellen married.

Serious and studious, young John grew up. At fourteen, the age when boys finished school and started earning, he had a modest birthday party; and it so happened that on that evening Hawley Artingstall's young daughter Ann was visiting her Uncle Birley, and she was with him when he called at the Stansfields'. A trivial episode: but the purse-proud Hawley was outraged that his daughter should have been introduced to the company of such lowly youngsters as young John and his friends, and made a great to-do about it. Her mother Lillian undertook to discipline the rebellious Ann, and finally packed her off to a school run by Lillian's sister Elizabeth Lightowler.

A very trying business for Hawley Artingstall's wife Lillian, who had a weak heart. A still more trying scene occurred sometime later, when she found occasion to speak severely to a maidservant. "Hilda," she said, "when are you expecting your baby?"

She waited to see the girl crumple up, fling herself at her feet, beg, howl. But Hilda only kept a level gaze directed upon Lillian.

Lillian's fingers drummed impatiently. "Well," she said. "You don't deny it, do you? When are you expecting it?"

Hilda's face broke suddenly into a radiant smile. "You'd better ask its father," she said. . . .

Hawley did not deny the accusation; and a fatal heart-attack culminated poor Lillian's fury. . . . Curiously enough, it was on the same night that Gordon Stansfield died. *(We continue in detail this novel, which we have condensed for serial publication in seven installments. Mr. Spring notes: "A few men and women who have played some part in the history of our times are mentioned in this novel. These apart, all characters are fictitious, all scenes imaginary.")*

A great novel of three boys who lived to see their ambitions fulfilled.

IT was a hard time for Hawley Artingstall. You can't live with a woman for the best part of twenty years without feeling wounds when she is torn away. Hawley got what consolation he could out of splendid obsequies. The procession which left the Limes for the cemetery was as lengthy as a Lord Mayor's show; and while the body was being committed to the grave, a memorial service was being held in t'Owd Church. The bell tolling for that service had disturbed old Suddaby, lonely in his musty labyrinth, for Hamer was away, attending the funeral of Gordon Stansfield. Old Suddaby stuffed cotton-wool into his ears. He hated the sound of the bell. He was too old to hear it sentimentally.

The things said at the memorial service were reported in the Manchester *Guardian;* and Hawley, stiff and stocky in black, standing with his back to the dining-room fire, read them the next morning.

He folded the paper open and laid it beside Ann's plate. He did not expect she or Lizzie Lightowler, who was staying in the house, would be down to breakfast before he left for the shop. He had decreed that the Artingstall diligence should set out at the usual time. He would act in a Roman fashion. There would be black boards across the shop windows; and he had instructed Mr. Tattersall, the manager, to supply to each male employee a black tie and a crape arm-band out of stock.

Hilda came in carrying the tray, and to Hawley's surprise, Ann and Lizzie came into the room behind her. Ann took the tray from Hilda's hands.

"You go," she said. "I can look after all this."

She put the tray on the table, and when Hilda had shut the door, she said: "Really, that girl shouldn't carry great weights like this. She's going to have a baby."

Hawley started up in his chair, his face purpling. "Ann!" he said. "What are you talking about? How dare you say such things?"

"Sit down, Hawley. Don't be foolish," said Lizzie Lightowler. "Of course the girl's going to have a baby. It's as plain as the nose on your face."

It was a nightmare to Arnold: the assault of those bloody hands.

Ann stood behind the door. The boys did not see her until, following Birley with

Hawley sat down and looked at the two women. Women—yes. This year had made a wonderful difference to Ann. The girl had grown. She was inches taller; she was a little taller than Hawley himself; she had a tranquillity, a perfect grip on herself, that both startled and scared him. He knew that if he had at any time had a hold over this daughter of his, he had none now. More than ever he saw her as neither Sugby nor Artingstall, but as belonging to that dimly remembered woman who was his mother.

She poured his coffee, gave him eggs and bacon from under the big metal cover. She served Lizzie, and then herself. When she sat down, she took up the newspaper, glanced at what Hawley had evidently intended her to see, and then, without reading, laid the paper aside.

"Yes," she said. "Something ought to be done about that girl. I saw her carrying a great bucket of water upstairs yesterday."

"She looks five or six months gone," said Lizzie.

"Quite that, I should say," Ann agreed.

Hawley looked up, his eyes smoldering like an angry bull's. "Ah don't like such talk," he said. "It's not decent."

"It's not decent," said Lizzie, "to have that girl carrying heavy things about. It's not decent, and it's not fair. I'm surprised Lillian didn't do something about it."

"Lillian!" The snort was out before Hawley realized its significance, its contempt, its utter loathing of Lillian. "She knew nothing about it," he said lamely.

"Someone must have known something about it," said Ann.

Hawley got up from the table, trembling with wrath. "Don't bait me!" he cried. "Ah'll not have this sort o' thing talked about in my house."

"I'm not baiting you," Ann said coolly. "Do be reasonable, Father. Something's got to be done about the girl. Would you like Aunt Lizzie to speak to her?"

Hawley crashed his fist down on the mahogany. "Ah'll not have this interference," he cried. "Something's got to be done, has it? Something *is* going to be done. Ah'm goin' to marry 'Ilda."

IT was very necessary, Birley Artingstall thought, to cheer up these young men. Arnold Ryerson had managed to get a few days' holiday for Christmas. He and Hamer, and Birley, had come back together from Gordon Stansfield's funeral, packed closely in a four-wheeler cab. The two boys got out in front of Hamer's house; and before the cab drove on with Birley and the minister, Birley put his head out the window and said:

"Can you two come and see me tomorrow night—seven o'clock?"

Arnold said, "Thank you, Mr. Artingstall;" and Hamer, who was mute with misery, merely nodded. They stood watching the cab till it was out of sight; and Birley, keeping his head stuck out of the window, noted the difference that a year had wrought. Arnold no longer overtopped his friend: they were of a height, and Hamer carried himself better. He stood straight as a lamp-post, his head set proudly on his shoulders, alongside his pale companion. . . .

Poor young chaps, Birley thought, as he prepared to receive them the next evening; they had a tough time ahead, the pair of them. He drew the curtains, mended the fire and opened out his gate-legged table. He put on the tablecloth and laid three places. He enjoyed doing this. It was not often he had company.

A thump of the knocker made him start. He pulled an old heavy watch out of his pocket. It could not be the boys: they were not due for half an hour. He turned up the gas at the head of his stairway and went down to the street door. Ann threw her arms round his neck and kissed him.

"Well, lass!" he exclaimed, holding her away from him and surveying her against the bleak background of Great Ancoats Street. "You've grown out of all recognition! Come in. How did you get here?"

"I walked," Ann said, and added with a laugh: "But don't be afraid. There'll be no dreadful consequences this time. I called at the shop. Father knows all about it."

"And he let you come?" Birley asked with wonder, following her up the stairs.

Ann felt it was not her business to tell Birley what had happened that morning to change her relationship to her father. She merely said: "Yes; he let me come. I told him that no doubt you would take me to some civilized part of the town and see me into a cab."

"Ay, I'll do that, lass," said Birley. "Here, give me your hat, and sit you down."

She took off her hat but did not sit down. Birley looked at her with admiration—so tall and fair and self-possessed. "I don't know what's come over you," he said. "A year ago—that's when you were here last—you were a slip of a thing, and now—well, I dunno—"

She laughed happily. "Just growing up, Uncle Birley—growing up, and learning all sorts of things, and meeting all sorts of people, and being happy for a year. That's all it is."

"Well, you'll make a fine eyeful for these two young men," said Birley. "And that's a funny thing—I hadn't thought of that. A year ago you went to their party, and now here you are coming to mine, and the same two youngsters are just about due."

"What! Arnold Ryerson? But I see a lot of him in Bradford."

"Ay, he told me something about that. Well, I've asked him here tonight, and young John Shawcross—Hamer, as he fancies to call himself."

"That's the boy who had a birthday."

"That's the one, and you gave him your hair-ribbon for a present."

ANN knitted her brows in an effort at recollection. "Did I? It's quite gone out of my mind. So much else happened that night. I don't remember a bit what he looks like."

"It'd be no use remembering, lass. He's changed as much as you. And you're both in the same boat. His stepfather died the same day as your mother. Now I'd better put another place for you. . . . There they are! Wait here. I won't be a minute."

He ran happily down the stairs, seized the boys by the arm, and took them with him along the street. "Come on," he said. "Only three doors down. Mrs. Sibbles."

"What about her?" Arnold asked.

"She's cooking for me," said Birley. "All very well mucking along on my own, so long as I'm *on* my own. But this is a special occasion." He banged a knocker, pushed a door that was ajar, and yelled: "Mrs. Sibbles!"

"Come on in, Mr. Artingstall," a voice answered. "It's all packed and waiting."

Illustrated by

rhythmic stampings, they passed round the table and laid down their burdens.

They marched back to Birley's house with the basket. Birley shut the door and put the basket behind it. "Now, lads," he said, "we'll take one each, and make a procession of it."

He stuck the holly behind his ear, himself took the Christmas pudding, and commanded Arnold to take the vegetable-dish and Hamer the steak-and-kidney pie. He thumped heavily up the stairs to announce his presence, and shouted: "Open! Open!"

Ann stood behind the door. The boys did not see her until, following Birley with heavy rhythmic stampings, they had passed round the table and laid down their burdens. Then Arnold exclaimed: "Why, Miss Artingstall!" and Birley, twiddling the sprig of holly in his fingers and watching that encounter, was aware that the boy's face lit up, and that Ann, though he had warned her whom to expect, advanced and took Arnold's hand with a sudden brightening of the glance, a slow deepening of color.

"Now, sit down," he said. "You all know one another. You do remember my niece Ann, don't you, John?"

Hamer remembered the occasion rather than the girl. He remembered a number of people signing their names in a book, and he remembered a girl, with a sudden whim, giving him a hair-ribbon.

Ann did not remember him. She remembered a pale, thin boy. This boy was not pale and thin. His eyes were large and beautiful under his broad brow; and Gordon's death had deepened the habitual gravity of his bearing. But he stood with his head up and his shoulders back, with an elasticity and resilience in the carriage of his body that made it impossible for her to think of the poor rough clothes he was wearing. She smiled at him, holding his hand for a moment. "No," she said. "I wouldn't have remembered you."

BIRLEY put the Christmas pudding on the hearth, and piled an extra log upon a fire already sufficiently hospitable. "Now then, sit down, all of you," he commanded again. "But first of all, shove the sausage down to that door, John."

Hamer did so, and came to the table where the others were already seated. He stood with his hands resting on the back of his chair, and looked down into the three faces. "I wonder," he said, "whether you'd mind calling me Hamer?"

"Good Lord, lad, whatever for?" Birley demanded.

"Well," said Hamer, continuing to stand, and smiling down upon them all with an air of sweet reasonableness, "it *is* my name, you know."

"Ay, but no one's used it, so far as I know."

"Well, I'm starting a sort of new life now—on my own. It's just a fancy of mine—if you don't mind."

"Sit down," said Birley. "It's nowt worth arguing about while the pie gets cold. It's a queer idea, but perhaps there's something in it. Ay—Hamer Shawcross. It's not a bad name."

"We must do this every Christmas, Uncle Birley," Ann cried, when they were all served and eating with unconcealed relish. "That is, if I happen to be in Manchester."

"You'll be in Manchester," said Arnold. "But shall I be? I may not always be able to get a Christmas holiday."

"Neither may I," Ann answered.

"But you're staying in Manchester, now that—that—" Arnold stammered over the words—"now that your mother's dead."

Ann shook her head. "No. I'm going back with Aunt Lizzie," she said; and Birley saw again how Arnold's face could not tell a lie about the joy this affirmation brought him.

"How do you get on, lad, in Bradford?" he asked. "You've been there a year now, and we don't hear much about what you do."

"It's what he's *going* to do that matters," Ann broke in; and when Birley looked inquiringly at Arnold, the boy colored and murmured: "Oh, that's just an idea of Mrs. Lightowler's. She's got in with a lot of people who meet and talk politics."

He left it at that, and Ann took up the story: "I don't know how Aunt Lizzie has the nerve to be under Father's roof. He'd die if he knew what a radical she was."

Birley cocked a questioning eye, and she said: "She's one of those who believe that working-people will have to have their own Members in the House of Commons. Now they get elected as Liberals and try to do what they can. She thinks that's nonsense, and that they'll have to form their own party. She takes Arnold about with her to meetings of these people, and he's spoken once or twice."

"So have you," said Arnold; and the two laughed, as though caught in a conspiracy.

"Well, bless my soul!" Birley cried. "I never heard the like. Working-people have their own Members? I've always voted Liberal. I think we're safe enough in Mr. Gladstone's hands. I can't take this seriously."

"Oh, it's serious enough," said Arnold quietly. "It'll come."

"Well, it's no topic for a Christmas dinner," Birley asserted, and Hamer said, surprisingly: "Perhaps it's a better topic where there are no Christmas dinners."

CAROLS, to Birley, were hymns. They sang hymns after dinner, and presently Birley said: "Now the grandest one of all—Number 133—'Let earth and heaven combine.' Charles Wesley. Ah, there was no one like Charles when it came to writing a hymn—not even John."

They sang it through to the end:

Then shall His love be fully showed,
And man shall then be lost in God.

Birley got up and lit the gas. Arnold Ryerson rose too. "I'm glad we sang those hymns," he said. "I don't agree with Robert Owen about religion or marriage. He didn't believe in either."

Arnold looked very young and naïve, standing there making his solemn affirmation, with the unaccustomed pipe in his hand. Ann laughed at him merrily. "You and your Robert Owen!" she said. "It was Robert Owen, as much as anything, that got me sent into exile a year ago."

"Are you sorry?" Birley asked.

"No, indeed," she said. "The last year has been worth all the rest of my life put together." She put on her hat and coat and took up her muff. "Now, you must keep your promise, and see me safely into a cab."

Birley prepared to go with her. "You boys stay here," he said.

The boys stood listening as the young eager footsteps and the old careful ones sounded together on the hollow stairs. They

heard the door bang. Then Arnold, his face shining, turned to Hamer and asked with childlike enthusiasm: "What d'you think of her?"

Hamer gave a noncommittal reply and turned to rummage among Birley's books.

In the street, Ann put her hand upon Birley's arm, and he patted it comfortingly. "Uncle Birley," she asked, "what do you make of that boy Hamer Shawcross?"

"Make of him? Why, my dear, it's difficult to make anything of him just yet. So far, he's hardly known that he's born, but now he's going to find out."

WHEN Hamer got home that night from Birley Artingstall's party, he found his mother and Mrs. Ryerson sitting by the kitchen fire. There was a teapot on the table, and the fingers of both the women were busy. Ellen was darning; Mrs. Ryerson, her maimed fingers as active as whole ones, was knitting. She got up when Hamer came into the room, and said: "Well, you tell him, Ellen. Now I must go and get t'bread going."

She went, with that air she had of expending a good deal of energy even upon the business of leaving a room, and Hamer sat down in the chair she had vacated. Ellen was swathed from head to foot in heavy black, relieved only by the cameo brooch at her throat. "We've been having a talk," she said, "about what we're going to do."

She spoke in a low voice, keeping her head bowed over her work. She did not want him to see that her eyes were red. "We could go in with t'Ryersons," she added after a moment.

At first Hamer did not understand; then he flushed, getting to his feet and sweeping the hair back from his forehead. "You mean share their house?" he asked.

Ellen nodded. "Mrs. Ryerson and I could sleep in one bedroom, and t'little uns in the other. You and Francis could have t'front room downstairs. He's a nice lad."

Hamer looked at her incredulously. "No!" he said fiercely. "No!"

Ellen spoke patiently, as though she were not surprised that he found this hard to stomach. It seemed logical, unanswerable; but again Hamer shouted: "No! I'm not going to give this up. It's our home."

"Ay, I know that, lad; but there's nowt comin' into it now."

At that, she began to cry quietly; and Hamer, who had not seen her cry till these last few days, stood with his back to the fire, his hands in his pockets, scowling to hide from her that his own eyes were smarting. Suddenly there came into his mind something Mr. Suddaby had said about Lord Lostwithiel, who had never seen Ancoats, living at ease on Ancoats rents. Even when Gordon had been paying the rent, the question seemed no more than academic; but now he realized that if this rent was to be paid, it must be paid out of *his* earnings.

"Why should we pay rent, anyway?" he burst out angrily.

Ellen dried her eyes and looked up at him in surprise. "Nay, now tha's talking daft, lad," she said. "Rent's rent, and it's got to be paid. Talk like that, an' Mr. Richardson'll soon 'ave thee on t'street."

"Well, we're staying here," he said firmly. "Do you understand that? Staying here! Where my room is upstairs. Where your kitchen is. Where old Grandfather lived, and Father lived. It's ours, and we're going to keep it."

She liked to hear him talk in that way. He looked proud and resentful. She stood up, tumbling things from her lap on to the rug, and took his face between her hands and kissed him. He didn't seem to like it. He was not used to being kissed. He drew away like a sensitive animal that hates to be handled. At the door, he paused and said: "I'm going up to my room to think. I don't know what we'll do, but we're not going to share with the Ryersons."

"There's no fire in your room," she said. "We've got to think about coal now."

"I can do without fire," Hamer said. "But we're not going to do without a place of our own."

Chapter Eight

MR. RICHARDSON was a bachelor, living in two rooms in George Street. He was not a companionable person—his job didn't lend itself to that; but he liked, especially in the winter-time, to look in at the Lostwithiel Arms on a Saturday night. He did this partly for business reasons. If he found a notorious rent-ower spending his money on booze, he would fix his eyes, hung beneath with blue heavy bags, upon the offender, and so force upon him a realization that this was an enormous offence: to be throwing down his neck, in burning spirits or frothy ale, the good money that was owing to "the office."

But this was secondary. Though not companionable, the man liked to be in company. He would talk to nobody, and few wanted to talk to him; but there he would sit, in the chair that was reserved for him on Saturday nights, his feet to the fire, his glass on the mahogany table, the gas in its round white opaque globe glowing above his head, the landlord attentive.

That Tom Hannaway, of all people, a whippersnapper, a person who had never been in the bar before, should walk casually over, seat himself at Mr. Richardson's table and engage him in conversation —this seemed to the landlord an outrage.

Tom Hannaway had come in and ordered himself half a pint of bitter. He sipped it as though he didn't like it. He was a popular fellow, and he stood a few drinks, and soon had his little circle happy. " 'Ow's trade, Tom? Tha seems t'ave brass to chuck about."

"Not so bad," said Tom. "Not so bad. I make ends meet. Once I've paid the rent, there's not much to worry about. But fifteen bob a week takes a bit o' finding."

"Fifteen bob? That's a bob more than Darkie Cheap ever paid."

Then Tom, who from a dark doorway had watched Mr. Richardson enter the pub half an hour before, cried with surprise: "Why, there's Mr. Richardson himself! Isn't the rent of my boneyard fifteen bob a week, Mr. Richardson?"

Mr. Richardson looked as if he did not want to discuss the matter, but he was seen to nod. It was then that Tom walked across from the bar to the nook by the fire and said: "Thank you for confirming that, Mr. Richardson."

The rent-collector, who usually remained till ten o'clock and then went home full of a gentle melancholy, got to his feet and almost roughly put Tom aside. "Excuse me," he said. "I've got affairs to see to at home tonight." No one but Mr. Richardson heard Tom Hannaway say: "I'll be calling on you."

He called half an hour later. When they were alone in the dingy little room of the lodgings, Mr. Richardson snarled: "What do you want?"

Tom had not been invited to sit down. He did so, and waved his hand toward another chair, as though he were the host. He smiled, showing his strong young white teeth. "Mrs. Burnsall owes you a good deal of rent for that lock-up shop on the corner of Broadbent Street."

"That's my business, and I don't want you sticking your nose into it," said Mr. Richardson.

Tom ignored this. "I've been lending a few shillings to one or two people," he said frankly. "Mrs. Burnsall wanted to borrow two pounds. I couldn't let her have it. I want that shop. It's time I expanded my affairs."

TOM HANNAWAY had two more calls to make that night. First of all, he went to the Widow Burnsall's. She was at this time in her early thirties, and Tom was just eighteen. He remembered how, the last time the fair had come to the croft and he had gone up to the boxing-platform, stripped of everything but his trousers, he had seen Mrs. Burnsall at the front of the crowd, with the naphtha flares shining on her face. The crude light brought out the height of her cheekbones and sank her eyes into dark pits. Tom thought she was an exciting-looking woman, and she had gazed frankly at his fine arms and white body and at the little dark curl beginning already to sprout on his chest.

He had seen her once or twice since that, when he had been out with his truck, collecting junk. She had asked him to come into her house. He had not gone; but gossiping on her doorstep, he had learned a lot about her. She was the only woman he knew who had money. She had married an old man of the most miserly habits. She was twenty-five then, and he died when she was thirty. A lifetime of the most ignominious scrimping and scraping permitted him to leave less than a thousand pounds. Mrs. Burnsall had fifteen shillings a week income. It was just not enough to manage on. So she had tried running the lock-up green-grocer's shop, and now that was a failure.

Tom Hannaway was turning all these things over in his busy mind as he hurried through the night from Mr. Richardson's to the Widow Burnsall's. The lock-up shop would not be a failure under *his* management; and what could be nicer for Mrs. Burnsall than to make up the few extra shillings she needed by taking him for a lodger?

It was the sort of house he was used to: two up and two down. But it was the most comfortable house he had ever been in. Polly Burnsall, surprised and delighted to see him, took him through to the kitchen. The steel of the fireplace and of the fender was shining like silver. The fire was bright. He had never before seen such a lamp as hung from the ceiling over the center of the round table on which Polly's solitaire cards were set out.

This was a sumptuousness which Tom had not expected; nor had he expected to find Polly Burnsall herself so spick and span, seeing that she could not have been long back from her disastrous failure of a shop. But her hair looked as if it had just been dressed; her high cheekbones were obviously fresh from soap and water; and her dress actually included a gold chain round the neck, passing to a watch tucked into her girdle.

Tom began to wonder whether the exciting things he had been dreaming about were not, after all, presumptuous and abominable. Polly put him into one of the easy-chairs and asked if she should make him a cup of tea. He said no, and plunged at once into his business.

"I wanted to warn you, Mrs. Burnsall: It's no business of mine, but old Richardson's been saying he's going to turn you out of the shop."

He waited for her comment on that, but there was none. She sat at the table, with her chin resting on the knuckles of her two hands, looking steadily at him with her dark piercing eyes. It was almost as though she were trying to hypnotize him. He stared for a moment at a couple of bangles which had fallen from her wrists down her bare shapely forearms; and then he went on: "Well, I wanted to warn you, see, and help you too. I know you can manage if you get a bit more money, and I wondered if you would like to take me for a lodger. I could pay you fifteen shillings a week."

Tom had settled in his mind on twelve-and-six, but something was working him up, and the "fifteen shillings" was out before he knew it.

She continued to gaze at him with inscrutable black eyes, not moving her position. He did not know what emotion she was keeping under control, how passionately the woman who had married miser Burnsall desired this handsome, black-haired youth with the white skin and the red lips through which the teeth shone like hailstones when he smiled.

"Well,"—and he managed to grin uncomfortably,—"d'you think I've got a cheek? Could you do it at the money?"

"When could you come?" she said, and he was thrown into a wild joy, to hear that her voice was as strained as his own.

"Tomorrow night," he said.

In the passage she took his arm. "Come tonight," she whispered. "Stay now."

He shook himself clear, once again the confident Tom Hannaway, the man in control of the situation.

"No. Sorry," he said in his bold clear tones. "I've got to run on and see a man about a bit of business."

IT happened that this was the night on which Hamer and Arnold Ryerson had been to Birley Artingstall's party. Hamer, leaving his mother downstairs, had gone up to his bedroom, which was fireless for the first time since it had been also his study, as his entry in the diary notes: *(Please turn to page 62)*

There was silence in the room; the firelight lit up the face of Ann, looking up at him with wonder and delight.


JOHN
LaGATTA

I'm Glad She's HAPPY

A story of those amazing creatures who inhabit Manhattan Island.

BY DAWN POWELL

Illustrated by JOHN LA GATTA

THEY held hands all the way down on the train. Ellen didn't say anything, but she knew what he was going through. He knew she knew. That was the thing about Ellen.

"It won't be so bad," she said encouragingly. "She isn't likely to make a scene in front of her new husband."

Ken wasn't so sure.

"Don't leave me alone with her, anyway," he begged.

She promised.

"Just be ourselves, that's all," she said. "We're all friends, really—civilized people. And we've got to start seeing each other socially sooner or later, now that we're back in America."

"We gave her a dirty deal; let's not kid ourselves," he said moodily. "Her life was wrapped up in me, and what do I do? I fall in love with you and run out."

As if they hadn't been over all this a hundred times, a thousand times, even, in the last year!

"Darling, you must stop punishing yourself," she pleaded with him. "You're getting neurotic about it. Be realistic, dear. In any really great love somebody has to suffer."

"I know," he admitted.

"Besides, she's got her new husband, this man Tayland," she said.

Ken stared out the window at the Connecticut hills.

"She did that for me too," he said. "She wanted to save my face—make people think she was the one that was running out, not me."

Ellen silently patted his hand. It was no use trying to console him when he got in these remorseful states about Caroline. It was no use telling him that this was life—millions of men leaving millions of devoted wives, after ten years of seeming content. It was nobody's fault that the great, really deathless love in a person's life often came late and broke somebody else's heart. The value of love was measured by its weight in tears. It was a trivial affair indeed (and a trivial man, Ellen privately reflected) that caused no pain. You had to be philosophical.

There was an uncomfortable silence. . . . "Look, how about a highball, Caroline?" Ken burst out as if in desperation.

"Do you know this man Tayland?" Ellen asked.

"I'm told I know him, but I can't place him," Ken answered. "I understand he's all right."

He frowned, and Ellen saw he was still angry at Caroline for marrying the very day of her divorce from him. If he, Ken, had the decency to wait a few extra weeks before he married Ellen, there was certainly no reason for Caroline to pick up with the first man she saw on the train out of Reno. It made everything look rather cheap, he had thought. He had said as much in his congratulatory note to Caroline, and was irritated that in her answer she ignored his disapproval.

"I don't know whether he's a good man to be around Billy," said Ken thoughtfully. "Bill's such a high-strung kid."

"Billy's a little darling," Ellen said readily. "I only wish we had room to keep him with us. But then our life is too unconventional for a growing child."

"We couldn't have taken Billy from her," said Ken. "The least we could do was to tell her to keep Billy with her."

It reminded him that he should have sent Billy a birthday present last week, but Ellen had attended to it, she said. They were nearing the little town of Eretria, and Ken drew his hand away from hers.

"We must remember not to pet in front of her," he said. "No sense in hurting her."

The train stopped, and he picked up their bags.

"Courage," she whispered.

IT was a relief not to find Caroline waiting at the station. It put off the awkward moment a little while longer. The gardener met them instead; it seemed that Mr. and Mrs. Tayland were still at the village fair.

"Didn't they get our wire?" Ken asked.

Yes, but they had already made plans for the fair. Mrs. Tayland was showing a dog.

"Goodness, I didn't know Caroline cared about dogs," said Ellen.

Neither did Ken. When he and Caroline were married, they never had even considered pets, because they loved to travel.

"Mr. and Mrs. are both great dog-lovers," said the gardener.

They were silent driving up the woody hills toward this hour they had put off for over a year. Ellen, stealing a look at Ken's drawn face, knew he was hoping something would happen at the fair so that once again he could get away without facing Caroline's sweetly forgiving, always adoring eyes. If she'd only been difficult about the business, it would have made it so much easier for all of them. It made both Ken and Ellen seem such rats, all that publicity in the gossip-columns about how wonderful Caroline, the loyal wife, had been when her now-famous husband had left her for a younger, richer, prettier woman. It was hard on Ken, now that he was really serious about politics, to have all that talk; and naturally it made things socially trying for Ellen at first. The nobler Caroline was about it, the worse it was for them. There were times when Ellen could have killed her for being so generous. Ken could have too; it was really no treat, having two women devotedly in love with you. . . .

The house was quite small, a mere cottage in comparison to the rather pretentious places Ken and Caroline used to live in. Ellen felt rather ashamed of their own elaborate duplex on the river. She had always had the idea that Caroline loved show and had made Ken forgo his own naturally simple tastes and live up to his position. But when separated, it was Ken who had chosen the great penthouse, and it was Caroline who had the tiny cottage. There was a large garden and a rambling red barn with chickens squawking around, and a goat on a tether in the meadow beyond.

"It's just a farm, you know," said the gardener. "Nothing fancy. Mr. and Mrs. don't like anything fancy."

A station-wagon drove into the yard just behind them, and there was Caroline waving and shouting to them. She was alone, and Ken could not restrain a frown, knowing what an irresponsible driver Caroline was. He had never allowed her to drive, but apparently Tayland had no such concern for the villagers.

"Timmy has to stay at the fair," she cried out. And to the gardener: "You'll have to drive over for him later, Tom."

She was so delighted to see them both—for Ellen had been her best friend before the break-up—that it made the two visitors even more awkward. They had braced themselves to be friendly and determinedly casual in the face of *(Please turn to page 94)*

How To Keep Sane

Do the headlines play havoc with your nerves? Then read this wise and shrewd article.

THIS morning of course was only a sample—but a fair sample of what all of us have experienced these last eleven months. It is now ten o'clock, and I have been up since seven, finishing a few little jobs left over from the evening before.

At eight o'clock came breakfast, and the newspapers, which printed a rehash of the news the radio had brought us the night before. That radio news in turn had been a repetition of the stories in the afternoon papers, and the afternoon papers seemed to have copied the morning papers, which in turn had merely retold in somewhat different fashion what we had heard the night before last during the final evening broadcast.

After breakfast came the mail. Ninety per cent of the letters were of a charitable nature. In every one of them I was urged to do something for somebody, or for a lot of somebodies who were either in a concentration-camp or were being bombed out of house and home, or who had lost everything they had ever owned and were now dependent upon the generous heart of America.

That heart of America is indeed a generous one, and it is quite willing to take care of a thousand people, or of ten thousand, or perhaps a hundred thousand or even a million. But when it becomes a matter of looking after tens of millions of victims of totalitarian violence, the problem achieves proportions which only astronomers can hope to solve; and astronomers, as all of us know, deal with heavenly bodies and not with terrestrial ones.

IN my own case on this particular morning there were even more horrible problems which would have to be solved within the next twenty-four hours. There was the case of Franz Werfel: when last heard of, Werfel was in Vichy or Marseilles, none of us knew for sure. He was in possession of a Czech passport, but the Czech legation in Paris had apparently been unwilling to give him a traveling visa because he was suspected of having retained some of his old Hapsburg loyalties. It may have been true, and it may not have been true. Being more or less familiar with the way small nations react in such matters, I was willing to believe anything, for in similar questions I had found that small nations can live up quite nicely to the worst traditions of their larger neighbors.

Next an inquiry, what had become of Lion Feuchtwanger, last heard of in a French concentration-camp? He was now said to have been arrested by the Gestapo, and that of course meant that the world might soon have to do without one more first-rate writer.

Next a cable showing me that my quest for the wife and children of our doctor in Middelburg had been in vain. Next a pathetic appeal from Ilse Bing, the famous photographer, rotting away in a French concentration-camp—and that, after all the magnificent work she had done for France.

At nine o'clock came the morning's news on the radio: Battles over the English Channel, hundreds of planes swarming in dogfights.

Then an unexpected telephone-call from New York from a friend who at last after ten weeks has got some definite information about my native country: The house in which I was born was bombed out of existence. My grandfather's house (and how well I remember it!) has disappeared from the face of the earth. Our beloved Zeeland has been shot to pieces. The two best known among the younger Dutch writers are dead. One killed himself just before the Germans got him. The other died a few hours later from shock, after he had heard of his friend's death.

That is the way it went this morning, and that is the way it goes every morning, every afternoon and every evening. And meanwhile I am supposed to keep my sanity, and so are you, and so are all of us. For if we let go and let our hearts guide us exclusively in the midst of these endless tales of cruelty and destruction, we shall soon be in the booby-hatch. But that, my good friends, is exactly what little Adolf would want us to do. He told us so in that incredible book of his, the only time a highwayman was brazen enough to inform the police and the public at large where and at what hour he intended to hold up the stagecoach. Unfortunately, this struck the rest of the world as so preposterous that none of us took this warning seriously until it was too late—too late for Europe, and perhaps even for America.

But while there is still time, we might at least examine some other pages by the German Fuehrer. I refer to those in which he frankly tells us that he intends to lose very few men in his attempt to conquer the world. "I won't have to fight," he writes in 1935, "because I shall first cause such widespread psychological disorganization among my enemies that they will be completely incapable of defending themselves." The fates of France and Belgium and the Netherlands and Norway and Denmark and a score of other nations are there to prove how such a thing can be done, even among people who have had a lot of warning. And soon it will be

In An Insane World

By HENDRIK WILLEM van LOON

Illustrated by ERSKINE BARR

our turn. For we too are gradually being beaten into a sort of spiritual insensibility in anticipation of the forthcoming attack.

And that brings us to the all-important question: how can we over here in America hope to save ourselves by preserving our sanity in a world that has gone completely insane?

I beg to offer a suggestion which also contains an answer.

If in this terrible crisis we allow our emotions to get the upper hand, we shall be lost. No decent human being can hope to survive the hideous things that are happening today to his fellow-men for more than just so long. After that he will go to pieces. Our doctors have already noticed this. They tell me that one of their main difficulties today is the widespread curse of insomnia. People are no longer able to sleep, because they are too greatly upset by the constant avalanches of bad news that descend upon them. Insomnia in and by itself is not really a disease. But it weakens our resistance, and therefore is a direct invitation to all sorts of unwelcome little microbes.

"But," my friends answer me when I warn them to get themselves in hand and turn over a new leaf, "what can we do? We are peaceful people. We were taught to abhor all injustice and cruelty; but what else is there in the world of today, and how can we survive this nightmare?" Then I tell them that there is one thing they can do, and this is it:

They should follow the example of all intelligent physicians. The medicine-men have long since realized that if they permitted themselves to become entirely wrapped up in every one of their patients, they would soon go stark mad. In order to keep on the safe side of the lunatic asylum, they have trained themselves to think of their patients in an entirely impersonal manner, as scientific objects rather than as close personal friends.

That is exactly the attitude we ourselves will have to assume if we wish to survive this present ordeal of fire. We must, however difficult it may be, learn to think of ourselves as spectators at a gladiatorial combat. We must imagine ourselves as being seated somewhere on the grandstand of history, while the greatest conflict and the most appalling drama of all time is being enacted right before our eyes. We must (cowardly though this may seem at first) repeat unto ourselves (and until we finally believe it) that we have been invited to attend a show which in its general arrangements and dimensions greatly surpasses all such incidents as the downfall of the Roman Empire, the Crusades, the religious upheavals of the Seventeenth Century, the French Revolution and the Napoleonic interlude, all of which were mere child's-play compared to what is happening today.

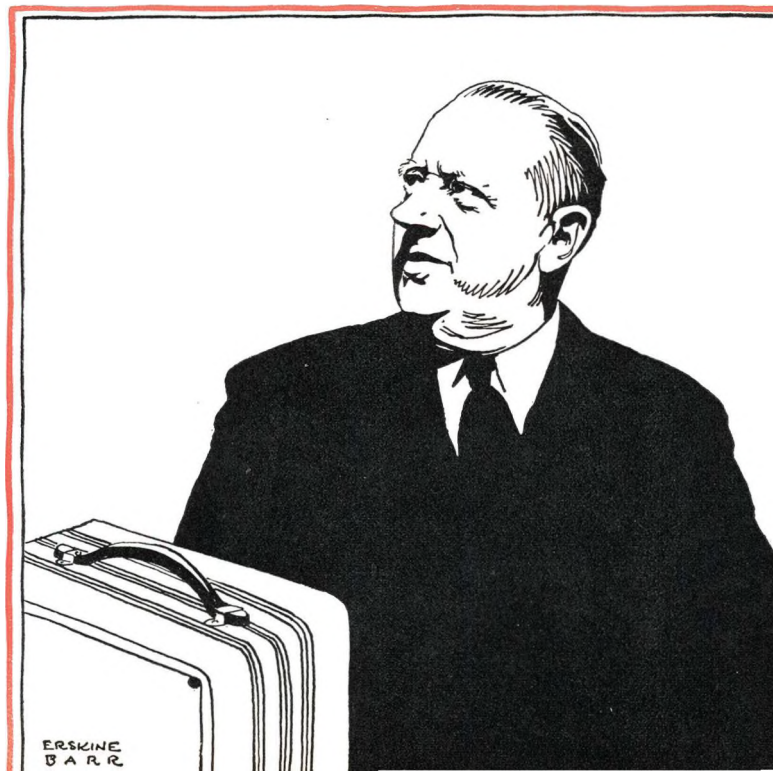
If we were able to do this (and believe me, there is no other course that can save us from our fate), we shall gradually acquire that attitude of impersonal interest which alone can keep us sane. And only by being wholly and intelligently sane, shall we be able to decide what we must do to prevent this European conflict from spreading through the bleachers. I realize that such counsel may sound extremely selfish, but we have got to be selfish in order that at the right moment we may step in and say: "Enough is enough, and now get out, all of you, so that we can clean up this mess and rearrange the arena for a somewhat different form of entertainment, a little more to the liking of truly civilized human beings."

YOU may at first shake your head and tell me you will never be able to do this—that you are too deeply shocked by what is happening not to let your emotions get the upper hand. I assure you that you are mistaken. It can be done, and it has got to be done if we want to preserve the freedom of our nation and get it ready for the rôle that awaits it in the near future, when it will be the last and only harbor of refuge for the white man's civilization.

And here is an extra bit of advice which may do you some good. I am not going to ask you to keep away from your radio or your newspaper, for I know that you won't do it, anyway. But after every new cloudburst of evil tidings that has just descended upon your unwilling ears, tune in on some station which will give you a few minutes of Mozart or Bach or Mendelssohn, or whoever happens to be your favorite composer. Their melodies will soothe your soul like the rains of heaven descending upon a landscape parched by the merciless sun of summer.

In the end, of course, there is only one real solution for all our troubles, and the name thereof is Peace. But while the war rages, why not try my remedy? "You will be surprised at the results."

And remember our duty to mankind at large—to preserve ourselves as well as we can for the day when America will have to carry on the work of the world, because Europe will have sunk beyond hope of recovery in this hideous madness of its own making.



"She meant plenty," said Geoff. "Well, this tears it!" He started off. Hildreth cried: "Geoff! Wait!"

HILDRETH

By HARLOW ESTES

Who won the $10,000 prize offered by Redbook Magazine and Dodd, Mead & Company, Publishers.

The Story Thus Far:

NINETEEN years old, thought Hildreth rebelliously, and she still knew nothing, had accomplished nothing. How could she?—in this little Maine village where she lived alone with her mother, who was fat and foolish and had long been divorced from Hildreth's father. Geoffrey Weirson at least had a college education, though he had no job, and lived—or starved—alone in the old Weirson house near by. Geoff meant much to Hildreth; she'd worried a lot about his friendship with a girl named Cathy last summer.

Hildreth's Aunt Laura, her mother's newly widowed sister, descended upon them for the summer with her four young boys and their nurse Regina; and next day Geoff went to town on a little excursion with Hildreth and Laura Furnard—who was pretty and only thirty-two. During luncheon at the hotel Laura suddenly got up, walked over to a thin and sour-looking man lunching alone across the room, and talked with him for some time. Later Laura said to Geoffrey when for a moment Hildreth had left them:

"You know that man you thought was staring at me? He was staring at Hildreth. He's her father—Mimi's ex.—Alec Carsidine. It seemed awful to me, seeing Alec and Hildreth there in that dining-room, father and daughter, alike as two peas; strangers to each other, not speaking, not even recognizing each other, perhaps. I suppose that's what made me go and hunt him up. I was snubbed for my trouble."

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

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

He didn't know what to say. He was a little dizzy. Laura's cheek was only a breath away from his lips. She would be sweet to kiss—sweeter than Cathy had ever been. . . .

And Laura—Geoff was a very attractive fellow; and as the summer days passed there grew in her heart a longing to relive the romance of other days, other youths.

In spite of Hildreth, Geoff became an eager suitor of Laura. One morning he had persuaded her to go swimming early, and he kissed her, his hand over her heart. Her heart leaped, startled. He let her go.

"Darling," he said. He hadn't meant to frighten her.

She was fitting her rubber bathing-cap on, quickly. Her voice was strained: "Madeleine isn't going back to Alec. He doesn't want her back. He told me so."

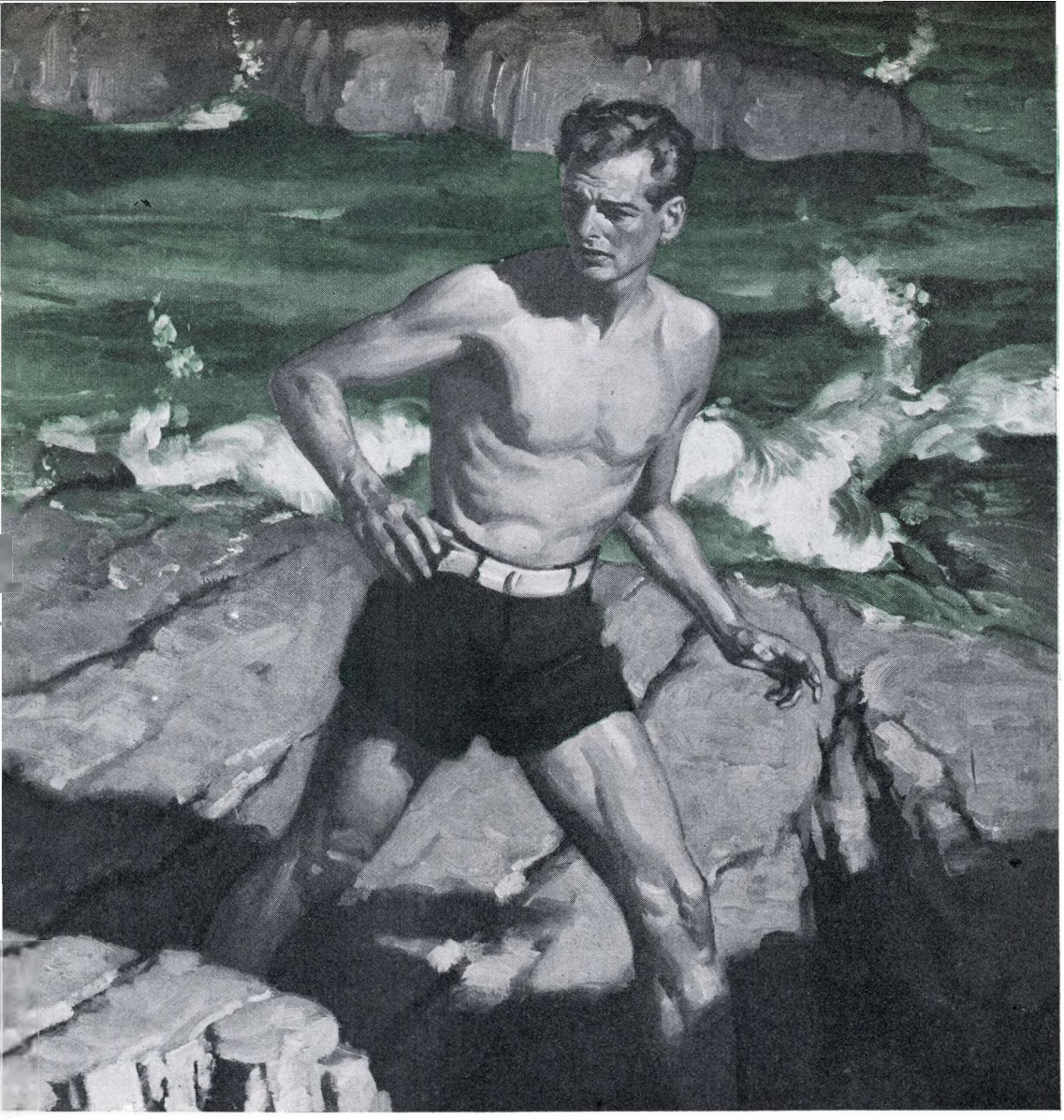
That was a crushing disappointment. He had counted on that remarriage to remove Mrs. Carsidine from the picture without spoiling Hildreth's chance at college.

But why had he counted on it? Had he really thought there was a chance of Laura's actually marrying him? *(The story continues in detail:)*

THAT was the peril of wanting and getting a little; a little was never enough; desire increased by leaps and bounds. It went beyond common-sense; beyond possibility. How could he possibly say to her: "Marry me, and I'll give you a roof and a fire and a bed, and all my love, but you'll have to pay for your own food and clothing and keep up your own car and your doctor's bills?"

Likely!

And even if she loved him enough to be willing to live with him, here, was he justified in letting her share the upkeep of a house, if he provided the house? Was he? Wasn't he? Perhaps. If she loved him. Did she? She hadn't said so. He had been afraid to



Illustrated by
FRANK BENSING

—Her Story

The novel of a valiant girl who found herself the rival of her aunt.

ask her—afraid to spoil everything by hurrying her. Because her marriage hadn't been happy. He was sure of that. So perhaps she was afraid of a second marriage.

Time to go back to shore. To other people. He couldn't keep her out here without her breakfast.

Her hands were busy, tucking her hair up under the cap. He said, "Laura!" and took hold of her hand, the left one. He said: "Your emerald's gone."

The empty setting gaped at her.

He said, "You shouldn't have worn it into the water," scolding because he was sick with apprehension. He felt exactly as he had that time he had broken one of his mother's crystal goblets, the costly ones, and the time he had got the scratch on her Sheraton table. He braced himself for the inevitable outburst of tears and lamentations. He wasn't to blame this time; but experience had taught him that a woman upset by the loss of a valuable possession would blame anyone within reach.

Laura said nothing. She looked at her hand. It was naked and strange without the emerald. There were the two rings she had worn so long, but naked and strange without the emerald. She had worn the two rings so long and so constantly that she hadn't thought of taking them off before going into the water. They were almost as much a part of her hand as the pink oval nails. A part of herself, of her life. Twelve years of her life.

He said: "With the sand and water shifting all the time, I don't suppose there's much use looking around, but I can try," and he went over the side of the float. Searching gave him something to do, an excuse to leave her before she began lamenting.

She made him stop at last.

"You're getting bloodshot eyes for nothing. I may have lost it on the beach, or in the road, or even at the house. Let's go back."

On the beach they searched a little, half-heartedly. They went up to the road and looked in the dust. And still she hadn't made any fuss. He said: "Aren't you going to cry about it?"

"Cry?" she repeated. "Why, no. I don't think so. Why should I? It's gone."

Part of her life vanished and gone. Regina was a part, too, and presently she too would be gone. Crying wouldn't restore what was gone for good. Even Fergus knew that much. He only howled because he enjoyed the sound of his own voice. He bellowed, and shed no tears.

"You're different from all other women," said Geoffrey.

He had thought so, because he loved her. And now he knew.

"I remember one Christmas that was spoiled for all of us because an expensive wreath, with fruits wired into it, was stolen from our front door just before a big party. My father couldn't afford the party; he couldn't even afford the wreath; but my mother ordered it anyway. The guests came, and never missed the wreath, but my mother said the party was ruined. She cried for two days. I was still young enough then for Christmas to seem important, and young enough to be unhappy when my mother cried."

"But how silly!" said Laura. "How silly of her, I mean."

"And a girl I used to know, named Cathy, cried and cried because she tore a tiny hole in a new tweed skirt. It could have been mended, easily, not to show, but she said she would never enjoy wearing the skirt again. There was a nail loose, she said, in my damned old porch chair. I went over and over the chair but I couldn't find a loose nail."

"Poor Geoff!" said Laura. "You've had bad luck with women. They aren't all as silly and hateful as that."

The boys were waving wildly. They must be very tired; they had trudged a long way.

She turned the ring on her finger so that the empty setting was clasped inside her hand.

"There," she said. She seemed to be wearing two wedding-rings. "There. Forget it, Geoff. I shall. When I get back to the house, I'll take them both off and leave them off."

(Because one would look strange and lonely without the other, and it was better not to be reminded of loss.)

"Then Mimi and Hildreth won't ask questions, and fuss. I don't like being asked questions," she said.

"Laura—marry me!" he said. It came out of him before he had time to think or be afraid. Blurted out like that, it sounded like a command. Which was just as well, since she didn't like answering questions. "Laura, marry me. I didn't mean to hurry you like this, but I must. Because September will be here before we know it. I'm not going to share you with Mrs. Carsidine and I'm not going to wait a whole year."

Marry? A voice inside her cried out, "But I am married!"—and then was silent. She stood before him, helpless and indecisive, clutching her white cape about her.

"Go away in September, if you must," he said, "and get the boys settled in school, but then come back and marry me. I meant what I said about taking good care of Fergus and you. Leave Hildreth and her mother in town. You come back to me."

"Hildreth," she said faintly, dismayed.

He knew what she meant. He said: "She'll be disappointed if she has to give up college. But there's no earthly reason why she should pamper Mrs. Carsidine the way she does. There's money enough to engage a paid companion, and if Mrs. Carsidine doesn't like that arrangement, let her take it out on the companion's head. That's what companions are paid for, poor devils!"

He sounded as if he had thought it all out, weeks before, and made up his mind and meant to make up her mind for her too.

There was no beseeching, "Please, darling!" about him now. The change in him had come so abruptly that he hadn't had time himself to realize what had brought it about. All at once his uncertainty had left him. He had been lifted to a conviction of inevitability, and with that, came complete confidence. Laura was different from all other women. All other women were like his mother and Cathy. But Laura was like himself. She had the same sense of values. She was the other half of himself. Inevitably they belonged together.

"You love me, enough to begin with," he said, with complete conviction. "You know you do. And after we're married, you'll care more. I promise you."

Well—she did love him, in a way. He was easy to be fond of. The boys were very fond of him.

She couldn't go on alone, could she, all the rest of her life?

"Marry me, Laura."

"All right," she said.

His eyes blazed. He would have taken her in his arms, then, where she belonged, if Hildreth hadn't appeared on the Carsidine porch in her old maroon dressing-gown, her short dark hair sticking up in shaggy disorder, and seen them. Exuberantly he waved. He would have liked to shout to her and tell her. He wanted to tell everybody. But Laura, glancing over her shoulder and seeing Hildreth, said fearfully: "Don't tell her yet. I'll tell her. But not quite yet."

IT was difficult, thought Hildreth, to know how to start on Laura; how to warn her to be careful about Geoffrey; difficult to explain without appearing suspicious and evil-minded. She could tell her about Cathy, but that would look gossipy. Tattling on Geoff! But some definite action must be taken. Laura was too easy-going. Hildreth knew that Laura would never have dragged herself out of bed for a dip before breakfast if Geoffrey hadn't coaxed and coaxed. But Laura must somehow be warned against encouraging him like that.

"It's odd, though," thought Hildreth with a pang, "that she didn't wake me and suggest that I go with them. Last summer I was the one who went out with him early, before Mother waked."

MADELEINE went to Mrs. Blades' for bridge on Monday afternoon. The tide was low, and Laura stayed on the porch. The perfect chance, the only chance in a week, for private talk. Hildreth sat herself on the railing in front of Laura, obstructing as much of the view as she could. Geoffrey and the boys and Regina were on the beach.

"The boys have been good for Geoff," began Hildreth. "They've given him something to think of besides his personal troubles. Don't you think he's lighter-hearted than when you first came? I think," she said, "that he's practically cured of Cathy."

Laura said, "Who is Cathy?" as she was expected to say.

"A girl who tried awfully hard to marry him a year ago. She taught the eighth grade at the Port school, winter before last. She hated teaching and wanted to get married, and Geoff was the only personable unattached male within reach. He hadn't a job but he had an education and was able-bodied, and Cathy had wit enough to realize that he could earn an excellent living if he could once get started. So she went to work on him. She met him first on the beach here. She'd driven over, looking for a good place to swim. Looking for a man, I imagine."

"Was she pretty?" asked Laura. "And young?"

"She had a nice figure," said Hildreth, "and she certainly made the most of it. She wasn't so young. Twenty-two. And there wasn't a bit of competition, you see. Geoff was fearfully lonely. We'd gone back to town, and his grandmother had died the preceding March. It was his first completely solitary winter. Cathy had a car and she kept coming over when the driving wasn't too bad. But it was spring before she could start her real offensive. My school closed a month before hers did, so I was down here to see her in action those last weeks. I saw plenty. I was terribly worried."

"Why?" asked Laura.

"Because she wasn't good enough for Geoff! If she'd been really deeply in love with him, and wanted to help him get a job for his own sake, I'd have cheered her on. Honestly, I would. But it was marriage she wanted, not Geoff the individual. He was just the means to an end. Any man would have done. And that sort of marriage would have ruined him. I mean, he needs to be loved for himself, and believed in, and bucked up—not just used as a meal-ticket. Oh, can't you see? You must see! He's proud and sensitive; he can't just be driven; he responds a thousand times more quickly to encouragement than to kicks."

"Doesn't everybody?"

"Oh, no! Some people just have to be thrashed! Failure is an incentive to some people. It rouses the fight in them. But Geoff is the other sort. I don't mean that he's a natural doormat, either. But he's modest. He needs some success to believe in himself. And he's never had any success, except honors in college, and those were canceled out by his failure to get a job after graduation. Success with Cathy might have served, if she'd been the right sort for him; if she'd really cared about him for himself. But she didn't; and he knew it; his distrust of himself makes him frightfully knowing about things like that. That's why the boys' admiration has been so good for him; it's completely whole-hearted."

She sighed.

"That's why nothing I say to him does any good. He knows I think he has a good mind but not enough gumption. He knows how impatient I am with him for just sitting down and accepting failure. I try to push him, but it just makes him more balky, because he knows I think he ought to be pushing himself. I don't know how to pretend, and even if I did, he'd see through it."

"And he saw through Cathy," said Laura.

"Yes, he did. That's why he held out against letting her take charge of his life, even though he was crazy about her, in a way. The last card she played was resigning from her Port job and taking another one, farther away. She was perfectly sure he'd miss her so much that he'd have to go after her. But he didn't. He stayed. He stuck it out. But the point was, being crazy about Cathy did him more harm than good. It kept driving it home to him that he couldn't afford to marry, even if he wanted to terribly. He got nothing out of the affair with her but a lot of misery. He's healthy and human; I expect he needs to be married; I suppose men are like that. . . . I'm glad I'm a woman, and cold.

"He's too fastidious," Hildreth went on, "to take something for nothing; to snatch what he needs, just anywhere."

Laura was mute, looking down at her hands.

"I do think it's a nuisance, the way we're made," Hildreth said. "It makes everything so much more difficult."

Then she said: "Why, you've left off your rings!"

"Yes," said Laura.

"I thought it was foolish of you to wear them in swimming. Even if water doesn't hurt an emerald, it's a risk. Rings slip off a wet hand so easily. And I noticed yours were loose on your finger. I suppose your hands are thinner since you were ill."

"Yes," said Laura.

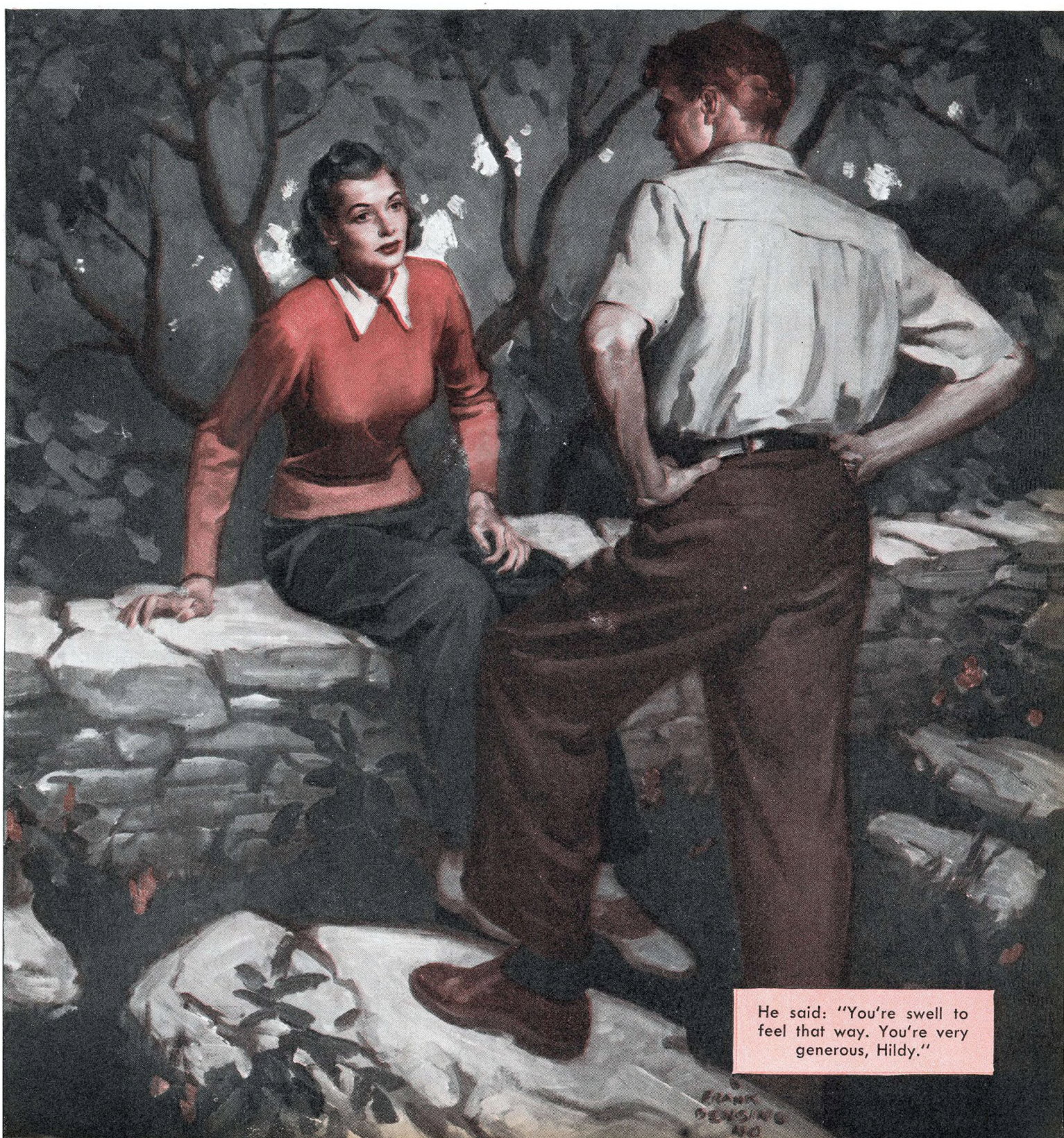
("Maybe I've said enough about Geoffrey," thought Hildreth. "Maybe now she'll realize that he's susceptible enough even to be attracted to an older woman, just because there aren't any young girls about, except me, and she knows I don't count; I told her that before.")

The afternoon slipped away. Hildreth read, and Laura lay back in her deck-chair, idle, saying nothing. "At least," thought Hildreth gratefully, "she doesn't talk all the time. She may not be very bright, but she's restful to have around."

It was nearly five. The children would be coming up from the beach any minute. Their supper was at six, and Regina was strict about getting them to meals and to bed on time. Regina was really practically well by now. She had taken back all supervision of the children.

"Laura—about the boys," Hildreth began: "I think you ought to tell them they're going to boarding-school next month. It isn't fair to spring it on them at the last minute. Changes are hard on children unless they have the reason for the change clearly explained to them, and unless they have time to think it over and discuss it and get accustomed to the idea."

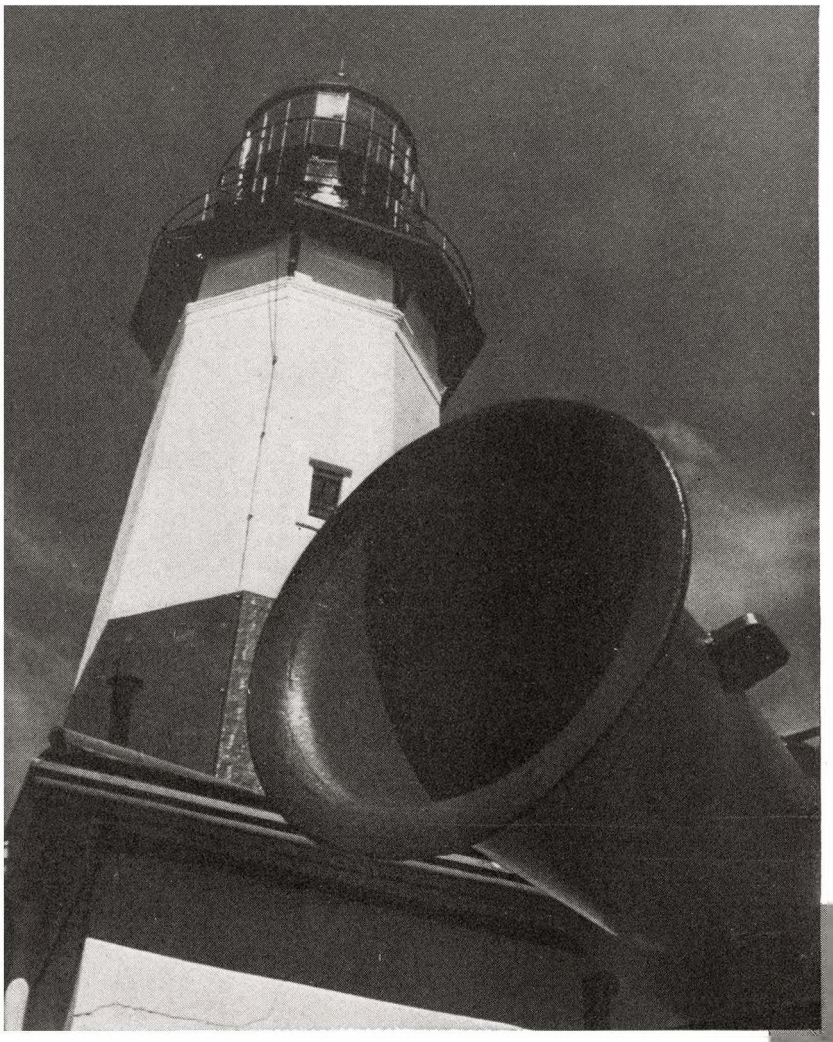
"How do you know so much about children?" asked Laura, not with rancor, but a little wearily. "You *(Please turn to page 105)*



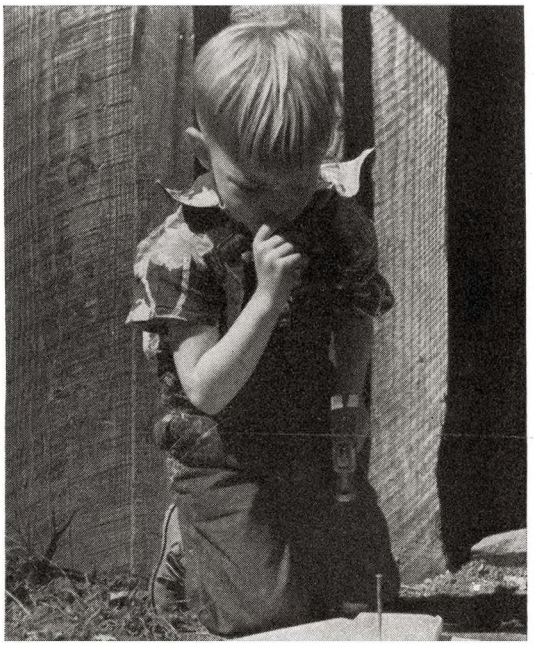
OUR *Prize-Winning*

THE EXPERT SELECTS . . .

SUMMER vacations are reflected in the six prize-winners this month. Our expert, Mr. Ruzzie Green, finds a lighthouse more to his liking than the windmill which captivated our laymen. The latter felt the solemn frog from Cape Cod was more appealing than the boy with his hammer, and that the horse was definitely superior to the thirsty worker in the field. What do you think? (Rules for the photographic contest will be found on page 112.)



First prize of twenty-five dollars to Mr. Arthur Krienke, of Plainfield, New Jersey.



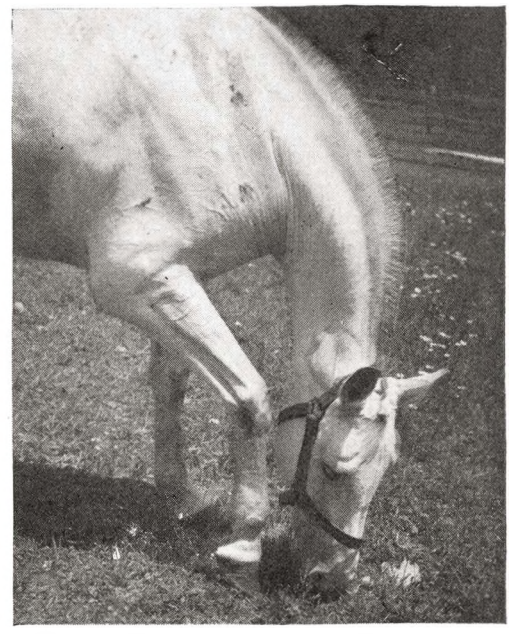
Ten dollars to Mr. Charles W. Johnston, of Payette, Idaho, for this study.

And another ten dollars to Mr. William D. Kyle, of Washington, Iowa.

SNAPSHOTS *of the* MONTH

THE LAYMEN SELECT . . .

Mr. Lawrence G. Justice, of Greensburg, Kansas, collects the first prize of twenty-five dollars on this page.



Ten dollars to Mr. Leo F. Wanner, of New York City, for Dobbin.

And Mr. Robert H. Boody, of Hyannis, Massachusetts, gets ten dollars for this unusual shot.

SPRING PARADE

HOLLYWOOD has watched Deanna Durbin for four years, expecting that any minute she would stub her toe. Luck such as hers, the town reasoned, could not be inexhaustible. She must make a bad picture sometime.

Deanna has treated the cynics with dignified silence. It is conceivable that she is not fully conscious of her unique position. Perhaps she is aware of it, but is unimpressed. At any rate, she is the only star in my memory of the screen who has made eight pictures in a row, all of which are above reproach.

Deanna is celebrating her four years without a flop this month in Universal's "Spring Parade," production of which reunites her with Joe Pasternak and Henry Koster, who sponsored her in 1936 in "Three Smart Girls." It cannot be said that "Spring Parade" is her best, any more than it can be stated that one sunset is better than all others. All sunsets are good; and up to and including now, so are all Durbin pictures.

There is one sad note in "Spring Parade," however: Deanna has grown up. In "It's a Date" there was a warning of this biological tragedy, for in that she was kissed for the first time. Those of us who hate to face reality tried to avoid the inevitable by dismissing the incident as a display of puppy love. But underneath, we knew; in our hearts we recognized that other and more serious kisses would follow.

In her present film she is at the threshold of matrimony.

"Spring Parade" is a lilting and blithesome tale of Vienna in the 'Nineties. It is Deanna's first departure from the contemporary age, and her first venture in costume films. The innovation is delightful. The whole concoction is a merry lot of romantic nonsense, filled with waggish characters and designed for entertainment purposes only.

Custom demands that Deanna, like other stars, have a plot. She is not, however, as dependent on it as are others. Her bewitching personality and enchanting voice compensate for any lack of story. "Spring Parade" is a reason for an hour of gayety and charm and humor, and some of the loveliest Viennese melodies the sound-track has recorded.

Deanna, a peasant girl, goes to the community fair to sell a goat. A fortune-teller predicts that she will go to Vienna, that a great man will aid her, and that she will marry the one who hits her with a stick. These things happen in one-two-three order. True, that's a lot better plot than many pictures have had, but it's no "Gone with the Wind." It suffices for an evening rich in music, joviality, comedy, dancing and festive dress.

Miss Durbin has ample help from others in making this flimsy Cinderella tale delightful. Robert Cummings is her romantic interest. He is an ingratiating fellow and lends considerable charm to the proceedings.

The sad-faced Mischa Auer contributes a riotous reel or two at the outset. He is the one to whom Deanna sells her goat; and with true peasant thrift, they bargain and fight until a price is agreed upon. Then he bets double or nothing on her ability to outlast him dancing the Hungarian czardas. A trick camera effect is used for part of the number, and the audience should be as dizzy as the performers when the music stops. As befits a star of Deanna's ruggedness, she wins both money and goat.

True to her fortune, but quite unwittingly, Deanna does go to Vienna, and through the baker from whom she gets a job, she meets the ones the fakir predicted would cross her path. Henry Stephenson as the *Emperor Franz Josef* is one; Samuel S. Hines, S. Z. Sakall, Walter Catlett, Allyn Joslyn, Anne Gwynne, Peggy Moran and Butch and Buddy (those two irrepressible kids from "The Underpup") are others. What rôles they all play doesn't matter; the entertainment they purvey is what counts.

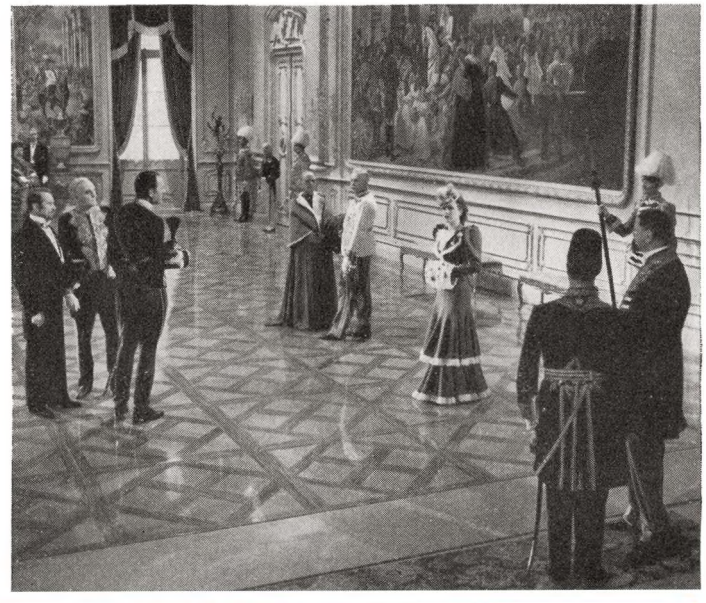
THE music, both instrumental and vocal, is from the original picture Pasternak made for Universal in Budapest ten years ago. That edition starred Franciska Gaal. It was never released in this country. Looking at it in light of today's technique, it still stacks up as a well-done and entertaining show.

However, the only thing it contributed to the 1940 version is the music of Robert Stolz and an idea for scenarists Bruce Manning and Felix Jackson to work on. They had to throw out much of the old plot, for it dealt with the military and had a number of marching songs and a lot of parading. Pasternak thought it best to disregard this atmosphere, considering the way armies are dominating everything today.

And so the Manning-Jackson story deals with romantic young people, stolen kisses, country fairs, wine gardens, pompous fools and understanding sages. These may not be the elements of important drama, but they are the ingredients of welcome and excellent entertainment.

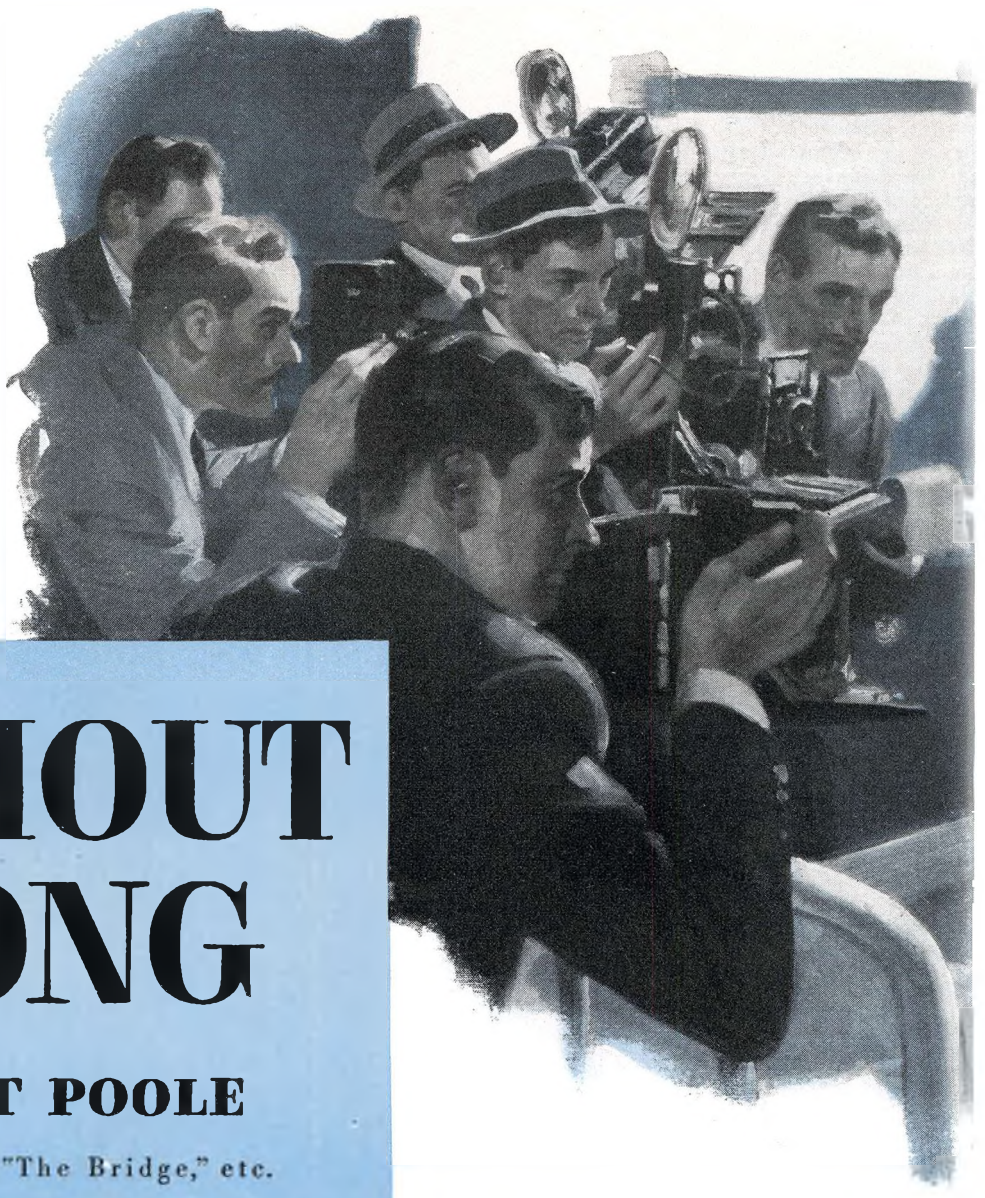
Aside from that old stand-by Strauss' "Blue Danube," "Spring Parade" confines itself to Stolz' music, and probably by now the tunes are familiar fixtures on the radio. Translations of the Viennese lyrics were regarded as rather coy for modern audiences, and so Gus Kahn was engaged to fashion new words for the tunes. It is almost certain that you will enthuse over "It's Foolish but It's Fun," "When April Sings" and "Waltzing in the Clouds," which Deanna sings.

The Durbin-Pasternak-Koster combination is one of Hollywood's greatest institutions. It began in Budapest several years ago. Pasternak had made a start in Paramount's *(Please turn to page 105)*



On this and the opposite page are several scenes from "Spring Parade"—a new Deanna Durbin starring-vehicle (Universal) produced by Joe Pasternak, who was responsible for all of her previous successes.

Great wars have been fought to the tune of great songs: "La Marseillaise"—"Madelon"—"Tipperary"—"Over There." . . . But no great song has been produced so far by the present war. Hence this moving story.



WITHOUT A SONG

By **ERNEST POOLE**

who wrote "The Harbor," "The Bridge," etc.

"NO war verse yet, Bob?"

"Not a line."

Sitting there beside Bob's bed in a London war hospital ward, his publisher watched him anxiously, and racked his brains for what he could say to this queer kid who was losing his chance to stir all England by his songs. The chance of his lifetime! Lifetime? His? What was the average life in the air for a lad in the Royal Air Force, these days? Steven Ransdale, the publisher, winced at the thought, then damned this kid for the way he could grip your very heart-strings—with his dark lean tragic face, his quick lovable appealing smile and his brilliant black eyes. Just out of hell, and going back to kill or be killed, this brilliant kid, who at twenty-three had come down from Oxford, and with only two small volumes of verse, had taken the London public by storm. But leaving all that, young Bob Blainford, enlisting in the war as a private, a gunner on a Hurricane, had fought in France and Belgium, got into the hell on the Channel coast, and there had been so badly hit that for weeks he'd lain here at the point of death. And yet out of all this, no war verse still—when England, desperate England, so needed the songs that he could sing! But easy, now. Steven Ransdale spoke in an anxious and friendly appealing tone.

"No verse at all inside of you, Bob?"

"Sorry, Steve. There's not one line."

"Your public is expecting it, boy."

Bob flashed up a quick bitter smile. "Me the Rupert Brooke of this war! That's too damned bad—for I can't write!"

"You can't—who at twenty-four had all London at your feet?"

"I wrote about living—not about killing!"

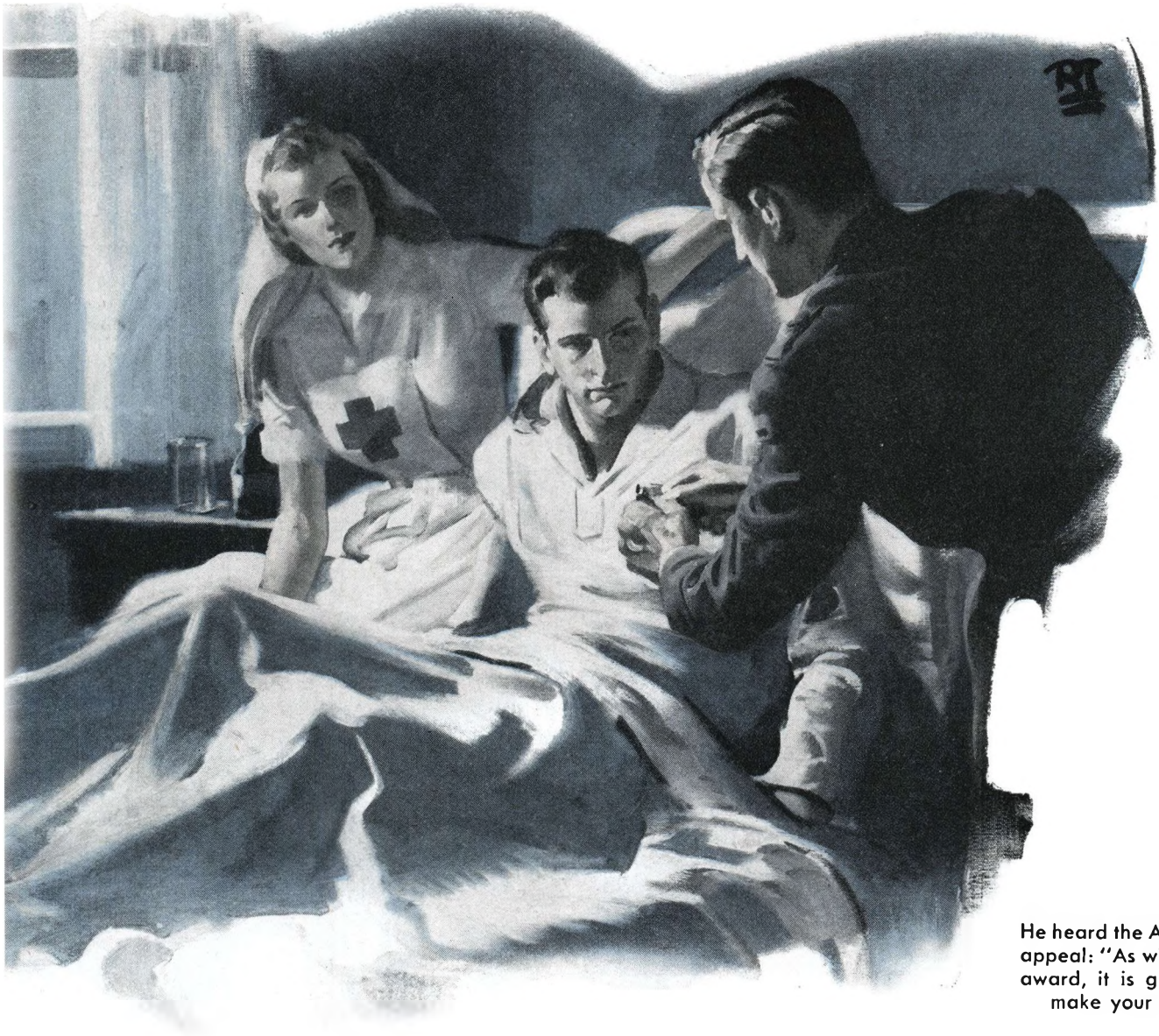
"Quite! But with that beast from Berlin leaping now at England's throat—England who loved you and gave you fame—"

"All right. I'm ready to pay with my life! I've proved that!"

"You have! And that's what we want you to write about! In the last war Alan Seeger wrote his 'Rendezvous with Death.' You have had yours now—"

"And I don't like it! I can take it when it comes, and I'll take it again! I'll be back upstairs in a month, and fight on in this hellish war until we've caged that bloody beast! But I won't sing about it—I can't! The whole war-song tradition makes me sick! With the drums and the bugles and flags and bands, it's been mainly to blame for all wars from the start—turned loose this madman on the world! We've got to stop him! All right, I'll fight! But I'm damned if I'll follow Hitler's lead and glorify war by singing! No songs!"

As Steven Ransdale left the hospital ward, he was met by Katharine Beech at the door. Trim and small in her nurse's uniform, with her smooth blonde hair cut short showing beneath the cap she wore—though her features were irregular, many had felt the beauty and strength in her wide sensitive resolute lips and big striking gray-blue eyes. A girl of well-known family, whose father was one of the key men in the British Air Ministry now, Kate had trained as a nurse's aid, and had helped nurse Bob through his crisis. Since the time two years before, when she was falling in love with Bob, and both had joined the Labor Party for its stand against all war, the crash of news from Prague and Poland, Finland, Norway, Holland, Belgium, France, had blasted all hope of peace and kindled in Kate such a passion for England as she had never known before. With it had gone constant terror for Bob out there in the dangerous skies. No news of him for weeks on end; then home he had come, so close to death that night after night, with hope all but gone, the whole world had felt cold and



He heard the Air Ministry's appeal: "As winner of this award, it is given you to make your choice."

black as a tomb! But she had a plan to save him now, and so she said to his publisher:

"Wait till he's stronger, Steve. Leave him to me. He will write then."

Ransdale answered: "If anyone can make him, you can."

"I've got to, Steve!"

He pressed her hand. "Good luck, my dear. It's not only for Bob—it's for England!"

"I know!"

When she came back to his bed, for a moment she stopped sharply, as though from a stab of pain in her heart. For as he lay there with closed eyes, he looked so little like a gunner, so much like a poet or a priest. Then he opened his eyes, and at sight of her they filled with a swift radiance that nearly brought tears in her own. But quickly she steadied, and thought of her plan. She sat down by his bed and took his hand.

"So terribly tired now, dear boy. Don't you want a little sleep?"

"No, Kate; I'd rather talk with you. No chance when I was so low."

"Even then—did you know I was here?"

"Always and always, day and night, I could feel you lifting me through." He smiled straight up into her eyes. "You're life to me, Kate, you're all the light and glory and joy of living that is left to me now. Let's hold to it still."

"We've got to, Bob!" Her hold grew tight upon his hand.

"Will you marry me now?"

"Whenever you say. I've even a little plan for that."

"What is it?"

"Not while you're like this. But I want you and need you. Oh, my dear! All the time when you were so low, I kept pouring it in, this glory of ours, deep into you from so deep in me—keeping you living so I could go on!" She waited, and then in a low clear voice: "And I was not the only one." From the small table by his bed she took a pile of notes and cards. "Look at these—all left by your readers—coming with flowers—all asking: 'Will he live to write?'"

Over Bob's gaunt sensitive face swept a little shadow of pain.

"Tell 'em I can't—I can't write now."

"Not now, not yet, my darling. But we owe a lot to England, Bob."

"I'm ready to pay!"

"With your life, dear boy. Are you sure that's the best you've got to give?"

"No war verse, Kate. I'm sick of killing!"

"Sleep, dear, sleep," she whispered.

WHILE he slept, she sat watching. How careful she must be with him, if she were ever to put this through! She knew that fixed idea he had could flame into a bitterness that might even tear them apart! For if he had his passion, Kate had hers—for England in her desperate need of the best that each one had to give. And Kate knew Bob's best, and she meant him to give it. But careful—oh, so careful now! All through the week that followed, as she nursed back his life and strength, she gave him her love, and only that. But then from her father so high up in the Air Ministry came news which not only filled her with pride but brought her keen anxiety too. For now she must tell Bob of her plan before she had him ready to hear. Why had the Government hurried this so? But in wartime, orders must be obeyed.

Slowly she came to his bed and sat down.

"Bob—I've got some news for you."

"News?"

"From the Air Ministry."

"What?"

Her answer came distinct and slow: "They are going to give you the D.F.C." The highest award in the Royal Air Force, the Distinguished Flying Cross! Watching, with a glow of hope she saw the light leap into his eyes.

"But—they can't give the Cross to a private."

"No. You're to get your commission first."

SUDDENLY his hand gripped hers, and he said: "You like this, don't you?"

"I'm—terribly proud!"

"All right, then I'm glad! I'll take it, Kate!" His eyes on hers quickly darkened. He asked: "What's the trouble, dear girl?"

"That isn't all."

"No?" He was watching her now closely and anxiously. "And the rest?"

Again her words came clear and slow: "They mean to release you from the Air, Bob, to another branch of the service."

"What?"

"The Ministry of Information."

"That propaganda bureau? Kate!" The swift bitter pain of his cry cut into her like a knife.

"Not for you, Bob, not for you!"

"No, only war verse! Safe as a church, I'm to sit and praise killing!"

"They didn't say that."

"They don't have to! I know so damned well what they mean! Oh, Kate—you love me! Help me now! Go to your father—get me back to my job in the air!"

"I can't do that! I know so well where and how you can serve the best!"

"I won't! I can't! It's too black ugly—all this war that I've seen from the start—by this mechanized tiger from Berlin—with his bombers, guns and tanks mowing even civilians down! It's hideous! It stinks with crime! That bloody chaos down below—those black petrol clouds above in this hell that Hitler has made of the skies!"

"Tell England that! Tell America that!"

"I can't, I can't—the verse won't come!"

"Not when you could fire all England when she has such need to be stirred?"

"I can't, I tell you; I'm not that kind! I don't want any part at all in glorifying this damnable thing!"

"But you've *played* your part!" She clenched her hands, and in spite of herself a passion of anger came surging up against this blind obsession of his that was taking him back to death in the skies. So she added in a hard clear voice: "And now you are going to have to talk about this part that you have played!"

"What do you mean?"

"You can't win fame like yours as a poet, and then the highest Air award, without letting the public in on it, Bob. I mean the press has learned of this, and they are waiting now below."

"I won't see them!" he cried angrily.

"Not even that?"

"Not even that!"

"Why not, when England needs it so?"

"Because I know what they want from me—grand old British hero stuff! And I won't give it! I won't play up!"

"But Bob! You blind obstinate young fool—you can't turn them off like that! If you won't see them, they will write the story without you, in their own way!"

"Let them!"

"I'm sorry!"

"So am I! Please go and tell them what I say!"

So she told them, and they went back to their papers and wrote the story in their own way. Cheap raw stuff. When Bob read it, his bitterness grew. . . .

His father came one afternoon. Himself a field gunner in the World War, and an officer now in the home defense, patrolling country roads at night, he came all filled with pride in his son and the honor he was soon to receive.

"When will you get it?" he asked.

"This week."

"But Bob—you're not fit to go to the King."

"No sir. I'm to be given it here, by my squadron commander. Thank God for that. It avoids the fuss and flummery. But what has got me boiling, sir, is the reason why they're rushing this, before I can get out of bed!"

And then out poured his bitterness. Shocked at first, then understanding, his father listened to the end. With a queer tragic smile he said:

"What a pity you poor kids have lost the illusions with which we once fought! We were out to save the world, those days."

"A damned tough job, sir. Did you?"

"No. It's got to be done, though, or England falls!"

"I know it has! I want to get back to my squadron, sir!"

"But that isn't what they want from you, Bob! My friends all keep asking: 'When will he write?'"

"Not till this slaughter is done; I'm no butcher songster, sir!"

With his thoughts in wild chaos he asked Kate, sobbing by his bed: "Kate, what have I done?"

Then his publisher, Steven Ransdale, came.

"This thing is getting ugly, Bob. They're beginning to call you names. Can't you see that by not writing you're playing into Hitler's hands? Already the word is going round that Bob Blainford has turned pacifist!"

"I? Haven't I proved that's all the bunk? I've fought like hell, and I'll fight again!"

"They don't need that; they need your writing more."

"I tell you, I can't! Sending other men into this hell is a job that just isn't in my line!"

"They'll go anyway, you obstinate ass! Why not send them in with a song?"

"Not from me, nor from any poet I know!"

"You don't know yourselves! Wait till it gets you now!"

"What will get me? What do you mean?"

Steven rose and turned to Kate.

"You tell him, Kate. And for God's sake, put it strong."

When she was left alone with him, for a moment Kate sat with head bowed, eyes fixed upon her clenched cold hands. For listening to many such talks, his increasingly bitter replies had brought back the fear she had felt at the start, that they too might be torn apart—she with her passion and he with his. Sharply she steadied herself and looked up, ready for the crisis now.

"I'll tell you what Steve meant," she said, speaking slowly words to strike in deep to the only part of him she could appeal to. "In these last weeks while you've lain here so blind, all England has filled with such a glory of passion for defense to the death, not only of these British Isles but human liberties everywhere, that you poets *will* sing of it soon—you must!"

"Then leave us alone till we feel it ourselves!"

"But we can't—we need you now!" she cried. "Now when each hour counts like a month! You will have to decide this very day! Your squadron commander will be here soon. With him, of course, will come the press, to see him give you this award. They'll hear him bring to you the appeal that you serve in the way you can serve best."

"Appeal? Then it isn't a command?"

"That's something I've done for you," she said. "You begged me once to help you—just as I'm begging you today. I've done my part—through my father, Bob. As a winner of the D.F.C., you are to be given your choice."

Illustrated by
RICO TOMASO

"That was fine of you, Kate!" He caught her hand. She shook it free.

"What is it, Bob?"

"Kate—Kate—can't you see that I am what I am—that, God help me, I can't choose but fight?"

"That's still your decision?"

"It can be none other!"

Slowly she rose. Unconsciously her small hands gripped tight the top rung of her chair. In a slow hard voice she played her last card.

"Then for you and me, I rather feel that now it's over, Bob," she said.

"Kate! Oh, my dear! You're wrong, you're wrong!" But as though she did not hear that cry, her white face gave not a sign of the clutch she felt within her breast.

"I told you that I'd marry you. How can I, when you feel like this—and I as I do? For people like us, what a farce marriage would be to us now! Rather ghastly, don't you think?"

He stared at her, with all the brilliant light gone from his eyes.

"I wonder. I'd never thought of that."

She steeled herself. "Then think of it now."

"I find that—difficult, my dear. You see, you're all that—I've got left."

Tighter she gripped the chair, until her little knuckles all showed white. "You've nearly lost me!" she replied. "For if you can be so bitterly set in your way of feeling, I can in mine!"

He looked up in such blind agony that she couldn't face it and sharply she turned away.

"Kate! All the glory and joy of our love! Don't take it from me now! How can I write when the verse won't come?"

"Not even for England?"

"Not even for you!"

"You can leave me out! It's England now! That's all I feel or care about!"

A nurse came quickly in and said:

"Your squadron commander is here, Mr. Blainford, and with him quite a lot from the press—cinema men, photographers and broadcasters—all waiting below."

His whole frame tightened. Then he turned with a desperate smile to Kate and said:

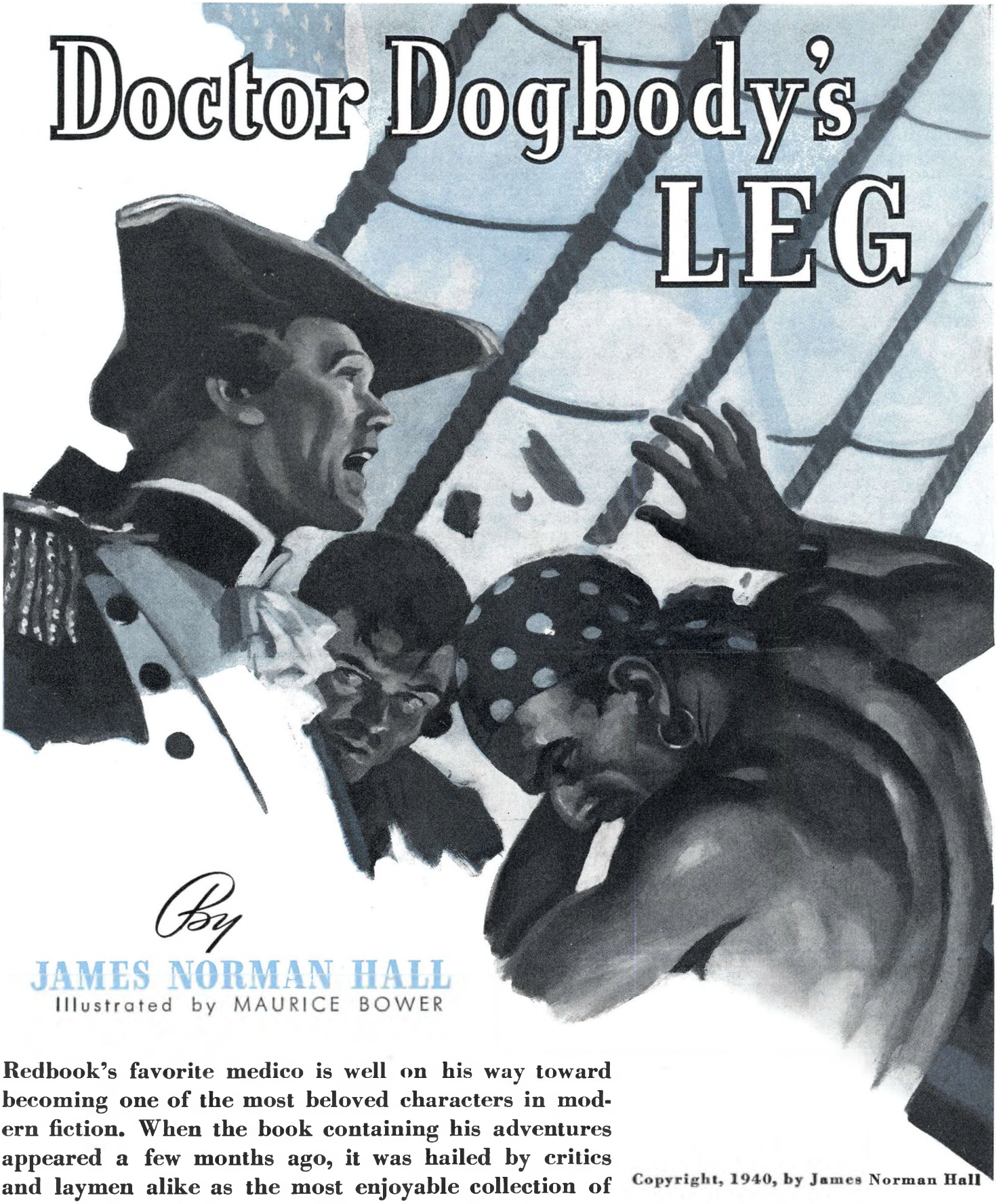
"Here comes England. We'll try your way. Let them all up. I'll see them now."

BEFORE them came his commander alone. Only two years older than Bob,—and at Oxford a classmate,—he smiled and said:

"In just this moment before the show, as one Balliol man to another, my honest congratulations, old boy."

"Thank you, sir." Bob couldn't relax. His eyes, still filled with desperate light, were fixed on the door at the end of the ward. In silence he watched them all troop in, this press that he had shunned till now. They grouped themselves around his bed. Lights flashed, and *(Please turn to page 62)*

Doctor Dogbody's LEG



By

JAMES NORMAN HALL

Illustrated by MAURICE BOWER

Redbook's favorite medico is well on his way toward becoming one of the most beloved characters in modern fiction. When the book containing his adventures appeared a few months ago, it was hailed by critics and laymen alike as the most enjoyable collection of short stories of the year. All of these stories, except one, were published by us during the past two years. That we should wish to reprint, by special arrangement with the author, the only story that our readers may have missed, is altogether natural.

REDBOOK'S Encore OF THE MONTH

THERE were seven in the company in the favored corner at the Tortoise on that mild midsummer evening. Will Tunn's faithful "props" were all present, and had with them Captain Oliver Tucker,—an old friend of Doctor Dogbody,—and Mr. Timothy Dwight, Secretary to the Society of the Sons of Ancient Britons, who had been introduced to the others by Mr. Ostiff. Captain Tucker, a half-pay officer living in retirement in the country near Portsmouth, was in his late sixties, though he looked younger. His gray eyes were of the colour of North Sea water, fogs and easterly gales, and his hearty voice was better suited to the wide air of mid-ocean than to the confines of a taproom, however spacious. Mr. Dwight was a short man, somewhat on the side of plumpness, and dressed with extreme neatness. His white silk stockings fitted his muscular calves like another skin, and the kindliness and good humor of his expression was added to by a pair of steel-rimmed spectacles which he frequently removed to polish with his handkerchief. There had been a lively exchange of conversation between the various members of the company. Presently, in a momentary lull, Doctor Dogbody turned to the secretary.

"Mr. Dwight," he said, "I have of course long known of the Society of the Sons of Ancient Britons, but this is the first time I have had the honour of meeting one directly connected with it. Would you be good enough to tell me what the purpose of your organization may be?"

"With pleasure, sir," the other replied. "We are one part genealogical and two parts humanitarian and benevolent."

The surgeon nodded. "And the benevolent purposes are turned in what direction?"

"Wherever ancient Britons are to be found, sir, in need of our ministrations. We strive, constantly, to enlarge the scope of our work. For example, I have only this week come from a visit to Greenwich Hospital, where, it was hoped by members of our board, some small services might be rendered the old seamen living in retirement there, despite the fact that the pensioners are under the Government's care."

"By God, sir," Captain Tucker put in, "ye'd have found some ancient Britons at Greenwich! Prime old sea-dogs, eh, Mr. Dwight?"

"They are indeed, sir," the latter replied. He sighed and shook his head. "But I discovered that there is little we can do to improve their condition."

"You're not saying they are neglected, Mr. Dwight?" Captain Murgatroyd asked.

"No, no. They want for nothing, of course, in the material sense. And that which they do want, it is not within the power of our Society to furnish them."

"And what is that, sir?" Mr. Runyon asked.

"Their youth, Mr. Runyon. Or better, perhaps, the heyday of manhood: their old life of stirring action in His Majesty's Navy. I was very sensible of the tedium with which the days pass in their retirement."

"There aint nothing to beat seamen for grumbling," Ned Balthus remarked. "We're all of a piece there, old or young."

"You surprise me, Mr. Dwight," said Ostiff. "I had always supposed that the Greenwich pensioners are thoroughly contented in so snug a berth for their latter days."

"They bear their lot well enough, to be sure. But my conviction is that the poor old fellows are bored to death; some, perhaps, without knowing it. For all their advanced years, they still have a power of life in them, which makes the monotony of their existence particularly hard for them to bear."

"YOU have diagnosed their trouble precisely, sir," Doctor Dogbody remarked. "I recall an experience I once had with Greenwich Hospital pensioners. B'gad, 'twas an extraordinary one, and it taught me that there is no such thing as a superannuated British seaman."

"When was that, Doctor?" Balthus asked.

"All but forty years ago; but I'd not wish to trouble the company with an account of it on this occasion."

"I, for one, should greatly like to hear it, sir," said Mr. Dwight.

"Aye, let's have it, Dogbody," Captain Tucker added. "We'll not have ye whetting our interest, then putting us off, this way."

"I was thinking of yourself, Nolly, for I should have to mention, at the outset, a name that would set ye to bellowing like a bull."

"Me? What name?" Captain Tucker asked.

"The twenty-four-pounders thundered; there was a ragged response from the frigate. We heard the sound of cheering."

"You're bound to have it?"

"Damme, why not? I can think of none that would have the effect ye say."

"Lord Sandwich."

Captain Tucker straightened himself with a jerk and leaned forward, his brown muscular fists clenched on the table.

"Sandwich, is it?" he roared.

"I knew it: I should not have been tempted," said the surgeon, innocently. "Damn your blood, Nolly! Ye needn't share the secret with the whole of Portsmouth."

"Secret?" roared the captain once more. "Where's the secret about it? The most formidable enemy the British Navy has ever had to meet was the British Admiralty itself, under the administration of that scoundrel Sandwich!"

MR. DWIGHT was plainly shocked at this outburst. "You astonish me, Captain Tucker," he said. "I have some recollection of a parliamentary enquiry made at the time into Lord Sandwich's administration at the Admiralty, but I had believed it due to his political enemies. Was he not exonerated?"

"No sir, he was whitewashed, and a mucky job they made of it! Mr. Dwight, for barefaced incapacity, the Sandwich administration at the Admiralty is unique in the annals of our history. Naval stores were stolen right and left, all merit neglected, and half-starved seamen sent out to fight the battles of their country in ships so rotten they could scarce swim. Dogbody knows it as well as myself. There's not a seaman afloat or ashore but knows it!"

"We'll bear off on the other tack," the surgeon remarked. "Nolly, ye've a voice like a Thames bargeman. Ye'll be heard from here to London!"

Captain Tucker, having rid himself of his sudden flare of temper, now gave a rumbling laugh like the dying thunders of a spent storm. "Proceed, Dogbody. I've done," he said.

"No more outbursts?"

"None, I promise. Heave ahead."

"Very well, then; but there is more than a suspicion of the truth, Mr. Dwight, in what the Captain has said of the state of our Navy during the Sandwich administration. He headed the Admiralty Board from 'seventy-one to 'eighty-two. I need not remind you that for the greater part of the period we were at war with France, Spain, and the American colonies.

"In the autumn of 'eighty, I was appointed surgeon to a seventy-four-gun ship, the *Repulse*, recently commissioned, and then lying in the Thames at Greenwich. I joined her the day my orders came, and found, to my surprise and pleasure, that she was commanded by an old friend and former schoolfellow, Captain Hugh Didd."

"Not Patience Didd?" Captain Murgatroyd asked.

"The same. As Murgatroyd knows, he bore the nickname because he was, past question, the most long-suffering and even-tempered officer in His Majesty's Navy. He would accept the disappointments and delays so common in the service, and more than ever so at this time, with an equanimity that was, truly, saint-like. *But* there was a point at which even the patience of Patience Didd could be exhausted. When that was reached, there was no man so determined and daring in his action.

"Well, I congratulated myself no end at having been appointed to a new ship, and one, as I thought, all but ready for sea; but Didd informed me that my joy was somewhat premature. The *Repulse* had been lying at Greenwich ever since she'd come from Deptford Shipyard, three months before, and was still waiting for her guns. Didd had managed to get eighteen twenty-four-pounders from the Woolwich arsenal. Not another one was forthcoming, for all his efforts to hasten matters.

"As for the ship, it needed no practiced eye to see that she was about as seaworthy as a butcher's basket. She was built by the yard, as the saying went of many of our ships of this period. Didd told me they had pumped the Thames through her half a dozen times since she'd come from the yards.

"As the days and weeks passed, I could see that even Didd's patience was wearing thin. Of the seventy-four guns needed, he'd managed to get the number on board up to twenty, with four carronades for the quarterdeck. We were short of men as well. The *Repulse's* full complement was five hundred and twenty, of which number we had no more than two hundred, the half of them pressed men, as sullen and rebellious as such men usually are, at first. There was a large number of Americans amongst 'em, sent to us off merchantmen captured at sea. We had only ninety, all old Navy men, who could be counted upon.

"I will now leave the ship for a moment, to speak of one of those curious chances that play so large a part in human affairs, afloat or ashore. It was my custom, during this long interval of waiting, to attend the Sabbath service at Greenwich Hospital. I enjoyed meeting and talking with the old seamen there who had served England in past generations. I might almost say, in past ages, for some were in their nineties, and better than a dozen had passed their hundredth year. It was heartening, too, to see octogenarians, even centurions, so spry and hale physically. Mr. Pinney, the chaplain at Greenwich, and himself approaching eighty, told me that of the eight hundred men then at Greenwich, only seven were bedridden.

"One Sabbath morning I set out for the service at Greenwich in the company of one of our midshipmen, a lad of fourteen named Sherr, who had, surprisingly, asked to accompany me. Had I known him better, I would also have known that he was up to some mischief, but he had only recently joined the ship, and was as innocent in manner and appearance as a pocket saint. He told me that he had already spent a few hours off duty in roaming about the walks at Greenwich Hospital.

"'You couldn't do better, lad,' said I. 'Cultivate the acquaintance of those old seamen. There's more authentic naval history in their stories and anecdotes than you'll find in all the books.'

"'Old seamen are scarce, aren't they, Surgeon?' said Sherr.

"'They are and all,' said I. 'Any man in the service who lives to see his fiftieth birthday deserves a Navy medal for the achievement. He's well earned it, if only for his agility at dodging balls, bullets and oak splinters.'

"'It strikes me the old Greenwichers would ask nothing better than the chance to be dodging 'em again,' said Sherr. 'They seem so tired of doing nothing. It's a pity something can't be done to liven 'em up.'

"WE walked on in the April sunshine, young Sherr chatting in his engaging innocent way, and reached the chapel just before the beginning of the service. The pensioners were coming along from the halls and dormitories, some with empty sleeves pinned up at the shoulder, some on crutches, whilst peg-legs past counting beat a ceaseless tattoo on the paved yard. Sherr and I stood at the entrance to watch them pass. 'Twas a privilege merely to gaze into the faces of those old fellows who had fought for England's glory in every corner of the Seven Seas. There was one amongst them, Dan Ruggles by name, who'd been a gunner in the fleet under Sir George Rooke, at the time he seized the treasure ships at Vigo, early in the reign of Queen Anne. Mr. Pinney, the chaplain, whom I'd known years before, had told me about him: he had passed his one hundred and fourth birthday, and though he'd lost the use of his legs, he propelled himself vigorously along in a curious little chair on wheels. B'gad, he seemed immortal in his energy and high spirits, for, unlike so many of the others, he rose superior to tedium.

"Young Sherr and I took places in the pew reserved for visitors —there were no others present on that day—and the service began. The chaplain was an excellent old fellow, though not what would be called an inspired preacher. I observed that the pensioners were getting as drowsy as myself. Heads began to droop, and presently most of them had disappeared behind the backs of the pews. I was all but asleep when I was pulled up by a sharp *'ſs-s-s-st,'* close beside me, and a momentary glare of light in the dusky chapel. Turning my head, I saw young Sherr on his knees before his seat, but in no attitude of devotion. He had my enameled snuffbox, which for convenience I had left on the prayer-book shelf in front of us. The young rogue had mounded on the lid of the box a generous pinch of gunpowder he'd brought with him, tied in his handkerchief, and had just touched it off. The smoke rolled up in an undulating cloud, and spread itself in the lofty vaulted chamber.

"B'gad, the effect was immediate. . . . No, I'm wrong there: 'twas not immediate, for none save myself had noted the flash, and it was not until the smoke had spread that the result became apparent. Mr. Pinney, who was reading his sermon, glanced up, peered out into the dusky chapel, at the same time wrinkling his nose like an old war-horse. Heads reappeared above the backs of the pews, and faces were turned upward where the smoke had now spread like a canopy about halfway to the vaulted roof. There was a stirring and scraping of crutches and wooden pegs, and an increasing buzz and murmur arose from all sides.

"I was vexed enough to have shaken young Sherr out of his jacket, there in the midst of the service, but it was next to impossible to assume and hold an expression of decent severity in the presence of the young imp. He gave me a cautious sidelong glance, so droll in its mingled innocence and appeal that 'twas all I could do to keep from grinning like a very accomplice."

"For all that, Dogbody, ye should have taken him over your knee and trounced him with a prayerbook," Captain Tucker remarked, with a grin.

"I was more than tempted," the surgeon replied, "and for a double reason: I'd only just bought my snuff-box, in London, and there was a pretty fancy on the lid: old Triton with his wreathed horn reposing on the back of a whale, with a view of the sea beyond. The flash of powder smudged the picture hopelessly, though I'll admit that the colour of the sea had been a scarcely credible blue, and the fumes of the powder had darkened it to a hue more typical of our northern waters.

"Sherr's prank scuttled the service. The chaplain tried to carry on, but he'd halt in the midst of a sentence to sniff the air once more; then he'd hem and haw for a new start and halt again before he was fairly under way. The pensioners, all fully awake now, made no pretense of listening. The old familiar smell of powder-smoke had carried them far enough from Greenwich, and the place was in what might well be called an uproar for a Sabbath service. The old fellows tried to keep their voices down, but you could hear 'em plain enough. In the pew directly behind me I heard some of 'em speaking of the taking of the *Havannah* and the amount of prize-money awarded all ratings, afterward. One said the seamen's cut was thirteen and fourpence, whilst another held it was fourpence above that. B'gad, ye'd have thought the *Havannah* had only just been captured and the shillings and pence of the prize-money still in their pockets! They got so hot over the amount I thought they'd come to blows.

"But I'll not linger in the chapel. The moment the chaplain had worried through to the end. I took young Sherr by the arm and straight up to him to make his apologies. For all the years he'd been in orders, Pinney could never break himself of the habit of swearing, and small wonder; the shepherd of a flock of eight hundred old seamen would be hard put to display an example of perfect abstinence in this respect. He gave us a cordial greeting.

"'Dogbody,' said he, as he hung his surplice in his little closet, 'you're the best parishioner I've got; you come round to service as regular as banyan day. But damn my eyes if it wasn't as much as I could do to get through this morning! One of my old villains has played a merry trick on us.'

"'Twas no old one, Chaplain,' said I, 'but the young imp who stands before you. He wishes to make his apologies.'

"THE chaplain held up his hand protestingly. 'We'll dispense with 'em,' said he. 'The lad's done a service for the lot of us. I wonder, Surgeon, you've so far forgotten what a limb of Satan you yourself were at his age. Damme, you were mastheaded a dozen times, as I recall it, on the voyage to Canada.'

"Young Sherr gave a grin at this disclosure, and I was forced to admit that I might not have been an example of perfect decorum in my younger days.

"'I should think not, indeed,' said Pinney. 'Say no more on the head of apologies. I love lads of spirit.' He broke off, smiling, as he nodded toward the entrance of the chapel. 'Look at 'em, Surgeon! Blast me if it's not the first time in my long incumbency here I've seen the old rascals reluctant to leave the chapel.' *(Please turn to page 119)*

"The young rogue had mounded a generous pinch of gunpowder and touched it off. The prank scuttled the service."

Winner

Illustrated by JOHN POLGREEN

"NOW for the big event of the day, the Ladies Bridge Stakes. Four will start, with each paying fifty cents, making a grand total of two dollars, and the winner taking all. They are all of an age, and all well matched on the record of past performances. It should be one of the greatest contests of the ages, a fair betting proposition."

Nell Smead laughed and laid down the cards so that they might cut for partners. "That was race-horse talk I was making up about us," she said. "Sounds silly, doesn't it? Fred's going to the track this afternoon, and I was looking over what he calls the dope-sheets while he was picking his winners last night. Look, here's one."

They had been playing bridge each Wednesday afternoon for almost two years now. Experts might have noted that Jane had cleverly made over last summer's taffeta, but otherwise they were of a pattern. Youngish matrons, each dwelling in a colonial house surrounded by quarter-acre of lawn, and meeting the five-fifty train at the station five nights a week. They examined the pink sheet.

"Winning parlays. Had six winners Saturday. Follow the old Kentucky Fox and get the mazuma. Winners guaranteed." Nell laughed and ceased reading at random from the ads. "Goodness," she said. "It looks as if everybody knows who the winners will be. If that's so, I don't see why we—" She glanced at the clock. "Listen, girls: Fred's going to phone before he goes to the track. Let's us pick a winner and have him play it for us with the two dollars. That would be fun, because if the horse wins, we could have a real handsome prize for the winner here today; and if he doesn't win, why, it wouldn't matter much either."

Cards lay neglected on the table while they discussed the names on the pink sheet. When the telephone rang, the three guests listened eagerly.

"No," Nell said. "We don't think we all ought to have our heads examined. Yes, I heard you say that before, but Scarlet Gypsy's the one we want you to play for us, not Caribbean. . . . What? Oh, Fred, don't be silly. Of course Scarlet Gypsy's got a chance to win! What do you suppose he's going to run for, if he doesn't have a chance to win? . . . What? Well, I don't care if you do know Caribbean's bound to win because he's the favorite. All four of us here picked Scarlet Gypsy, and so that makes him our favorite; and besides, it's our money and— Oh, honey, that's better. I knew you wouldn't be obstinate and— What? Well, of course you can hang up now, because you're six blocks from the track and it's almost time for the first race. But as soon as our race's over, you phone us and— What, they won't let you phone from the track? Why, that's just silly. You can tell them— Oh! Well, anyhow, that's the craziest rule I've ever heard about. What's the use of having winners, if people can't know they have them? It— All right, honey, all right. I know you did work awfully hard last night picking your winner for the first race, and it's the only day you've got to go to the track, and you want to get your bet down. . . . Yes, Scarlet Gypsy. Right on the nose? Of course I don't want you to smack him right on the nose with our two dollars. What good would that be? I— Oh! Well, be sure you do."

They heard the clicking sound of a hastily broken connection.

"It's all right," Nell announced. "He can't phone to us about who wins, because of some silly track rule about phoning. But we can all watch the papers tonight; and if we win, I can send a check to the winner, if the winner's not me."

They played two rubbers, disposed of tiny sandwiches and iced tea, and resumed play. While they played, they talked. Mary Beth told about how much fun it had been attending the opening of Noel Coward's new play the other night. Louella confided that Randy had promised that if business continued to pick up, they could take the twins to Florida for a month next winter. Only Jane, who once had been so eager, had little to say. She wrinkled her brows and carefully studied each card.

Nell watched her and then looked quickly away for fear that Jane would think she was eying the taffeta. She looked at the score and decided to pay more attention to her own game instead of worrying about Jane, who, concentrating on her cards, was winning steadily and was now far ahead.

"No," Nell said. "We don't think we all

Take All

A SHORT SHORT STORY

By HUGH BRADLEY

It was no use; Nell wondered if Mary Beth and Louella knew that even though Jane's husband still caught the eight-twenty each morning as usual, he spent his days in the city looking for a job. Ever since Fred had happened to find it out two months ago and told her about it, she had been thinking about that. Probably Fred was right, though, she told herself again. Even if Jane was a good neighbor, it was no business of theirs to interfere, even if there was anything they could do.

THEY were in the final game and rubber. Nell was slow in picking up her hand, while she listened to sounds from the kitchen which would indicate that the maid was busy about early preparations for dinner. Louella passed, as did Mary Beth. Jane wrinkled her brows, stared at the cards, and was about to speak when the telephone rang.

"What?" Nell said. "Why didn't I tell you? Tell you what? About Scarlet Gypsy? Why, Fred, I did tell you. I told you to bet our two dollars on him, and you said you would; and now if you mean to tell me you forgot all about— What? Why, certainly we knew all about him. Why shouldn't we? The paper said he was the longest price in the race, didn't it? And if you're going to bet your money, you ought to bet it where you're going to get the most back for it, oughtn't you? Why, of course you should! That's just common sense—and— What? Anyhow, you left the track to come outside and let us know? Let us know what? Oh, Fred! He *did?* Honest, darling, you're not fibbing, are you? Sev-en-tee dol-lars! Oooh, Fred! Bring it right home!"

Nell sorted her cards while the others discussed the good news about Scarlet Gypsy. She thought about dinner, and decided to change the dessert to his favorite fig soufflé, so that Fred would feel better about losing bets on all the horses he had picked. She heard Mary Beth and Louella bemoaning their own luck, while complimenting Jane on picking this day to be so far out in front that only a miracle could beat her now. She looked at her cards, could not believe what she saw, heard Jane say "By," and looked at her cards again. She knew now why the others had been unable to bid.

Ace, king, queen in four suits stared back at her with the spades prolonged by a jack. It was a hand such as she had never even dreamed of holding, an unbeatable hand which insured her coming from behind to win game, rubber and the seventy dollars. She remembered how Fred had said that the odds probably were a hundred billion to one against anyone holding such a hand. She looked up at the others so she might relish the full flavor of their amazement when they heard her bid.

She saw a happy, far-away look in *(Please turn to page 87)*

ought to have our heads examined. . . . Of course Scarlet Gypsy's got a chance to win!"

Right: British cavalry tanks watching the co-operating aircraft during the exercises. Below: England's biggest aircraft factory pours out Blenheim bombers.

Photographs by Wide World

THE Lion AT BAY

A great writer returns home after a long absence and discovers a new Great Britain, a grimly determined, ready-for-whatever-may-come fortress.

By W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

THERE are two ways of writing about a country. There is the way of the man who has dwelt in it for twenty years, and there is the way of the man who has spent a few weeks in it. Both have their merits. The first will give you solid and reliable information; but owing to his long familiarity, he has often ceased to notice what is peculiar, picturesque and characteristic; and it is just this that attracts the attention, if he is observant and has a quick perception, of the random traveler. I have a notion that something of the sort may be as true of a situation as of a country; and so I think it may interest you if I tell you what impressions I have received of England since my return to it a few weeks ago. I brought a fresh eye, and perhaps saw changes which, because they had come gradually, had escaped the attention of those who have been in England since the beginning of the war. I came, indeed, like a curious, alert traveler visiting a new country.

Those of you who have read my account of my journey home will know in what condition I left France. When I heard on the radio that France had capitulated, I went down to my gardener's cottage to tell him. He had just finished breakfast, and was sitting with his wife at table. He is a rugged, gaunt man, and his wife is fat and smiling. He fought all through the last war. When I told them the dreadful, unexpected news, they began to cry. Great sobs rent their breasts, and neither could say anything but: "Poor France, poor France!" Later in the day, when I went into Nice,

a gay, friendly city that loves its ease, I saw people at the cafés reading the papers, and the tears rolled down their cheeks. I saw them walking in the Avenue de la Victoire with bowed head. All France was filled with bewilderment, shame and despair. It made you shy to meet a Frenchman's eyes; and when you talked to one, you tried to avoid them. The air, though the sun shone so brightly and the countryside was so smiling, seemed charged with gloom.

When I stepped onto the collier that was to take me home, it was like going out of a darkened sickroom into the sparkling daylight. When I stood on the *Saltersgate's* iron deck, I knew that I stood on a little bit of England, and I breathed more freely. The crew were rough Glasgow boys, and their faces were as black with coal-dust as their grimy clothes. They talked with so strong an accent that it was hard for an Englishman to understand them, but there was no mistaking the sense of what they said. They were friendly and willing, and they bubbled over with high spirits. Ever since the war started, they had been sailing the dangerous seas, and did they care for Jerry's bombs and Jerry's torpedoes? Not they! Their confidence was infectious, and if you asked one of them what he thought about France, he answered with gay effrontery: "It doesn't matter; we can lick the Jerries alone."

And I found the same optimism in Liverpool. Fear of invasion? Not a shadow of it. "We'll smash 'em. It'll take time, of course, but that's all right; we can hang on." I found the same spirit in London; I found the same spirit in the country, where the corn in the fields was beginning to turn golden and the apples on the trees already weighed down the branches.

BUT, mind you, it wasn't a careless or a thoughtless spirit; it was grave and determined. Since my arrival I have talked with numbers of people, from privates to generals, from farm laborers to landed proprietors, to poor women and rich, to clerks and financiers; I have found everywhere the same sense of the seriousness of the situation, the same resolution to continue the struggle to victory, and the same readiness to sacrifice everything to achieve it.

After what I had seen in France, where the failure of morale in the population had, I thought, so greatly contributed to the lamentable collapse, I was anxious to find out if my general impression was confirmed by those who had better opportunities of judging than I could hope to have; and when I met the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces, the first question I put to him was what he thought of the morale of the people at large. Sir Alan Brooke, the Commander-in-Chief, is a sturdily built man of about middle height, with grayish, thick-growing hair, a hooked, rather fleshy nose under which is a line of dark mustache, and with powerful, stubby hands. He gives you an impression of physical strength, and this strikes you as unusual because he has an intellectual, sensitive face. With his horn-rimmed spectacles he looks more like a scientist than a soldier; and if I had been sitting opposite him in a bus, and he were in mufti, I should have taken him for a professor of science in London University. His voice is strident. He speaks well, fluently and with decision. I don't think you could spend half an hour with him without coming to the conclusion that this was an able, determined and cool-headed man. I was conscious of a peculiar satisfaction when I reflected that the defense of my country was in the hands of that capable, intelligent man. Brains and strength; it is a valuable and rare combination.

As an example of the morale of the nation, the C. in C. mentioned the Home Guards. These, as you probably know, are volunteers, men in civil employment—though many of them served in the last war—who were called to deal with parachutists and attempts at sabotage, to protect bridges, railways and docks, and generally to make themselves useful in case of invasion. The vast majority are workingmen, and they have been asked to fulfill these duties in addition to their day's work. The response was so great that it has been found necessary to call a halt, since it was impossible immediately to equip so many. Even the generous gifts of American rifles, sporting-guns and revolvers, which were so gratefully received, did not suffice. But of course equipment is catching up; supplies are coming along in huge quantities; and soon, perhaps even before you read these lines, every member of the Home Guard will have his rifle.

From the morale of the nation, it was natural to go on to talk of the morale of the Army. I think no one could have heard the ringing, convinced tone of the General's voice when he spoke of the troops he had commanded in France without sharing his confidence in them. Nothing demoralizes men more than to hold a

Above: L. D. V. (Local Defense Volunteers) craft passing in review on the Thames River. The Home Guard Navy is patrolling 125 miles of the river. The speed-boats are guarding the locks, towpaths and landing-places day and night. Left: An American-built Hudson and its crew (from left to right)—the navigator, the pilot, the wireless-operator and the rear gunner.

position, perhaps with considerable losses, and then be ordered to retire because the support on their flanks has failed them; and when they take up a new position, they are apt to think: "What's the use? Why should we lose a lot more fellows holding it, when we shall have to fall back again?" This is what happened time and again in Flanders, when the Belgian army capitulated, and the French on the other flank abandoned the field. The British troops held each successive position with undiminished determination.

It is no wonder their General was proud of them. And later, when he was withdrawing his army to the sea, they encountered French troops who had thrown away their arms and were marching haggard and broken, an army no longer, but a rabble surging along the Belgian *chaussées*. You would have expected such a sight to upset the British troops; but they marched stubbornly onward. There are advantages in a race that is so—what? So unimaginative or so unemotional, so pig-headed or so stolid, that it doesn't react to impressions of this sort because it doesn't know how to?

The fact remains that the British troops in France were never forced to retire by pressure on their front, but only by the withdrawal of their allies on their flanks. They returned to England with nothing but the clothes they stood up in, tired and hungry—but as full of fight as ever.

I was convinced that one of the causes of the French collapse was that the Army had been left through a long winter of inaction with nothing to do, so that they had grown bored and discontented, and I put it to General Brooke that, if the Germans did not invade England this summer, the vast forces which make Great Britain a huge fortress would have to confront a situation similar to that which had had so unhappy an effect on the French troops. He reminded me that the British Command had had to deal with it during last winter. They had done so by keeping the men working, but not excessively, by providing them with entertainment, and by giving them short periods of leave at frequent intervals. I suggested that the soldier of today is a more highly educated man than the soldier of five-and-twenty years ago; he is accustomed to using his brain, and his mind must be kept busy as well as his hands.

"Of course," he said. "But don't forget that the training of a modern soldier is very different from what it was a generation back. Then he only had to learn to fire a rifle and drill; a certain amount of drill is needful, but there is nothing so heartrending, especially to an educated man, as this eternal marching about a barrack square. The modern soldier is a technician who has to learn a great deal about mechanics, engineering and electricity." All that, he went on to say, enormously interested the men and kept their brains active. During last winter, classes were started on various subjects, and classes to teach French were especially popular. The war-correspondents were invited to give lectures on any topic they chose. With the experience thus gained, activities of this kind will be intensified and every effort made to keep the men interested, occupied and happy.

This, naturally enough, led me to ask the Commander-in-Chief whether he expected an invasion of England. I knew the question was indiscreet, and I was not surprised when he refused to answer it. "But I'll tell you what I will say," he added: "I don't say to my staff, *if* we have an invasion, but *when* we have an invasion. That's the best way to keep everyone on his toes."

SINCE this is above all a war of machines, I was glad to have a chance of seeing General Pope, who is Director of Armoured Fighting Vehicles. He is a man of a different type from the Commander-in-Chief. I don't think you could see him anywhere, in any clothes, without guessing that he was a British officer. He is a well-set-up man, with a good profile, a high color, a breezy manner and a jovial laugh, rather slangy in his speech, courteous; a good sportsman, one would surmise, but shrewd. He lost his right arm in the last war. He was not long returned from France when I met him.

He told me that the new British tanks were better than anything the Germans have now. He had himself seen the turret of a British tank which had had four direct hits from anti-tank guns in the space of a sheet of foolscap, and was not even dented inside. He knew of another that had been hit twenty times without serious damage. This strength gives the men complete confidence, and they are prepared to take their tanks anywhere. One British tank at Gravelines fought single-handed all day and destroyed three German heavies and two light tanks. At Arras the British tanks advanced ten miles, the only advance of the war; and if they had received the promised support of the French infantry, might easily have won a victory which might have changed the whole face of the war. The support failed, and the tanks had to retire.

The British had then only one tank division against ten German divisions. When the struggle is resumed, conditions will be very different. Before the war, from inception to completion, it took eighteen months to produce a heavy tank; now it only takes nine. The preparations that Britain has been making have at last reached such a point that every day tanks are being turned out in impressive numbers, and these numbers are increasing week by week.

Since this General had fought in the last war as well as this one, I thought I would ask him how the Germans of the present day compared with those of twenty-five years back. He told me that they were wonderfully brave—he was speaking of the infantry then,—but not such good men as their fathers, and they suffered from a lack of younger officers of good quality. They hesitated to attack the British, but concentrated on the French; that, of course, was natural enough: when you are playing doubles at tennis, you don't return a ball to the stronger of your two opponents if you can help it, but to the weaker.

But while General Pope was speaking of this, he made an observation that interested me: He remarked that the German method of going around obstacles rather than confronting them is not invariably sound, for an obstacle may not be so formidable as it looks, and by hesitating to tackle it, you may lose a heaven-sent opportunity. On the other hand, when you cannot avoid it, but are forced willy-nilly to deal with an *(Please turn to page 116)*

Book Suggestions For November

by HARRY HANSEN

THE shadows lengthen; the lights come on early; there is more time for reading. New books are published in bewildering confusion. Because there are many that may be read with pleasure and profit, I am naming more than one or two.

Here is a fine novel about Vienna that portrays the crisis just before the Nazis ruined its home rule—"The Defenders," by Franz Hoellering. A sustained account of the emotional tension endured by the people of Austria, it tells the love-story of a nineteen-year-old girl, (who is courted by a wealthy factory-owner who is trying to save his property), and who falls in love with a courageous engineer, leader of the workers' defence. A novel with many characters, expressing all the points of view held in Austria before Hitler came, and showing us what disunity means.

Then here's another about Ireland and America—Cork and New York City—Sean O'Faolain's "Come Back to Erin." Poetic at times, a little wordy at others, as an Irish story might well be. The story of *Frankie Hannafey*, who comes to New York City to raise money for the revolution, and of his brother *St. John*, who made money in America and is starved for the sights, sounds and smells of the homeland, and of *Bee Hannafey, St. John's* wife, who had to comfort them both.

Maine of the lobster-pots, the haze in the fir trees, the deep-red sunsets, the life along the coves, may be found in a book of New England poetry called "Maine Tides," by Wilbert Snow. "Our daily round itself is like the tide—"

And I have found a most informing book about the moon and the planets called "Life on Other Worlds," by H. Spencer Jones, of Cambridge University, England. This gives an authoritative answer to all our speculations about the atmosphere of the earth, life on Mars and the condition of the Moon.

"The Defenders," by Franz Hoellering (Little, Brown & Company.)
"Come Back to Erin," by Sean O'Faolain (Longmans, Green and Co.)
"Maine Tides," by Wilbert Snow (Henry Holt and Company)
"Life on Other Worlds," by H. Spencer Jones (The Macmillan Company)

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


A Truly Great Whiskey
Once there were two Colonels
OF PUPPIES
FOUR ROSES
Their grain won first prize...for you!
FOUR ROSES
ONCE AGAIN..
TO MAKE A
Merry Chr
FOUR
-and a Four Roses ad that can never be written
The ad has never been written—and never will be—that can make Four Roses—or *any other* whiskey—better than it actually is.
So we have gone along on this basis: First, we've constantly tried to make Four Roses the finest whiskey it was possible to make . . . and we've constantly tried, and consistently succeeded, in making it better and better.
Then we've run ads like those reproduced here—ads you probably remember seeing—to remind you that Four Roses is a superlatively fine whiskey.
It pleases us when people like our ads. It pleases us more that so many of them think Four Roses is the finest whiskey ever bottled.
FOUR ROSES
Four Roses is a blend of straight whiskies—90 proof. The straight whiskies in Four Roses are 4 years or more old. Frankfort Distilleries, Inc., Louisville & Baltimore

WITHOUT A SONG

(Continued from page 51)

movie cameras whirred. As he faced that battery with the look of a man being crucified, his jaws set tight and his pulse beat hard with the feverish race of his thinking. So soon he must be ready to talk! And reaching back into this war, already he was jerking together the things he felt that he must say. The speech of his friend from Balliol College at Oxford steadied the race of Bob's thoughts. For it was so British, so quiet, so brief.

"I am privileged by His Majesty, sir, first to give you a commission well earned—as Lieutenant in His Royal Air Force—and then, in recognition of tireless devotion in service and resourceful courage shown in combat with the enemy, his highest award for our branch of his forces —the Distinguished Flying Cross."

THOUGH by habit Bob straightened to attention, as he murmured his thanks in reply, he was blind to the little silver cross he could feel being pinned upon his breast. His lips were dry. He licked them. Just one minute more, and then must come his effort to swing not only these men, but Kate with them, to the truth about war!

The torture of waiting was over at last. For now while movie cameras whirred on and lights kept flashing, he heard the Air Ministry's appeal, with this sentence at the end:

"As a winner of this high award, it is given you to make your choice."

"I choose to go on fighting, sir!"

His voice, loud, harsh and quivering, sent a wave of electric excitement through that little crowd of men, and as they sensed the story here, from one of them the question came:

"No writing with the fighting, sir?"

He'd been waiting for that! His desperate thoughts had all been straining, racing for that!

"Now I'm ready at long last to tell you about that." he replied. "Day and night they've been begging me for war verse. I'll tell you why the verse won't come." He glanced at Kate, then shut his eyes and leaned back on his pillows; for he knew he'd have to save every ounce of strength that he had in him for this.

"I'll tell you what in these months I've seen and heard and smelled of this war —this foul and filthy, grim and cold—this ugly mechanical Hitler war! This war of machines and chemicals—so coldly, coldly planned by men—to butcher all who refused to bow down to the cold and mechanical rigid creed of that icy madman in Berlin!" He drew a long quivering breath and went on:

"I've seen from the air whole villages burst into flames from the Jerry bombs! I've seen village streets that stunk with bodies, piled in heaps—men, women and children—legs and arms all blown away—guts out—and all, all stinking, stinking! This is war, men, this is war!

"I've seen our lads by tens of thousands —rushing in lorries along the roads,—to help the Belgian King—then, betrayed by Hitler's tool, battling back for their lives to the coast! I've seen what fools they were to think they ever had a chance —against that slaughter by war engines, vomiting their crimes on men! Tanks and armored cars and bombers—yowling down on Red Cross lorries, ambulance cars and C. S. stations! Yowling bombs and then machine-guns! This is war, men, this is war!

"Upstairs where I've been, we've had little time to look down on this world that Hitler has made—too busy with the enemy planes! At two hundred miles an hour up there, get on his tail and give him your fire! Get him, damn him, or he'll get you! Heroes? Devotion? Gallantry? Courage? Hell, no! Slaughter! This is war!

"But when we did get time to look down, I've seen roads packed with refugees—and into those scared desperate crowds of men, women and babies, all together—go-carts, wagons, bikes and flivvers—often I have seen and heard the Jerry tanks at forty an hour—roar and plow right through and over—leave a bloody mass behind them! This is war, men, this is war!

"I've seen at Dunkerque men by thousands—on the beach and in the water—well and wounded all together—bombed and gunned while they were swimming—struggling in that oily water—greasy stinking death-filled water! This is war, men, this is war! On sea and land and in the air—in that new hell where once was heaven—this is war, men—Hitler's war!"

All through this outpouring he had lain with eyes still closed and face gone white, like the face of a man nailed to a cross. Now, exhausted, he stopped.

He opened his eyes, and saw all the newspaper men racing their pencils.

"My God, sir, is that all?"

"It's all."

"It's plenty! It's the song we wanted!"

"What do you mean? What have I done?"

"You'll see when you read it in print tonight!"

"By God, sir, it's the stuff we wanted!"

And to make the late editions, they were off in a rush down the ward. With his thoughts in wild chaos, he watched them go, then heard Kate sobbing by his bed. She had dropped on her knees, had gripped his hand and was kissing it, pressing it to her heart. Blindly he asked her:

"Kate, what have I done?"

"All I asked—all England needs! To have you paint this hideous thing and our need to combat it—Hitler's war—this hell that we've all got to face—to meet and down! You've put it into words like fire! My dearest! Now you've sung!"

He fell back limp—his voice a whisper.

"Kate—don't ask me—ever to do it again!"

"I never will—I never will! Oh, my dear—I never will!"

FAME IS THE SPUR

(Continued from page 35)

"This small fact brings home to me more than anything else the change in our economic situation. Mr. Suddaby is paying me seven-and-six a week. I am nothing more than an errand-boy. I cannot expect him to increase my wages, and yet more money somehow must be got. I have read an enormous amount in the last couple of years, but what is the use of all that to me now? How terribly the scales are weighted against the poor! Had I been the son of well-to-do people, all this reading would have been to my credit. It would have been said that I was doing well. But now it means only that I have been neglecting to acquire the mean accomplishments that would give me employment. I begin to see how men are forced *to be servile. I shall not be one of them. I will, somehow, get a more profitable job, but however hard that may cause me to work, I shall not drop one single endeavor toward the raising of my condition. I swore this last night on the Old Warrior's saber. It caught my eye, hanging there on the wall, and more keenly than ever before I saw what the old man had meant when he called it a symbol. Hereafter I shall never look at it without thinking of the unending battle between the rich and the poor. As this idea of swearing the oath came into my mind, I took down the saber and was actually holding it above my head when Tom Hannaway came into the room."*

Tom Hannaway slumped into a chair, took out a pipe, and lit it. He looked round him in surprise. He had never seen a room like this before. It was unlike Mr. Richardson's dingy lodging, unlike Polly Burnsall's comfortable kitchen.

"This would be nice with a bit of fire in the grate," he said.

Hamer stood before the cold fireplace, his hands in his trousers pockets, and scowled. "Can't afford it."

"You want a job with more money attached to it," said Tom Hannaway. "I've come to offer you one."

It seemed incredible. It seemed only a day or two ago that they were both at school; and here was Tom Hannaway talking about giving him a job! Some boys would have laughed. Hamer didn't.

"Tell me about it," he said briefly.

It was going to be harder than he had thought. Tom Hannaway left him in no doubt about that. "You'll have to be up early—at the market while the good stuff's there. It's not my business to tell Mrs. Burnsall why she's made a muck of it, but that's one reason: she'd never get up early enough. Come home with a few mangy lettuces and sticks of rhubarb. You won't do that—not if you want this job. You'll be in the markets at six, and you'll open up the shop at eight, and shut it at eight at night. And you'll keep accounts of what you spend in the market and what you take in the shop, and we'll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MRS. PHILIP HARDING (ALICE ASTOR)


MRS. JOHN JACOB ASTOR

AMERICAN TRADITION of Beauty

Before the pearly freshness of the American girl's face, came an enduring tradition of fastidious care of her person.

Cultivate your skin's smooth enchantment gladly, frankly, without falter. Give your face at least once daily the authoritative Pond's ritual, based on the structure and behavior of the skin. Its users are among the fresh-skinned, *soignée* daughters of America's foremost families.

BATHE your face in an abundance of luscious Pond's Cold Cream—spreading it all over with creamy-soft slapping fingers. Slap for 3 full minutes—yes, even 5 minutes. This cream has 2 actions. One, cleansing. The other, softening. It achieves these effects by *mixing* with the dead surface cells, make-up and foreign accumulations on your skin.

WIPE OFF with bland and persuasive Pond's Tissues—and you've wiped off the softened debris, helped remove some of the softened tops of blackheads, making it easier for the little plugs of hardened sebum to push their way to the surface.

FLOOD and SLAP a second time with releasing Pond's Cold Cream. This slapping increases both the cleansing and the softening. As dirt is released, wipe off with gentle Pond's Tissues. Pores seem finer. In the softened skin, lines are less apparent.

LUXURIATE now in the cooling astringence of Pond's Skin Freshener, splashed on with a pad of cotton dripping with it. Then

COAT your whole face with the final blessedness of Pond's Vanishing Cream. Here is a cream whose specific function is to disperse harsh skin particles, little chappings caused by exposure, and leave your skin delightfully smoothed. Wipe off the excess after one full minute. Observe that this cream has laid down a perceptible mat finish. Your rich reward is your skin's satin touch—its flattering reception of and faithful hold on powder.

This, in full, always before retiring or during the day. A shorter ritual whenever your skin and make-up need freshening. Act now to start your new daily ritual—aid to a fresh, flower-soft skin. Already some thirteen million women in the United States use Pond's!

WOMAN-SKIN

owes its witchery to that tender *look* and *feel*, so different from a man's. And women through the ages intuitively have tended and coveted this treasured birthright of theirs, this delicacy of skin which lovers and poets have ever likened to the delicate face of a flower.

GIVE-AWAY **for the thrifty minded—Frankly to lure you to our larger cream jars, which are actually a better buy, we are handing you FREE (for a limited period) a tempting supply of our equally authoritative hand lotion, DANYA, with each purchase of the medium-large Pond's Cold Cream. Both for the price of the cream! At beauty counters everywhere.**

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I LEARNED MY
WHAT A FIX! A FROZEN RADIATOR ... A CRACKED ENGINE BLOCK! AND I THOUGHT I'D BOUGHT SURE PROTECTION!
1
TAKE A TIP FROM THE ARMY AND NAVY, MISTER. THEY CANT GAMBLE THEY USE "PRESTONE" ANTI-FREEZE
2

LESSON THE HARD WAY!

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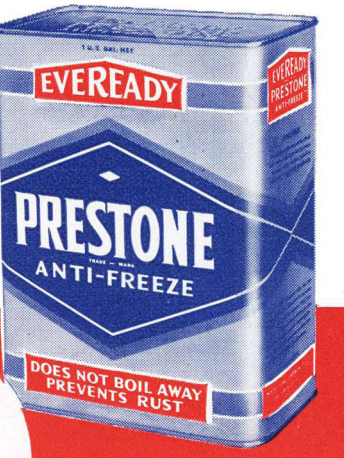

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6 Years Old
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11 Years Old
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4 Years Old
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5 Years Old
"HAS HAD NO PEERS FOR FIFTY YEARS"
Golden Wedding
A Blend of Straight Whiskies—90 Proof—Bourbon or Rye. The straight whiskies in Golden Wedding are 4 years or more old. 11%, one straight whiskey 5 years old. 2%, one straight whiskey 6 years old. 1%, one straight whiskey 11 years old. 86%, two straight whiskies 4 years old. Copr. 1940, Jos. S. Finch & Co., Inc., Schenley, Pa.

check 'em over every night, an' square that off with what's left in stock. And there'd better not be much of that, because this is perishable stuff. I don't want to see my money withering in the window."

"And what do I get?"

"Fifteen shillings a week to begin with."

"When do I start?"

"As soon as I've got the place ready. It needs a coat of paint."

AT six in the morning Hamer was at the market. By half-past seven he had returned to the shop and put the stuff where it had to be. Also, if the window needed rearranging, he saw to that. In the early days of his life as a greengrocer Tom Hannaway had appeared on the pavement one morning at eight o'clock, examined the display critically, and then walked into the shop. He seized three or four lettuces out of the window and shook them angrily under Hamer's nose. "What d'you call that?" he demanded. "Shriveled! Withered! Horrible!" He threw the lettuces out into the road, then went after them and brought them back. "No waste," he said. "Keep 'em—if some kid comes in for rabbit-food, sell 'em at half-price. But don't let me see that sort of stuff in the windows again."

The next day Tom brought along a streamer, printed in gay colors: *"The Dew Sparkles on Hannaway Produce."* He pasted it across the window, looked at it with his head on one side, and coming back, indicated a watering-can. "Live up to that motto," he said.

So now, by half-past seven, Hamer had looked to the window. Then he went home to breakfast. There was no early-morning running now, but the barrow-pushing opened out his shoulders, and he remembered to breathe deeply. Ellen could not get over her habit of looking at him solicitously. He knew what she was thinking. He got up one morning from the breakfast-table, threw off his coat, rolled up his shirt-sleeves, and flexed his biceps. "Get hold of that," he said. Ellen pressed the hard muscle with her fingers, which were rough and red, for she was now caretaker of the chapel in Emmott Street.

"It seems all right," she smiled.

"Stop worrying," he said. "They won't get me down."

By eight o'clock he was back at the shop and had opened for the day. Behind the shop was a tiny room, used as a store, with a window opening on to a back-yard. When he was in there, no one could see him, for a curtain hung across the glass door that communicated with the shop. No one could come into the shop without his knowing, because there was a bell that sounded when the shop door opened.

There were long stretches of time with no customers, and then he would fling up the window, breathe deeply, and run standing. That is to say, he would throw back his head, lift up his knees—up, down, up, down—covering an imaginary mile; and then he would bend and twist and stretch, suppling his muscles and making his body do what he would. When all that was done, he would take from his pocket a primer he had got from Mr. Suddaby, and recite: *"J'ai, tu as, il a."* There was not the time now, or the money, for those French lessons he had promised himself; but all the same, "They"—those mysterious hidden forces—were not going to get him down! *"Nous avons, vous avez, ils ont."*

Tom came, as he always did, at a quarter past one. Hamer wondered a little at the brightness of Tom's eye in these days, and his even more than usual confidence and grown-up-ness. Tom was only eighteen, but in those days he seemed suddenly to have leaped into an adult similitude.

But what lay behind this was a speculation outside Hamer's range at that time. What he knew was that there was only three-quarters of an hour for dinner, and that Tom's good humor would be gone if he were not relieved at two o'clock sharp.

In the afternoon, it was the same performance: greengrocery, running a standing mile, bending and doubling and twisting—and *"j'aurai, tu auras, il aura."*

At eight o'clock Tom, whistling, hurried away to the ever more deeply-appreciated comforts that Polly Burnsall afforded; and Hamer, turning out the gas, locked up the shop and went home to his late "high tea." Sometimes Ellen was there to give it to him, but often now something demanded her presence at Emmott Street. Then he would look after himself; but whether she was there or not, he would go straight up to his room at half-past eight and write in his diary till nine. From nine to ten he read fiction or poetry; and at ten he put on his hat and coat, and with an ash stick in his hand, walked the streets till eleven. Then he went home and to bed. That was his day; for a long time that was every day.

HAMER was seventeen; then he was eighteen, just turned eighteen; this was the last night of 1883. A lugubrious and lamentable night, with but another hour to live. Its old eyes were closing in a blear weeping mist that clung to the hairs of Hamer's overcoat as he hurried from the house in Broadbent Street.

He had run down from his room, with the notes of his address in his pocket. He looked into the kitchen where Ellen sat by the fire, bowed over the work in her lap with the immemorial and sacrificial stoop of poor women. She raised her head as the door opened, saw him standing there, tall, erect, already with something commanding in his very air and presence; and again a pang of remembering showed her a straight bright figure going out, and a cloth-veiled figure coming back supine upon a hurdle, and down nearly twenty years of time she heard again the brief decisive sound of the shot that stopped the agonized plunging of the horse. She withdrew her eyes from him, and the lamplight fell upon the gray lying in her hair like snow streaking shallow furrows in black land, and upon the long needles glinting and clicking above the growing length of the muffler.

"You won't change your mind? You won't come?"

She shook her head and said: "I'll wait up for you." Perhaps she wouldn't have gone, anyway; but she couldn't go there; she couldn't go to this little chapel where, after a year's preaching here and there, he was going this night to conduct the watch-night service. She told herself she was wrong, she was wicked, to feel like this: that she couldn't listen to the boy talking in the place where Gordon had talked. . . .

The little chapel was lighted by oil lamps. It was very cold and full of creeping mist. There was no side entrance to the vestry. You had to walk the length of the big room and pass through a door at the side of the pulpit. As he passed swiftly down the room, Hamer's heart lifted to see that the little place was packed. He had been saying to himself all the evening: "If they come tonight, I'm all right—all right."

He came out of the rabbit-hutch that was called a vestry, ran up the two creaking steps to the platform, on which a table stood, and paused for a moment, erect, shoulders back, surveying them; then passed his hand slowly through his hair as he spoke the first words. That was one of his tricks to the very end: that pause—"Here I am: look at me"—that gesture with the hand as though smoothing his thoughts into order behind his brow. It persisted when the brow had become loftier and lined and venerable, and the thoughts as misty and inchoate as the Ancoats fog which at this moment was dimming the lamps and chilling the people's bones.

He gave them their hymn in that voice which had a clear and piercing quality, though he rarely needed to raise it:

The old year's long campaign is o'er;
Behold a new begun!
Not yet is closed the holy war,
Not yet the triumph won.

Then he spoke to them from the text: *"Ye have not passed this way heretofore."* It was a simple address, obvious as the daylight, as all his addresses then were; but it had the quality of his personality behind it. He was more and more, at this time, savoring his life as an adventure toward he knew not what. Few men could have sustained his emphatic belief in a great achievement lying ahead unless they had been upheld by some inkling of what the achievement was to be. But he had no intimation whatever of the lines his life was to follow. Every day was an unrelenting adventure, but an adventure in the dark, and an adventure full of unreasonable faith. And so he was able to impart to his audience something of this driving confidence in life, this challenge to lions in the path that proved to be only chained lions, this belief that "though ye have not passed this way heretofore, ye *shall* pass, and come out safely on the other side."

WHEN the year had but a minute more to live, they knelt in the clammy silence, going down upon the boards with a scuffle of heavy boots and clog-irons. *"It seemed to me, standing above them"* (so runs the diary, which throws the true light on the occasion) *"that the year which was about to begin for all these people could hold nothing that the dying year had not held, and that was a bare permission to live, and eat a little, and roughly clothe themselves. But when, presently, a jangle of discordant bells and a blast of hooters told us that the new year had come, they stumbled to their feet and looked at one another with the manifest belief on all their faces that in some way at which they could not guess*

this year would *be different, though all experience should have taught them that it would do no more than bring them nearer to the grave."*

IF it had ever been your luck to see Lady Hannaway driving in a mustard-yellow Rolls-Royce through Hyde Park, you would have been hard put to it to recognize Polly Burnsall. She was eighty when she died. Sir Thomas was then sixty-five. There didn't seem such discrepancy as when he married her.

If that devout Catholic Mrs. Hannaway had not pulled Polly's hair round her ears and called her a Protestant slut, Tom might not have married this woman who was to be his helpmate and his stay. But the coarse insult in the face of all who knew her, suddenly set to work in Polly's mind forces that Mrs. Hannaway had not reckoned with.

Her resolve to marry Tom was born in that moment. She was a strategist, as a woman in her position needed to be. There were two things to be done: one was to make herself and her home indispensable to Tom, something without which his life would be unthinkable; the other was to wait till he wanted her money. She knew him well enough to be sure that that time would come.

As soon as Tom Hannaway knew that Darkie Cheap was behindhand with his rent, he made up his mind that the place must be his. As soon as he knew that Polly Burnsall was not making her business pay, he resolved to take it over. So with the shops he acquired later. His mind was of the sort that does everything swiftly or not at all. Thus it was when he wanted the little draper's shop. He calculated what his greengrocery shops and the boneyard would bring him if he parted with them, found it was nothing like enough, and went straight home to Polly. "Polly, if you get hold of that bit of capital of yours, it'll do us some good. It's only bringing you in fifteen shillings a week, and it'll help to give us a first-rate little business."

But now the swift and instantaneous mind of Tom encountered a mind which could wait and wait. Polly had waited for some years, and now she knew that her moment had come. Tom had a week's option on the draper's shop. She would not decide; she could not decide. What if the business failed? At least now she had fifteen shillings a week between her and starvation; but where was a woman, with no status, no one to rely on, supposing this venture fell through? She kept Tom in a crisis of nerves for six and a half days. She made imaginary visits to an imaginary lawyer who cautioned her, advised prudence.

"It *can't* fail! When did I *ever* fail?" That was Tom's sole contribution to the debate, with a thousand variations, throughout the week.

"But if it *does?* Where am I then? I've got no one. Who's going to bother with a woman getting on for forty, and without a brass farthing to her name?"

"My God, Polly!" Tom shouted. "Don't *I* look after you? Do *I* think of you as a woman getting on for forty? Well, then, blast your money, if that's how you feel about it! I'll go on selling cabbages. But I thought you'd want something better for me. I thought you'd want to see me out of this rotten slum and in the town by the time we married."

"Married?"

"Of course, married. You don't think we're always going on like this, do you?"

"Well, then, what are you shouting about? If we're married, you can do what you like with the money. A married woman's property is her husband's. That's the law."

Tom looked at her, flabbergasted. "Why the hell didn't you tell me that six days ago?" He snatched up his hat. "I'll go and see that man."

Though the finger of God was hardly apparent, save to prejudiced eyes, in the fascia of the little draper's shop which marked Tom Hannaway's transition from back-street trading to the limelight of a great shopping center, yet some sort of providence was looking after Hamer Shawcross. The very day on which he ceased to work for Tom Hannaway brought him a letter from a Manchester solicitor, which said that, if he would call at the office, he would learn something to his advantage "in connection with the estate of the late Charles Suddaby, Esquire."

Old Suddaby and his concerns seemed now so remote that this, the first intimation of his death, stirred in the young man's mind hardly more than a formal regret and a strong curiosity about what he might hear "to his advantage."

The lawyer's office, full of black japanned tin boxes and bundles of papers tied in red tape, was over a shop in St. Ann's Square.

Hamer sat in a chair by the fire as the solicitor read the will. There was small need to read it, but this man had written it himself and was not to be denied the joy of rolling out its involved and complicated inanities. When he had done that, he explained in two sentences what it meant. "So Mr. Suddaby leaves you twenty pounds and five hundred books, which you can choose yourself from the stock. Everything else goes to this Friedrich Engels, whoever he may be." Then he added: "Oh, and there's a letter. He left a letter for you. Here it is."

Hamer walked out of the office with twenty golden sovereigns, more money than he had ever handled before, jingling in his pocket. He had the key of the shop, and he had Mr. Suddaby's letter, which he had not yet opened.

He shut and locked the door behind him, not wishing to be disturbed. He struck a match to light the gas, but already some zealous official had cut the gas off. He remembered where candles were kept, and found them. A feeble yellow flame trembled in the musty-smelling dark, as he carried it toward the spot where Mr. Suddaby had been accustomed to sit.

Hamer dropped some grease upon the table, feeling a little compunction at so untidy an act, and stuck the foot of the candle into it. Then he sat down in Mr. Suddaby's chair, and, his own movements being still, he became aware of the cold silence shuddering through all the deserted aisles of the catacomb. He took the letter from his pocket, flattened it on the table under the wavering light of the candle, and began to read. Began and finished almost in a flash of the eye, for this was all the letter said: *"Don't forget the saber from Peterloo. Keep it shining."*

Chapter Nine

THE last thing Birley Artingstall did for Hamer Shawcross was to make a scabbard for the saber. The old man called at the house in Broadbent Street on the night when the boy was going through his few possessions, deciding what to take, what to leave behind. Ellen could not speak to him. It was a hot summer evening, but from force of habit she was sitting by the kitchen fire. Birley put his head through the doorway and asked "Upstairs?" She nodded, and when he was gone, she relapsed into misery.

She couldn't understand the boy. A few years ago, when Gordon died and she wanted to go in with the Ryersons, sharing a house, he was fiercely against it. Now that he had taken this whim to go off wandering, it seemed to him excellent, brought it out as though it were a brand-new idea of his own: "You could go in with the Ryersons."

The five hundred books that he had chosen from Mr. Suddaby's stock, and all the other books that he possessed, were crated and nailed down. They were to be left behind. Birley sat on one of the crates, took out his pipe and lit it. "So you don't reckon on doing much reading, Hamer?"

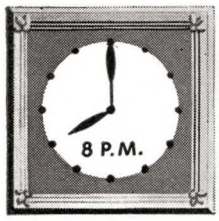
"None at all, if I can help it. I want to see the things that other people read about."

"Such as?"

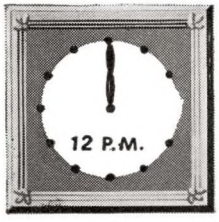
"Venice, for one thing."

If the boy had said Heliopolis or Babylon, Birley could not have been more surprised. "Venice!" he cried. "What on earth d'you want to see Venice for?"

LADY ESTHER FACE POWDER



CLINGS FOUR FULL HOURS



Lady Esther Face Powder

"Flatters Longer because it Clings Longer!"

Yes, Lady Esther Face Powder clings for four full hours!

OF COURSE any girl with any acceptable shade of face powder can look well for 15 minutes, but you just let a quarter of an hour go by and the real differences in face powder quality begin to be visible!

For, says Lady Esther, my face powder will cling to you lovingly for four FULL hours! If you put it on after dinner, say at 8 o'clock, it will still be there, a lovely flattering force, when the clock strikes midnight.

Lasting Flattery for your Skin

It will give you the glow of natural loveliness, the radiance of a satin-smooth skin—for four long and happy hours. You can forget your powder puff and revel in the knowledge, in the supreme confidence, that you are wearing a powder that guards your glamour all evening and flatters your skin to death!

Money, says Lady Esther, cannot buy a finer face powder, and good taste cannot find a lovelier, more exquisite selection of becoming shades.

Find your Lucky Shade at my expense!

There is magic in your face powder if you know your lucky shade. Ask any stage director what lighting effects and slight changes in color can do to a woman's skin. The *right* shade can make her look years *younger*—but . . . the *wrong* shade can make her look years *older!*

So find your *right shade* . . . your lucky shade—in Lady Esther's long-clinging face powder. Don't try to choose your most becoming color by the appearance of the powder in the box. Powder shades are always deceiving, unless you try them before your own mirror, *on your own skin.* Only then can you find the one shade that will make you lovelier!

So send today for all 9 exquisite shades of my face powder, *at my expense.* See how they look on your own skin. Find out which shade is exactly the one for *you.*

Try every one—and find out which is the shade that becomes you, flatters you most. Then wear it confidently . . . certain that it will make your skin look glamorously lovely for four long hours!

★ 9 shades free! ★

(You can paste this on a penny postcard)

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7136 West 65th Street, Chicago, Ill.

Please send me FREE AND POSTPAID your 9 new shades of face powder, also a tube of your Four Purpose Face Cream.

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(If you live in Canada, write Lady Esther, Toronto, Ont.)

Hamer stood at the open window, looking down into the street that, for longer than he could remember, had been his home. He had come there when he was two. Now for six months he had been twenty. A few boys sat on the canal wall, their legs dangling. The black water had a faintly evil smell in the torrid night. The mill face rose beyond it, stony and forbidding. Hamer turned back toward old Birley, who was puffing contentedly, well-pleased with Ancoats. "Because," he said, "I used to imagine that Venice was like that. I know now how daft that idea was; but my mind is full of other ideas—about places, about people—that are no doubt just as daft, but I don't know it. Well, I want to get rid of those illusions. I want to know about things as they are."

Birley took a long pull at his pipe. "Well," he said, "a ship's boy *may* have a chance to see all those things. And then again he may not."

Hamer smiled, as though there were more in his mind than he cared to divulge. He took the saber from its hooks on the wall. "I shall take this," he said.

IT was then that the old man said he would make a scabbard. When it was finished, it was a fine piece of work: a curve of glistening brown hide studded with strips of brass into which all Birley's love went in deeply cut scrolls and arabesques. He made a belt from which the scabbard could hang. Belt and scabbard went into the small wooden box which contained all that Hamer Shawcross took with him. Birley paid for the cab which took the boy and his mother to the station, and rode in it with them. When the train swung round the curve, Hamer leaning out of the window, saw only his mother and the tall figure of the old Viking with one hand on her shoulder, the other waving a black hat. When he came back to the same station three years later, only Ellen met him. The fascia which said "Sweets and Tobacco" over the shop in Great Ancoats Street was already faded and weather-beaten, for *"Birley Artingstall: Leather"* had been dead for two years. . . .

It is not necessary to follow in any detail the wanderings of Hamer Shawcross during the next three years. The diary is not very helpful where this period is concerned. For example, under three consecutive dates you read: *"Lima." "San Francisco." "Samoa."* Nothing else. But one thing becomes clear. After leaving the Argentine, he earned his living by working with his hands. There is only one recorded exception, and that is when he spent a month in Sydney arranging the books of a mutton millionaire who had bought the contents of an English nobleman's library. He seemed gradually, and perhaps unconsciously, to have fallen into the intention of making this tour a study at first hand of working-men earning their living. He worked on boats and about docks, in mines and on railways. He sweated like a coolie in India and felled timber in Canada. In South Africa he worked in the diamond mines. Wherever he was, he read nothing but the newspapers of the country; and whenever possible, he forced his way into any assemblies that were open to him, whether they approximated to parish councils, town councils or meetings of Parliament.

In the three and a half years of his journeying, Hamer gratified only one sentimental desire: he saw Venice. He worked on a boat carrying a cargo from Capetown to Genoa, and thence went at once to dispel the illusions of his childhood. All the time he had been away, he had lived thriftily; he had money to spend, and he remained in Venice for six weeks. He visited churches and picture-galleries, dawdled on the canals, and characteristically, he worried along with the newspapers and a dictionary till he could make something of the language. When the six weeks were up, he made his way on foot through Austria and Germany. At Hamburg he found a ship bound for Liverpool, and worked his passage home. In his diary, while he was on the ship, he wrote:

I don't know what made me tear myself out of Ancoats as I did. The impulse to do it came suddenly, and now that the adventure is over, I am glad I did not resist. Whatever life may do to me now, I have had these three and a half years. I can honestly say that I feel a different being from the one who set out.

He looked a different being. When Ellen met the train from Liverpool, she could hardly believe her eyes. This man of commanding height, with the regular features, the square shoulders, the face which sun and wind had burned and weathered: this was something difficult to reconcile with the secret vision she had nurtured. For while he was away, she had not remembered him as she had last seen him, much less imagined him as he would become, but with a fond aberration had permitted her mind to fall back upon memory of a small leg-dragging boy with a broad white forehead and a purple vein too prominently pulsing in his neck.

To Hamer also the meeting was not what he had pictured. He had forgotten, or never realized, that she was so small a woman. In her infrequent letters she had never told him that she had lost her work as chapel caretaker, and that she was earning her living, as Mrs. Ryerson did, by such odd jobs as she could come upon. She had picked up a lot of Mrs. Ryerson's habits, including the habit of wearing an old cloth cap when out at work; and there she was now, having come straight from scrubbing some offices, with that cap aslant upon her gray untidy hair; a rolled coarse apron under her arm.

He stooped and kissed her; and feeling the protector, and no more—never again—the protected, said: "Let's get a cab."

HAMER slept that night on a bed made up on a couch in the Ryersons' front room downstairs. Rather, he lay upon it, not sleeping. He had been accustomed to sleeping in strange places, but here he could not sleep. He felt as though no place he had been in had been so strange as this place which he should have known so well. The strangeness was in his heart, because once more he was confronted by the question which he had kept behind his back for three years and a half: What to do?

Now it was a question that could be left unanswered no longer. In the first light of dawn he was up and dressed. He went out and smelled the morning. Recollection flooded upon him, and throwing his coat and waistcoat into the Ryerson passageway, he rolled up his shirt-sleeves, took a deep breath, and started to run. Automatically he followed the mile route that he and Tom Hannaway had laid down. Nothing seemed changed. Brick, stone, soot, no green thing; long perspectives of identical small houses. He was breathing easily when he got back, to find Mrs. Ryerson on her knees yellow-stoning the entrance-step of the house.

"I've just run a mile," he said, "and I'm not puffed. Feel." He took her small maimed hand, etched with fine lines of ineradicable dirt, tough as a parrot's foot, and laid it on his shirt over his heart. "Not a flutter," he laughed. "And d'you know what I decided to do while I was running?"

She shook her head.

"Go over to Bradford," he said, "and see Arnold."

He did not know that this was the answer to all his questions.

Chapter Ten

OLD MARSDEN who, with his wife, looked after Elizabeth Lightowler's house in Ackroyd Park, was glad when it ceased to be a school. Now that there were only Mrs. Lightowler and Miss Artingstall to look after, things were much easier.

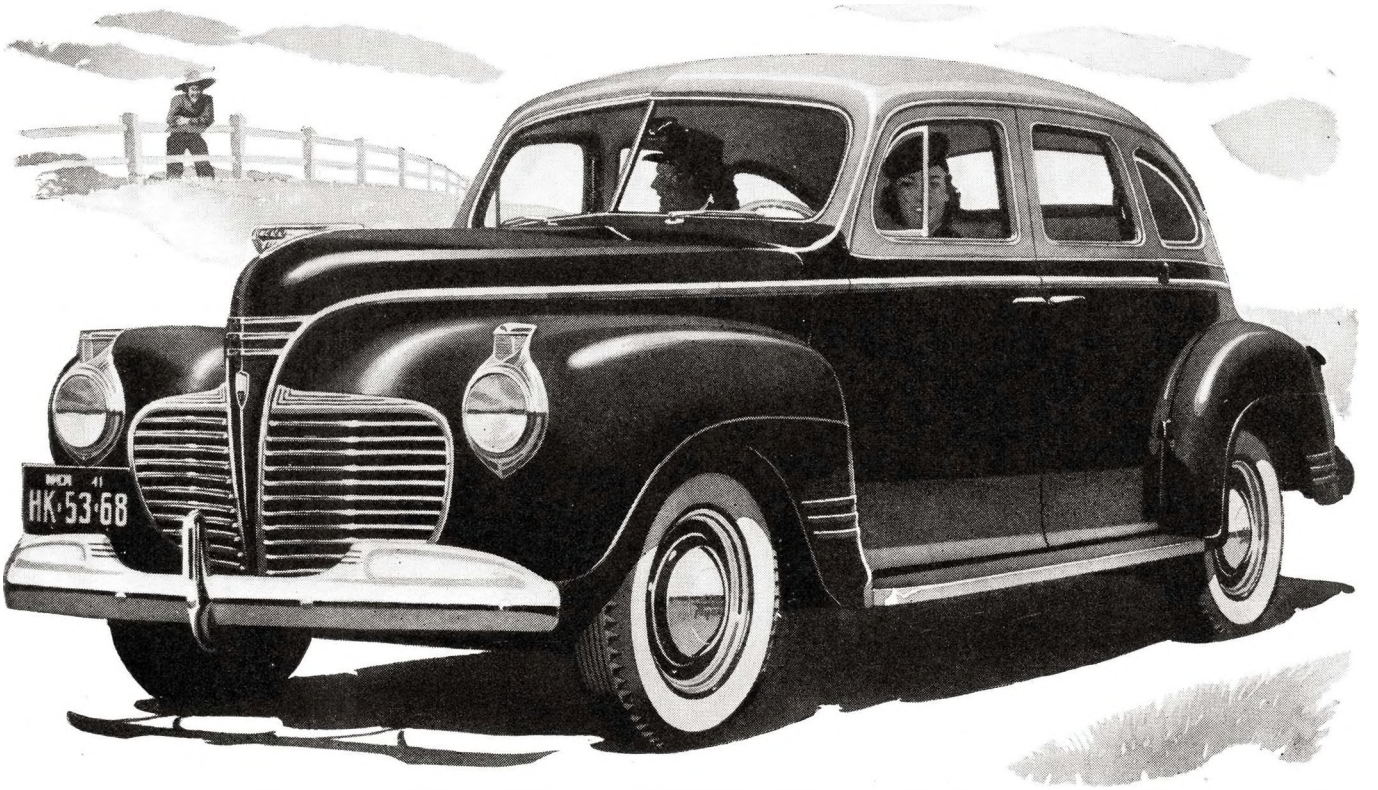
One good safe grumble was the breakfasts. Why in the name of fortune Mrs. Lightowler should ask people to breakfast, he couldn't understand. On an October morning in 1889 he opened the door and used the formula his cunning had devised: "Mr. Ryerson *again*, mum." Then, seeing that Ann was alone in the room, he corrected himself: "Miss Ann, I should say."

"Come in, Arnold," Ann said. "Aunt Lizzie isn't coming down to breakfast. She's got a bit of a cold."

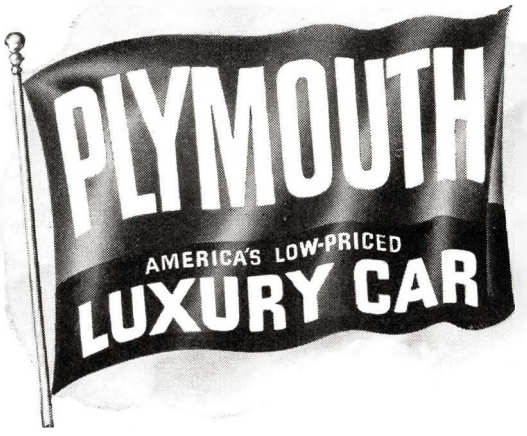
Sunlight, thinned by the city smoke, was striking through the wide window from whose seat Ann had risen. It shone on the lustrous white-gold of her hair, making it seem suddenly to radiate light. She was dressed in a material of filmy white, and there were red roses among the silver and porcelain of the breakfast-table. Arnold noticed all these things with a sudden joy at his heart. Aunt Lizzie was not coming down to breakfast!

This young man, at whose entrance Ann looked up with a welcoming affectionate smile, was as much a part of her daily life as her food and drink and Aunt Lizzie. He was at this time twenty-six years old, and she was twenty-five. That night when she had first met him in his mother's kitchen—the night when Mrs. Ryerson's hand was crushed, and Ann had put the children to bed, and then had come down and found Arnold staring into the kitchen fire—that night seemed incredibly remote, and indeed, it was getting on for ten years ago. To look at Arnold, you would have thought it was twenty.

His face, as he stood there by the breakfast-table, was already almost heavy in its refusal to take life easily. His chin was the only part of it that had ever been shaved. Brown frizzy side-whiskers and a considerable mustache made it difficult to guess his age. The hair upon his forehead did not fall, as it did on Hamer's forehead, in a wide silky wing. It



Here's the "One" for '41



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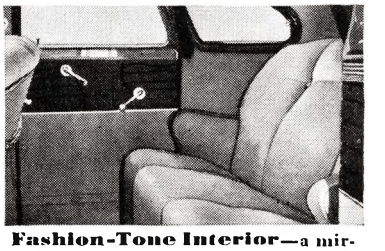
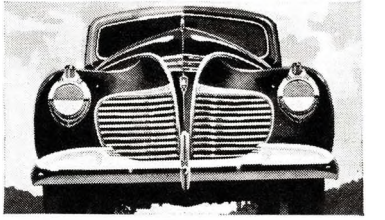
- CHOICE OF 11 SMART NEW COLORS at no extra cost. New 2-tone color combinations available on the Special De Luxe sedans.

Try Powermatic Shifting—vast reductions in driving effort—with actual elimination of certain of the shifting motions of normal driving.



Fashion-Tone Interior—a miracle of color, fabric, appointments. Imagine—sumptuous 2-tone upholstery in the Special De Luxe Plymouth.



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drooped in a gauche oiled quiff, which combined with his pale skin and blunt heavy nose to give his face the look of an honest artisan's; but the softness and spotlessness of the hands denied this.

Arnold's hands had not always been spotless. He could—and often did—recall those early days in Bradford. Even now he could savor again the breath-taking sense of relief that came to him when Aunt Lizzie (as he now thought of her) first appeared in Broadbent Street. And even now, when Bradford was so familiar to him, it was not difficult to recapture the thrilling sense of being for the first time in a town that was not his own.

It was in Thursley Road that Arnold was to live. It was there Aunt Lizzie had left him under the charge of Mrs. Muff, the landlady, who took him to his room on the first floor. It was an unexciting little room with a bed and a wicker chair, a small chest of drawers, and a washstand which could also be used as a writing-table. Mrs. Muff was too used to lodgers to be moved by Arnold's coming. She told him he must take his meals in the kitchen, and that for the rest of the time when he was in the house, she would expect him to keep to his own room. This was the room: cold, bleak, clean. The washstand was pushed against the fireplace in a way which said plainly enough that no fires were lighted here; and for illumination there was a candle in a red enamel candlestick on the chest of drawers. But Arnold was not daunted. When Mrs. Muff was gone, he put his few things away and then sat on the bed, tentatively heaving up and down. It was soft and springy. He smiled to himself. This would be the first time in his life, so far as he could remember, that he had had a bed all to himself.

ARNOLD did not know till years later that Lizzie had paid a premium to enable him to learn the craft of printing. By that time, it did not surprise him; for if Aunt Lizzie had come one morning on big white wings flapping down Thursley Road and had alighted on the sill of his window, he would almost have regarded it as being in the course of nature. At first he did not see much of her. She got her information about him from Henry Greenhelgh, owner of the Bradford *Mercury*—who reported him to be a hard worker, painstaking and uninspired. Lizzie was not able to do much more for him, now that she had launched him. For one thing, at that time she still had her school. It was not till the Easter after his coming to Bradford, when all her pupils were gone home, that she invited him to lunch.

There were only the three of them present: Lizzie, Ann and Arnold; and it was a most unremarkable occasion. Arnold as a guest was like Arnold as a printer: painstaking and uninspired. Lizzie did not know—for all her knowledge of the world, she could not guess—that this visit was an awful and awe-inspiring business for Arnold. He had occasionally gone to the Shawcrosses' for a meal; and Birley Artingstall had asked him once or twice to share a rough-and-ready supper; but he had never sat down in a house like this of Lizzie Lightowler's, never encountered such a perplexity of cutlery and crockery. Ann's presence did not help him, for all her amiability. He could not forget that she was the daughter of Hawley Artingstall, that she was the girl who used to arrive at the shop in a victoria, causing Mr. Tattersall the manager to leap about like a provincial official doing some small service for the Queen. And so Arnold was most horribly deferential, and Ann was most carefully kind, and Lizzie was bright and supervisory. She gave him some books to take home and read, and there seemed no more in it than if she had presented a lump of sugar to a good dog.

IT was not till Ann was twenty-one that she learned her mother had left her money. Lillian, for all the heart-tremors of her last year or so, never imagined that death was near her. Had she done so, she might have altered the will which she had made when all was smooth, and Ann was obedient, and Hawley had cast no eyes in unlawful directions. But the will was not altered; it gave to Ann at twenty-one, should her mother have predeceased her, the capital with which Lillian herself on her marriage had been dowered by old Sir James Sugby. On her twenty-first birthday Ann discovered that she had ten pounds a week to do as she liked with.

It was soon after this that Lizzie Lightowler gave up the school. She had all the companionship she needed in Ann; the girl had been receiving a small salary for helping with the pupils; now she needed this no longer; the house in Ackroyd Park became their joint home and their joint responsibility. In each of them there had developed with the years a profound interest in the stir of social currents that they sensed all about them. Few places gave them a better opportunity than Bradford did to keep in touch with what was becoming more and more the leading motive of life to each of them.

Mrs. Muff, Arnold's landlady, got along somehow. Arnold paid her twelve-and-sixpence a week; she did a little dressmaking; and she had a working daughter who had been christened Penelope and was called Pen. Arnold did not see much of Pen Muff. She seemed to him to be a spiritless creature as he watched her going in and out of the house. She was never at a kitchen meal when he was. He had noticed the unhealthy pallor of her face, her peering shortsighted eyes, her finger-ends cracked and sometimes bleeding. She worked, he knew from Mrs. Muff, in a paper-bag factory, and all day long paste was congealing on her fingers.

To his surprise, he found her one winter morning sitting at the kitchen table with her mother when he went in to breakfast. He sensed domestic trouble.

"Good morning, Mrs. Muff. Good morning, Pen," Arnold said uneasily; and added to the girl: "We don't often have the pleasure of seeing you at breakfast."

Pen did not answer. Mrs. Muff looked at the young man who had grown from a boy under her eyes. She had come to like him; he was a quiet undemonstrative chap, one you could trust. She suddenly blurted out a private matter, a thing she had never done before. "She ought to be ashamed of herself," she said harshly. "Chucking a good job over a shilling a week, a place where she's been for years and years—"

Pen raised her sulky eyes; but now, Arnold saw, they had a little fire in them. "Yes, years and years," she said. "Years and years of slavery. Eight in the morning till eight at night. D'you call that a life? I don't, anyway. And now to cut down our wages—just like that!" She snapped her fingers. "Not even giving us a reason. 'You must work for less'—that's all we're told. As if we weren't getting little enough as it was. Well, I'm not going on with it. I'll find something else."

Pen got up from the table, and Arnold suddenly halted her. "One minute," he said. "Why give up the job? Why don't you go back there and work among the girls—get them to organize themselves—join some union?"

Pen sat down again and stared at him with her pale weak blue eyes. "Organize?" she said. "You don't know 'em. They've got as much idea of organization or anything of that sort as my foot."

"I expect they're as good as you are, my girl," said Mrs. Muff.

"Oh, no, they're not," said Pen, with a confidence that surprised Arnold. "As a matter of fact, I *have* told them what fools they are. I have asked them to refuse to have their wages cut—to come out on strike. They don't even seem to know what I'm talking about."

"I should think not," Mrs. Muff sniffed. "Strike, indeed! A fat lot o' good strikes ever did for man or woman. Them as have got the money can hold out till you come crawling back, starving."

"All right, you'll see," said Pen darkly.

"Yes, I'll see the pair of us in the workhouse, you hare-brained senseless little fool!"

Arnold said nothing more to Mrs. Muff. This was not a matter for her. But as he went on munching his breakfast, a resolution was shaping in his mind—a resolution that warmed him with a fine sense of excitement and that surprised him by its vehemence. Some day—some day—he had been saying to himself for years, he was going to *do* something for working people. Ever since, as a boy, he had read Robert Owen, this resolve had been growing in him. He knew now that this *doing* something was not as easy as he had imagined. But sitting there, with a mouthful of bacon turning over on his tongue, he had the surprising conviction that the moment had come, that this trivial affair of Pen Muff's shilling a week was where he stepped off.

HOW well Arnold got to know his soap-box! But for all the hundreds of times he stood upon that humble pedestal, he never forgot the winter evening in Bradford when first he lugged it with him. A fine rain was falling as he made his way down to the lugubrious road that ran, side by side with the railway, through the valley. He had not gone far when Pen Muff joined him. Neither of them had spoken to Mrs. Muff of the adventure; and they had thought it wise not to leave the house together. Arnold was wearing a heavy overcoat and a bowler hat. The soap-box depended from one arm. A moment or two after he had heard the patter of Pen Muff's footsteps on the wet pavement behind him, he was surprised to find the other arm seized. Without a word, Pen took it in hers, pressed it close against her side. It was the first time in Arnold's life that a woman had taken his arm. He was disconcerted and tongue-tied.

ARTIST

Norman Rockwell

SAYS

"Growing numbers of my guests appreciate a chance to say, *'I'll take WINE'*

One of America's foremost artists, ***Norman Rockwell*** is most widely known for the brilliant magazine covers and illustrations he creates. At his home in New Rochelle, New York, Mr. Rockwell plays host to many well-known people. He notes that a growing number of them are saying, "I'll take wine"

It's easy to be a Wine Expert

Smart American hosts and hostesses serve their wine very simply today. Here are some practical tips:

At the appetizer hour, serve Sherry Wine . . . mellow amber, nutlike in flavor, the perfect invitation to a good dinner. Sherry is usually served in cocktail-size portions

• • •

With meals, serve a "table" wine, red or white as you prefer. Table wines are made "dry" (not sweet) especially to complement the flavor of main-course dishes. With your dinner, in portions about half the size of a water glass, try:

Sauterne which is golden, slightly sweet, goes well with chicken, fish or any mildly flavored main dish

• • •

With refreshments or desserts, serve a "sweet" wine... rich with the natural sweetness of the grape. During your casual entertaining, or at any afternoon or evening affair, bring on cocktail-size portions of:

Muscatel, which is the color of old gold, full bodied, with the unique flavor of Muscat grapes — delicious with cakes or cookies

"People find they need to relax and enjoy themselves, and almost everyone wants to stay on the moderate side"

"IN RECENT MONTHS," writes Norman Rockwell, "more of my guests than ever before have been selecting wine as their beverage.

"I think the reason is simple. People want to let up, to get a few hours of relaxation. And yet in times like these almost all of us prefer a moderate kind of evening."

Popular hosts and hostesses all over the country report as does Norman Rockwell. They find more and more people nowadays like a chance to say "make mine wine." Prefer wine *because* it is a beverage of moderation.

Why don't you try it next time you have guests for dinner, or when friends drop in during the evening?

You'll notice, when you do, that folks like to sip wine slowly. You will find yourself lingering over your glass as a connoisseur does — savoring a bouquet and flavor that is delicately satisfying. You'll discover there is no urge to bolt wine down.

Good wine is thrifty to buy these days, and delightfully easy to serve. There are some interesting, easy-to-follow suggestions in the panel at left.

THE WINES OF CALIFORNIA:

In the most discriminating households the good wines of our own country are usually served today. Actually more than 9 in every 10 Americans who serve wine choose wines grown here. The wines of California, for example, are grown to strict standards of quality. You will find them true to type. Well developed. Inexpensive.

Be Considerate — Serve Wine

This advertisement is printed by the wine growers of California, acting through the Wine Advisory Board, 85 Second Street, San Francisco

The door of the paper-bag factory opened straight onto the street. On the opposite side of the street a lamp was burning. Arnold, relieved to have his arm free at last, put his box under the lamp and stood upon it. He looked right and left along the dark road, melancholy in the increasing rain. Not a soul was in sight in either direction.

ABOUT fifty women were employed in the factory, from girls in their earliest teens to ribald old grannies. Suddenly the door was flung open, and clutching their shawls about them, they began to pour out into the dark wet street. The light tap of leather, the staccato clatter of clog-irons, the loud raucous voices of a horde shouting with gladness in the moment of release, broke the stillness of the street. Arnold felt his throat tighten and his tongue go dry. He had imagined people standing about him, and had been prepared for that. He had not bargained for this swift stampede, this rush in both directions toward home and supper. His audience was melting before his eyes, and he didn't know what to do about it. Should he shout: "Ladies!" or did one begin formally: "Ladies and gentlemen"?

As he dithered and the precious seconds fled, Pen Muff, with a rough elbow-thrust to the stomach, pushed him off the box and mounted it herself. "Hey! You! All of you!" she shouted in a clear penetrating voice. "Just a minute! It's Penny Muff talking. There's a chap 'ere as 'as got summat to say t'you. Just gather rahnd an' listen."

Arnold climbed onto the box. "Lasses!" he called. "One moment—I'll not keep you long on a night like this."

The women began to crowd round. A stout, coarse-looking old body, holding her shawl in a gnarled fist, shouted: "What's wrong wi' t'night? Tha's a good-enough lookin' lad."

The women pressed closer to Arnold, grinning and cackling at the ribald sally. "It's the sort of night when you want warmth and comfort," Arnold went on.

"Just what Ah'm sayin', lad. What abaht it?"

"Warmth, comfort, food, are the right of every one of you."

"Oh—food! Let's push off."

"No, stay and listen to me," Arnold cried, one hand holding his overcoat collar tight about his neck where the rain was overflowing in a steady trickle from his bowler. "Stay and listen! How will you ever be sure of the three things you have a right to—food, clothes, shelter—if you tamely allow the bosses to cut down your wages whenever the fancy takes them?"

A sullen-looking woman at the back of the crowd called: "Don't listen to 'im, girls. This is Penny Muff's stuff. We've 'eard it all. Work isna good enough for t'stuck-up slut. She's full o' fancy notions. Let 'er work like t'rest of us."

"I'm willing to work—as willing as any of you," Pen answered shrilly. "But Ah'm damned if Ah'll work for nowt."

Another voice broke in: "Tha doesn't need to work, wi' a fancy man to look after thee. A grand-lookin' lad, too. Take off thi bowler, duckie. It's dribblin' t'watter dahn thi neck."

"P'raps 'e needs coolin'."

The women milled closer, screeching with laughter. Arnold saw his meeting dissolving in the heat of a coarse jest or two, and made a desperate effort at recovery. He removed the bowler with a wide-flung dramatic gesture, spattering its contents into the nearest faces. "Women!" he appealed.

The sullen woman at the back had picked up a newspaper that lay soaking in the gutter. She squeezed it into a filthy soggy ball. "Acht, shut thi gob!" she shouted, and hurled the missile. It smacked Arnold full in the mouth and sprayed out in a wet mass over his cheeks.

Arnold knew that he was defeated. He made a gesture of despair and got down from the box. Pen Muff immediately sprang upon it, furious with anger, and began to pelt back at them the stuff they could understand. "You pack of silly dirty-minded old women!" she yelled. "All you're fit for is to sweat your guts out and give away a bit more of your pay every time the bosses ask for it. Why should anybody try to give you a better life, a more decent life? It'd be wasted on you, you bosses' door-mats!"

"She's never talked to them like this before," Arnold thought suddenly. "It's because of me. It's because of the way they treated me. Anyway, this is the end of it. They won't stand that."

He was right. The women surged forward in a furious stampede. The clogs struck with sharp angry notes on the stones of the road. Arnold saw, in a sudden wild chiaroscuro, faces change from laughter to masks of fury, hands change to clenched uplifted fists. He saw women stoop to pick up garbage to throw. The spatter fell slapping on the wall behind them, and on their faces and their clothes, as the milling horde closed about them. In the midst of the crowd he saw Lizzie Lightowler, her hat gone, her white hair tossing like a mane. He saw Ann Artingstall in a wet raincoat, shining like a seal, her face white and resolute as she fought toward the box where he and Pen were now trying to beat off the attack. All the hands that clutched at them, that knocked off his hat, that pulled his hair, that struck at his face, that tried to tear the clothes from their bodies, were like Pen Muff's hands: cracked and sore and sometimes lightly bleeding. It was a nightmare to him for long afterward: the assault of those bloody hands.

HE and Pen were pressed back now to the wall. The soap-box had been splintered by the charging clogs. Women picked up the fragments and used them as weapons. The venomous woman who seemed to have some personal spleen against Pen was armed with a fragment of wood in whose end Arnold saw in a gleam of lamplight a long silver-shining nail. She struck at Pen's head, and Arnold's forearm took the blow. He closed with the woman, wrestling to take the deadly weapon from her, and was aware that Ann and Lizzie were now at his side.

"Get out of it," Lizzie shouted. "Don't fight, you fool! Run! And take that girl with you. They're tearing her to pieces."

Arnold would have run had he been permitted to do so. But as he turned, looking for Pen, the spiked wood in his hand, the woman from whom he had wrested it bent swiftly, took off a clog, and smote him on the crown of the head with its iron sole.

That was the end of the fight, though Arnold did not know it. As he went down with a groan, consternation fell upon those mænads. There was a moment's silence; then swiftly they fled; and when Arnold opened his eyes, dazed but little hurt, there was nothing but the quiet lamplight shining through the rain, and the long perspective of the dreary, empty street.

Between his eyes and the lamp, Arnold saw the silver aureole of Lizzie's hair. She helped him to his feet, and he stood for a moment dizzily, unsteadily, supported by the lamp-post, Lizzie's hand round his shoulder. Then he saw Pen Muff, leaning against the wall, breathing heavily, her hair like wet seaweed about her scratched and bleeding face, her coat gone, her blouse lying in ribbons at her feet, her pink bodice torn down the middle. The rain was falling on Pen's bare breasts, pointing up defiant in the lamplight. "By heck!" she panted. "It was a good fight. I nearly gouged the eyes out of the one that downed you."

Arnold turned with embarrassment and distaste from her proudly flaunted nudity. He looked for Ann. "Are you all right?" he asked.

Pen answered for her, surlily: "As right as rain. She came in when it was all over, bar the shouting."

DOWN the road which ran through the valley was a little chapel hall. Lizzie Lightowler, with Ann to help her, ran a clinic there. Lizzie was up to the eyes in all sorts of activities which, she said, the Government or the local authorities would one day take off her hands. She knew nothing about medicine, but she and Ann both knew a lot about hygiene and more about malnutrition. It wasn't difficult to tell a dirty baby or a starving one when you clapped eyes on it; and for the rest, Lizzie was paying a young doctor to attend once a week.

The two women had been returning from the clinic when they ran into Arnold and Pen Muff battling with the factory-hands. When it was over, and the four of them were walking to Ackroyd Park, with Pen's nudity concealed beneath Arnold's overcoat, little was said by any of them, but Lizzie and Ann were busy with an identical thought.

They had been discussing Arnold that morning at breakfast. It began with a theme that occupied their minds a good deal, for the needs of the people were bare before their eyes in that town compacted of mills and factories, warehouses, back-to-back dwellings climbing the steep streets, built in the riotous heyday of the industrial revolution when the housing of the "hands" was a matter of less thought than the kenneling of dogs. Nothing had ever been done about it. The impetus of the great industrial change-over from hand-loom weaving in the homes, with pure streams flowing by the doorstep, to factory production, and polluted rivers, and congregated thousands in dwellings that were ugly to begin with and now were squalid and filthily insanitary: that impetus still rolled wool-making Bradford along—the town of the golden fleece: pleasant to live in, as Lizzie said at breakfast that day, if you were fleecing and not being fleeced.

"And you see, my dear," said Lizzie, "I'm one of the fleecers, and so are you."

Ann turned her aunt's answer over in her mind; and that morning when Lizzie demanded to know what right they had to all the comfort that surrounded them, she was not unduly depressed.

"One of the fleecers," Lizzie had said, and Ann took her up.

"It will never be changed," she said, "unless the people change it for themselves. There must be people in the House to speak for laboring men and call themselves Labor men. There'll have to be a Labor Party."

Lizzie rose. "You're right, my dear, of course. It's the natural and logical thing. But why are you so vehement about it this morning in particular?"

It was then that they began to talk about Arnold Ryerson.

They could not believe that Arnold filled the bill. He was a disappointment to them both. So much was soon apparent. "I like him," said Lizzie. "He's a good young fellow. I'd trust him with my purse or reputation, but—"

Ann said uneasily: "You know, Aunt Lizzie, we rather dumped him into the deep end to sink or swim, didn't we? I vote that we reserve judgment. We ought to see a lot more of him. Have you realized that we've tended almost to drop him entirely? It's nearly six months since he was last here."

Lizzie, too, felt a stir of self-reproach. When she set her hand to a job, it was not her way to leave it half-finished, and Arnold Ryerson was certainly a job she had set her hand to.

"Good gracious!" she said. "I hadn't realized that. I've got too many irons in the fire, that's what's the matter with me."

"We must have him here to dinner," said Ann.

"Pretty often," said Lizzie.

And then, coming home from the clinic that night, they had run into the fight under the street-lamp.

And so for the first time Arnold found himself in what was the very *arcanum* of Lizzie's house: that sitting-room with its green bookcases breast-high, its green fireplace and pale fawn carpet and curtains, and with the firelight falling on the brass fender and the shining mahogany of the writing-table.

Lizzie said: "Well, you must come and see us more often, Arnold. It's been a treat to have you tonight. The way you're framing, I shouldn't be surprised to see you an M.P. one of these days."

A YEAR later Arnold left the house in Thursley Road. It had been a year of intensive work. That not dishonorable stigma which Henry Greenhelgh had applied to him—"painstaking and uninspired"—stuck like a burr. It was true of his public speaking and of his sturdy honest appearance. But he and Lizzie Lightowler and Ann Artingstall had learned where his strength lay. As an organizer he was superb. In the course of that year he organized two trade-union branches where they had not existed before, kept them in vigorous being, did his daily work as a printer, and continued indomitably to blunder through innumerable public speeches.

It was, in many ways, the most important year of Arnold's life. It shaped him, definitely and finally. At least once a week he dined at Ackroyd Park. There, and in the course of his work, he met all sorts of people who understood and valued his sound modest talents.

IT was a year of pride and misery for Pen Muff. Arnold guessed, what now became obviously true, that he had been to Pen an object of sentimental interest before the Battle of the Amazons gave them a solid matter in common. Pen felt that she had, because of her part in that affair, in some sort launched Arnold on his career. She took no pains to conceal her suspicion of Lizzie and Ann, who were able to do for that career so much more than she could do herself. It was because she was determined to accompany Arnold on his wanderings that she refused all work which would have kept her, as the paper-bag factory had done, at it till eight at night. She found employment at last as a waitress in the Kurdistan Café, a place of alcoves and cozy fires, set in the midst of the dark interlacing streets of warehouses, where the wool-merchants and brokers clove a way through their harassed mornings with the help of chess and dominoes. It was gentler, easier work than she had been accustomed to, and as well paid. She was through with it by six at night.

Arnold found her useful and devoted. "Pen, will you make a list of those new members, with their addresses? . . . Pen, we ought to start some proper books for these subscriptions . . . Pen, you might call and see if those handbills have been printed."

She did all he asked; and without being asked, she read books and newspapers, marked passages that he ought to read, carried a bottle of cold tea to his meetings, and saw that he had a drink when he had finished speaking. Pen and her cold tea—a painstaking and uninspiring drink—became a joke for miles round Bradford. "It's all he'll have while I'm looking after him," she declared uncompromisingly. "An' if some of *you* stuck to tea, you'd be able to pay your union subs."

"Looking after him!" Arnold knew it, and if you had asked him whether he liked it, he would have said yes and no. Pen was a grand comrade: she knew he was aware of this, and that made the year for her a year of pride. But if it came to being looked after, he would have preferred to be looked after by Ann Artingstall. Pen knew that too; and so the year was one of misery.

And this was why Arnold left the house in Thursley Road. It became intolerable.

He was helped in his decision to go, by another decision which was made at this time. The heat of an August day was still exhaling from the pavements when he turned into Ackroyd Park to keep his weekly dinner appointment. The dinners were no longer a terror to him. He had ceased to be self-conscious about his printer's-ink-stained fingers, and about glass and cutlery. Use and wont had done their work. He walked with happy expectation between the rhododendrons and laurels that were sagging with dust and heat, and rang the bell. Old Marsden looked at him with no welcome. "Dinner's ready—*and* spoilin'," he complained; "but when *they'll* be down, I *don't* know."

Then Lizzie's voice was heard, crying over the banister: "Arnold, come up here for a moment, will you?"

Arnold went up to the study at the back of the house. The window was flung open upon the poplars standing up like spears, with not a breath to bend them, and upon the view of the distant hills, cutting a line across the red smudge of the sunset. But the room, nevertheless, felt stuffy, and both Ann and Lizzie, who were sitting at work, looked hot and exhausted.

Lizzie threw down a pen, got up, and said: "Come, Ann. What isn't done must be left. We'll finish after dinner. There's no end to it, Arnold, once you start this game. Letters to the Pankhursts in Manchester, to Keir Hardie up there in Ayrshire, to secretaries and presidents of this and treasurers of that—"

Ann took up the litany: "To M.P.s and K.C.s, to boards of guardians and school boards, to trade-unions, suffrage societies and political fussers in general. What we need, you know, Aunt Lizzie, is a full-time secretary."

Lizzie, passing a distracted hand through the white mop of her hair, paused.

"We do!" she agreed emphatically. "Arnold, will you take it on?"

Arnold laughed with good-humored skepticism, as he had done the day when Lizzie suggested he might become an M.P. "Me?" he said. "A fine secretary I'd make!"

"Good gracious, man," said Lizzie, "you can read, you can write! Perhaps we'll get you one of those typewriter things. You're up to the eyes in the same work that we are. Where could we find a better man?"

"We couldn't," said Ann. "Not anywhere. Arnold, you *must* do this."

Arnold knew that this appeal, this command, had settled the matter.

LIZZIE and Ann, contributing equally, paid his salary of three pounds a week. He sent his mother one. He had two rooms in the little stone-gray street that ran through Baildon village to the moors. He still spent many evenings tramping about on his missionary work; and now that Pen was not there to accompany him, Ann often came. Then he would climb the hill to that eyrie of a village where the clean air blew in through his window, and where, as he sometimes did, he could before sleeping take a turn on the moorland road, a white glimmer twisting through the night under the immensity of the stars. Once Ann had walked with him; and saying nothing, they had stood together listening to the silence threaded with tiny sounds: the tinkle of hidden streams, the barking of a distant dog, the shutting of a cottage door. It was so quiet that when they saw a lighted pane fall to darkness, they could almost hear it.

They turned back toward the village, and he walked with her through it and to the brow of the hill whence they could look down on the lights shining in Shipley. "Don't come any farther," she said. "I shall be all right. I'll get a train at Shipley, and that'll see me in Manningham in no time."

They did what they rarely did: they shook hands at parting. "It's good work, Arnold," she said, "and I'm glad I'm doing it with you."

He watched till she disappeared into the darkness, then walked rapidly back through the village. Late though it was, he did not go into the house, but went again out onto the moor. He sat upon a boulder, lit his pipe and gazed into the darkness where now there were no lights showing anywhere. Surely, surely. . . . Once more his mind was off in pursuit of his inclination. "I'm glad I'm doing it with you."

Surely there was more in that than the words' cold meaning. Surely in the tone of the voice, in the way she had let the words fall and then hurried into the darkness.

He smoked the pipe through, then knocked out the dottle against the boulder and stood up. He spoke her name aloud in the silence, as though it were part of the beauty, the healing, about him. "Ann," he said. It sounded like no other word he had ever spoken. He said it again: "Ann—Ann. . . ."

This, then, was the young man Arnold Ryerson, so grave in demeanor, so stiffly and formally dressed, so much in appearance like a decent mechanic, who, on an October morning in 1889 felt his heart lift when he entered the breakfast-room at Ackroyd Park and Ann said: "Aunt Lizzie isn't coming down to breakfast."

He had screwed up his courage to say so much to Ann, and that was why, first of all, he had better say something noncommittal, something negligible. "Oh, Ann," he said, "you remember that boy Hamer Shawcross? I got a letter from him this morning. He's been trotting about the world for years, and now he's back. He's coming to pay me a visit."

Chapter Eleven

Lizzie Lightowler, unaware that Fate, or Luck, or Providence, or what you will, was about to speak through her mouth, sat up in bed, reading the Yorkshire *Post*. She was not ill; the indomitable creature could not be ill; but she was tired. A hint of a cold gave her an excuse for having breakfast in bed, but she couldn't keep her mind off the affairs of the day; and now, the breakfast-tray pushed to one side, she was reading the paper. Suddenly she hauled on the crimson rope suspended above the bed, and a bell jangled in the kitchen. Mrs. Marsden slippered leisurely up to the bedroom. "I want to see Miss Ann—at once," said Lizzie.

"Excuse me, Arnold," Ann said, when the message reached her. "Finish by yourself. I've had all I want." She ran out of the room.

Arnold gloomily swigged the half-cup of coffee he had left there. Then Ann came back. "Arnold," she said, "Aunt Lizzie would like to see you. Henry Thornton's dead."

He followed her up the stairs, and Lizzie called: "Come in, Arnold! You're not afraid to see an old woman in bed, I hope?"

She went on: "Ann has told you, I suppose. It has pleased God to remove the Conservative Member for the St. Swithin's Division."

She waved Arnold to a chair and threw the paper across to him, folded open at the column which said that Henry Thornton, who had represented the St. Swithin's Division time out of mind, had died suddenly in a hansom cab in Pall Mall, London, on his way home from a banquet.

"The Liberals have a prospective candidate—Crossley Hanson," said Arnold, the efficient secretary. "They've been nursing the constituency for years."

"*Nursing* is the word," Lizzie replied. "Giving it the usual soft pap. What about a bit of solid Labor food for a change?"

"You mean a Labor candidate?" Arnold asked.

"Why not?" Lizzie shot at him.

"They're few and far between, the right sort of people."

"Well—there's you."

"But—Parliament!" he gasped. "Me!"

"Don't let that worry you," Lizzie said robustly. "You won't get in. But we'll burst into the constituency. We'll make a noise. We'll get a footing there. Then we'll stay on and, to use the lovely word, we'll nurse it. It's only a matter of time. Good heavens! St. Swithin's! I should think ninety voters in a hundred there are working-men."

"And hidebound Tories at that," Ann put in morosely.

"Well, what of it?" Lizzie truculently demanded. "If God can turn apes into men, He can turn Tories into Socialists. He just wants time. And now, Arnold, what about this—this Shawcross boy? Ann says he's coming to see you. Who is he? What's he like? Have I ever met him?"

They began to tell her about Hamer Shawcross. Arnold said he supposed he'd have to put him up in the hut.

The hut was a rare concession from prosaic Arnold to romance. When you had passed through the homely little main street of Baildon out on to the moor, you saw, away to your left, a few rough fields that had been won from the heather. You will see many such in the moorland parts of Yorkshire. The people thereabouts call them intakes.

Crossing the intervening strip of moor one afternoon that autumn, Arnold sat on the wall of the intake—a wall of time-blackened stones, piled and unmortared. Where he sat was the angle of the intake wall, and presently he slipped over it and sat down there with the wall at his back, the green field stretching before him, the blue sky above.

His years in Ancoats, followed by the years in dreary Thursley Road, gave him a heightened sense of the value of the freedom in which he now lived. But even the house on the road to the moor irked him at times. He was not alone there, and he wanted to be alone. The intake was roughly farmed by the husband of the woman with whom he lodged, and from him Arnold got permission to build his hut in the angle of the field.

Arnold was entranced when the work was done. He embellished the place. He had an old ladder-back armchair, and a table to write at. He rigged a few shelves for books, hung a lamp from the ceiling, and made sacks do for carpets. Wire netting stretched over a wooden frame and covered by a paillasse served for a bed on those frequent occasions when he had sat there reading till late at night and did not wish to walk back to

the house. Out on the moor he had cut peat, and had heaped a stack of it against his wall.

It was half fun, a hermit lark; half seriousness, because he did get something out of his solitude. The quiet deeps in the inarticulate fellow were moved and satisfied when he came out at midnight, leaned on the wall, and in the utter silence looked across the moor, stark and elemental under the night. He could never, for the life of him, say any such thing as that the night spoke to him with the immortal encouragement of the stars. He merely felt, puffing stolidly at the last pipe, that this was a good life.

Then he turned in, happy.

"WHAT about this Shawcross boy?" Aunt Lizzie had asked; and Ann, as she walked down to the station with Arnold to meet the train from Manchester, had not moved in imagination beyond the point where Shawcross was indeed a boy. She remembered, though not clearly, the birthday party. She remembered sitting down with Birley Artingstall and Arnold and this boy Hamer Shawcross to a Christmas dinner. There was nothing about any of it to prepare her for what she met. Years afterward, out of the emotional dazzle and confusion of the moment, there was only one thing that she could clearly recapture, and it seemed such an incongruous thing. They were all three walking through the echoing subway that led from the station, when Arnold, in his trite way, babbled concerning Hamer's travels: "Well, I suppose, as Pope says, the proper study of mankind is man." And this extraordinary being who had somehow intruded on and smashed in a moment all her preconceptions, this swarthy, youthful giant with the piercing eyes and the ringing voice, who was overtopping them as he strode along with a big wooden box swung up as lightly as a match-box on his shoulder, gave a great laugh as he slapped Arnold on the back and said: "True, little one; but Pierre Charron said it rather more than a hundred years before Pope."

And yet, she sometimes wondered, was it incongruous? It was so much a part of Hamer, this ability to confound and dazzle by fishing up a piece of knowledge that not one man in a thousand would have. She herself had never heard of Pierre Charron; but then, she asked herself, laughing rather ruefully, who had, except this being who seemed born to sweep women off their feet?

They were going up the steep hill which is Darley Street, and Ann had a feeling that she was having to put her best foot forward in order to keep up with Hamer Shawcross. Uphill, and with a box on his shoulder, but he seemed the quickest of the three. She walked between the two men. Hamer was taller than she was; Arnold was shorter by an inch or so. "It's a long time since I ran a mile every morning," Hamer suddenly said. "This air makes me want to do it. It's good." He breathed deeply. "Better than Manchester air."

"You'd better not run a mile with that box," Arnold warned him.

"It's nothing," said Hamer. "Try it." He put the box down on the pavement, and Arnold swung it up to his shoulder, but with difficulty.

"I wouldn't like to carry that far," he said. "What on earth have you got in it?"

Hamer answered, swinging the box back on to his shoulder: "A cake for you from your mother. And also all my worldly goods, except my books. I've come for a long stay."

"WHY! I thought you were a boy—about fourteen, with short trousers and a Lancashire accent," said Lizzie.

Hamer didn't smile. He looked hurt. Lizzie was soon to learn how touchy he was. He said, with the arrogance that was to develop in him so deeply: "I too used to come to conclusions without evidence. There was a street in Manchester that I used to think was like a street in Venice. Now I know that it isn't. I have spent nearly four years traveling the world in order to clear my mind of illusions. And if I have a Lancashire accent, I impart it to four languages in addition to my own."

All this without a smile—quite an oration. Lizzie smiled to herself, but did not allow it to appear. "Oh, Liz," she thought, "you *have* touched raw withers. Soothe him! Soothe him!"

"Oh, dear," she said, "you make me envious. When my husband was alive, we traveled a lot, but now I hardly ever get out of England. Do come in now and sit down. It'll be a treat to hear something of what you've been doing and seeing. But first of all, let us have tea."

They went into the drawing-room, where a fire had been lit, and Marsden brought in the tea. Arnold Ryerson said: "Aunt Lizzie, I think, you know, Hamer and I ought to go as soon as we've had tea. It'll take some time to get up to Baildon and settle him in, and then I've got that meeting at Keighley tonight. You're coming, Ann, aren't you?"

The color rose in Ann's cheeks. "I'd forgotten, Arnold," she said; and indeed she had forgotten everything during the last hour. The prospect of seeing Hamer Shawcross depart as soon as he had swallowed a cup of tea, and then of going to Keighley to meet Arnold, seemed suddenly disagreeable. Lizzie was watching the girl closely. "You'd better excuse Ann tonight, Arnold—will you?" she said; and to Hamer's surprise, she added: "And you'd better excuse Mr. Shawcross too. There's no reason at all why he shouldn't stay here tonight and go to Baildon comfortably in the morning. You take the morning off and wait there till he comes. Let me be selfish and have him here tonight for a good long talk."

Arnold looked at the three of them: Lizzie with that authoritative way of hers, that way of settling things for other people; Ann, who was usually so calm and self-possessed, now flushed and confused; Hamer Shawcross standing there with a cup of tea in one hand, the other pushing back the hair from his forehead and looking as if he were weighing up a situation which he knew to be difficult and unusual. And Arnold felt somehow that they were leagued together, leagued against him, that he was outside. There was no need for him to go. He could have stayed for a couple of hours and then caught a train to Keighley; but now he didn't want to stay for a moment longer than he could help. He had not felt so desolate since the day when he stood in the snow outside Hawley Artingstall's store-window, and wondered whether he dared to go in and ask for his wages.

Neither Ann nor Aunt Lizzie had ever come across such energy and force. Before they had finished tea, Lizzie had told Hamer of the intention to run a Labor candidate in the St. Swithin's division.

"When are you telling the electors?" he asked. "You should do it tonight."

Lizzie looked up, surprised. "What! With old Thornton not yet in his coffin?"

Hamer put down his cup, stood up before the fire, looking to the seated women immensely tall, and demanded: "What's that got to do with it? Look: The Tories have all the advantage of having held the seat for years. The Liberals, you say, have a well-oiled organization. You've got nothing. You've got to start from the beginning. Make the beginning now—this very minute."

"What on earth can we do now—this very minute?" Lizzie asked, more amused than impressed. She did not imagine he would have anything practical to offer.

"With your permission, we can do this: I will go to town at once and find out who represents the Yorkshire *Post*. That's the paper we want—it's a daily, and we want the news in, in the morning. Where is a good open-air pitch in this—this St. Swithin's Division?"

Lizzie began to sit up, and so did Ann. "There's Four Lane Ends," said Ann. "There are always a lot of people about there—and three public-houses."

"You should have a meeting there tonight," said Hamer. "Tell the people that for the first time in the history of the Division there is going to be a Labor candidate—an independent Labor candidate, at that, who will vote Labor and nothing but Labor."

"Who's going to address the meeting?"

"I am."

There was silence in the room, save for the purring of the fire. Looking back, later, Lizzie could always persuade herself that she recognized at once its fateful quality. *"I am."* There was in the declaration something which carried its own conviction. He stood as straight as a blade, and the firelight shone past him, and lit up the face of Ann, looking up at him with wonder and delight.

SUDDENLY Lizzie thought to herself: "Poor Arnold!" and aloud she said: "You carry a woman away!"

"Don't you want to be carried away?" he asked. "Well, do you agree? Shall I go and tell the Yorkshire *Post* man that an important announcement about the St. Swithin's Division will be made at eight o'clock at Four Lane Ends? They'll report it. A Labor candidate is news!"

At last Lizzie smiled. "Go ahead," she said. "I can't resist you. But will you have time to make notes for a speech?"

"Notes? I sha'n't need notes."

"What will you talk about?"

He walked out into the hall where his box lay, hastily undid the straps, and came back carrying a leather scabbard attached to a belt. He drew out a saber whose cold steel flashed in the firelight. *"This,"* he said. "This is the text and the sermon both. I shall talk about this."

The rise of Hamer Shawcross—his brilliant public life as well as his dramatic private career—is vividly described in the forthcoming chapters of Mr. Spring's already much-discussed novel.

HAWAII HOLDS A PLEBISCITE

(Continued from page 11)

Hawaii i Mokuaina?" For the benefit of those of our readers who do not speak Hawaiian, let us hasten to add that that ominous-sounding phrase means simply: "Do you favor statehood for Hawaii?"

It is a foregone conclusion that the overwhelming majority of the residents of the Islands will answer "Yes." How much their vociferous assent will impress Congress, which alone, has the right of granting statehood to American territories, is something else again. Ever since the Republic of Hawaii, acting upon its own initiative in the year 1898, became an integral part of the United States through annexation, the Islands have clamored for parity with the rest of the country, through admission as a State. Finally, in response to numerous petitions, Congress sent a joint committee of the Senate and House to the Islands in 1937 to investigate the matter. The report of the committee recommended that action be deferred, but suggested that the Territory would be well-advised to record by popular vote the sentiment of its people regarding statehood.

FEW people in the United States realize that instead of being merely a playground for winter and summer tourists, the Hawaiian Islands are a very important factor in American industrial life. To begin with, Hawaii has a greater population than Vermont, Delaware, Wyoming or Nevada. To continue, the Territory of Hawaii (6,438 square miles) surpasses in size that of Connecticut, Delaware or Rhode Island. The gross assessed value of Hawaiian real and personal property stood at $425,203,000 as of June 30, 1939. In other words, it was but three millions under that of Florida, and far ahead of the gross assessed value of real and personal property in South Carolina, Wyoming, New Mexico, Delaware, Alabama, Vermont, Idaho, Nevada or Arizona. Hawaii's volume of commerce approximated 250 millions in 1939. The Islands bought from the mainland to the amount of 101 million, which means that as a market for United States products, it was exceeded only by the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan and France.

Sugar, pineapples and travel are Hawaii's three major industries. The military importance of the Islands is tremendous. According to Major George Fielding Eliot, Pearl Harbor is the most formidable maritime fortress in the world.

ADRIENNE MAKES HER CHOICE

(Continued from page 17)

companionship? Jay gave up the enigma of adult ideas. Humorously he grinned back. "Oh, she was making out," he said reassuringly.

Adrienne had been making out only too well to suit him. The girl from France had been having one of those quiet successes that gather momentum every minute. It was only by assiduous cutting-in that he had had her in his grasp when his father appeared. His father had more luck, for younger men were shy of interrupting their elders; but Budlong Prestley at last resolutely whisked her away.

Now Mr. Wittenden, mopping his brow, darted glances about the mêlée of dancers into which the young pair had disappeared. He glimpsed his prey across the hall, and with a "Ha! There she is!" he charged out across the floor, unwitting, obviously, of the rule of not cutting back immediately. Jay, who was getting ready to cut in himself, stared incredulously. Dad was certainly out of his depth. Didn't he see that Adrienne was all right? Why didn't he whirl and jiggle with one of his own decade? There was Aunt Myra sitting alone, as the married pair beside her rose and made rhythmically off. Feeling the need of some one to whom to express himself, Jay sauntered over to her.

"He's going to have a stroke or something if he doesn't let up," he said darkly. "And Adrienne can't take this sort of thing all night."

Myra was looking amused. "Thick ankles can do a lot," she said enigmatically.

FROM that evening there was virtually a cataclysmic upheaval in the life of the Wittendens. Jay, who had used his home merely as a way-station, a spot in which to eat, sleep and change his clothes, now haunted the place. It appeared that Adrienne was domestic. She took care of her own room, very efficiently, and was delighted with any duties that Myra or Ella would delegate to her. The American habit of telephoning for groceries shocked her, and she begged the privilege of marketing. Jay became very helpful, driving her about. She was shocked, too, that no bargaining was in order. "That cabbage, now, he should have been more cheap, because I bought the so-expensive melon!"

She was very hesitant about venturing off on any of the longer excursions that Jay was constantly suggesting. "I comprehend it is the American way," she admitted, but her voice was dubious, and then it grew sweetly persuasive as she went on: "But the picnic"—she said *peek-neek*—"it is so much more gay with the many others, *n'est-ce pas?*"

"Not for me, it isn't," said Jay. "But if it makes you any happier—"

So with the many others, the outraged Sally Benster among them, Jay took Adrienne to a picnic on Hound's Head, a slab of rock atop a hill near by, and to a shore dinner on the beach, and to a little dining- and dancing-place called Sailor's Delight—in fact, Jay went nowhere that he did not take Adrienne; and the girls who rang his phone and asked for him and left messages gradually dwindled in

numbers and frequency; and Sally Benster did not ring at all—after the first days.

Jay was unperturbed. He was, in fact, beatific; or he would have been, but for the behavior of his father. The performances of James Wittenden, Senior, were making James Wittenden, Junior, alternately cringe with shame for his parent or smolder with wrath against him. At first he thought that Jimmy was doing the heavy paternal when he fluttered about Adrienne—that he had a complex or something about the daughter he'd never had—and Jay was fairly tolerant, though embarrassed. Then it dawned hideously upon the young man that he was witnessing a second springtime.

No doubt about it: James Wittenden was falling for the young French girl. He appeared oblivious of the ghastly disparity in their ages. He sat entranced when she played her schoolgirl pieces on the piano or sang, "*Au claire de la lune, mon ami Pierrot.*" He came home early from the office, laden with candy; he engaged her in long games of Chinese checkers, and longer conversations. He told her about his business and his struggles and his triumphs and his political convictions—misled, Jay perceived, by Adrienne's peerless manners, into the fatuous belief that he was entertaining her. He took to saying that a man was as old as he felt; he ordered new clothes, bringing the samples for Adrienne to select; and Jay even discovered a bottle of hair-tonic, inadvertently left out, though Jimmy Wittenden's dark locks had not perceptibly thinned.

IT was all rather pitiable, young Jay thought; but it was infuriating when Jimmy took to carrying the girl off to town, to a theater or a concert. The first time, Myra and Jay had been included in the party, but after that Jimmy telephoned from the office directly to Adrienne. And Adrienne thought she had to rush off to him, every time. Jay could see that she looked on Mr. Wittenden practically as a father, and he was horrified for fear she would get a clearer idea. . . . Of course Jimmy did not realize what he was doing.

He must be made to realize. Jay hated the job, but there it was. He considered approaches as carefully as he would a putt. The thing was, not to let Jimmy know that he, Jay, had seen anything fishy in this fatherliness, not to let Dad know that he was on the verge of making a holy show of himself. Bring him up short, by coming out with his own feelings—he'd wear his heart on his sleeve, and thrust the sleeve into Jimmy's face.

That would do it. That would remind the old boy how young Adrienne was, and who was a suitable match for her. That would bring him out of the ether. At any rate, no man, however bewitched about a girl, could go on making passes at her when his own son was making passes!

So Jay Wittenden braced his broad young shoulders, tightened a stomach that turned squeamish over paraded sentiment, and with a bland and casual look in his gray eyes, sauntered through the French windows into the living-room some few moments after Myra had mentioned that Jimmy was alone there, reading the paper.

The scene had changed since Myra saw it. Much of the coolness and casualness

went out of Jay's gray eyes when they rested upon the present set-up. Mr. Wittenden was not reading the paper. He was bending over Adrienne and saying, "There, I thought that would look pretty on you," and fastening a bracelet on Adrienne's left wrist. Then he was lifting the wrist and kissing it in what he might or might not conceive to be a Continental manner.

"Hello!" said Jay abruptly.

His father dropped Adrienne's wrist and spun about; he said something very like, "What are you doing here?" and then smothered that with a false-hearty, "Just brought Adrienne a gadget. Something to tell the time by. . . . Looks nice on her, doesn't it?"

"The old sap!" thought Jay irately.

The gadget was a platinum wrist-watch with twinkling diamonds.

"It is too lovely," said Adrienne. Her voice was over-bright and under-sure. She gave Jay a swift look as if reminding him that this was none of her doing, and the hotness in his eyes melted into a tender warmth for her young helplessness. Then, with a vague murmur of showing the so-beautiful watch to Miss Wittenden, the girl slipped away.

"WELL, well, well!" said Jay, falsely hearty himself. "Showering diamonds on the little girl, eh?"

"Oh, she needed a pretty watch—what's a watch, anyhow?" said Mr. Wittenden, defensively.

"It would be plenty if *I* asked you," retorted his son. "Nothing like a girl-child for getting the goods." That sounded as if he were jealous of the present, and he was sorry for it; what he was jealous of was that he could not give it to her himself. He sauntered over to the window and stood with his back to his father.

"Look!" he ejaculated suddenly. "D'you mind if I don't finish college? It's one more year, and I hate to waste the time. I thought I might try to get a job."

"Get a job?"

"Yeah. Try to grab something. Why waste another year at college? There aren't too many openings, and I hate to waste the time."

"Good Lord!" said Mr. Wittenden. "You've got to equip yourself for a job before you can get one, and you need all the education you can get. I wouldn't dream of letting you leave college."

"Now, now, I'm free, white and twenty-one," Jay reminded him amiably. "Maybe you're right, about equipment, at that; but I hate to waste the time."

The reiterated phrase struck on Mr. Wittenden's attention. "Waste the time? What do you mean? You've got all the time and money that you need. You're all the son I've got."

"Well, I want to settle down—get going," Jay threw out, contradictorily. He swung about, his long figure silhouetted against the window, the sun very bright on his rumpled hair. "You see, I'm 'that way' about her."

Jimmy asked, "Whom do you mean?" but Jay saw that his father knew the answer before it came.

"Adrienne," said Jay.

"Oh—Adrienne," said Jimmy. Even in that moment, which must have been pretty bad for him, Jay thought, the name had a singing sound on his lips.

Jay looked away from him. He heard him moving, a little restively, picking up a magazine and putting it down.

"You'll get over it," said his father finally.

This wasn't what Jay had expected. He turned quickly. "I'm serious," he said.

There was a sudden brightness burning through the guarding calm of his gray eyes, and an answering brightness sprang out in Jimmy Wittenden's brown eyes as they faced each other.

"I'm serious too," he declared.

JAY felt shattered. It was terrible, having the old man come out with that admission. What did he have to do it for? Why didn't he cover up and trust to Jay to appear oblivious? He muttered, "Gosh, Dad, I'm sorry," and his gaze sought anything in the room on which to fix except his father's face. He didn't want to see Jimmy in shipwreck. "I guess you know I'm sorry."

"Don't be sorry," said Jimmy, very cheerfully. "Take it as it comes. . . . Best man win, and all that."

"Huh?" Jay's gaze swung back, astounded.

"I said, may the best man win."

"You mean you—"

He couldn't credit it. His father wasn't mourning any lost hope. He wasn't curling up, like a sensitive plant, at the touch of reality. He was just smiling, a little strainedly, and looking preposterously resolute. . . . Was he deluded enough to think he had a chance?

Jay flung out: "Why, Dad, you're—you're—"

"Old enough to be her father," said Mr. Wittenden evenly, his voice making no admission of chagrin, though he drew himself up as if to call attention to his good looks and robust state of preservation. He even said: "Forty-four's nothing of an age. . . . You'll find that out when *you* are forty-four."

Jay hardly heard him. He was now feeling the impact of the realization that his father was not at all deterred by the knowledge that his own son was crazy about the girl. Such unpaternal behavior revolted him, deadening sympathy, and his thought defined itself as: "The old rooster!"

He said: "You mean you'd try to grab her?"

Jimmy said: "Son, this is the first girl I've made a pass at since your mother died. And I'm going to do my darnedest."

"You haven't got a chance!"

"No?"

"I'll say you haven't!"

"I have a notion," said Jimmy, smiling too steadily, "that Adrienne likes me."

"Sure she likes you. She thinks you're swell. And you *are* swell—only not in that way," said Jay Wittenden, earnestly. "Don't you see—"

He couldn't say, "—that I'm what she ought to marry?" but his six feet of youth were saying it for him, and his gray eyes, angry and miserable and defiant.

"You've got a lot, son," said Mr. Wittenden. "And some day you'll make some girl very happy. But not this girl, I hope. I've got her earmarked."

"Gosh!" breathed Jay. He gave his appalling parent one last, long look. "Try and get her!" he said savagely, and slammed out of the room.

Out in the pool, cooling off, he thought it over more rationally. It was a hell of a note, yes sir; but there it was. Maybe he ought not to blame the old boy for making a play for her. Adrienne was lovely enough to go to anyone's head, and Jimmy was fooled, that's what he was, by Adrienne's nice ways toward him.

Jimmy must have been fooled. He couldn't, really, have a chance. . . . Or had he? . . . Adrienne did like him. She might be flattered by having so important a man as J. P. Wittenden giving her a rush. . . . But she couldn't be crazy about him, not that way. . . . She wasn't looking crazy about him when he was putting on that bracelet; she was just being polite and appreciative—then plenty bothered when he, Jay, had come in.

She was on a spot; that's what she was. Here she was, all alone, thinking she was getting a home and a father, and then finding out that the father wasn't really a father but wanted to be something else again. That wasn't any fun for her. Jay hadn't thought of that angle before, but now he worried. Evidently his father had said something to her, before this, for he seemed pretty sure of himself. "I have a notion that Adrienne likes me." The first thing you knew Jimmy Wittenden would make the place too hot to hold her.

THERE wasn't any time to be lost. Adrienne couldn't be allowed to go on, feeling friendless, and badgered. Heck, she knew she wasn't friendless. Jay reflected; she knew he was crazy about her. He hadn't said anything really serious, though—she hadn't let him say anything, come to think about it. But she knew how he felt, all right, and she was glad. He couldn't be mistaken about *that!*

Then why, he asked himself, floating face downward, and contemplating, unwinkingly, the blue-tiled depths, hadn't she let him say anything before this? . . . Perhaps she hadn't been quite sure. A girl like Adrienne had a lot of character. She thought seriously about things. You'd imagine a French girl would be all for glamour and romance; but Adrienne, he felt, wanted to be positive it was the right romance. That was pretty high-minded. Besides, he guessed, she was a little shy.

It was an outmoded word, but it gave Jay a queer, tender feeling, while at the same time he decided that shyness had had its way long enough and the hour had come for action. This situation couldn't go on, with his father bringing home diamond wrist-watches, and he motoring her about to market, or sprawling at her feet on the beach, in the mob scene of one of those unsatisfactory picnics. It was only kindness to his father to bring it to an end. Then his father could do what he had just prophesied that his son would do—get over it. It wouldn't be long before his father was fond of her in another way.

BUT for all his heartening conviction of Adrienne's state of mind, there was a cold, uncomfortable kernel of anxiety in the young man's heart. Maybe he just seemed a kid to her. Maybe his father knew the answers. His father was a pretty grand guy. Plenty of women—but they were older dames, of course—had tried for him. Aunt Myra knew all about them. He wondered how much Myra knew now about her brother and his present hopes. She must have seen plenty, but she might not know how serious it was. But Myra was just soft enough to want anything for Jimmy that he wanted. It wouldn't bother Myra to be done out of her home here, for she liked to live in New York, anyway, and do social service or something.

Jay put his aunt and her concerns out of his mind. Adrienne was all that mattered. Adrienne with her haunting eyes, her demure ways, her little figure of love. If only Adrienne cared, as he hoped—

He scrambled out of the pool, dripped water all the way up to the house and across the kitchen, unheeding Ella's scandalized outcries, and with his mouth full of snatched cookies, he gained his room and improvised speeches of declaration as he dressed.

But as it happened, he didn't use those speeches. He didn't remember them, anyway. All that he was aware of, when the moment came, was the magic of Adrienne beside him. He had got her away to himself at last, away from the interminable Chinese checkers with his father, from the threatened movie with Aunt Myra, away from the radio and the impact of world-disaster. He had got her out into the garden, down to the garage, to be exact, on pretext of showing her a new gadget on his car. . . .

The west was still red, and a lovely line of trees was penciled on that redness, and a thin, high tremolo of frogs came from the pool across the road. Adrienne

wore white, and her hair was swept up in curls on her head, and the coming dusk made it seem darker than it was. The nape of her neck was unbelievably endearing and appealing. Jay felt his lips grow hot and his heart pound.

HE kept looking at her, but she would not look at him; she looked at the new windshield-wiper. "So many pretty things your father buys!" There was the glint of the diamond-studded watch upon her wrist.

"Well—yes," said Jay, rather taken aback. He rallied: "But there are plenty things that money can't do. It can't make a man young, can it, Adrienne?"

She was silent a moment; then she gently agreed: "But no, certainly, it cannot make a man young."

His heart pounded so at that soft assent that he could hardly go on; he was distracted by the nape of her neck, and her lashes on her cheek, and the roundness of her little shoulder, so close to him. He burst out: "Oh, Adrienne, you're so lovely! And I love you so."

Once he began to say it, he could not stop. "I love you, love you, love you!"

"*Mais non!*" said Adrienne breathlessly.

He caught hold of her wrists as she tried to turn away. "You knew I did, didn't you? Look at me, Adrienne."

She looked at him, then, and said, very faintly: "Oh, yes. I knew."

"And you love me a little, don't you, Adrienne?"

"I love you a great deal," said Adrienne.

He knew what to do then, and he tried to do it, but her hands were against his breast, holding him off. "Oh, *non!*" she protested vehemently.

"It's all right! I mean, I want to marry you—we're engaged and everything," he urged reassuringly. "Oh, you sweet—"

But she twisted away from him, in agitation. "Oh, no, this must not happen! We are not engaged, Jay." Still that soft, slurred *Jay*. She said, with quaint precision: "To love, is not to be engaged."

It sounded as if she were quoting from some French textbook, and Jay laughed outright. He told her joyously: "It certainly is! If you really love me."

"Oh, I love you," said Adrienne, with a catch in her voice. "But—but your father—" She faltered embarrassedly.

"Yeah—Father," said Jay in a tone even more embarrassed than her own. Then he grew fierce. "But don't let Father worry you. He isn't in the picture."

"Oh, but he is. You do not understand. He wishes to marry me, Jay."

"What does that have to do with it? He'll get over it."

"But he is so kind—he does so much—"

"You don't have to marry Father out of gratitude. It isn't done, over here."

"You do not understand—"

"Of course I understand. It's rotten for you. But I'll take care of you. I may not have much, at first—"

"Oh, this is miserable!" cried Adrienne. "To cause such trouble!" She flung him an unhappy look and started toward the house.

He let her go; he could afford to, now he knew she loved him. His heart swelled and rocked with triumph. She loved him. "*I love you a great deal!*" Oh, the darling, the darling! She loved him, and she would marry him. He would

make a home for her. Perhaps he'd have to finish college first, but it wouldn't be long. His father would get over this feeling of his and receive her as a daughter. It would all turn out splendidly.

But in the meantime his father had to be told. The old man couldn't be allowed to go on, deluding himself, putting unconscious pressure on the girl. Dad was a sound sort, at heart, and once he saw what he was doing—knew what she felt—

It wasn't going to be easy to tell him. But it had to be done. So once again Jay marched into the living-room, where that afternoon Jimmy had been beamingly clasping a watch-bracelet on a white wrist, and where now he was sitting alone by the radio; Jay marched across the living-room to the radio and turned it off.

In the sharp silence that followed the extinction of the voice of the announcer, the young man said abruptly: "Well, you lose, Dad. . . . She cares for me. She told me so."

In the silence after that, a prolonged stillness that stretched on and on, he had time to feel horribly sorry for his father, sitting there so quietly, looking at him with such a steady, poker face. He wanted to say that he was sorry, but he could not find the right words.

"Did she say that she would marry you?" said his father.

"Why, she—no, not exactly." Jay's indignation mounted again. "She said something about you. . . . Do you know what she seems to think? That because you've been so good to her, she ought not to call her soul her own! That she's got a duty to you or something."

"Well, now, that isn't the idea," said Mr. Wittenden, very soberly.

"Of course it isn't. I knew you wouldn't want that. So I came right in to tell you."

"To tell me that she cared for you?"

Jay nodded, mutely.

"That isn't surprising," said his father. "You're attractive, you know, son."

He added, musingly; "I rather expected she was fond of you."

That startled Jay. "You didn't act like it, this afternoon. You said she liked *you.*"

"I still think she likes me. . . . She hasn't said she'll marry you, has she?"

JAY stared. There was a moment when the whites showed over his widened eyes, and a moment when the pupils grew to pinpoints of fury and revolt. "You don't mean that you'll still marry her—if you could get her?"

"Why, yes, I would. If she wanted to take me."

"You'd marry her, knowing—knowing that— You'd let her marry you because she's grateful? You'd trade on what you're doing for her?"

"Why, no," said Jimmy. "That isn't the idea. . . . Where is she now?"

Jay's flaming head jerked toward the ceiling. "Up there, I guess. In her room."

Mr. Wittenden went to the door, and then across the dining-room to another door. "Ella! Slip upstairs and ask Miss Adrienne to come down. As soon as she can."

He came back, closing the doors after him carefully. "We might as well let her settle this."

Jay turned his back on his father. He went over to the radio and turned the knobs. The needle slid along the dial, with a chaos of sounds. A dance-tune. An organ note. *"For that fuzzy feeling, you can't do better. . . . Two destroyers and one . . . For every woman who wants to become more alluring . . . If we yield to bewilderment. . . . Remember, just write in—"* Sharply he snapped the knob back, and in the stillness heard his father's footsteps, up and down. He busied himself with cigarettes. Then, sharply, both of them listened to the step upon the stairs.

ADRIENNE came in quietly, showing no signs of the agitation in which she had raced away from Jay a quarter of an hour before; she looked composed, and very serious and self-possessed. Jay gave her a fleeting smile.

"This was Dad's idea, not mine," he said jerkily. "At that, I think it's a good one. I want to tell you, before him, that there is no reason in the world why you should dream you have to marry him out of gratefulness or anything like that. That went out with the dodo. This is a free country, and you're a free agent."

"Oh, I would not be marrying him for gratefulness," said Adrienne earnestly. "You do not understand."

"Oh, yes, I do! You're not marrying him at all. You're marrying me."

Slowly, but very definitely, she shook her head. "No, Jay."

He stammered: "But you love me—you said you loved me!"

"And I said, to love was not to be engaged." She gave him a soft, placating look. "You are so young, Jay. You are like a child. You think only of love. . . . But me, I must think of other things. I must arrange my future. I would be much better established with your father than with you."

She gave Jimmy a little smile, and then turned the candor of her lovely eyes upon the son. "Your father and I, we understand each other. He knows that I will make him a good wife. I will be *très contente.* He will make me a fine husband. He is established, rich, independent. One must look to the security of the family."

"You see, son," said his father's voice gently. "No hard feelings."

Jay said helplessly: "But you love *me!*"

"That will pass," said Adrienne.

Stricken, he could only stare for a moment. Then he made a last, despairing effort. "I could take care of you. You wouldn't starve, you know."

"Perhaps. But it is all *perhaps* with you, poor Jay; and with your father it is certain. In France, the parents consider things like that when they arrange a marriage. And since I have no parents to consider for me, I must establish myself, *n'est-ce pas?*"

She looked from one to the other with her clear, practical gaze. "One cannot have everything, no? One must choose. And I make a wise choice, I think." Her look lifted to Jimmy, watching her intently, rather pale under his fine tan. "I like you so much," she said. "It will grow more."

Then a gentle concern crossed her face. "And Jay will forget. He will change. We shall arrange something for him, yes?"

Already she was talking like a stepmother. . . . Jay gave one wild look at Adrienne the realist, and plunged out of the room.

WINNER TAKE ALL

(Continued from page 57)

Jane's eyes that she had not seen there for three months.

Nell's lips felt suddenly dry. She wondered why this had to be a day when Mary Beth and Louella, who were ordinarily as good players as Jane and had no real need for the seventy dollars, were so far down in the score. She knew that if she did this, it was something that even Fred could never be told about. She ran her tongue against the inside of her lips while she tried to tell herself that charity began at home, and that some other miracle might occur to make Jane lose anyhow.

The arguments were unconvincing. She stared again at the unbeatable hand, trying to forget the far-away happy look in her neighbor's eyes. Her lips tightened. She straightened in her chair.

"Oh," she said, answering Louella's question, "I passed long ago."

Casually she gathered the cards and swept them into a jumbled heap, so no one need ever know.

HITLER AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

(Continued from page 23)

consumption has been set up in Berlin and all capitals of European countries occupied or controlled by the Germans. Its function is to create the impression that life in the occupied countries of Europe is well on the way to recovery. Normality is just around the corner, the story goes, and countries that did not resist the German invasion—such as Czechoslovakia, Denmark and Luxemburg—are scarcely aware of the German military control, which is described as discreet and humane.

Is not King Christian taking his morning ride through the streets of Copenhagen, duly photographed by Goebbels' cameramen? Are not the Prague cafés doing a thriving business? And are not the German soldiers spending like sourdoughs in a gold-camp, and thus bringing prosperity to Amsterdam, Antwerp and Liège? Do we not every day read cute human-interest boxes telling of this or that incident of romantic fraternization between a helmeted Fritz and a citizen of one of the conquered lands, or indications that the blond heroes are finding ready favor in the eyes of Czech damsels and Belgian demoiselles?

THIS is the picture the German *Nachrichtendienst für Amerika* tries to convey of Germans in war: ruthless fighters in combat, but soft-hearted and magnanimous Nordic dreamers in peace. Americans, who are known for their keen sense of fair play, and who like to shake their opponent's hand once the tussle is over, should approve of that type of sportsmanship in war, calculates the shrewd Dr. Goebbels.

Quite a few distinguished Americans, among them some prominent Government officials, have swallowed the Nazi propaganda handouts, hook, line and sinker. Parrotlike, they are repeating that Hitler's armies of occupation are behav-

ing like perfect gentlemen. German troops are not beating up passers-by in the streets of Amsterdam or Brussels or Paris. They are not violating the women. They pay for whatever they purchase. They do not damage property. In short, they are conducting themselves quite in accordance with the rules of Emily Post's book of etiquette. The implications of such reports are quite obvious. We are to rest assured that no harm will come to us from an eventual direct contact with such chivalrous warriors.

THE reality is a little different. Wherever the Germans have installed themselves, they have stripped and plundered and looted as no other army in modern history. It is true that they seek to keep down material damage, once they have occupied a given area. But they merely do this in order to cart away every possible thing of value. The farms of Denmark and Holland are deserted today. The cattle have been slaughtered to provide more meat days for the German people. Sixteen million chickens, ducks and other poultry have been taken out of Holland alone.

Take the case of the town of Zaandam in Holland. One morning a long stream of military lorries, most of them captured from the Dutch army, drove up and stopped in front of the most important lumber-yards. German officers entered the offices, asked what stocks of lumber were on hand, ordered the immediate loading of the material, and departed without further ado. This performance was repeated at every lumber-yard in the town. When their stocks were gone, the Dutch merchants were holding promissory notes, drawn on the German Reichsbank, in their hands as payment. Four lumber-dealers who objected to this procedure were taken for a ride, and have not been heard from since. But the next day the German-controlled press described in glowing terms "the generous business transaction" of the army of occupation.

Or, again, take the case of Lyons, the second city of France, and Europe's largest silk and textile center. There Germany's system of plundering reached a climax. In one week's time the entire silk stocks were removed to the Reich—a matter of a billion francs in value. In addition, the citizens were charged with the cost of the German army's occupation, and with the transportation of the goods. I had occasion to speak to a French refugee who witnessed this hold-up of an entire community. It was fantastic, he told me, how the German officers maintained perfect decorum, clicking their heels and saluting the proprietors of the mills they were emptying. The handing over of the receipt took place in the main square, with the band playing *"Deutschland Ueber Alles"* and the commanding general saluting Mayor Edouard Herriot. No less than two divisions participated in this operation.

But the worst came a few days after the Lyonese had thus been robbed of their possessions. A new detachment of German soldiers, engineers this time, arrived to dismantle the factories and spinneries, and to ship the machinery, the looms, the bobbins and the spindles to Germany as scrap-iron. The German *Nachrichtendienst* described this outrage, which leaves one of Europe's greatest industrial centers an empty shell, as "a temporary loan of material."

The soldiers of the Third Reich are behaving like perfect gentlemen—but not since the Vandals went sacking and pillaging through Europe in the Fifth Century, has anything more dastardly been witnessed than the "peaceful" stripping that is being carried out by the Nazis today. The Germans do not confine themselves to so-called necessities such as foodstuffs and raw materials. Although there has been little military traffic on the railroads of the conquered countries and of the Reich in the period following the French armistice, the rails and highways of Western Europe are clogged with endless caravans of freight-cars and trucks transporting the most variegated material to the Fatherland. From Rheims have gone millions of gallons of champagne, from Sèvres the delicate porcelains that were the pride of every Frenchman, and from Rouen the immense linen and cloth stocks. In Holland there is not a stick of furniture left in the factories; the wooden-shoe warehouses have been emptied.

No pretense is being made of keeping the home industries of the vanquished peoples running. After being deprived of the means and tools to make a livelihood, the populations of the conquered countries are left to shift for themselves. Germany is the insatiable ogre who sucks up and swallows everything in his path like some monstrous vacuum-cleaner. Time and again Hitler has made it clear that his duty is toward the German people alone: If the conquered peoples sink back into the primitive bareness of life in prehistoric days, it is no concern of the Nazis. The fundamental principle of a German peace is *Væ Victis*, woe to the conquered. The Nazis are deliberately and systematically reducing the defeated nations to so low a standard of life that the label of "inferior races" will in a very short time fit them perfectly.

HITLER'S visit to the museums of Holland, Belgium and France was by no means a mere courtesy-call. The Fuehrer considers himself the supreme arbiter of German culture. He believes that the best of the classic art which has been preserved for centuries in Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum, in the Louvre of Paris, in the Musée Royal of Brussels and the treasure-houses of Haarlem, Bruges, The Hague and Antwerp, rightly belongs in the capital of world-Kultur, Berlin. With a critical eye, the erstwhile housepainter roamed those ancient halls of fame and noted which of the treasures were to have the privilege of being added to the collections in Germany. Commissions of uniformed German *Staatskunstgeheimräte*, or State art-experts, followed the Fuehrer to select the canvases and sculptures that from now on are to adorn the Nazi *Kunsthallen*. Only the works of non-Aryans, and "degenerate art," which includes masterpieces of the modern schools, are to be left behind. Herr Hitler is hurrying the stripping of the French museums before Mussolini, who has expressed his intention to share in the booty, sends over his Italian connoisseurs to do their picking.

From Norway, ninth-century wooden churches, with their picturesque carved roofs and gables, are being bodily trans-

ferred to Germany. In Holland historic structures famous for their ornamental Renaissance façades are being taken down brick by brick, to be reconstructed across the Rhine. The same fate probably is in store for some of the most famous chateaux of the Touraine region in France. Of course the ironclad censorship, which controls the press of every occupied country, forbids the slightest mention of this wholesale vandalism. Even to talk about it, let alone protest, means flirting with a long sentence in a concentration-camp—or with death.

MILLIONS of humble men and women throughout Europe are living under a terror such as the darkest pages of history do not record. The Gestapo—Hitler's dread secret police, which is bound by no law—reigns supreme. When the Germans boast of the strength of their ever-increasing army, they omit to mention that the Gestapo today numbers close to three million men. It is in the hands of this merciless secret Pretorian guard that the fate of Germany reposes. The fighting in the field, however, of which the Fuehrer so proudly boasts, was for the most part done by Austrian, Sudeten German and Tyrolese divisions, under the watchful eye and ready pistols of the Gestapo battalions. It is also the Gestapo which is entrusted with policing the urban and rural districts of Nazi-occupied territories.

The Gestapo spy system extends to every block and every house. Members of the Gestapo are stationed in every hotel, bank, café, theater, church, newspaper office, factory, playground, train and park. They have dictaphones that catch whispered conversations in restaurants and bedrooms. There is no privacy left in Europe. Every man distrusts his neighbor. No one knows whether the street-cleaner, the waiter or the postman is not a Gestapo agent in disguise and his accuser of tomorrow.

In the first week of the occupation of Paris, the German Gestapo arrested and deported to Germany seventeen thousand French citizens who had been on the blacklist of the German consulates and embassy. Besides, tens of thousands of refugees fell into the clutches of the Gestapo, which with sadistic triumph carried them back to the concentration-camps of Dachau and Oranienburg and the torture-chambers of Buchenwald and Spandau. In Amsterdam every journalist, university professor, school-teacher, social worker, lecturer or clergyman reported to have at any time uttered the slightest disparaging remark or word of criticism against the Fuehrer was taken into custody, not to be heard from again.

I know one famous banking-house which, because it had refused to subscribe to a German loan back in Stresemann's days, saw its members shot down in cold blood on the first day the Gestapo marched into the city. Merchants and shippers who had refused to deal with Nazi Germany, and young women who had spurned the advances of high German military officials, were dragged out of bed in the middle of the night and carted off in cattle-trucks to meet their fate in the soundproof chambers of the Nazi Brown Houses.

In Czechoslovakia the terror has reached such proportions that huge concentration-

camps have had to be established to take care of women and girls driven insane by the knowledge that their menfolk had been sacrificed in the mass attacks in France and Flanders. After Poland, where nightly massacres are taking place, the patriotic Czech people are perhaps the worst sufferers from Germany's "humaneness, magnanimity and generosity."

Gestapo rule in German-occupied territories means ruthless extermination of all non-conformists.

That is the true picture of the Nazification of Europe. Carnage in a pool of blood hidden behind a screen of headlines. The cries of the victims drowned out by shrieking broadcasts that proclaim the great benefits of National Socialism. What we are witnessing in the world today is something which differs fundamentally from all the other campaigns of conquest that have gone before. Hitler is not a Napoleon or an Alexander or a Cæsar. The only historical figure with whom the Fuehrer can perhaps be compared is Mohammed. For the Fuehrer and his followers are animated by the same fiery fanaticism that inspired the irresistible Moslem hordes who overran the better part of Africa and Europe in the early Middle Ages. They were out to impose a creed on the rest of humanity, the creed of one God, and Mohammed His Prophet. But whereas Mohammed and his successors promised their followers their recompense in the hereafter, in a sensuous Paradise replete with every imaginable delight, Hitler and his captains promise the German people their reward in this world.

The German people are to be the new ruling class in the world society the German army is shaping out of blood and iron. A nation which considers itself the elect by virtue of its Nordic blood and superior fighting qualities, has set out to subjugate the human race. All the other peoples are judged to be of an inferior grade. Slavs, Semites, Latins and the mongrelized Americans are destined to be mere slaves at the service of the godlike Teutons. The National Socialist world-revolution is on the march, backed by a military machine of such striking power as the world has never seen before.

As the smoke of German propaganda lifts, the outlines of Europe's gorilla man, club in hand, ready for the kill, become clearly discernible. That is why the all-dominating force that cuts across American life from Maine to California is an undaunted will for national self-preservation through an invincible defense.

THE CASE FOR ROOSEVELT

(Continued from page 13)

Coolidge and Hoover, all of whom went unsung and indeed unmentioned on that unique Republican occasion, but as a successor to Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. T.R. and Woodrow Wilson —they were the heroes in the Willkie Valhalla, the saints in the Willkie hierarchy. Let me too, therefore, revert to them.

WHEN in 1909 Theodore Roosevelt turned the Presidency over to William Howard Taft, and with a gun over his shoulder tactfully sailed for darkest Africa, all of those whom he had described as malefactors of great wealth gave a sigh of relief. They and all their train—their biddable rectors, their servile editors and even their tame college presidents—had hated Theodore Roosevelt—hated him with a virulence unbelievable by the young of today, who, when listening to their elders (like me and William Allen White) have heard T.R. spoken of, in comfortable retrospect, only in terms of affectionate admiration—hated him and feared him with the kind of fear Frank Lloyd Wright must have had in mind when he said there was nothing so timid as a million dollars. But now, his job in Washington done, that disturbing creature was going away to hunt a different kind of big game. And on the day he sailed, banks and brokerage-houses in the financial capital broke out in a rash of waggish signs reading: *"Wall Street expects every lion to do its duty."* You see, already the hatred of T.R. was turning into laughter. But they had not yet begun to canonize him as he was canonized at Elwood. . . .

After the Taft interlude, not Theodore Roosevelt but Woodrow Wilson was "that man in the White House," faithfully and inevitably earning the same kind of enmity from the same kind of people and for the selfsame reason. I still remember one great corporation president—he was the whiskered kind invariably sought as college trustee—foaming at the mouth at the mere mention of Wilson's name, and with shaking fist demanding "that damned radical's" impeachment! Indeed, during the eight years of his eventful Presidency, Wilson was honored by such furious and apoplectic abuse as was not to be heard again in this land until the present administration. . . . . T.R. and Woodrow Wilson! Mr. Willkie would have us look upon him as their successor. But to my notion the man who already has clearly been that, is Franklin Roosevelt.

It would be possible, I think, to write an illuminating history of the American Presidency as the story of a fight—now gaining a little, now losing a little—against greed. And one is almost drawn to the conclusion that a man cannot go into the White House and there make a valiant and spirited effort to represent the whole people without bringing down on his head the wrath of the advantaged few.

They—the advantaged few—are the automatic by-product of any devil-take-the-hindmost economy. They are absurd only when they confuse their private fortune with the public good, and vicious only when they use it to corrupt the political machine of the State in which they live. In the South before the Civil War, they were the slave-owning few who carried the Southern States into secession. In Germany, in our time, their counterparts financed the rise of Hitler—acting, of course, from fear, which is the only reason why people ever act basely. In England they were all-important in the backing of Baldwin and of Chamberlain; and it was their dread of higher taxes which, more than anything else, brought England unarmed into the present war, and so sent English boys to fight tanks with naked fists.

And what have they to do with the coming election in the United States? Just this: What makes me uneasy about Mr. Willkie, and at this writing disinclined to vote for him, is that they are all for him. From coast to coast, advisedly or not, and with or without any assurance from him, they are for him to a man.

I WILL VOTE FOR WILLKIE

(Continued from page 13)

took it with an awkward avidity which those who heard the convention on the radio easily mistook for calculated political voracity.

None the less assuming his genuine selflessness, which I believe in—so far as his conscious mind went.—the third term still is the third term. Moreover, if Mr. Roosevelt should die between now and the day when the Electoral College meets, and Mr. Wallace should be chosen by the electors, it would still be a third term; the continuation of one policy under the dominating spirit of one man, controlled by one policy. Which is wrong in a democracy, for two reasons. First, because even so revolutionary an idea as that which has dominated the Democratic administration since 1933 should have a chance to meet its critics in an opposition administration and an opposition Congress. An idea not strong enough after eight years to meet the test of critical trial is not really a part of the political philosophy of a democratic people. To be cuddled after eight years in an incubator of its own party, tube-fed and artificially heated, merely proves that the basic idea of the new philosophy will not work in the cold, hard, challenging air of practical democratic experience. Personally, I believe that under Mr. Willkie many of the changes in our life that Mr. Roosevelt has sought to introduce will survive; but they will survive under hardship. They will persist because they are strong enough to triumph in opposition, which will prove that at least they are good enough to deserve survival in the frank rough-and-tumble of our American political tradition.

The second reason why the third term is a menace to the ideals of this republic is that no man of any party, and indeed no party, is good enough nor wise enough to resist the arrogance that comes with more than eight years of power. The Republican party survived from 1860 to 1884. But it became the survival of corruption: Grover Cleveland's campaign slogan, "Turn the rascals out," seems like a silly slogan now; but it is the instinctive outcry of a people who fear that the steel rods of reinforced bureaucracy will raise up concrete walls against their liberty. Man for man, a Democrat in office is as honest as a Republican in office. There is no difference between the honesty and intelligence of partisans. But given a chemically pure, disinterested, noble Republican, keep him and his Cabinet twelve years with his bureau chiefs and his ideas behind those bureau chiefs unfettered and unrestricted in power, and that chemically pure and noble Republican, will become a petty tyrant and think he is bigger than the Government.

He will begin to feel after the third-term election that the people are his servants, forgetting that he is not their master. Power long held inevitably begets arrogance. Arrogance always threatens the liberty and self-respect of those whom it touches. This would be true of the Republican party—indeed, it has been true—if the same faction in the party should try to run it for twelve consecutive years. It is a fairly workable political axiom that eight years is enough for any party to survive in control of our national administration; and as for the States, the best-governed States and even cities are those that change their parties' rulers two or three times in a decade. It is inherent in the democratic principle that policies and ideas in government must run the party gantlet, and that men in power, however wise their policies and disinterested they may try to be personally, finally grow evil in use if not evil in purpose. For by unrestricted and uninterrupted power, statesmen grow proud, and in their pride menace free institutions.

So much for Mr. Roosevelt and his partisans. They have done, on the whole, a job long overdue. They have merely brought into American life the institutions that thrived in a civilized world in the 'teens and 'twenties of this century. Now these changed institutions must struggle for survival in a new world, among men of a party that has on the whole opposed these changes in our democratic way of life.

What is Mr. Willkie's position? His acceptance speech makes it clear that he will not try to wipe out the New Deal. He has given his candid endorsement to the Federal control of public utilities; to the Federal control of stock-markets. He went further this spring in his speeches in the direction of aiding Great Britain as a measure of American defense than President Roosevelt. He has lived as the executive of the greatest public-utility organization in the world under the New Deal labor legislation, and he has accepted that legislation and has seemed to make it work. Very likely he will not reject it *in toto* nor in principle. In the matter of encouraging competition by the private and publicly owned power projects, Mr. Willkie and the President differ, but the power projects are here. Most of them, as the President would say, are "on hand or on order," and there is little Mr. Willkie can do about it. If the people don't like his way of doing what he may do about the T. V. A. and Boulder Dam and Grand Coulée and other Federal hydro-electrical projects when he leaves office, they can have their way at utmost in eight years. He can't blow up these great dams and wreck these physical properties which we have built up here in the last dozen years.

Mr. Willkie is supported by men who hate the New Deal from stem to stern. They will have their influence with him, but their ideas will have to get into Congress and through Congress, and that means in the long run that these enemies of the New Deal will have to go to the people and convince them. If the people want a change, they will have it, no matter whether Mr. Roosevelt is in the White House or in Hyde Park, or perhaps is twanging his harp under his golden crown in his long white robe in that political heaven which on the whole history some day will say he has earned as a good and faithful servant of the American people.

It is not a question between personalities of Mr. Willkie and Mr. Roosevelt. The campaign issue does not hinge upon their characters. For though Mr. Willkie may believe in and has long advocated many of the things which Mr. Roosevelt has tried to achieve, after all, Mr. Willkie has been a Democrat and has subscribed to the Democratic credo twenty-four of the twenty-seven years of his political maturity. He hasn't changed his belief about the iniquity of high protection. He has been an old-fashioned silk-stocking champion of civil liberties. He has denounced the Dies Committee and demanded justice for Earl Browder. He has vigorously supported the Hull Treaties. He is still the old-fashioned unwashed Democrat that he has been all these two and a half decades since his first Democratic Presidential vote for Woodrow Wilson. When and where has he recanted? No wonder if, aiming at the independent vote, he could not with a straight face pretend that he stands for the old-fashioned, stand-pat, regular hard-shelled Republicanism whose generals led Taft into calamity, named Harding and worshiped Coolidge, as a wise golden serpent whom the priests of Baal exalted just before the great calamity.

MR. WILLKIE, for all his years as head of the Commonwealth and Southern, is—more than any other man whom the Republicans could have nominated—a shining representative of the progressive Republican faction. Mr. Willkie does not see eye for eye, cheek by jowl, with George Norris, but he comes closer to George Norris than he does to the temple priests who have been running the Republican National Committee for the last twenty years. Mr. Willkie has publicly rebuked them several times since his nomination in June. His acceptance speech must have affronted them profoundly. His whole attitude toward money in politics is a negation of the stand-pat Republican doctrine. Yet upon the flood-tide of his popularity, win, lose or draw, the Republicans are certain to elect a certain number of Congressional Representatives and Senators who hold to the old creed, who worship the old gods. In the clash of ideals necessary to the give and take of politics in Washington, with Mr. Willkie in the White House the New Deal will find its trial by fire, and thus will it come, all that is left of it, properly into the American way of life. It is better to have the survival qualities of the New Deal tested in the knock-down and drag-out of a political struggle, than to have it nursed along in pink cotton in the incubator of its jealous and possessive parents.

Because I believe in American institutions as they have worked for a century and a half, not perfectly but vigorously, because I feel that unbroken political power leads unconsciously to political arrogance, and because I have faith in the integrity, the wisdom and the deep fundamental liberalism of Wendell Willkie, I am supporting him and the Republican ticket in this campaign.

LUCKY PASS

(Continued from page 29)

"No touchdown," said Rourke. "No gain at all."

"A five-yard loss," said Casey.

"A beautiful tackle," said Rourke. "Who was it made the tackle?"

"That was Wiesnowski."

"Well," said Rourke, "after all, the fellow with the ball ran right into his arms. All he had to do was reach out and throw him down to the ground. I could have done it myself."

"But not get up afterwards. Wiesnowski is one of the best tacklers in the game."

"Indeed? Who is it told you so?"

"I read it in the *Star*," said Casey.

"The *Star*," said Rourke, "hasn't it right. I read the *Globe*."

"A line plunge!" said Casey. "Watch!"

"He was stopped again, Casey. By Wiesnowski?"

"No."

"Ah!"

"By Goldberg, the right tackle," said Casey.

"Oh," said Rourke.

"It looks to me," said Casey, "as if Wiesnowski got hurt on that play."

"Too delicate," said Rourke. "I could have told you so. And now they'll be putting in Danny. That's good news."

"Yes," said Casey, "but Wiesnowski's a better player."

"Casey! Have you no family loyalty?"

"It's for the good of the team I'm thinking."

"Casey," said Rourke, "I'm disgusted with you."

"Here comes Danny. Watch the game, Rourke. Don't always be arguing."

"We'll be seeing action now," said Rourke.

"Maybe too much. They're going to try for a field goal. If they make it, they get three points. But the ball's a long way off. Watch now."

"Hooray!" said Rourke. "It was too short. It missed by ten yards. That's the boy, Danny!"

"Rourke! Danny had nothing to do with preventing it. He wasn't anywhere near the ball or the fellow who kicked it. Can you not use your intelligence?"

"Don't talk nonsense," said Rourke. "It was Danny being in there that made him nervous."

"Sit down," said Casey, "—and hand that man his hat. You knocked it off. It's our ball for the first time. Watch what happens."

"Wow!" said Rourke. "Danny has it. Go it, Danny! Look, Casey, he's still going. He's going to make a touchdown!"

"Danny hasn't the ball," said Casey.

"He has!" said Rourke. "I saw him with it."

"He had the ball at first, but he slipped it to Guisillupi. It fooled you just like it fooled the other team, Rourke. Guisillupi made fifteen yards."

"That's what he gets for using treachery," said Rourke. "Fifteen yards is all he gets, and if Danny had kept it, he'd have made a touchdown. There wasn't anybody near him. I was watching him."

"You shouldn't be complaining," said Casey. "A minute ago it looked as though they might score, and now we're going up the field with the ball."

"Going too slow. Trying all that fancy business."

"Fifteen yards is a lot," said Casey. "Watch the play. —Ow! Another fumble!"

"That's bad," said Rourke. "Is it Riley again?"

"Guisillupi."

"That's better."

"It's no better," said Casey. "It's their ball again. In our side of the field again. Another chance to score, it gives them."

"They'll not score against us with Danny in there."

"Danny's gone out," said Casey, "they've put in a substitute for him already."

"Ah me! The best player on the team. The coach is crazy."

"Look!" said Casey. "Look what's happening. It's a pass. It's a long one! See that man running down toward our goal line? If he catches it, it's a touchdown!"

"Ouch," said Rourke. "He caught it."

"A touchdown for them, Rourke. Six against us. A lucky pass and a lucky catch."

"All because they took Danny out," said Rourke. "Who threw that pass?"

"Wait til I look in the program. Number 17. . . . That would be their quarterback—Halloran."

"Halloran! And who caught it?"

"Number 30," said Casey. "That would be—uh—Dugan."

"Wow!" said Rourke. "Wow! The most beautiful pass and the most beautiful catch I ever saw! Hooray for Halloran! Hooray for Dugan!"

"Rourke," said Casey, "be quiet! Do you want to get lynched? Sitting in this cheering section, and rooting for the other side!"

"The other side, my eye!" said Rourke.

"It's seven to nothing against us now," said Casey. "Halloran just kicked the goal. It was a pretty kick, wasn't it?"

I'M GLAD SHE'S HAPPY

(Continued from page 37)

emotional scenes, but Caroline's merry welcome left them embarrassed. Even Ellen, who managed all situations so beautifully, was stiff and silent. Caroline's muddy slacks, moth-eaten green sweater, her straight fair hair all flying about her shoulders, made the visitors seem foolishly overdressed in their smart sport-things. Ellen, gloves and bag in hand, newly waved brown hair under jaunty felt hat, picking her way through the muddy garden, felt a twinge of sheer irritation at Ken. The least he could have told her was that the formerly impeccable Caroline went plain berserk in the country. Caroline all disheveled and gay made Ellen seem like some trussed-up wooden window dummy, and she wished now the meeting had been staged in town on their own premises.

"Where's Billy?" Ken wanted to know. "Does he know I'm coming?"

"I should have written him," said Caroline contritely. "He's staying the summer with his grandmother."

ELLEN did not dare look at Ken's face. It was thoughtless of Caroline to let Billy go to his grandmother's, knowing how Ken felt about that. The old lady was making a perfectly selfish spoiled brat out of Billy. Ken had always said so. Caroline knew it.

"If we only knew where we'd be from one week to the next, we'd love to have Billy with us," Ellen said. "He's such a dear."

"He's a young devil," grimaced Caroline. She led them into the living-room. The furniture must have come with the house, for its battered comforts were without distinction, mostly of the gim-crack Victorian style. Even the pictures bore no evidence of the taste Caroline had always shown in selecting her previous homes. It had been a leading grace of Caroline's, that one-time gift for making a unique and decorative home.

"Have you lived here long?" Ellen asked, wondering.

Caroline laughed.

"Ever since we were married," she said. "As a matter of fact, it was seeing the house that made us decide to get married at once. It was all ready and perfect for us."

"Are you planning many changes?" Ellen inquired, still puzzled.

"No, we love it this way," said Caroline. "And then we both hate fussing over a house when we might be spending the money and time on the orchard or the farm buildings."

She showed Ellen to their bedroom, an old-fashioned black-walnut bedroom under sloping roofs with dormer windows. She herself would wash up and give them drinks in a few minutes, she said. Ellen decided against changing, and went downstairs again. Ken was standing with hands in pockets, gloomily staring at the low bookshelves beside the fireplace.

"I think she's going to be all right," Ellen whispered. "I think she's taking it very well. Don't worry, darling."

Ken grunted.

"Looks all right to you, does it? Take a look at these books."

Ellen glanced at them. There were a few volumes on animal husbandry; the rest were detective stories.

"Escape stuff," he said. "This isn't her real self. She's looking for an out, don't you see?"

It did seem a little odd that there were no works on current political topics, none of the books that their old group used to discuss. Ellen had years ago been deeply impressed by how closely woven Caroline's intellectual tastes were with Ken's. She realized that what was bothering Ken now was the hint that the subjects once dear to Caroline now brought her only painful memories. He was too sensitive, of course; he was needlessly torturing himself when the whole damage was done long ago, and it was really too late for remorse. He had been more philosophical about the break-up at the time it occurred, far more realistic; but then, Ellen reflected a little bitterly, men always managed to arrange their more sensitive periods so as not to interfere with the immediate desire. Now his remorse only made Ellen feel guilty and sad. She braced herself to be gay when Caroline rejoined them in fresh white slacks and short jacket.

"Timmy's back," Caroline announced. "A neighbor brought him. He didn't have to stay, after all."

A frowsy rosy-cheeked little maid brought in a tea-wagon, and Ellen saw with sinking heart that it was well-laden with canapes, sandwiches, tea-cakes and other signs that dinner would be at least two hours off. Ken was a fanatic on the subject of early dinner. He did much of his writing at night, and liked to get at it right after dinner, say half-past seven, so he could have work done and be ready for sociability around ten-thirty. It was an old habit, as Caroline well knew, and one that prohibited heavy teas or extended cocktail hours. Furthermore, there appeared to be nothing but martinis to drink, and Ken never drank anything but highballs. Ellen was relieved, however, that he made no complaint.

"There really is nothing like a dry martini," Caroline said with a sigh of satisfaction as she sipped hers. "Timmy and I work so hard around the farm, and the only thing that picks us up is a good martini."

"Each one has his own tastes," said Ken.

Ellen heard steps outside, and Caroline's new husband came in. He was a big ruddy fair man, and immediately shook hands with Ken.

"Great seeing you again," he said.

KEN stared at him with slow understanding.

"I didn't realize that you were the Tayland Caroline married," he said; and then to Ellen: "Ellen, this is the Spike Tayland I told you about, you remember."

"The Spike you used to go to college with!" Ellen exclaimed.

"We've had a few good times since then too," said Tayland. "I used to visit them when they had the house in Florence."

"And he used to help me with my shopping when I went to Paris," said Caroline. "He knew every little restaurant, and we both loved to explore."

"I hate to explore," stated Ken. "I like to have one good hotel and stick to it, one good bar, one good tailor, one good dish—"

He gulped down his martini, sensing that "one good wife" would have neatly completed his remark; and everyone laughed self-consciously as if the words had really been said.

"Imagine Ken's not knowing that Timmy was really Spike," Caroline said. "Timmy is the only Tayland I ever knew. And he was always around—that is, some place where I was. Of course it would be Spike."

"I don't think I knew about your seeing him in Paris," Ken said.

Tayland laughed, a deep complacent laugh.

"I guess I tried to happen around wherever Caroline ever went," he confessed. "Caroline was always the big thing in my life."

There was an uncomfortable silence, with Ken smiling a rather wry smile into his glass. It was all too clear to Ellen that the news of another man being devoted to Caroline all during their marriage was not pleasant, nor the idea that Caroline had taken such devotion so much

for granted she never mentioned it. That Tayland's love had finally triumphed made it look as if Caroline were the one who had finally walked out on Ken, instead of Ken being the offending party. It was not a dignified position for a man like Ken to be in—that of a man whose wife finally goes over to his own old college chum. It would have been much better if this Tayland had been what Ken had supposed him to be, some stranger whom Caroline had snatched at to console herself for her broken heart. But this way a person would think she had been treasuring a passion for the man all the years of her first marriage.

Ellen found her own reaction one of vague indignation too. That Caroline should be so contented with another man just a year and a half after her break-up with Ken, made Ken seem somehow less of a prize than Ellen had thought. And his years of complacent blindness to the Timmy-Caroline friendship made him out a fatuous type, far less appealing than the ruthless male he had seemed to her.

The cocktail-shaker was refilled. Caroline and Tayland devoured sandwiches, though Ken refused to "spoil" his dinner.

"I advise you to give in," laughed Tayland. "Our dinners are pretty simple affairs up here—when we do get them."

"Look, how about a highball, Caroline?" Ken burst out as if in desperation.

Caroline looked up in guilty surprise.

"Oh, dear, I didn't realize you might have wanted something else. Darling, please fix Ken a highball, will you? I'm so thoughtless."

Ellen could not imagine why Ken was giving her such strange, meaningful looks while Tayland was in the dining-room whistling over his bar duties. Obviously there was something she was supposed to understand, but she didn't. Caroline was chatting away about how they had found the farm, the possibilities of a sailboat on the inlet at the foot of the woods, their awards for old "Beansie," the English shepherd dog, in the dog-show at the fair. Ellen shook her head helplessly at Ken's mysterious nod, so that he was obliged to speak.

"Don't you think you'd better help Spike, Ellen?" he asked.

"Oh!" said Ellen blankly, and got up. As she started for the dining-room, Caroline called out: "Oh, darling, do hurry back and tell Ken and Ellen what a time we had finding the minister to marry us."

Ellen sat down. If Ken had forgotten his terror at being left alone with Caroline, it was quite plain that Caroline had no wish to be alone with him. But Ellen could tell by Ken's annoyed scowl that he was blaming Ellen for not responding to his wish, rather than Caroline.

DINNER was a good hour away, and when it came was really nothing but a simple country meal, a roast and vegetables with no pretensions to the artful little culinary tricks Caroline's former home had been noted for, the little tricks that had seemed to be her joy.

"Frieda manages all the meals," said Caroline happily. "I never give them a thought. It's such a relief."

It was rather odd that in only eighteen months Caroline had forgotten another preference of Ken's, the matter of soup. He had for years declaimed on the nonsense of jellied soups, when the whole purpose of soup was gently to warm the stomach, winter or summer. Yet here was jellied madrilene, just as if his old tirades against it had been utterly forgotten. If the hostess had been anyone but Caroline, Ellen would not have hesitated to whisper an apologetic request for a cup of hot bouillon for her husband; but you could not after all explain your husband's tastes to a hostess who had lived with him for ten years before you even met him.

Caroline murmured to Frieda:

"You made a lot of the madrilene, didn't you, Frieda?" And then by way of explanation to the guests, she added: "Timmy creeps down to the icebox in the middle of the night and wolfs all the madrilene, so we have to keep gallons of it on hand."

COFFEE was on the garden porch with the new moon just coming up in the dusk. Timmy went out to the barn to confer with the gardener, and when Ellen got up to join him, Caroline hastily insisted that she sit down for another cup of coffee.

"Goodness, Frieda forgot the brandy!" Caroline exclaimed; and she jumped up. They could hear her humming as she sought the right bottle.

"I thought your mother had taught Caroline the way you like coffee," Ellen whispered. It was a pet of Ken's, his mother's coffee, served with brown sugar and cinnamon sticks, and Ellen had learned to love it. But there was only white sugar on the coffee-tray.

"It seems to me that Caroline has got awfully thoughtless," Ken muttered. "Little things about a person that the least acquaintance would be expected to remember, really."

"As we get older, we get more selfish, I'm afraid," said Ellen. "I suppose she only thinks of herself now."

"I'm afraid she's changed for the worse," he said gravely.

Caroline brought the liquor-bottle out; and Ellen saw, with fresh apprehension, that it was some cherry cordial and not the Armagnac that everybody in the world knew was Ken's standby.

"This is Timmy's special," Caroline said proudly. "It's part of his father's cellar—we got it for a wedding present, and it is divine, really. You know how tired you get of cognac. It's black cherry."

From the barn they heard Timmy calling to her. Something about the colt. She excused herself and ran out to him. They could hear the two of them laughing with the gardener.

"At least she seems happy," said Ellen.

She saw that Ken was squinting his eyes, trying to see the distant figures in the dusk of the barnyard. He did not touch his cordial.

"I'm glad she's happy," he said slowly. "That's something! I thought it would take much longer for her to—get over it."

"It makes everything all right, then, doesn't it?" Ellen said thoughtfully. He did not answer for a minute, still staring into the dusk where the two others were laughing, their arms about each other.

"Oh, perfect, sure," he said. He absently put out his hand toward hers, but for some queer reason she pretended not to see it. If Caroline could stop loving him so easily, then maybe so would she.

JUST FOR US AND NOBODY ELSE

(Continued from page 28)

where we were going and Kitty said, "Everywhere," but I was serious and she said, "All right, we'll go to Bermuda. There will be blue water and pink sand and long moonlit nights." She stopped and then she said, "My father and mother went there on their honeymoon. He loved it down there and—and—"

Kitty never finished, but I knew what she was thinking. Her father had liked to walk on the beach at night. In Bermuda there would be miles of beach and maybe—maybe he would be there.

Later I went inside, but Kitty just sat there. I started to open a suitcase and then she said, "You're a fine bridegroom! I want to be carried!"

I laughed and then I was on the porch and Kitty was in my arms and I was carrying her over the threshold. Her arms were tight about my neck and I could feel her breath against my ear. She said, "We are right, aren't we, Nick?" I kissed her and then we were sitting on the bed and I was still holding her close to me.

"If that's your answer," she said, "a perfect translation would be the word, 'Yes'."

I kissed her again and she said, "So you won't talk, eh?" And then neither of us did any talking.

The next morning we were in New York and that meant steamship-tickets and trunk-checks. But there was more than that, for Kitty loved New York. There was lunch in a garden restaurant. In the afternoon we went window-shopping. We went up to the top of the Empire State Building because Kitty liked to be in high places. We had cocktails at the Plaza. We smiled and I leaned across the table and kissed her. It seemed that the whole world was one of those things that were just for us and nobody else.

That night Kitty called a lot of her friends and then we were swept up in a party. There were strange faces and we moved from one place to another. Wherever we were, it was Kitty who was the center of attraction. Kitty was a charming hostess even if it wasn't her party. I danced with a lot of people. I didn't know their names, but I danced with them and then I drank with them. Kitty was always in the middle of a group and I could see her laughing and talking.

For a moment I felt alone and left out of everything. We were at a night-club and I excused myself from the table and went over to the bar to have a drink. I lit a cigarette and sat there and thought about everything. Nothing seemed real. I felt that I was back in college and all of this was a long dream that had no end.

And then there was a girl sitting next to me and it was Kitty.

THE boat sailed at three. We stood at the rail, waving good-by frantically to a lot of people we didn't know. But they were all those people we didn't want to know. They were walking around in circles. Their lives were so filled with small things that they didn't have any time for love. But we did; we had minutes

and days and years for love, and it would always be that way. We were beginning our flight of youth.

In the morning we played deck tennis and shuffleboard and ping-pong and in the afternoon there were horse-races and walks around the deck. At four we went for a swim. It was a small pool but we raced up and down until the water was as rough as it was outside of the boat. And then we held on to the edge of the pool and kicked our feet out behind us. Kitty looked at me and we both smiled: It seemed a long time ago, and yet it might have been yesterday.

We took our towels on the deck and spread them out near the stern. The sun was hot and we lay there for a long time. And then Kitty jumped up and she was back in the pool and I was diving in after her. We were cooled off and we went back to the cabin to dress. I powdered her back and she said, "You are a handy fellow to have around, aren't you?"

I said, "I'll do till a better one comes along," and then we gave ourselves a rain-check for the cocktail-hour, because Kitty had put her arms around me and that meant that our world stood still for a while.

THAT night there was a dance and we went up to the ballroom. Kitty was wearing a white evening-gown and I knew that everyone was watching us as we danced past the tables. I felt proud and happy. I looked into faces and my eyes were saying, "This is my wife and she is lovely." We walked out on the deck and stood by the rail for a cigarette. There was a breeze and Kitty's hair blew softly about her head. When I held the match, I said, "You look lovely in this light," but she blew out the match and it was dark and I felt her lips on mine.

And then there were stars and we tried to count them, but Kitty said, "That's silly. They all belong to us," and I said, "Things like this are just for us and nobody else." We walked around the deck. The air was clean and salty and we stood at the bow and felt it rush against us.

Kitty said, "Nick, do you ever think of the college?" and I said, "Yes."

"Just, *yes?*" she said.

"No, more than that," I said. "It seems a long time ago, doesn't it?"

There was a long silence and I knew we were both thinking. Kitty's hand was warm inside of mine and when she said, "Sorry?" I answered, "No, Kitty. Not at all sorry. There are things ahead."

I had been telling myself that ever since we had left. There were big things ahead of us. At times I wondered whether I had talked myself into it. But it didn't matter. I was in love with Kitty and there were things ahead. The only thing was, I wasn't sure where they were or what they were. . . .

In the morning we sighted land and soon the boat was working its way around the islands and peninsulas. The green of the land was spotted with the white and pink of the stucco houses and farther ahead was the city of Hamilton. As we neared the pier, tiny sailboats and speed-boats seemed to be playing tag all about the ship. And then we were tied up and Kitty and I stood on the deck and looked down at the people who were meeting the boat.

There were the customs and finding our trunks and saying, "Good-by" to the people who were milling away from us. There were waves of warm air and then a breeze, for we were riding in a carriage up the long hill to the hotel. There were the shops and dark-skinned natives and the white people who looked "very, very British." There were cobblestone roads and rich foliage and exotic flowers. Kitty's eyes were moving quickly from one side of the road to the other.

"It is wonderful," she said. "Isn't it, Nick?" And I just nodded because our fingers were together and I knew we were both thinking, "Things like this—"

That afternoon we stayed at the hotel, but there were people there—people such as we had waved "good-by" to in New York, the same people we'd been on the boat with. We wanted to get away from them; we wanted to find our own world.

After dinner we walked down to the water. It was dusk and there was a peaceful calm over everything. We watched the sailboats drifting across the bay. We turned and watched the bicycles rolling down the street, and then we climbed the steps of the "21" Club. We sat on the porch and drank rum swizzles. We clicked glasses and again we said, "Things like this are just for us and nobody else." We talked of days that meant now and not tomorrow, because we were here and this was Bermuda and we were on our flight of youth.

Suddenly the stars disappeared and it began to rain, a soft, cool rain. I wanted to get a carriage, but Kitty said, "Let's walk, Nick. It will be fun." This time I didn't have to ask her why it would be fun. I knew.

And yet that night I had a hard time getting to sleep. I tried to blame it on the heat, but I knew that I was thinking about leaving college. I was thinking about the bills that had to be paid and I wasn't paying them. I kept hearing Kitty say, "You can't learn to paint by sitting in a classroom." Now we were in Bermuda and I was going to have my chance to paint. Maybe, that was the trouble. I wondered if I were afraid.

IN the morning we went to a real-estate office; then it was an hour later and we had bought our bicycles and we were riding across the island to find our cottage. The man in the office had described it in glowing terms and we both felt that it was just what we wanted, but Kitty was saying, "Do you really think it could be that wonderful?" I laughed and said, "The British are a very conservative people!"

And then we didn't talk, for there was a steep hill and we had to get off and walk. Every garden and every house and every plant was the most wonderful one yet. I liked to watch the expressions on Kitty's face as they changed from wonder to delight. Kitty was beginning to live her dream life. She was beginning to feel the world, hard and real, all about her. I said, "The sun is hot," but she just laughed and said, "I love it."

At last there was the top of the hill, and we could look down to the blue-green water and the long rolling beaches that spread out beneath us. There was the

country store, and we found the caretaker, who took us down the narrow path to the little cottage. It was set back just above the beach-line. The stucco was white, and the roof was stepped to catch the rain-water as it trickled down the slope. We walked up the porch and into the living-room, which was cool after the hot rays of the midday sun. There were two doors at the back; one to the kitchen and one to the bedroom. Kitty ran from one to the other. She let her hand touch the bed and the chairs and the tables. She ran along the porch, and then she was sprawled out on the couch.

"Oh, Nick," she said. "I do love it so! We must have been right. Things like this are just for us."

After he had told us about the water and the electricity and the store, the caretaker left, and Kitty said: "I want to call up everybody I know and tell them how wonderful it is." I laughed and said something about it being a pretty expensive burst of enthusiasm.

FOR a month the days and nights were filled with new wonders. We rode our bicycles all over the island. There were the perfume factories, and watching the clippers land on the bay; and then there was the Aquarium, where Kitty wanted to walk on the bottom with a diver's helmet. We played tennis and golf, and at night we went dancing at the hotels. There were hours on the beach in front of the cottage. Our bodies were tanned from the sun, and Kitty's eyes were always sparkling and darting about as she soared higher and higher on our flight of youth.

One night, just before we went to sleep, Kitty said: "This isn't fair."

I wanted to know what she meant, and she said: "Life is too short as it is. We shouldn't have to sleep. Do you realize that we spend one third of our life in an unconscious state?" I tried to tell her we had to do that, or we wouldn't be able to have the other two-thirds, but Kitty wanted everything at once. . . .

Every place we went, Kitty's eyes kept searching for the man who would look like the picture she carried in her locket. She wanted to ask someone about an unpublished American poet, but there were lots of unpublished poets. There would be men on the beach, and Kitty would talk to them. There were a lot of people who wanted each to tell her about his life, but it was never the life she wanted to hear.

On one Wednesday I took out a canvas and tried to do some sketching. I blamed it on the heat, but no matter what it was, I couldn't seem to find anything I liked. That night Kitty wanted to go into Hamilton and see a movie, but I thought she should rest, and anyhow I didn't feel like going. I walked along the beach by myself. I kept trying to find the key that would solve the puzzle, but there didn't seem to be one.

All that week I tried to paint. I used color, but all I could bring home were slashed-up canvases. On Friday we were supposed to go out fishing, but I didn't go. I said that I was going to paint, and I did. I painted a marine, and after I had looked at it from five feet, I remembered the line about "ashes to ashes," and I tossed it into the water. I went back and made a drink, and then when I had finished that one, I made another. It was a

hot day, and I sat on the porch in my trunks and felt the heat eating into my body. The drinks were cold, but then the liquor would heat my blood, and I would have to have another one to cool off. It was a vicious circle, and by the time Kitty came home, I was ready to swim back to New York.

I said: "How was the fishing?" It had been something new and exciting. She said: "It was wonderful." I wanted to know if they had caught many, and when she said, "A lot," I told her that she didn't do very well.

Kitty said, "What do you mean?" and I said that she could have stayed home and caught the biggest fish on the island. She thought I was joking, but I told her that I was fed up. I said: "It was a nice flight while it lasted, but now the plane has crashed, and we haven't got any parachutes."

And then Kitty cried, and for the first time I didn't go to her and put my arms around her. I just sat there and looked at her. I wanted to kiss her, because I loved her and she was my wife; but I knew what would happen if I did. We would make up, and then in the morning everything would start all over again. There would be more wild dreams, more flights of youth, and more bills that Kitty would pay.

I walked off the porch and started to wheel the bicycle up the path. Kitty tried to stop her tears. She said, "Where are you going?" and I said something about the Big Dipper, for that would hold a lot of swizzles, and I was still hot. Kitty kept calling, "Nick! Nick, please don't leave me," and then I didn't hear any more, for I was riding down the road, and the sandy cliffs put a wall between us.

I kept telling myself it was good for her to cry. Perhaps she would come to her senses. For a moment I wondered about leaving her in the cottage alone—the sun was down, and soon it would be dark. But then there was a hill, and the wheels were moving quickly, and there was no turning back now.

I stopped at a hotel and sat up at the bar and had a drink. I turned around and looked at the people who were there. It seemed queer not to have Kitty. And then I thought about her crying and sitting alone in the cottage.

There was a large party sitting at the corner table, and they began to laugh. I listened to them for a moment, and then I began to wonder why they were laughing. In Kitty's world only the young, only the young on a flight of youth, could laugh. But these people were laughing, and then I heard some others out on the porch. They were just ordinary men and women. They would be here for a week or maybe two, and then they would be in New York or Boston or Peoria, and they would be working, and they would be feeling the world, hard and real, all about them. Kitty was wrong. We hadn't found life; we were running away from it.

I STARTED to laugh; it felt good. I laughed again, and listened to myself. Ever since we had left college, there had been a question in my mind. Now I was able to answer it. I paid for the drink, and walked down the steps and stood at the dock and watched the moon playing with the ripples on the water.

I walked up the street, and then I was sitting at a table in another place. My back was against the wall, and the stones felt cool through my shirt. I noticed a man at the next table. He was wearing a dirty linen suit, and his eyes were black and sunken. He had a white beard, and for a moment I wondered if that would have been my fate if I had allowed Kitty to hold back the key to the puzzle. I must have stared at him, for he nodded, and his deep voice was saying: "You're an American, aren't you?"

I told him I was, and then we were sitting together, and there were two drinks on the table. I introduced myself, and he told me to call him Soul. He said: "I have a first name, but it isn't very pleasant." He paused, and then he said: "It's 'Lost.'" For a moment I thought we were both drunk, but he kept on talking.

"You're smiling," he said. "You think I'm drunk. Well, maybe I am. I don't know. The days are so much alike, nothing seems to make any difference."

I took up my glass and said, "Here's how," and then I took a drink.

"Yes. Here's how," he said. "Here's how the world ends—not with a bang, but a whimper. That's not mine. It's somebody else's." He started to laugh. We sat there for an hour and talked.

WE solved some of the problems of the world, and then I told him about Kitty and me and college. I told him about her dreams and her love of adventure. I told him how she wanted to ride on the waves and feel the wind blowing her through life, and no rules. He listened with a queer half-smile on his face, and then he let his head rest on his arms, and I let him sleep for a while. I sat there and watched the people coming in; they were still laughing. But then the door opened, and Kitty stood there, and she was crying. Her dress was wet from a shower, and her hair was falling in front of her face. She saw me, and then she cried, "Nick!" and rushed over to the table.

I tried to be indifferent, but Kitty was in my arms, and she was sobbing. It wasn't one of her polite little cries. Her body was shaking, and I felt her chest rising and falling quickly as she pressed in closer.

She kept trying to talk, but all I could hear were garbled words between her sobs. I kissed her and said: "Don't cry, Kitty. Please, don't cry." But she just hung on to me, and I held her closely. I gave her my drink, and she took a long swallow, and then she pushed the hair out of her face. She said; "Oh, Nick, why did you leave me?"

I wanted to tell her why, but there weren't any words: it was just something I felt inside of me. I tightened my arms around her, and remembered the day Kitty had tried to squeeze her thoughts into me.

Kitty said: "Nick, you do love me, don't you?" And I said: "Yes, Kitty, I do love you. More than anything else in the world." I did love her. I think I loved her at that moment more than I ever had.

We didn't say anything for a moment. Kitty just sat there and let her head drop on my shoulder. There was a burst of laughter from the other side of the room, and my friend raised his head. Kitty looked up, but then she let her head drop back again.

I said: "Kitty, this is Mr. Soul." She just nodded without looking up, for she was crying again. She was crying softly, and I knew she felt better.

My friend said: "I'm sorry I can't say I'm glad to know you. Women are rocks."

I thought I would cheer him up, so I said: "Rocks? What do you mean?"

"Rocks for ships to crash on in the middle of the night," he said.

I laughed, but he kept on talking. He said: "I knew a woman once—knew a woman?" He laughed. "I loved a woman. They think I'm crazy down here. I've been here for years. I stand around when all the boats come in, because I know some day she'll come back to me."

I watched his eyes as he talked. There was something peculiar in them, and I kept on staring.

"Some day she'll get off one of those boats, and I'll be here waiting for her." He stopped and took a drink, and then he said: "But you don't want to hear about it. I've told a lot of people. They only laugh at me."

Kitty straightened up slowly. Her voice was calm now. She was saying: "I won't laugh. I want to listen to you."

The man looked at her, and then he turned away. He stared out of the window. He said: "It's a lonely life, when you haven't got anyone. It's not life; it's hell." His words trailed off, but Kitty was leaning over the table. Her face was rigid, and she was staring at him. Her eyes were darting back and forth.

Kitty said: "Were you ever married?" There was a new tone in her voice. I put my hand on her arm, but she asked the question again.

The man kept staring out of the window. He spoke slowly, "Yes," he said. "Yes, I was married."

Kitty reached inside of her dress and took out the locket. I watched her as she held it in her hands, almost afraid to open it. She undid the catch, and then she was peering down at the picture. She looked up slowly. Her hand was trembling. The man kept mumbling, and Kitty listened and looked at him long and deep, and then she let her head drop, and there were tears in her eyes. This man could never fill the picture of her father. She had always known him to be young and romantic. To Kitty, her father had been the epitome of everything that was filled with life and hope. This man was a lost soul.

I wanted to take her away, but she kept staring ahead of her. Her lips were moving as if she were afraid to say something, and then she said: "What was your wife's name?" The man didn't answer. Kitty's eyes were sparkling. She waited, and then she said it slowly. She said: "Was your wife's name—Margaret?"

SHE seemed to be holding her breath. The man turned slowly in his chair. The far-away look on his face had disappeared. Now he was here, with us, sitting at the table. There was a film over his eyes. He started to mumble, and then he whispered: "No . . . No . . . Her name was Carlotta — Carlotta." He sat up straight, with his shoulders back. His pointed chin was raised, and then he be-

came hysterical. He kept calling for her, and then his quiet sobbing became a loud wail: "I want my wife . . . I want Carlotta."

He began to sway, and his body fell to the floor. Kitty bent over him and tried to hold him up in her arms. The tears were rolling down her face. She knew now this wasn't her father. She knew, and yet there was something about him. This man seemed to be about the same age her father would have been. But his wife's name had been Carlotta.

Kitty couldn't stop her tears, and the bartender came over and said: "Don't mind him, lady. He's just a bum around here. He's always doing that." But Kitty was standing up, and she was crying as she shouted:

"He's not a bum! He's not a bum!"

THEN there was a carriage, and gray walls and the smell of iodoform. Kitty sat by his bed in the hospital and held his hand in hers. In a moment this man had done what her father would have done. She kept thinking that some place in the world he too might be crying for his wife—and—and his daughter. Kitty looked up at me. No longer did her eyes dart back and forth. Now there was something new there. It was almost a look of peace and understanding. Something had happened to her. The man mumbled, and every once in a while he called for Carlotta. Once he seemed to speak to Kitty. His voice was dry and thin. He said: "It's been lonely. Lonely. Lonely."

A doctor and the nurse came in. There was a hypodermic injection, and then the nurse was taking his pulse. He closed his eyes, and Kitty looked fearfully at the doctor.

She said: "He will be—he will be all right, won't he?" We walked out in the corridor, and the doctor patted Kitty's arm.

"He's a very sick man. Alcohol. Lack of nourishment and severe shock," he said. "Is he your father?"

Kitty was quiet for a moment. She was fighting to keep back the tears, and then she said slowly: "No. No, he isn't my father."

When we went outside, it was long after midnight and the streets were deserted. There had been another shower, and the cobblestones were still wet. I tried to make Kitty take something to eat, but the evening had been too much for her, and she only wanted a cup of coffee. We sat in silence. I kept thinking that this had done something to Kitty. It had been a revelation of what might have happened to her father. She was trying to hold up, but every so often there would be tears, and I would hold her hand and wipe away the drops.

She said, "Let's go back, Nick," and we walked back to the hospital. Kitty said: "Oh, Nick. I'm frightened. It's so quiet." I squeezed her hand, and then we were back in the little room, and the nurse was sitting by the bed. She said, "There's no change," and we stood by his side, and Kitty stared down at him. She was trying to substitute the picture in her locket for the face of an old man who was tired of living a lonely life.

The doctor came in and out; and then it was after three, and he was shaking his

head. Kitty began to cry softly. She wanted to stay there with him, but the doctor said, "No," and I took her outside again.

I wanted to go to a hotel for the night, but Kitty said, "I'll feel better if we go back," and we took our bikes and pedaled across the island. Kitty kept her head down. She was tired. I remembered the first time that we had taken this road. Her eyes had been sparkling, and she had been singing with life; now her dreams had crumbled. I rode close to her, and once she took my hand and our fingers pressed together. It was just beginning to get light when we reached the cottage.

I thought Kitty would want to go right to bed, but she didn't. We sat out on the porch and watched the sun as it seemed to rise up out of the water. We smoked a cigarette each; then Kitty snuggled close to me, and I held her in my arms.

"Nothing seems real," she said. "I can't believe this night has ever happened."

I just nodded and kissed the back of her neck, and then Kitty leaned forward. She said: "Nick, you don't possibly think he could have been my father?"

I DIDN'T answer for a moment. I was trying to think back over the last hours. I was trying to find some place to begin my thoughts, but there wasn't any. I said: "No, Kitty. I'm sure he wasn't your father."

Kitty shook her head. She said: "No, he wasn't my father, but he might have been. And now they are both gone, because they belonged to a world that doesn't exist any more. There isn't any flight of youth. It's either there, or it isn't. We don't have to look for it."

In that moment I felt that there had been another death. I felt that in Kitty's mind her father had died, too. Her tears and thoughts, they were not alone for the man here; they were also for *her* father. No longer would she go on searching for him and for the life she had thought he lived.

And then she said: "I'm not sad any more. This was the only way. You heard what he told me. He said it was lonely. I don't want to be lonely, Nick. I don't want this kind of adventure any longer. I mean—I want something else with it. That man wanted it, and what did he get? Nothing. He probably thought Bermuda would be his jumping-off place for the rest of the world. But it wasn't. He just came here, and he stayed until he was a lonely old man."

She looked out over the ocean. We finished our cigarettes, and then Kitty started to say something, but she stopped.

I said, "What is it, Kit?" and she just shook her head. She said: "I was going to say something, but that's all in the past now." She paused, and then she looked up at the sky. She said: "God does have a way of talking to people, doesn't He? Oh, Nick, it's all so clear now. We wanted the world hard and real around us; and then we got it, we didn't know what to do with it." Kitty laughed. She had been learning quickly. "We need a reason for adventure; for dancing and swimming and long nights of moonlight." I felt her hand in mine, and then she said: "Nick, let's find those other things. Things like college and what it stands for, and then we'll find—things like this."

On Saturday we were on the boat. We didn't swim in the pool, and we didn't go to the dances at night. We walked up to the bow and stood there and watched the water spraying away from the boat. We walked around the deck, and I held Kitty's hand in mine. I thought of our wedding-night. Kitty had said the wind in the trees reminded her of the water washing up on the beach, and now there *was* the sound of the water. Afterward we stood up at the bow again. Kitty said: "We won't ever be lonely, will we, Nick?" I held her hand tightly, and she said: "We will go back to college in the fall."

I said: "Yes, Kitty. We'll go back." I said, "Yes," because I knew what she meant. We would go back and begin all over again. We would find an apartment, and we would go to classes, and in the evenings we would study together. There would be cool nights, and we would light a fire and sit up close to it. And then it would be spring, and we would walk up to our hill and sit there and hold hands and look out across the valley. The years would pass quickly, and it would be graduation, and we would sit there together.

TOGETHER—that's the way it would be with everything. We would go up to the platform and take our diplomas, and then we would be out in the world, and it would truly be hard and real all around us, but we would never forget our first months together. We would never forget the pines, tall and stately, looking down on us. We would never forget holding on to a sailboat and kicking our legs out in back of us. We would never forget the warm sand and the long moonlit nights. We would say: "We had our flight of youth, and now we're back." And then we would kiss each other and say: "Things like this are just for us and nobody else."

BOBBY'S CURRENT EVENT

(Continued from page 21)

her heart. But she felt a little foolish, and overly sentimental, when Bobby bounded into the hall a few moments later. She might have been the wind for all he heeded her—the Group was again the paramount joy in his life.

"Hi, Pip!" he shouted in greeting. (Everyone called the young man Pip, though his name was Richard.)

"Hi, there, Bob!"

Pip liked Bobby, and for that reason Claudia liked Pip, who was about as nice a person as ever wore a signet ring—with beautiful manners and a clear open face. "I bet if he has a mother, he's awfully good to her," Claudia had remarked to David, and David had agreed, somewhat abstrusely, that he looked like the sort of a young man with a mother who expected to have a son who was good to her. It was on the subtle side, but Claudia knew exactly what he meant. It had a lot to do with Pip's not smoking or drinking, or running around with girls—which made him the perfect influence for young children. Certainly, Bobby adored him; and now, as Claudia watched them together, she had a sense of being an outsider.

"WHAT are we doing today, Pip?" Bobby asked.

"Some of us are going to the zoo, and some of us are going roller-skating in the park," said Pip.

Bobby's thumbs came out of his armpits. "Yippee!" he cried, leaping in the air, with his knees up.

"Oh, the zoo will be lots of fun," Claudia said swiftly.

Bobby's face fell. "But I want to go skating!" he expostulated.

"No, dear."

Pip saw trouble coming. "I wouldn't have mentioned it," he explained in an aside, "only Bobby told me he was a good skater."

"But I am!" Bobby indignantly protested.

"I know you are," Claudia appeased him. "But you've never skated with a crowd; you've always had Bertha watching you."

"Oh, I'll watch him," Pip said. "You don't have to worry about that."

"You'll have so many to watch—"

"I have to go!" Bobby cried, in a kind of frenzy.

"Bobby, no. Please. Wait until you're older."

"I'm old enough." He wheeled upon her mutinously, but his eyes were filled with hurt rather than with enmity, and she knew that she had let him down. She hadn't meant to, but it had happened. In the brief passage of a single moment, she had chained him to her, and had lost him. Once again they were strangers, forever linked by the accident of birth.

"I have to go," he repeated in a stiff hard voice. "You have to let me go."

It was easy to mistake despair for insolence; and in the name of discipline, she could deny him with a perfect justice.

"No, Bobby, I don't have to do anything of the sort," she corrected firmly.

Bobby drew his breath in sharply. Claudia thought: "At this moment, he hates me." Pip must have known it too. He put his hand on Bobby's shoulder. "Look, old man," he said, with an air of understanding all sides of the case, "you don't want to upset your mother. I mean, if it was my mother, and I were you, I wouldn't go."

BOBBY said nothing. He stood torn with conflict. Claudia was torn with conflict too. She looked at her son, and she looked at Pip.

"Will you see that he doesn't skate too fast?" she asked with effort.

Bobby could hardly believe his ears. "Yippee!" he cried. "I can go!"

She walked with them to the door. Bobby rushed to the elevator to ring the bell, his skates jangling from his arm. The cables whirred. The elevator door slid open.

"Have a grand time!" Claudia called after them.

Bobby hesitated, and then all at once he turned back and flung himself against

her, his small arms straining in a quick hard hug. He was away from her before she could hug him back, but for a long moment after he had gone, the warm damp odor of him lingered.

IN a little while Matthew woke up. Claudia gave him his milk and tucked him into his carriage. He hadn't quite come back from his vast journey into sleep. He held a woolly dog in his fat hands, and studied it, his lips pushed out and his opaque blue eyes crossing ever so slightly in inscrutable cogitation.

"You funnymalink!" said Claudia.

He made no response. The exquisite idiocy of babyhood still enfolded him. "You're not very congenial," she chided him.

Nevertheless she discovered that it was fun to wheel him up and down the Avenue amid a Thursday regiment of mothers, who didn't have anything half as good to show.

"If I set my mind to it, and if Bertha would only give me a chance, I could make a very professional mother," she thought. David, of course, wouldn't like the idea too much. Professional mothers usually make inferior wives, forever imbedded in the cradle, so to speak.

The clamor of an ambulance-gong from out of nowhere sliced through into her thoughts. Her heart stopped. She was a fool about an ambulance; the sight of one tearing through the streets never failed to fill her with dread. She quickened her steps. How good it would be to get back to the warmth and safety of her own home! It didn't make any difference that it was only a furnished apartment; it was home because it held the three people she loved most in the world. She found, all at once, that she couldn't divide them in her thoughts. David was the children, and the children were David. It was wonderful to think of them going their separate ways each morning, and coming together again at night.

She had an impulse, as she let herself into the dim, empty apartment, to light all the lights, to fill all the rooms with light. She wanted light, against the darkness of the night outside.

She settled Matthew in his crib, and while she heated his cereal, she set the table in the kitchen, and laid a plate for Bobby as a special treat.

She glanced at her watch. Twenty of six. The Group always broke up before five. Maybe her watch was fast. She telephoned downstairs to ask the hall-boy.

"What's the right time, James?"

"Five-forty-seven, Mrs. Horneledge."

She was about to telephone Pip's house to find out if anything was wrong, when the bell rang. Her heart lifted in a wave of relief. Funny that he rang only once, though! Then she remembered that she had reproved him, at noon, for almost blasting the roof off. She was touched at his restraint.

"Nobody home!" she called out with her hand on the knob, rewarding him with a little of the lunacy that so delighted him. There was no answer.

"I said, 'Nobody home!'" she insisted doggedly.

In reply, the bell pealed out again—as if it were being rung by a person who meant business, who had no time to waste on nonsense.

Once, in a nightmare, she had dreamed of a policeman standing at her door with a little book in his hand, and tidings of death on his lips. Now this one at the door said—and that seemed like the nightmare, too:

"Are you Mrs. Horneledge?"

Her lips moved, but no sound came. There were two of her all at once. One of her cowered and covered her face and cried out in denial. The other of her stood straight and still, and heard what he had to say, and let life come to an end within her. The policeman's shoes were black and shiny. He moved them restlessly beneath her scrutiny. It would have been easier for him if she screamed.

PIP was waiting at the hospital. He looked so full of suffering that the policeman thought he was her husband, and left them together.

"Oh, God!" said Pip. It was all he could manage to bring out. His round young face was twisted and old with pain. "You're wonderful," he added in awe. "You're so quiet."

"I'm not letting myself feel," said Claudia. She didn't say that she was dead inside. He wouldn't have understood that—nor how she could have moved so steadily about the business of locking the apartment, and taking Matthew to a neighbor.

She would have kept on being dead if he hadn't begun to babble how it had happened. The policeman had already told her, but Pip seemed to want to tell her, too. It was like a confession to cleanse his soul: "Another boy lost his balance and fell against him. Bobby couldn't stop himself. He skidded off into the street. A car was turning the corner—" A violent shudder shook him. "He was unconscious when we picked him up. I went with him in the ambulance. They took him right upstairs. I tried to reach you on the phone, but there wasn't any answer, so I called your husband's office." He wrung his hands. "Oh, it's so awful to have to wait like this without knowing whether he's alive or dead!"

His fear destroyed her. Life flowed back into her in waves of agony. She rushed to the corridor. A nurse passed. Claudia caught her arm in frenzy. "My little boy—he was just brought in—I've got to go to him—"

The nurse looked down from her great height of authority. "I'm sure everything is being done," she said, not unkindly. "The doctor will be with you presently—" She knew how to deal with hysterical mothers. Claudia found herself alone.

She saw a man in white coat. "Please, Doctor—" she approached him sobbingly.

The man shook his head. "I'm an orderly," he said.

David came a few minutes later. He was strong, and he was calm. She marveled that he could be so master of himself. Only the little vein beating in his temple, and the way his jaw was set, showed what was going on within him. He took her hand and held it in his firm, warm grasp. He nodded to Pip. "I'll go and see him," he said.

"But they won't let you!" Claudia cried.

"They'll let me," David promised her.

It seemed hours before he came back. His lips smiled assuringly, but his eyes told a different story. She gasped:

"David, he's dead!"

"Nonsense!"

"David, you're lying to me!"

"Have I ever lied to you?"

"Do you really mean it, sir?" Pip's voice trembled with relief. Tears rolled unashamedly down his round cheeks.

"There are no bones broken," David said.

"I want to be with him! Let me go to him!"

He held her back. "Not yet, dear. He's still asleep."

A little cry escaped her. "You mean he's—"

"Well, naturally," David brusquely injected. "He's had a damn' good conk on the head—"

He didn't tell her until later on, that it was a fractured skull. It was easier for her to know that when she could sit with Bobby and hold his hand, and hear him speak, occasionally, from among the white bandages that made his face look small, and pale, like an angel's face.

"All kids look like angels when they're sick," said David. He couldn't fool her, though. His heart was breaking. There was a night when she held him in her arms, and was strong, while grief had its way with him.

"We'll never lose him," she whispered. "Even if he dies, he's part of us—"

David was rebellious. "It's not enough—"

"It's more than most people have," said Claudia.

He raised his head to look at her. With his finger-tips, he touched her lips, her eyes, as if he would imbibe some secret knowing that was hers.

"Yes," he said at last. "It's more than most people have."

It was strange that it should have been the next morning that the doctor told them Bobby was going to get well. . . .

He was in the hospital for three weeks, and he lost the look of an angel.

"He's a little devil," said the day nurse fondly. "He keeps nagging to go home."

"But darling," Claudia appealed to him, "you're having a lovely time here, with everybody sending you such wonderful toys."

"I have to go to the Group," said Bobby.

"There's not going to be any more Group." But she didn't say it aloud, for there was nothing to be gained by making an issue of it while he was still laid up. It was one of the first things, however, that she and Bertha had decided. Bertha, who had aged ten years in the past weeks, was, in her own manner of speaking, finished with Groups. "From now on," she said, "I take my day off after supper."

"No such thing," Claudia protested. "I'm going to be a lot more active with the children."

"Ach," said Bertha, looking worried.

Bobby looked worried too, when his mother hinted of gay times to come. "We'll have the nicest sprees together," she confided to him.

"What are sprees?" he queried doubtfully.

"Oh, long walks, and picnics, and all that sort of thing."

He was politely appreciative, but nothing more. He seemed to have forgotten that he had flirted with death.

"It's amazing, isn't it," Claudia said to David. "The way he acts, you'd think that nothing ever happened to him."

"What's amazing about it?"

"You seem to have forgotten what's happened, too," she accused him.

"Completely," he said. "Suppose you try and do the same."

Her voice trembled with passion. "I'll never forget," she cried.

"That's going to be swell for Bobby," he remarked with a short laugh.

She didn't tell him what was in her mind until a few days before Bobby was ready to come home.

"David," she said one evening, "as long as you're tied up here until May, would you object if I took Bobby straight up to the farm from the hospital?"

"Certainly I'd object," he promptly replied.

"That's unreasonable," she pointed out. "Bertha will be here to take care of you and Matthew."

"And you?"

"I'll have Fritz, and I can always get Mrs. Cootz to come in to do the heavy cleaning and some cooking."

"But what's the idea?" he demanded.

"I've been doing a lot of thinking."

"You've been doing the wrong kind of thinking," David said, slipping boot-trees into his shoes. "Did you see my slippers?"

"Here—under the chair. David, listen—"

He took them. "Thanks. . . . I don't want to listen. It's ridiculous."

"Oh, please don't make it so hard for me," she begged. "I hate to leave you—I never thought we'd turn into a week-end marriage; but a woman's got to think of her children."

"That goes for a father too," said David. "If I thought it was best for Bobby to leave for the farm now, I'd let you take him— No, by God, I wouldn't! I'd have Bertha take both youngsters, and you'd stay where you belong—with me."

She couldn't help feeling warm, and thrilled inside. He had a cave-man look to him.

"But Bobby doesn't need the country to recuperate," he went on. "I'm not worried about his fractured skull—that's all healed up; but I don't want him to have another fracture that will never heal."

"Oh, I know," she put in witheringly. "You want him to be virile, and independent—"

"And without fear," he finished for her. "Without your fear."

"But the city's no place for children!" she argued vehemently. "Can you deny that if we'd stayed up in the country, this would never have happened?"

"YOU just mentioned Mrs. Cootz," said David, with apparent irrelevance. "Do you remember little Joey Cootz?"

"Yes, of course; he used to come over to play with Bobby occasionally. Why?"

"He'll never come over to play with Bobby again," said David quietly. "Little Joey's dead. He fell from the hayloft last week, and broke his neck."

She gave a cry of shock and horror. "Oh, *no!* Who told you?"

"Fritz."

She sank to a chair, stricken, and vicariously bereaved. David patted her shoulder. "He was a nice kid," he muttered huskily.

"Oh, David," she whispered, "it's such an awful big dose of philosophy to swallow at a single gulp."

"I choked on it too," said David.

They didn't speak again until they were in bed.

"David—" said Claudia, into the dark.

"Yes, dear."

"Bobby wants to go back to the Group."

"I know it. He wants another pair of skates too. He told me."

Claudia didn't answer. After a little silence, David softly called: "Are you asleep?"

"No," said Claudia. "I'm thinking. The right kind of thinking," she amended. She turned and put her arms around him.

SPRING PARADE

(Continued from page 47)

New York studios, and from that had advanced along the various steps until he headed Universal's European production. In that capacity he hired Koster as director. When he came to Hollywood, he insisted that Koster accompany him.

In addition to the picture in which she made her début, Koster directed Deanna in her second, fifth and sixth ventures.

Deanna has skipped through four years without stubbing her toe, and if she follows the course laid down by the two men who have brought her to this point of her career, a misstep is improbable. Lately, however, there have been alarming rumors. It is said that she has been advised to take a more active part in the selection of her stories. It is likely that she will pay no attention to those who urge this stand, for she is aware of the Pasternak-Koster genius. But if she does listen to the blandishments of others, and attempt to dictate her vehicles, that toe is likely to hit something very hard. Deanna has but to read Hollywood history for the long list of favorites who attained a position which allowed them to choose their yarns.

And where are they now?

HILDRETH—HER STORY

(Continued from page 43)

said mine were the first you had ever known well. Have you learned so much just from observing them?"

"Observing," said Hildreth, "and talking with them, and hearing them talk among themselves. And remembering how I felt and thought at their age. I've a good memory. This summer I've been remembering how dreadful that other summer was, ten years ago, when I was Dillon's age, and Father left us."

"Was it hard for you?" asked Laura. "The divorce, I mean. Mamma and Mimi both said you'd never miss your father because he hadn't been like a father at all. He always ignored you."

"What if he did ignore me?" exclaimed Hildreth. "I didn't ignore *him!* He was part of my life. And everyone said I was like him; that I had his brains; I was terribly proud of that. I wanted to hurry

and grow up so that he'd notice me and talk with me and find out that I had his brains."

Laura was touched.

"Hildy, why don't you go over to the Port and see him? Get acquainted with him, now that you've grown up? I'm sure it would mean a great deal to him."

"No, it wouldn't!" The girl's voice rose high and thin. "If I'd ever meant anything to him, anything at all, he'd have tried to see me before now, or written to me, or something! He could have, easily enough! He knew where I went to school! He could have gone to Miss Gallop's to see me if he was afraid to face Mother and Granny at the apartment! I used to hope he would. I gave up hoping long ago. And now it's too late."

SHE was probably right, thought Laura. It wasn't such a good idea. He'd only snub her and make her hate him the more. He had said, "No human relationship could ever be of any vital importance compared to my work." Once he had understood that his daughter was financially able to go to college, he had asked no further questions about her.

A most unpleasant man, not human. But Hildreth was human. She had real blood in her veins. It leaped up in her face when she was embarrassed, or excited and angry, as she was now in speaking about him. That uncontrollable blush was appealing, somehow. It made her seem vulnerable. It gave away her feelings. She wasn't her father over again. She did have feelings.

"What I'm trying to put across to you, Laura," she had her voice under control again, "is not how I felt about my father when he deserted us, but how your boys are going to feel about going to a new school."

"Oh, they won't mind much," said Laura. "They're pretty thick-skinned and they like new fields to conquer."

"All the same," insisted Hildreth, "they may feel bad, just at first, about not going home. They're fond of their home. They're always talking about it. It was all they had to hold onto, last winter, the familiar place and the familiar school, and Regina. I do think it was dreadful of you to go off as you did, without saying good-by to them, or telling them where you were going, or why, and never writing to them, even at Christmas or birthdays. Cass and Dillon both told me their Christmas was awful; they had a tree and a turkey, but you weren't there, and the presents supposed to be from you had no postmark, they didn't come by mail and didn't have your handwriting on them, so the boys knew Regina had bought them herself. It was easy to fool Pete and Fergus, because they're young enough to be greedy about presents as such. But Cass and Dillon are eleven and nine and shrewd for their age. They knew their father was dead. What proof had they that you weren't dead, too? They were afraid to ask Regina outright because they knew she would tell them the truth, and worrying was less awful than knowing for certain. They stood it until Cass' birthday, and when you didn't come then, or write, they had to ask. Regina told them you weren't dead. But think how they suffered between Christmas and April!"

"You're imagining all this!" protested Laura. "They can't have told you all this! And I know Regina didn't. She doesn't talk unless she has to."

"I know," said Hildreth impressively. "I've put two and two together. They've let things drop. They've asked questions and shown enormous relief when they found out the answers."

"You don't have to tell me that they ask questions," said Laura. "They've done that ever since they could talk. It's plain curiosity, not suppressed worries. There is nothing suppressed about my sons. You think they're the way you probably were at their age, but remember, you were an only child, and lonely, and thin-skinned. My sons don't brood. If anything bothers them they start a fight and relieve their feelings with their fists."

"Here come the boys now, Laura. Tell them now. Tell Cass and Dillon, at least. Let them stay with us for supper; it will make them feel important and adult; we can all discuss school together. They can break it to Pete later."

The boys came up the beach road with Fergus lagging behind, because his legs were the shortest, and Pete tearing ahead because he always had to be first if he could. Mr. Higgins, eating a sparrow in the shade, saw Pete—and shot under the house. Hildreth went to meet Regina.

"We want Cass and Dillon to have supper with us. That's all right, isn't it?"

Regina said grudgingly, "I suppose so. But no acid fruit and no shell-fish, or I'll be up with them all night."

"I'll give you a lift up the hill," offered Hildreth. "I have to drive up for Mother anyway."

When she returned, with Madeleine, Cass was treating his mother to a long dissertation on the digestive processes of jellyfish, as explained to him by Geoffrey, and Dillon had lured Mr. Higgins out from under the house and was petting him. The boys appeared undisturbed.

"Have you told them, Laura?"

"Told us what?" asked Cass.

Laura murmured evasively.

Hildreth unhooked Madeleine and set the table. She went out to Laura again.

"How do they like the idea?"

"What idea?" asked Cass.

"Boarding-school," said Hildreth. "If your mother won't tell you, I will, because the news is too good to keep any longer. You're going to be crazy about boarding-school. Geoff was. He went when he was only Pete's age. He learned to play hockey and basketball and football. He had such a good time that he hated going home for vacations. He told me so."

"Who's going to boarding-school? Me and Dillon?" asked Cass. He showed no excitement, but he was alert.

"And Pete," said Laura.

"When?" asked Dillon. He stood up, and the cat fell off his lap and stalked away, indignant.

"Next month," said Hildreth. "Your mother and Aunt Mimi are going to live down here all winter, near enough so you can come here for vacations. Geoff will be here, too. You'll enjoy your vacations if he's here, won't you?"

Cass said: "We'll have to go home first, to get our things, won't we? Our winter clothes and all?"

"No," said Hildreth, "that won't be necessary, because you'll have to have all new outfits for a new school. You couldn't get into last year's clothes, anyway, you've both grown so this summer. We're all going up to the city together, Labor Day, and we'll be busy as anything shopping for clothes and for schools. I'm going to a new school, too, and I haven't yet decided which one. You'll want to drive around and look at several before you decide which one. Maybe you'll choose the one that Geoffrey went to. You'd like to go to his school, wouldn't you?"

Dillon said: "You m-mean we aren't going home at all?"—not pleading, just asking for definite information.

"That's right," said Hildreth. "You see, there just isn't time."

The boys glanced at each other.

"You do see, don't you?" asked Laura gently.

They nodded gravely. They saw.

Chapter Thirteen

THEY were quiet at supper. That was to be expected. They had received a surprising and exciting piece of news and they needed time to think it over and talk it over privately and get used to the idea. They would doubtless want to discuss it with Geoffrey, too.

Laura walked up the hill with them after supper. Hildreth, watching them go, had a feeling that of the three Laura was the least mature, the least adequate. Cass and Dillon, one on each side of her, seemed to be protecting her from any danger rather than keeping close to gain comfort from her. Even her own young sons, thought Hildreth, seemed to realize that Laura was helpless and needed looking after.

Long after they were out of sight, Hildreth stayed where she was, sitting on the stone wall, hugging her elbows, her eyes on the ground. Already the days were shorter. The darkness came down more quickly after supper than it had in June.

"Waiting for someone?" asked Geoffrey, and she started up, taken like that without warning. She hadn't heard him; the dust had muffled his footsteps; and he hadn't whistled to her.

"Yes. For Laura. She went up with the boys. She ought to be back soon."

She sat down on the wall again. She was trembling, for some idiotic reason. He stood before her, tall and broad, smiling at her. He wouldn't smile like that if he still resented their quarrel, would he? He wouldn't come like this to find her, would he, unless he wanted to be friends again?

It was the first time they had been alone together since the row. She had been all ready to seek him out and apologize, and then she had been afraid to. Finding out how he felt about Laura had made her afraid to talk to him alone because she would be sure to betray the knowledge that she wasn't supposed to have; her treacherous face would give her away; and he might be angry if he found that she knew just how silly he was.

But it was getting dark now. He couldn't see her face so well. And it would be wonderful to be friends again; to blot out the quarrel.

She said, "You look taller and bigger than you did in June. I believe you're still growing, like the children."

He laughed. His teeth were white and even.

"Oh, Geoff," she burst out, "such good news! I'm so happy and relieved about it! I persuaded Laura to let me tell the boys about the plan for next winter and while it was a big surprise to them, they seemed to like it."

So Laura had told her! Geoffrey said eagerly, "You're really pleased about it? I'm glad the boys are, too, but I was particularly anxious that you should approve. I value your judgment. Yes, and your approval."

Impulsively he reached for her hand. His grasp almost broke the bones. She was startled and confused. He never touched her except by accident. She said breathlessly: "Why wouldn't I be pleased? I think it's a wonderful idea! How could I help it?"

Cross purposes. Each of them was shaken out of normal commonsense and perceptiveness by an excess of emotion. She was thinking about college, and being free. He was thinking about love, and being married.

He said, "You're swell to feel that way," and freed her hand. She moved the fingers cautiously; they were bruised, but intact. He said, "I was afraid you'd think she was throwing herself away on me; that she was marrying me just because I get on well with the boys, and because she was sorry for me; and of course that wouldn't be good enough for either of us. But she really does care about me, Hildy. Not the way I care about her. Not yet. I don't expect that. I'll be patient. I think her first marriage must have made her a little afraid of love, poor darling. But she needn't be afraid of me, ever."

HILDRETH hardly made sense of what he said. The words rattled together madly, a babble of shouting in her ears, although he was speaking with perfect clarity, and low, almost below his breath. But the quality of his voice got through to her. This was something she had never heard in anyone's voice before. It moved her unbearably. She wanted to put her hands over her ears and run away and hide. She couldn't move a step. She had to bear it.

"I hadn't a hope that she'd marry me, till just lately. But I think I've been in love with her ever since that night we drove to the Port, you and she and I, and bought the fireworks."

(That night! "I made her go," thought Hildreth dimly. "I made him go. He didn't want to. He refused at first—")

"I'll take wonderful care of her, Hildy. I swear I'll make her happy. She won't be sorry. Neither will the boys."

They were going to be married. Live together in his house. Sleep in the same bed. . . .

"Of course you'll take good care of her!" Hildreth's voice was loud and sure—too loud. "She'll be happy with you! She'll be grateful to you, over and over again, for being the exact opposite of Uncle Drake. You're gentle, and patient, and you won't force her to do everything you want to do; you'll find out first if she wants it, too. You'll be

a good influence on the boys. They're too much like their father now. They've imitated him in everything. Now they'll imitate you; they've been trying to, all summer. They'll be gentler and less willful. And you won't be jealous of them and try to crowd them out. She's lucky to have you in love with her, Geoff."

GEOFF was tremendously moved. Why, he had never appreciated Hildreth before! She was more than a good friend. She was selfless. He had been unjust to her. He had thought that all women except Laura were like Cathy and his cold, selfish, nagging mother. But Hildreth was different, too. Hildreth and Laura. His friend and his love. He must be worth something or these two would never have bothered about him. He would never dare to doubt himself again. Self-doubt would be an insult to these two who believed in him.

He said, "You're generous, Hildy. You think about all the rest of us, even the welfare of the children, before you think about what it's going to do to you. Your plans are spoiled."

"You mean my plan for college?" said Hildreth, still rather loud but perfectly steady. "Don't fret about that. That can wait. I don't have to give it up altogether; just postpone it for a while; having to wait will be good discipline for me; teach me patience, perhaps. You've always scolded me for rushing at things."

("For sticking my neck out. Leading with my chin. You said it would get me into trouble. Is this trouble? I don't know yet. I can't think or feel yet. I sha'n't know whether it's real trouble till this shock wears off.")

"As a matter of fact, Geoff, my conscience has bothered me about going off for a whole year and leaving Mother and Laura to take care of each other. I snatched at the chance. But you know it wouldn't have worked satisfactorily. Mother and Laura are fond of each other and they get on well, but Mother requires an awful lot of waiting on, and Laura wouldn't do it—you know she wouldn't, and why should she? Mother isn't her job, but mine."

"You're very swell," said Geoffrey.

Madeleine called from indoors.

"I must go in," said Hildreth. "Will you come?"

"No thanks," he said. "I'll walk up and meet Laura."

Hildreth went in to her mother.

All the time she was setting up the card-table, dealing the cards, placing red on black, waiting for her mother to play, helping her mother to win, she listened for Geoffrey and Laura to return. She tried not to listen. She tried to close her ears. She didn't want to eavesdrop. She tried desperately to shut off her consciousness. But her very skin seemed to listen. What did two people in love, about to marry, say to each other when they were alone in the dark?

After a long time Laura came in alone, smiling. She looked exactly as usual. How could she look the same?

"You were right, Hildy. Absolutely right —about telling the boys ahead of time. They took it very well, didn't they?"

"It was you," said Hildreth, "who said it wouldn't bother them, whether they were told now or at the last minute. You said they were thick-skinned, not the way I was at their age."

"All the same, I'm glad the telling is over," said Laura. "I'm glad they didn't make any fuss. —Who's winning? Want me to take your place, Hildy?"

Hildreth went out on the porch, thankful to escape, and sat on the lowest step. The porch-light was out; she was thankful for the darkness. Shock was wearing off, gradually. Now she could think. She must think, and not just feel.

Geoffrey and Laura. Marriage. A fact to be faced. Why had the statement of the fact been a shock? Because she hadn't foreseen such an arrangement? Because she hadn't planned it herself and maneuvered it?

She forced herself to consider the marriage objectively. Why wasn't it a good idea? It was. It must be. If Geoffrey had never been seriously attracted to a woman before, it would have been natural to suppose that he had fallen in love with Laura because there were no other attractive women in sight. But there had been Cathy. He had been attracted; but he hadn't wanted to marry Cathy. His feeling for Laura must be different, because he wanted to marry her. It must be the difference between physical infatuation and real love. Laura must have something that Cathy had lacked; something he needed. Perhaps it was her very helplessness—her dependence and indecisiveness. Some people who were unsure of themselves needed bolstering up; some, perhaps, needed to be leaned upon. Laura would lean. No doubt about that. . . .

She had money. He had very little. He had always been ridiculously sensitive about money. Yet now he was planning to marry it. Perhaps love restored commonsense, and a sound sense of values, instead of destroying it, as was generally supposed. If Geoffrey and Laura loved each other, what difference did it make which had the money they lived upon?

There was a small sharp hurt in Hildreth's chest—a physical pain. "I wanted to lend him money," she thought, "and he was furious. We had that awful quarrel. He wouldn't take money from me, even as a loan. But he'll live on hers."

A tall broad shape loomed up in the path. He had come back! He couldn't keep away from Laura for even an hour.

"Oh, it's you! I hoped I could find you." The voice was Regina's, jerky and breathless, as if she had run down the hill. "Will you get me the keys to Mrs. Furnard's car? Don't tell her. Don't frighten her. There isn't any need for her to be worried yet. They can't have been out of the house more than an hour. They can't have gone far."

"They? Who?" asked Hildreth.

"Cass and Dillon." The nurse's voice caught and rasped and broke in a gasping sob. "They've run away."

Chapter Fourteen

HILDRETH went past her mother and Laura as casually as she could, a sweater over her arm, the car-keys clenched in her fist.

"I'm going out to get some air. I won't be long."

"Air?" echoed Madeleine, her light blue eyes rounding. "The windows and doors are wide open and you've been outdoors all day! I don't like you roaming about in the dark by yourself."

"Oh, Mother! Nothing'll hurt me!"

Hildreth got out at last.

"I'll drive. You watch the road, Regina. You know them so well, you'll be able to see them in the dark. What made them do it?"

"Boarding-school!" asserted the nurse fiercely. "She told them, didn't she? That's why she kept them with her for supper! I knew it must be something special. She never wanted them around at meals before. A fine time to break bad news to them—just before a meal! I wonder they could swallow."

"It was I who told them," said Hildreth. "I thought they took it very well. They were quiet about it. Very composed. I thought there might be an explosion. They're usually so violent about nothing."

"That's just the point!" snapped Regina. "If you knew anything about children, or if she did, either, you'd both have known they were up to something, quiet like that. When they're violent, there's nothing to worry about. Go slow. We can't miss them. We don't dare to miss them. They'll be trying to thumb a ride."

If a car had already picked them up. Or if a car hadn't seen them, and had struck them. Anything could happen on a pitch-black road!

"SHE sat with them while they got ready for bed," said the nurse. "That was something unusual, too. I heard her say something about boarding-school. I couldn't help hearing because they weren't making their usual racket. It worried me. After she left I kept thinking about it. But I didn't look into their room till I was sure they must be asleep. . . . They must have dressed again without my hearing, and climbed out through the window. It isn't a long drop to the ground; there are bushes to fall on."

"Why should they hate the idea of boarding-school so much?"

"Why wouldn't they? Cut off from everything they're used to! Their father dead, and their mother likely to go off without notice any time, the way she did last November, and now, not even to be allowed to live at home!"

Regina knew how they felt, thought Hildreth. She wanted to go home, too. Only it wasn't her home.

"The note said they'd gone home."

"They left a note?" Hildreth was astonished.

"Cass would think of that. He's fussy about details."

"What else did it say?"

"That they'd get home all right by hitch-hiking and for her not to worry!"

Not that she was likely to worry! Someone else would do that for her. Someone always had. Regina hadn't told her about the boys with any idea of sparing her alarm, but simply because telling her would have meant telling Mrs. Carsidine, too, and that would have meant a deluge of talk, and maybe hysterics, and certainly confusion and delay.

This girl was different. Regina disliked her thoroughly, but granted that she kept her head and didn't let anxiety affect her driving.

"We ought to overtake them pretty soon, Regina. We've been only crawling, but they're on foot and they can't have gone far."

"Those two," said Regina, "will have a story ready. They can lie when they have to or when they think they can get away with it. They never lied to their father, and they never lied to me because he told them not to, or else! But I've heard them tell stories a mile high to Cook and Hooper. They think fast, like their father, and make up their minds in a split-second, and they've got a right to. And there isn't anybody that can stop them, now he's dead."

"I thought you could do anything with them," said Hildreth. "I thought they trusted you absolutely and would come to you with any problems."

"They used to," said the nurse, "when they were little. Fergus still does. But Cass and Dillon know I haven't any final authority now. I'm only the hired help. There's nobody to back me up, now Mr. Furnard is dead."

"Regina," said Hildreth, "did you like Mr. Furnard? Was he good to work for? Did you admire him?"

"Like him!" cried Regina. "He was wonderful!"

Strong language, for her. More quietly she said: "There was never anybody who knew so much, or accomplished so much so quickly, or was so—" She faltered. "So good," she went on. "Good. And kind."

("So I've been wrong about him all these years," thought Hildreth. "I've been wrong about a lot of people and a lot of things. I'm not so smart as I've always thought. In fact, I hardly think at all. I just feel. A mass of emotions and prejudices. As bad as Granny. As foolish as Mother.")

Regina said, "Slow down. There they are. Don't speak to them till they're inside the car."

The boys weren't merely thumbing. They were waving wildly. They must be very tired. They had trudged a long way.

Regina threw open the door to the back seat. Cass said, "Gee, thanks! You're the first car that's stopped. Two went by and one so fast it almost hit us. We're awful tired and we gotta get to the Port tonight. Our mother's sick. We gotta get a doctor."

They scrambled in. Their eyes, dazzled from staring into the oncoming headlights, took time to adjust to the lesser light of the instrument-board. Hildreth was backing the car and turning it before Cass cried out: "Hey!" Regina said, "Yes, we're going back."

There was a panic-stricken gasp; after that, only a terrible silence.

AT Mrs. Diamond's they went in, dragging with weariness. Regina said: "Go to bed."

They went.

Regina sagged into Mrs. Diamond's worn Morris chair. Her big lean hands were twitching.

"Could I see the note, Regina?"

The nurse held it out. All during the ride she had kept it in her fingers, folding and refolding it. It was shabby with her distress. Hildreth spread it out. It was printed in Dillon's block capitals, signed by him and signed also in the

cramped meticulous hand of Cass. It said: *"Dear Mummy—we have gone home. Don't worry. We will get there all right hitch-hiking. We would of told you but there isn't time."* Some doubt about the double *h* in *hitch-hiking*. The second had been erased, leaving a dirty smudge.

"It was my fault," said Hildreth. "I was the one who told them. I was the one who said there wasn't time."

Regina's head hung forward as if her neck had wilted. Her bushy hair had come unhooked from behind her ears, and fell forward against her flat colorless cheeks.

"It isn't anybody's fault. Death isn't anybody's fault. Mr. Furnard died, and the family is going to pieces without him. It isn't her fault; he wanted her to be the way she was, the way she still is; he took care of her and of the boys and of everything. But now he's dead."

"Let me talk to them, will you?"

Hildreth tapped at the door and went in. The boys were in bed, their faces small and pinched with fatigue. Their black eyes met hers unblinkingly. She sat on the foot of Dillon's bed. She had always felt closer to him than to the others, but now he was shut away from her, sealed up in his private trouble.

"I'm sure you had good reasons for going home," she began cautiously, "or you wouldn't have thought it out so carefully. I mean, if it had been just a prank, you wouldn't have left the note for your mother and told her not to worry. But why didn't you talk it over with her first?"

"We don't tell Mummy things," said Cass. He was always ready to explain anything, but now he sounded patient and very tired. "Daddy said we mustn't bother her, ever."

"You could have talked to me."

"You're only a cousin. Only a girl," said Cass. "We don't know you awfully well. It wasn't your business."

"You know you can trust Regina. You always have."

"She would've stopped us."

"But it was silly of you to start out like that without any money. You couldn't have gone far."

"We had m-money," said Dillon. "My birthday m-money."

Cass said irritably, "We would've got farther if Dillon hadn't had to stop and be sick in the bushes. His damned old stomach is always spoiling everything."

Dillon sat up, outraged.

"We would've got started earlier if you hadn't stopped to pack up your damned old seashells and stuff to take with you!"

THEIR implacable united front against the adult world was broken down by their anger with each other. Now it was easier to talk to them.

"Tell me why you felt you must go home, Cass."

"My collection!" He, too, sat up. "All my specimens, my bottles! I've been years getting them, and they're on a shelf in the basement and once Hooper knocked one over and it broke and he wasn't sorry, he said he'd like to throw the whole damn' shelf-full out on the dump; he said it made the basement stink, but it doesn't stink!"

"Is Hooper the only person at home?"

"No. There's Cook. But she wouldn't hurt my things. She said I was smart to have got so many, and once she saved me a mouse out of a trap."

"If you sent her a telegram," said Hildreth, "asking her to move the bottles to a safe place,—the attic, or a closet with a lock,—wouldn't she be willing to do it?"

His face brightened.

"I bet she would. She likes me. There's a closet off the laundry, right there in the basement. It's got a lock and rows of shelves for preserves. There'd be plenty of room for my stuff."

He grinned: a lightning shift from despair to mischief.

"Be funny if somebody went to get a jar of jam and got one of my bottles by mistake, wouldn't it! The mouse, maybe. Gee!"

"What about you, Dillon?" Hildreth asked. "You haven't a collection, have you? Did you go along with Cass just for the walk?"

He flushed with emotion and the effort of speech.

"I gotta s-see the dogs. Whiskey and Soda. I have to explain to them about our g-going to boarding-school. We've been away all s-summer, and if we don't g-go home all winter, what'll they think? Hooper feeds them but he c-can't explain things to them. He d-doesn't try. They'll keep s-smelling and hunting for us all over the house, like they d-do for Daddy. Maybe they'll think we've forgotten them or maybe we're d-dead. I gotta t-tell them!"

Hildreth said, "Early this summer you asked if the dogs couldn't be sent on here in crates in the baggage-car. You thought they'd like it here. They would, too. Dogs do. Geoff's grandfather used to have a little black spaniel and at high tide he'd race along the beach barking at the waves. He liked to swim after sticks, too. Whiskey and Soda are used to retrieving, aren't they? And Geoff would take care of them while you're at school. He'd talk to them, too, so they wouldn't miss you too much."

The relief and rapture in Dillon's face made her eyes smart.

"I'll speak to your mother about it in the morning. We'll telephone to the Port and send two wires from there, one to Cook about the bottles and one to Hooper about crating the dogs. . . . You see how easy it is to manage things if you just talk it over?"

Something was still bothering the boys. Dillon asked at last, hesitantly, "Was Mummy much b-bothered when she saw our note? It won't make her s-sick again, will it?"

"She hasn't seen it yet," said Hildreth, "She doesn't know you tried to run away."

Their silence was loud with agonized entreaty.

"Would you rather she didn't know? Ever?"

Cass said painfully, "If she gets sick again, and goes away, we won't have anybody to come home to except Regina."

(Hildreth thought, "They'll be happy when they know they'll always have Geoff to come home to, as well as their mother." She thought, "Yes, it's a good marriage. A good idea.")

Her anxiety over the boys, her relief at finding them safe, and her sympathy with their distress, had all combined to lift her to a kind of exaltation, above her own private worries.

"I won't tell your mother and I'll ask Regina not to."

They sank back, infinitely relieved.

REGINA said: "Certainly I won't tell her! The less chatter there is about this night the better. If there's too much talk, and no punishment, they'll begin to think they did something awfully smart. But I can't punish them, can I? It happened because they haven't any father to confide in!"

Hildreth said impulsively: "You care so much about their welfare that I'm going to tell you a secret. It isn't my secret. I wasn't asked not to tell. But keep it to yourself, will you, until Mrs. Furnard announces it to you herself? It will make you feel easier in your mind about the boys when you go away. They're going to have a man around that they can trust, one they already like very much. You said she would marry soon. You were right—she's going to marry Geoffrey."

"That boy!" Regina spat out the words in shock and protest.

"But he isn't a boy, Regina. He's twenty-four—and old for that, because he had trouble and responsibility early. He lost his father and it was dreadful for him so he'll be especially understanding with the boys about having lost theirs. And he's had terribly bad breaks; he's been half starved at times, and always lonely and discouraged. It's made him older than he really is; and Mrs. Furnard has always been protected—so that even to me she seems pretty undeveloped, and immature for her age. I'm sure the age difference won't matter in this marriage. It will be all right. You'll see."

Regina's lips folded tightly.

"Yes, it will be all right. You'll see." Hildreth repeated it stoutly as she went down the hill. She had left the car in Mrs. Diamond's yard. She wanted to use her own legs, to walk fast, to escape from her own thoughts but they hurried with her. It would be all right. Why shouldn't it be?

She was tempted to go down to the beach and walk for hours. But her mother would be alarmed.

She paused at her own door, peering through the screen to the pleasant lamplit room. So much had happened in a short time; yet there sat Laura in the wing chair, her feet tucked under her, reading placidly; there sat Madeleine, her rocking-chair rocking like a ponderous cradle, her crochet-needle darting, her padded jaws working. Hildreth stared at those ruminant jaws. How peaceful they looked, those two, how protected; better not to tell them things.

Hildreth envied them, but only for a moment. Then she thought, "I'd rather be unhappy than not know things!"

"I'm back," she said, and went in.

Madeleine choked and went into a paroxysm of coughing. Hildreth flew to thump her on the back, but Laura, laughing heartlessly, said, "The windpipe, Mimi, is no place for peanut brittle."

Hildreth looked at the box on the table. A large box, and practically empty! And Laura never ate sweets.

Madeleine, her face as purple with coughing and guilt as the flowers on her

printed chiffon, gasped, "Oh, Hildy, forgive me! I've cheated like this for years behind your back, you were so strict about my diet, you watched my every mouthful, and I do get so hungry, and I'm perfectly healthy, the doctor said so, it isn't glands."

("So I've been wrong about her, too," thought Hildreth. "Poor Mother. I tried to manage her, and she had to cheat.")

"I guess it doesn't make much difference what you eat," said Hildreth, "or you'd have been dead years ago. I won't torment you any more, counting calories."

In her room she sat on the bed a long time before she undressed. She sat staring ahead of her, seeing nothing.

("Wrong about all of them. Always so sure I knew best.

("Wrong to blame Father for marrying Mother. A man in love can't help the mistakes he makes.

("Wrong about Uncle Drake. I judged him without ever having known him.

("Wrong about telling the children; if I'd let her wait till the last moment, as she wanted to, they wouldn't have tried to take action on their own account; there really wouldn't have been time, by then, and desperation would have forced them to speak out.

("Wrong, most of all, about Geoff. I thought falling in love with Laura would be the last straw to break his courage and perhaps his heart. And look at him now—everything solved.")

A need to punish herself sent her to Laura's door. "May I come in?"

It was the first time that she had felt shy with Laura. It was the first time she had looked at Laura and actually seen her not as an aunt but as a woman.

"There's something I feel I must tell you, Laura."

"Oh, dear. You're not going to scold at this time of night?"

Anxiety made her seem very young. Much younger than Hildreth. It wasn't, thought Hildreth, an adult anxiety, but that of a young girl afraid of a scolding.

Young. And pretty. Prettier than Hildreth had ever thought before. Soft eyes and soft young mouth, soft fair hair, and smooth white shoulders under a cobweb of lace—lace and a chiffon cobweb even on these cool nights at the shore!

That was what men wanted, then. Softness. Gentleness. Helplessness.

He would see her like this, in bed.

The thought was shocking, excruciatingly unpleasant. Hildreth was the more shocked at herself for thinking it. Her fingers, clenching in her sweater pocket, found the slip of folded paper—the note Cass and Dillon had left.

LET her read that note. Let her see what a bad mother she was. A mother her children couldn't tell things to. Let her hear it all, the silent desperation, the escape through the window, the dark road, the blistered feet, the cars rushing past. They might have been killed and left in the road.

They were her sons. She, and only she, was responsible for their physical safety and their peace of mind. Perhaps, when she knew what danger they had risked in order to go home, she would be ashamed and think only of her children, and forget herself for once, and forget Geoffrey, and go home.

OUR PHOTOGRAPHIC CONTEST

(Continued from page 44)

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

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

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

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

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

He would get over her. He had got over Cathy. A young man shouldn't be satisfied to live on another man's money and bring up another man's sons. He should beget his own children and work to provide for them.

("I promised the boys I wouldn't tell her. If they can protect her from worry, so can I. I must—I promised them.")

"I wanted you to know that Geoffrey told me. And I think your marrying him is a fine idea, for him, and for you, and for the boys, I do, really."

"Oh!" said Laura faintly. She said, in a very small voice, "You think I'll do him less harm than Cathy would have? I don't want to hurt anyone—Geoff, or you, or anyone."

"I think you'll make him very happy," said Hildreth. "I think you're exactly what he needs."

Back in her own room she sat on her bed, staring ahead of her, seeing nothing, her heart pounding and her knees weak with fear at what she had so nearly done. Fear of her own weakness and doubt of her own integrity.

("I wanted to hurt her. I wanted to drive her away. I wanted to injure her and make her suffer. Because she looked pretty and young.

("I said I wasn't jealous. But I was mistaken in my judgment of all those others. I could be mistaken about myself. People who are jealous never recognize it and never admit it. I could be wrong about myself.")

Jealous.

It was the ultimate humiliation!

Chapter Fifteen

REGINA sat at the window, staring out. There was nothing to see. The fog had come in and stayed for days, wet, gray, impenetrable. It was more depressing than rain. There was a certain activity about rain. The fog was passive. It was just there. Everywhere. Clothes molded on hangers; sheets and blankets were clammy, doors refused to close, and bureau drawers refused to open.

The boys, cooped up indoors, quarreled all day long, and Regina, cooped up with them, was going quietly mad. Nothing to do but wait for the fog to burn off; wait for the summer to end; for everything that was sweet and satisfying to end; to be told nothing, since the Carsidine girl had told her there was to be a marriage; to have nobody to talk to; nothing to do but sit and wait and think.

The hatred that had been steadily increasing in her all the summer, hatred of this place and everybody in it except the children themselves, had mounted now to fury and it was directed against one person only: That loafer—that idle good-for-nothing. That penniless bum who had wormed his way into Mrs. Furnard's good graces by pretending to take an interest in the boys!

The Carsidine girl was sorry for him. Sorry for him because somebody didn't bring him a fancy job on a silver platter and beg him to accept it! Great strapping hulk, too lazy and too proud of his fancy education and fancy manners to get out and dig ditches or drive a truck or hire out as a farmhand the way an honest man would!

Regina no longer resented Hildreth for being young. She pitied her for it. Too young and inexperienced to know a bad lot when she saw him. Maybe she was crazy about him herself, the poor girl. It would be natural at her age, and there weren't any decent boys around here for her to take an interest in.

Regina no longer resented Mrs. Furnard. Wasn't Mrs. Furnard exactly the easy-going, innocent kind to be taken in? She was lonely and lost without Mr. Furnard, and she couldn't handle the boys herself. She was a natural prey for the first schemer who made up to her by pretending to take an interest in her boys. All that fuss about teaching the boys to swim! Just an excuse to show himself off in a pair of trunks, to swagger around before her as much as to say: "See how big and strong and brown I am! See what a fine dependable fellow I am! See how the boys admire me!"

Children were always impressed by brawn. They weren't to be blamed for not knowing better. Mrs. Furnard wasn't to be blamed for not knowing better. She'd been protected all her life; she took it for granted that any man with pleasant manners was as dependable and honest as Mr. Furnard. She was as innocent as her own children. Mr. Furnard had kept her that way, but he wasn't here now to take care of her. Why, he'd beat that cheap show-off to a pulp! But if he were here, his wife wouldn't even see that fellow. She had never had eyes for any other man when her husband was around.

"There's nobody left to protect her, nobody who knows what's going on, but me!" thought Regina in despair.

For Mrs. Carsidine was no use. She meant well, but she hadn't any sense. And the Carsidine girl was too young to suspect evil, and probably in love with the skunk herself.

"Nobody to understand or do anything but me!" Regina raged. "And what can I do?"

What could she do? Tell Mrs. Furnard that he wanted her money and not herself? Tell that to a young-looking attractive woman who'd always been admired by men?

"She wouldn't believe me. Why should she? Who am I? Only the hired help. I'm hired to take care of the children, not to take care of her. I'm not supposed to notice or suspect or have opinions."

"FERGUS, use your handkerchief."

Cass had caught cold, thumbing a ride that night; Fergus had taken it from him, and their noses were streaming, and Dillon was cross as two sticks, and Pete was a fiend out of hell.

"Here's Mummy and Geoff!" shouted Pete, stepping on Fergus' hand and upsetting Dillon's paint-box in his rush to be the first to meet the visitors.

Laura came in laughing, a yellow sweater buttoned up to her chin, and a pale blue leather jacket on top of the sweater, and beads of dampness, fog, on her hair.

Geoffrey picked up the bellowing Fergus, and the bellowing stopped short.

"We thought we'd take the boys for a walk, Regina, and give you a rest from them."

"Walk, in this wet?" Regina bristled. "And those two with colds in their heads! They'll stay right here by the stove!"

Geoffrey said: "A little damp won't make their colds worse. Can't they bundle up? Fresh air's good for a cold."

("Telling me my business!" thought Regina. "Conceited squirt! I've been taking care of children ever since I could walk, forty years and more, and taking good care of them, too. Mr. Furnard thought I was good enough to be trusted. And now I'm to be taught my business by this young smart-Alec!")

"Let us take Pete and Dillon off your hands, anyway," coaxed Laura, and the two fortunate boys rushed off for their jackets.

Regina, left with Cass and Fergus, went back to her seat at the window, blind with rage.

"Dirty loafer! Fortune-hunter!"

She didn't realize that her angry thoughts had reached her lips in an audible mutter. Fergus looked up, interested, and moved quietly nearer.

Her fury had done one good thing for her. It had taken her mind off herself. She felt as vigorous and adequate as she had in her thirties. Her sense of proportion was restored, and her tolerance toward everybody except the one abominable villain. All summer her head had bothered her; she had felt heavy and dull; now her mind was clear of self-pity; she no longer cared about her own future; all she wanted was to protect Mrs. Furnard as Mr. Furnard would have wanted her to do, since he wasn't here to do it.

"But what can I do? He'll get hold of her. . . . Gigolo!" muttered Regina aloud.

She wasn't sure what the term meant, but she'd heard it, somewhere, sometime, and was sure it meant something contemptible and slimy.

"What's a jiggle?" asked Fergus at her knee, peering up into her face with bright attention.

"Vermin!" she said fiercely.

"What's vermin?"

"Something nasty, that crawls and that sucks blood."

He was enchanted. "Wanna see a jiggle!"

Spite pushed her past all discretion: "You look around the beach, if the sun ever comes out so you can go to the beach, and I wouldn't be a bit surprised if you found one! I've seen one down there myself!"

Cass giggled: "You find one, funny-face, and I'll put it in my collection."

Fergus hurried to the porch to see if by any chance the sun might be coming out, and Cass said: "I knew you were kidding him, Regina. I know damn' well what a gigolo really is."

Well, it was more than Regina knew.

ON Friday the sun came out, golden and splendid. Everybody except Madeleine went to the beach directly after breakfast.

"You go right along—don't mind me," she said cheerfully.

Regina and the boys and Geoffrey were on the beach already when Hildreth and Laura went down.

"We can't go in this soon after breakfast," said Hildreth. "Let's walk to the Point."

Pete shouted: "I bet I get there first. I bet I beat everybody to the Point!" and started off as if shot from a gun, the other three in pursuit. Laura said: "I'm lazy. I'm going to sun myself. I feel as if I had green mold all over me after all that fog. You go along."

Geoffrey left her, reluctantly, and Hildreth went beside him, uncomfortable because she knew he was reluctant.

Regina, left with Laura, apart from her but intensely aware of her, thought: "I could warn her now. But she wouldn't listen."

Laura thought: "I could speak to her now. I'd like to tell her, before she goes away for good, what she's meant to me, to all of us, all these years. I'd like to. But I'd only sound foolish and sentimental. Mawkish. She'd be disgusted with me. She'd never thought much of me. Drake was the one she admired."

Drake. . . . Drake. . . .

"I can't tell her that I'm going to marry Geoffrey. She couldn't understand. She'd be horrified. She's a self-sufficient spinster. She's forty-five. I'm only thirty-two. And I've never lived without love. Parents—sister—husband. I can't live alone, without love."

Marriage with Geoffrey meant that she must admit the truth of what she had refused for nearly a year to believe. Something was finished. Over forever.

She shut her eyes and shut her mind. . . . Later. Not now.

Geoffrey said: "Regina dislikes me. When I said good morning to her, she didn't even answer. She simply glared."

The children were far ahead of them.

Hildreth said: "I don't suppose you and she'll stay here more than this winter."

He stopped short.

"Oh, you don't! And where do you think we'll be? This is where I live. My house is here. We must live where the house is. I can't buy houses in other places. What did you think I'd use for money? Or did you think, perhaps, that I'd use her money?"

"But, Geoff! She's going to be your wife. I know you wouldn't borrow money from me. But your own wife—that's different."

"You're right, it's different!" he said. "It's so different that you may be interested to know that I'd borrow money from anyone on earth before I'd take it from my own wife."

He turned his face away and walked on.

"I can't object to her using her own money on herself. I can't be as petty as that, because I can't myself provide her with the comforts, or even the necessities, that she would have to give up. If I had money enough for two of us, I'd ask her to put all hers in a trust-fund for the boys. I hate having her live on that man's money. But I must swallow that, or not marry her at all. And I can't give her up."

Hildreth was too frightened and bewildered to speak, and he glanced at her. He said, trying to speak lightly: "Now that our quarrel is past, it may amuse you to know that I had practically decided that day to accept your offer of a loan. I had my mouth open to say all right when you lost your temper and jumped down my throat. After that, of course, I couldn't."

It didn't amuse her. It almost killed her. She wanted to lie down on the sand, and cry and cry. Everything she had done all summer, all her life, everything she had tried to do and missed doing, had been wrong, wrong, wrong!

"Now that we're friends again," he was saying, "I can tell you, Hildreth, that if I had to borrow money from anyone, or even take it as a gift, which God forbid, if I had to, I could accept it from you with the least repugnance. We've known each other a long time, ever since we were children. And you've always been decent, and generous, and fair. Not many women are."

All at once he was ashamed of having said so much.

"Race you the rest of the way!" he said.

SHE ran well. They arrived at the Point out of breath, but neck and neck.

The three older boys were skipping flat stones into the water, trying to strike beyond the surf that was churning about the Point. The tide was high. Fergus was trotting busily from rock to rock, peering into the shallow tepid pools in the rock-depressions; very busy, and curiously stealthy, glancing toward his brothers from time to time as if he hoped to go unnoticed, which wasn't like him. Hildreth asked: "What're you looking for?"

He hesitated. Then he decided that she was trustworthy and might even be helpful. He wasn't having much success.

"A jiggle," he whispered. "A jiggle to put in Pete's bed."

Hildreth looked at Geoffrey. "What does he mean? What's a jiggle?"

He shrugged. "Darned if I know. What's it look like, Fergus?"

Fergus screwed up his face and pinched his tiny nose between thumb and finger.

"Nasty. It's vermin, Regina said. It crawls. It sucks blood, she said. I gotta find one. She said if I looked around the beach when the sun came out, she wouldn't be surprised if I found one; and I gotta find one, because Pete put sand in my bed, and Regina had to pull the sheets off. I'm gonna put a nasty slimy little jiggle in Pete's bed, and it'll suck his blood and he'll die."

He bustled off to go on with his search.

"I wonder what she meant," said Geoffrey. "You don't find ordinary bloodsuckers around salt water."

"Ask Cass," suggested Hildreth. "Don't tell on Fergus. Cass will be pleased to explain. He won't even wonder why you want to know. He's rather tiresome, so terribly informative."

"We'd better find out what's going into Pete's bed," said Geoffrey. "Regina may not like me, but I don't wish her the hard luck of having to deal with a baby octopus or something. Cass!"

Cass liked to be singled out by his elders. After all, he was the eldest and far too often he was bulked ignominiously with the younger boys.

"Cass, what's a jiggle? Something Regina was telling Fergus about. Something she said he could find here on the beach."

Cass burst into delighted laughter.

"Aw, Regina was kidding him! I heard her. I thought I'd bust laughing. He's easy to fool. He's too little to know anything. *Gigolo* was what she said."

"Gigolo?" repeated Hildreth, puzzled.

"Sure. You know. There's a song about it. I heard it on the radio ages ago. I asked Daddy what it was, and he said it was a young fellow that makes up to an older woman to get money out of her. Regina was kidding Fergus when she said he'd find one on the beach here."

"We understand," said Hildreth. "Thanks for explaining. Run along, Cass."

But Cass didn't budge. He was wondering why Geoffrey looked so queer, and why he sounded so queer when he said, "Yes. We understand," through his teeth as if they were locked together and he couldn't get them apart.

Hildreth said: "She didn't mean anything!"

"Oh, didn't she?" said Geoffrey through his teeth. "She meant plenty. She knew they'd repeat it. She knew it would hit the hardest, coming from them. Well, this tears it."

He started off toward the woods. Hildreth cried, "Geoff! Wait!" but he kept on going as if he hadn't heard.

The fine humanity that distinguishes Harlow Estes' writing is nowhere more manifest than in the unexpected yet logical climax which brings her novel to its conclusion in our forthcoming December issue.

THE LION AT BAY

(Continued from page 60)

obstacle, being unaccustomed to that kind of thing, you may easily grow disheartened. In other words, it's wise not to take your jumps till you come to them, but when you come to them, if you don't take them, you'll never get anywhere.

Finally I asked this General what he thought of the Italian tanks. He answered with one word: rotten. I suggested the possibility of the Germans bringing their own tanks to help the Italians. Well, first, he answered, they would have to bring them across the Mediterranean, and the British fleet would have something to say to that; then, if they got over, they would have to be adapted to desert conditions, and their drivers would have to learn desert navigation. That is a difficult business. A point that is marked on the map as prominent may indeed be so from the east, but not at all from the north. You can't learn desert navigation in five minutes. "I think we can deal with any tanks the Germans bring out to the Near East," said General Pope, with a smile. . . .

General Brooke said to me that modern war is a collaboration of navy, air force and army, and it is essential that perfect coördination should exist between the three arms. This coördination now exists in Britain. I could not but recall an axiom of my own about the drama; a play, I have never tired of repeating, is a collaboration between the author, the actors and the public, and here too it is essential that perfect coördination should exist between all three.

As we know, it is the superiority the Germans have had in aircraft which allowed them to achieve their victories over the unhappy countries they have conquered. On my return to England I discovered there was still some anxiety in the public mind about the efficiency with which this state of things was being dealt with. Of course we are building planes, but are we building enough? Of course we are buying them in America, but are we buying enough? These were the questions I heard asked. I made up my mind to try to find out for myself what I could about the production of aircraft. I thought I need not concern myself about the airmen. Their daring, their coolness and presence-of-mind, their indifference to odds, their endurance, have been shown in a hundred battles and have been praised by the press of the whole world. I have myself known several members of the R.A.F., and when I looked at their youth, my heart was wrung because with all life before them, they must take such fearful risks. Some of them showed cheeks so smooth that you felt a safety razor was only recently a necessary part of their equipment; and yet they were so lighthearted, so gay, reckless yet confident in their skill, boys in appearance but men in experience, wily and knowledgeable, with old heads on their young shoulders, that it was not enough to be proud of them;

I was filled in their presence with a great humility.

I knew one somewhat more intimately, and he was a little older than the others, twenty-four, quite a little chap, not more than five foot four, I should guess (just the right height for a pilot, he said), jaunty, with a carefree look in his impudent blue eyes. He had crashed early in the war and had nearly broken his neck, but after a few weeks in hospital and a niggardly leave, had gone to work again. He came to see me on his return from France, and he had grim stories to tell of how the French, after their surrender, had tried to prevent the British planes from getting away, how they had refused to give them gas and oil, and how they had driven lorries over the aerodrome to prevent those whose tanks were full from taking off—bitter, shameful stories, but not such as it is any use to dwell upon. What I wanted to tell you is of a "scrap" he had had with two German planes, one of which he shot down; a lucky shot pierced the oil-tank, and they were so close to one another that the oil covered his own plane, so that he could not see through his windscreen, and had to guide himself by looking backward over his shoulder. "They were rather interested in that when I got in," he said. "An expert came and examined the oil, and he said it was rotten—we wouldn't use oil like that in a truck." I asked him if he wasn't scared. "Not then," he said. "I've never been scared in a scrap—it's too damned exciting; but I'll tell you when I have been scared: in a reconnaissance flight; when you're up there all by yourself hour after hour, flying over the enemy lines—I don't know what there is about it; I suppose it's the loneliness; I know the first time I did one, my knees were just knocking together. But of course you get used to it, you know; it's like everything else, you've got to get the knack of it."

NO, I didn't think it was necessary to concern myself with the fighting men. I wrote to Lord Beaverbrook, who is the Minister of Aircraft Production, and asked him if he could spare me a few minutes. This Ministry has not been in existence long, and I wanted to know something of what Lord Beaverbrook, with his great driving power, had accomplished. He is a man who has achieved success in most things he has set his mind to. He is an optimist, with the optimist's good conceit of himself, but he is a man of ideas and resource. He has boundless energy, and it has been well said of him that if you give him a job to do, he will get results almost before the ink on his commission is dry.

By return of post I received an answer to my letter saying that he didn't make appointments, but would be glad to see me any time I went to the Ministry. He was engaged when I arrived, but I was almost immediately shown into his room; his visitor was still with him, but soon after took his leave. It occurred to me that to have another caller brought in was a very efficacious way of disposing of one who had said his say.

Low, the Australian caricaturist, has made the appearance of Lord Beaverbrook so familiar to the British public that each time you see him you have to readjust your impression of him. He is not the little gnomelike creature with a satanic grin of Low's effective invention; he is not even small, five foot ten, I should say, squarely built, bald, with a rugged, deeply lined face, grim except when he smiles, but his smile can be very engaging. He was very grim when he sat me down in a chair on the other side of the desk at which he was sitting, and crossing his arms, fixed me with eyes hard under the beetling brows. "What d'you want of me?" he rasped. The question was abrupt enough to be disconcerting if I had not known the answer.

I asked him first to tell me how the British planes now compared with the Germans in numbers. "How can I?" he answered. "I don't know how many planes the Germans have got; every expert I consult gives me a different figure. But this I do know: we've got enough to crush any attack they can make."

"That's pretty good news," I said. "And when d'you expect to reach your peak production?" "Never. There is no peak," he answered. "The sky's the limit." I asked him how the Messerschmidt compared with the British planes; he said it was not so handy as the Hurricane nor so swift as the Spitfire. Great effort is being made to increase production in Britain, and the output in July was more than double what it was in July last year. More than twelve thousand engines have been bought in America, powerful, modern and well-tried engines, for which the aircraft frames will be built in Britain.

Since the Aircraft Ministry has been in existence, it has spent ten million dollars a day in America.

On the day on which I saw him, Lord Beaverbrook could say that there were in Britain more planes than pilots; I doubt if he could say so on the day I write, for this morning's paper had pictures of a great and merry band of airmen that had just arrived from their training in Rhodesia. Week by week pilots are arriving from Canada, and the Minister for Aircraft Production will have to exercise all his famous energy if he is to continue to turn out more planes than there are men ready to use them. It cannot be long before the mastery of the skies is ours.

I MUST say a few words about that member of the collaboration whom I've not yet mentioned. The Navy has always been the pride of the British Empire, and I will neither waste my time nor yours in dilating upon its exploits in the past and its activities in the present; but I should like to tell you something of the man whom Winston Churchill, when he formed his Government, invited to take the place at the Admiralty which he was himself vacating. This is A. V. Alexander. He has been for years one of the most respected leaders of the Labor Party, but he is not only a politician; he is a business man as well; he was the moving spirit behind the Cooperative Wholesale Association, and the astounding success he has had in developing an undertaking which has been of such immense value to the working-man is sufficient proof of his acumen and his force. He was First Lord of the Admiralty during the Labor Administration and then won on all sides golden opinions; when he resumed his position, he entered upon a job which he already knew a great deal about. He is a thick-set, stoutish man, with something of a jowl, which adds to the rugged determination of his face; a short, aggressive nose; keen alert eyes behind horn-rimmed spectacles; a strong, pugnacious jaw and short gray hair neatly cut. His manner is quiet, but resolute. He puts on no frills, and when you go to see him, gets straight down at once to the topic of discourse. He talks with the fluency of a man who knows his subject and is accustomed to public speech.

There are huge maps in the stately room of the First Lord, and he got up from his chair every now and then to illustrate a point on one or other of them. He pointed out the immense coast-line which Germany has now to defend; it reaches from the top of Norway to the Spanish frontier of France; and British ships are building, British ships are very near completion. That fierce jaw of his jutted fiercely as he told me that now the British fleet was ready for anything. Since the new Government came in, the output in planes, guns and ammunition has almost doubled.

Knowing how long I have lived in France, and how close my relations have been with it, he talked to me of the attack the British Navy had made on the French fleet at Oran. "I can't tell you how deeply I regretted the necessity of it," he said, "but what could we do? We possess at present fourteen capital ships, the Germans two or three and the Italians six. The French had nine. Add three and six and nine together. If we'd let the French ships fall into enemy hands, the balance in heavy ships would have been against us, and our ocean convoys would have been liable to destruction by hostile surface forces. We had to do it. We couldn't help ourselves. The French people were never allowed to know the terms we offered their fleet; they couldn't have been more reasonable—they couldn't have been more honorable." He looked at me suddenly. "You're going to America, aren't you?" he asked. "I think so." "Well, what security would there have been for the commerce of America if the power of our main fleet had been outweighed? Why, even their territory wouldn't have been safe." Since he had mentioned America, I thought I would ask him what he wanted from the United States. "Guns, ammunition, planes, motor-boats, destroyers. We're fighting their battle as well as our own. So long as the British fleet is there, America is safe; if it is destroyed, America is doomed. We don't want them to come in, but every other help they can give us we want, and want badly."

NOW I have told you something of certain of the men in whose hands lie the destinies of the British Empire. I have tried to speak of them as personally as possible, because it is as men that they count. They say that this is a war of machines, and so it is; but it is the men behind the machines, their courage, their skill, their industry, their resolution, that

bring victory. In these men of whom I have written I found a full realization both of the gravity of the circumstances and of the greatness of their responsibility. Their confidence is great, but it is not based on self-complacency or on erroneous ideas of the enemy's internal weakness. Gone now are those foolish notions that all we had to do was to sit tight, and a revolution in Germany would settle the war for us. There is no more shilly-shallying in Britain. We know how great is the power that confronts us. We are undismayed.

These men I have described to you, two soldiers, a labor leader, a newspaper man, are men of intelligence and determination. They are well aware that they are engaged in the greatest conflict the British people has ever had to face, and they face it with calmness. They are the leaders, but the people are behind them; and the people, these stolid people of Great Britain, with their virtues which even their enemies respect, and their faults which exasperate even their friends, are prepared for any sacrifice, any loss, any hardship that they may be called upon to endure. They are fighting for their homes, their wives and children, the standards they cherish, for their social services, for their franchise, for their freedom of speech and their freedom to dispose of themselves as they choose.

These things they're fighting for; but though they wouldn't tell you, because it would make them self-conscious, they're fighting for other things too; they're fighting for honesty, truth, kindness, loyalty, justice and decency. In the end the man that matters is the common man; and what gives dignity and strength to the common man is character. I, who came back to England with fresh eyes, see a great change in my fellow-countrymen. I see in them a greater seriousness, a new unselfishness and a new sympathy with one another, and deep, deep in their hearts a resolution, when victory is achieved, to make the world a better, happier place to live in.

DR. DOGBODY'S LEG

(Continued from page 55)

"It was indeed an odd sight to see the pensioners lingering in the aisles and about the door, breathing in the, to them, delightful and memory-stirring aroma of powder-smoke. Lethargy had vanished; one and all, they were as lively as fleas on a dog's back.

"Now, gentlemen, I'll whisk ye in a breath over the next few days. They were no more than repetitions of numberless earlier ones, with Captain Didd pacing the quarterdeck of his idle ship, awaiting orders that never came. I could see that he was fast reaching a state of desperation, and to divert his mind, I told him of Sherr's prank at Greenwich chapel.

"At last he decided to go up to London, to try the expedient of getting the ear of someone at the Admiralty who would take notice of our situation."

"And much good that did him, I'll warrant!" Captain Tucker remarked, with a snort. "I tried the same thing a time or two, at the period. Never managed to see anyone above the rank of a clerk."

"So it was with Didd," said the surgeon. "He was kept waiting in an anteroom for two hours, and had to come away without accomplishing anything. I was about to say that he was gone overnight, and during his absence fifty of our pressed men escaped. They'd laid their plans well and had gotten clean off before the absence of any was noted. I can't say I blamed them, for they were all Americans. To be pressed into our service to fight their own countrymen was an outrage they were too spirited to endure.

"This was the news Didd came back to, after his Admiralty visit; and the very next day came an order, signed by Lord Sandwich himself. B'gad, 'twas brief enough; I can quote the exact text: *'H.M.S. Repulse being now ready for sea, you will proceed at once to Spithead, arriving there not later than the 4th, ult.'*

"Ye'll know the effect of so mad an order upon Captain Didd. He guessed the reason for it when he noted, in the papers of the same day, an announcement of a royal visit to be paid the Channel fleet at Spithead on May the sixth. This was, apparently, a surprise to the Admiralty, and desperate efforts were being made by

the First Lord to assemble the fleet in time for His Majesty's inspection. Didd well knew that no excuses would avail him. The blame, in case of failure, would be passed on to him. Go we must, somehow; and b'gad, go we did!"

"With a crew of one hundred and fifty when ye needed three times the number?" asked Balthus. "And with only twenty guns for a seventy-four?"

"WILL ye give me a moment to reach that point? Damme, Ned Balthus, d'ye suppose Captain Didd was not turning that problem over in his mind until he was dizzy at sight of it? He remained in his cabin for eighteen hours, eating nothing, seeing no one, whilst his officers prowled anxiously about the decks, more than half expecting to hear a pistol-shot, the signal that he'd solved the difficulty in the only way that seemed possible!

"The review was to be on May the sixth. On the evening of April thirtieth, Didd sent for me. I found him sitting at his table with his papers spread out before him, and I saw at once that look of grim determination on his face which I knew so well of old.

"'Dogbody,' said he, 'I wish to consult you in your capacity as a medical officer. Would there be any great risk—not to me; to the men themselves—if I were to make up my ship's company with Greenwich pensioners? Would their health be endangered by a voyage to Spithead?'

"I was so taken aback by the question that I stood for the moment speechless.

"'I can see no other way out,' he added, 'and 'twas your account of young Sherr's prank that put me in mind of it. They'd come, wouldn't they?'

"'Come!' said I. 'Hughey, they'll go wild with joy at the chance! As for their health, have no fears on that score. The old lads are as sound as the Burnham beeches. But—but for a Naval review—and before His Majesty, at that—'

"'The chances are that His Majesty will visit only the Admiral's flagship,' he replied, adding, with more than a touch of grimness: 'Should he, however, chance to board the *Repulse,* he must draw his own conclusions as to my necessities.'

"'But the guns?' said I.

"'We'll have 'em within twenty-four hours,' said he. And b'gad, gentlemen, we did!

"I know. . . . Balthus here is thinking I go beyond the bounds of the possible in that statement. He's about to tell me that no ship could take in fifty-four guns in the space of twenty-four hours, granted that they were available. Nevertheless, we did. On the evening of the second of May we had the others.

"They were dummies, Ned. There chanced to be lying near us in the mudflats an old sixty-gun ship that had been used as a decoy some years before on the coast of Holland. She was furnished with wooden guns of the precise form and size of twenty-four- and thirty-two-pounders. These we placed in our empty ports, and from a distance of fifty yards ye'd never have guessed that we were not completely furnished as to armament. Our ninety loyal seamen worked like devils getting them in place. The same night our Greenwichers came aboard."

The surgeon paused for a charge of snuff, smiling with pleased recollection as he gave his nose a vigorous rub.

"B'gad, there was a sight to have seen!" he resumed. "I wouldn't have missed it for a thousand pounds. I was Didd's ambassador to Chaplain Pinney, who was, to all intents and purposes, the acting governor at Greenwich. The actual governor, one of Sandwich's political placemen, was never there; in three years he had visited the hospital but twice. Pinney never so much as hesitated in granting the request. All that worried him was how to choose four hundred from twice the number who would be tearing to go. He had a veritable riot on his hands in making the selection. However, he managed it at last, and on the evening of the second, here they came, the chaplain at their head! They were like schoolboys on a holiday, or better, like schoolboys playing truant with the connivance of a popular undermaster. They were bustled aboard and below-decks at once, for it was hoped that the whole matter could be kept secret. But there was one Pinney had left behind who came after the others, and made such a fuss at the dockside that he had to be taken aboard, wheel-chair and all: Dan Ruggles. Damme, he'd not take a score of no's for an answer!

"We'd not a moment to lose if we were to reach Spithead in time for the review.

"I PASS over the next forty-eight hours spent getting out of the river. During this time our Greenwichers were kept out of sight, but they fitted into the old routine like balls in the rope-rings. They

were, of course, spared all heavy tasks. We had enough of our own men to work the ship; the pensioners were used to make up the gun-crews, and grieved they were upon learning that so many of the cannon were dummies. The more active amongst 'em were assigned to the real pieces.

"As we were then at war with France, Captain Didd had to be prepared for any eventuality, though he promised himself that we could get round to Spithead safely by hugging the coast. As the event proved, we could not have done better, for 'twas on the morning of May the fourth, not three leagues off Beachy Head, that we met the frigate." The surgeon made a perceptible pause, adding: "The French frigate *Insolent,* of forty-four guns, as we were soon to learn!

"And the *Insolent* well justified her name; she showed no disposition to run, though she soon discovered that we were, to all outward appearances, a seventy-four. . . . Nolly, what would you have done in the situation, had you been in Didd's place?"

"You had twenty twenty-four-pounders, you say?"

"Aye, and the four carronades on the quarterdeck."

"With a sufficiency of powder and ball?"

"Enough for a dozen charges for each gun."

"Then, by God, I'd have tempted fortune," said Captain Tucker, "granted I could depend on my Greenwichers. I'd have given that frigate good cause to regret her name!"

"Which is just what Didd did," the surgeon proceeded. "Damme, had he sought safety in flight, he'd have had a mutiny on his hands. 'Twas a heavy responsibility to take, but take it he did. As for the so-called invalids, whose combined ages reached the surprising total of thirty thousand, four hundred years—"

"DOGBODY, what the devil are you saying?" Mr. Ostiff broke in. "Thirty thousand, four hundred years?"

"I give you the all-but-exact total," the surgeon replied. "I'm not a dozen years off on either side. A few of the pensioners were in their late sixties, but I learned from Chaplain Pinney himself that the average age was seventy-six. We had four hundred aboard. The simple act of multiplication will convince you that the figures are correct.

"I have always been a lover of curious statistics," the surgeon added. "The collecting of them is a hobby for which my interest has grown with the years. I shall give you a few more items of a similar nature, the result of a census taken amongst the pensioners before we left the Thames. Of their eight hundred nether limbs, ninety-seven were of wood of various kinds, twenty-six of whalebone, eleven of ivory, and fourteen of miscellaneous substances, whilst nineteen pairs of crutches served those who preferred them to pegs. One hundred and nine of the splendid old fellows bore the scars of ancient wounds, sometimes two or three to the man, received in engagements the earliest of which dated back to the closing years of the reign of William and Mary. But the most surprising result of my examination of their persons was the discovery that the action of three hundred and eighty-two of the four hundred hearts was that of men in their middle forties, at the very height of health and vigor. And all without exception beat with the same high courage."

"With the frigate closing in?" Mr. Runyon asked. "And knowing as they did the crippled state of the *Repulse?*"

"More so than ever, at that moment, Runyon. It made one proud of one's English blood to see the coolness of the old fellows as they took their stations."

"At the dummies and all?" asked Balthus.

"The dummies and all. Every gun-port was, of course, hooked up—for the victory, if it should come, would be due in large part to sheer intimidation. As for our twenty authentic pieces, the way in which our Greenwichers prepared them for action convinced me that they had lost none of their oldtime skill."

"Doctor Dogbody, would you excuse a momentary interruption?" Mr. Dwight asked. "I have no notion whatever as to how such guns are fired. Would you be good enough to enlighten me?"

"I cannot do better, sir, than to refer you to Mr. Balthus, who has been in that trade the past forty years," the surgeon replied.

"I'd need a quarter of an hour for a proper answer, Mr. Dwight," said Balthus, "but I'll make it as short as the action was, with a good crew. Hooked to the beams above the guns were the tools for loading and firing. The powder ye put in

with a ladle, with a long handle. The head of this shovel, as ye might call it, was shaped like a cylinder, open on one side. Ye thrust the ladle holding the powder-cartridge down the muzzle of your piece and give it a quick turn to put the cartridge in place. A wad of rope yarn was then drove home against the cartridge with the rammer. Next came the ball, which ye spit on for luck, and the wad on top of that was rammed down just hard enough to hold the shot in place whilst aiming your piece. Then ye thrust the priming-iron, spiraled at the end like a corkscrew, down the touchhole and into the cartridge. Next comes the priming-tube, a little quill filled with the best mealed powder, mixed up stiff with spirits of wine. This ye place in the touchhole so that the lower end enters the cartridge in the hole made with the priming-iron. The upper end of the tube is frayed for to take the fire readily. Ye touch this off with a match on a linstock about three feet long. The gun does the rest, and the message ye send with the ball is what your fancy chooses."

"You observe, Mr. Dwight," said the surgeon, "that Mr. Balthus, a pattern of modesty, says naught of the skill needed in aiming the gun. 'Tis there our English gunners are approached by few and equaled by none."

"HOW do you make that out?" Mr. Runyon enquired.

"By the results of our naval engagements, Runyon, and the reason for it is our cool phlegmatic character. The French and the Spaniards are nervous and impulsive in temperament; their gunners are so eager for execution as to defeat their own ends. Ours watch like hawks and wait with patience for the precise moment when the ship begins to rise from her roll, so that the discharge, if it should miss the hull of the enemy, which rarely happens, will be certain to damage her masts or rigging.

"However, in the *Repulse* we had not yet reached the moment of action. All was in complete readiness whilst the frigate was still half a mile off. Despite crutches and wooden pegs, the old fellows stationed at the dummy guns were fairly dancing with vexation at thought of making a mere dumb show. Ye'll guess the delight of those who were to serve the authentic pieces. Dan Ruggles, who had been a master gunner in his day, was in general charge of those that would fire. He was everywhere at once in his little wheel-chair, which he guided with a skill exceeded only by the speed with which he rolled from one place to another. He drew up before me with a jerk as I was about to descend the ladder to my own post in the after cockpit. 'Surgeon,' said he, ''tis a day of days for us Greenwichers, but I'm done for if I get shot in the wheels!' And away he went with a cackle of glee, before I could reply.

"As it chanced, there was no shortage of men in the surgeon's department, and my assistants had all in readiness below. Mr. Pinney was there as well, that being a chaplain's post during action.

"Our dismal hole on the orlop is more than ever so just before an engagement. Nothing can be heard there, as the ships are closing in, save the suck and gurgle of the water along the vessel's side, at the level of your head. The moments then drag by, or, more accurately, time seems to be a stagnant pool, with neither life nor movement in it.

"Pinney paced our confined quarters for ten minutes, then scurried up the ladder for a peep above. Back he came, his eyes shining with excitement. 'They're not half a cable's-length off, Surgeon,' said he. 'There'll be hell stirring directly!'

"Then he thought of his wards at the dummy guns, and quite forgetting that he was or ever had been a chaplain, he gave as pretty an exhibition of profanity as I remember to have heard—and welcome it was, in that tense moment.

"'Dummies!' said he, his eyes blazing. 'By the—' No, I'll leave that. 'Twould be useless to attempt even to adumbrate an outburst of such wrathful virtuosity."

"I'd like well to have heard it," Captain Tucker put in, with a chuckle.

"'Twas worth hearing, Nolly. Pinney, who was a true Christian if ever I've known one, could take all the honours in a contest in vituperation. And when he came down to Lord Sandwich—b'gad, you'd have been nowhere, against him. I've heard boatswains, pursers, quartermasters in their inspired moments. Theirs was mere talent. In his rich variety, Pinney soared to the heights of genius.

"Of a sudden he remembered his cloth and broke off with an expression so droll and contrite, 'twas as much as I could do to maintain my customary gravity. 'Surgeon,' said he, 'forgive me. I fear I'm more of a sheep than the shepherd of my flock.' *'Sheep'* was hardly the word to be used in connection with so spirited a performance, but I quite understood what he meant. 'They're eight hundred to one, Mr. Pinney,' said I, 'from every corner of England, and from every branch of Navy service. 'Tis small wonder if ye've picked up, unbeknownst even to yourself, perhaps, a word or two out of the common.'

"'Aye,' said he, 'and when I think of the splendid old fellows forced to stand at dummy guns—' I waited, hoping he was off once more, but this time he managed to hold himself in.

"But heaven be thanked, they were not all standing at dummies. A moment later the ten twenty-four-pounders on the starboard side of the upper gun-deck thundered out in a broadside so perfectly timed ye could not have inserted a split second betwixt the discharges. There was a ragged response from the frigate; ye might have thought their gunners were firing at random, but we noted, presently, that they seemed under better discipline.

"You'll know our anxiety in the cockpit, where we could hear only the uproar of action and see none of the results of it. Pinney was about to rush up again, but I ordered him to stay where he was. There would be casualties enough, I thought, without adding a needless one to the list. My gaze kept turning to the companionway where the first of the pensioners would soon be carried down to me. But none came, and I began to think that matters might be even worse than I had feared. There were none, perhaps, to bring the wounded down, or balls and great oak splinters might have been mercifully final in their action amongst the Greenwichers. Usually I am never more calm than in the midst of an engagement, but this present lack of any news of the fortunes of the day, and with no wounded to attend to when all of twenty minutes had passed—damme, I became as nervous as a rat in a scuttle-butt. As for Pinney, he couldn't sit still for ten seconds.

"'Surgeon,' said he, presently, 'by God, I'm going up!'

"'Chaplain,' said I, 'by God, you're going to rest where you are! What kind of discipline is this for an old Navy man, and a parson at that, who should set an example of coolness and obedience?"

"'Only for a peep?' he pleaded. 'Damn my bones and blood! I must see how the lads are getting on!'

"'You can hear 'em, can't you?' said I. 'Damme if I couldn't swear they were serving ninety guns instead of twenty!"

"'God bless 'em, God bless 'em!' said Pinney, his eyes moist with tears. 'Their pieces are that hot they'll be bucking the beams by now. Surgeon, if ye knew 'em as I do—' He broke off, unable to sound the depth of his affection for them.

"Then, b'gad, we were forced to forget the pensioners and think of our own situation. A film of water a quarter-inch deep had spread over our deck. We'd not noticed at the moment, concerned as we were with the fighting overhead. Pinney stared at it in amazement.

"'What's this?' said he. 'By God, we've been holed at the waterline!'

"'By French gunners? Never believe it,' said I. Nevertheless, I sent two of my lads running along the orlop on either side to spy out if we'd taken any damage. By the time they returned, the water was finger-deep. Not a hole had they found. I then realized what had happened. I have said, I believe, that the *Repulse* was something wanting in seaworthiness. Captain Didd had kept men at the pumps constantly; but with the sighting of the frigate, these had evidently been called away for other duty. With the water sloshing around our knees at every roll of the ship, it was plain they'd have to be called back without loss of time.

"I IMMEDIATELY sent word to inform Captain Didd of the situation. Whilst we were waiting, the firing ceased on the instant. The ensuing silence seemed deeper than even silence could be. We stared at one another, not daring, at first, to give voice to our fears. 'Surgeon,' said Pinney, in a heartsick voice, 'if we've been taken—' He broke off, and we listened again. We heard the sound, very faint, of cheering. Pinney sprang to his feet, but slipped and sat down in eight inches of greasy water. He scrambled up and made a dive for the ladder, but I grabbed him by the coattails.

"'Let me go, Dogbody!' he begged. 'By God, we've licked 'em! It's my old lads we hear! I'd know their cheers amongst the innumerable hosts at the Resurrection! Dogbody, in heaven's name! I must see how they've fared!'

"'You'll stay here,' said I, 'where duty has placed you. We'll soon know what's happened; meanwhile we've got to move our gear out of this. Damme, chaplain, there may be scores of men hurt! We must be prepared, now, for our part.'

"Pinney acknowledged the truth of this. I hastily packed my instruments, dressings, medicaments, and the like, whilst the others carried the kids, table, portable stove and other necessities up to the lower

gun-deck. On this deck there had been naught but dummy guns. As my glance swept the place, I saw that three of them had been smashed, but there was no sign of dead, wounded or living. The place was deserted, but we heard noise enough just over our heads. There was no holding Pinney now; he was away with the speed of a hare. My mates and I followed him up ten minutes later, as soon as we had all in readiness once more to care for the wounded."

"And what then?" Captain Murgatroyd asked, after a lengthy pause.

"Well may ye ask!" the surgeon replied. "Damme, 'twas all but incredible!"

"Ye're not saying there was none killed or hurt?" said Balthus.

"None killed, Ned, and heaven be thanked for it! Wounded there were aplenty, but they needed the services of the carpenters rather the surgeon and his mates. Will ye believe it? There was twenty-two legs lost in the action, and not a drop of blood spilled! All pegs."

"GOD'S rabbit!" Balthus exclaimed. "There was luck that wouldn't come twice in a hundred years."

"Not twice in a thousand years could there be so extraordinary an engagement. Chaplain Pinney was all but out of his senses for joy. If he'd forgot discipline before, he threw the last shred of it to the winds now. He was pounding Captain Didd on the back as though he were a common seaman.

"'Are they stout lads, Captain? Are they stout lads?' said he. Then away he'd go about the decks to pick up the bits of splintered legs of the old fellows who'd been hit. He gathered them in a heap, every splinter he could find; then they were all placed in one of my empty tubs that had had mangled limbs in 'em times and to spare, but never anything like this before. He meant to take them all home to Greenwich."

"You tell us, Dogbody, that no one was really injured?" Mr. Ostiff asked.

"One only of the Greenwichers, in his proper person," the surgeon replied. "Dan Ruggles. A tiny sliver of one of his comrades' legs had entered the lean calf of his authentic one; a few drops of blood stained his stocking where the splinter had entered. I had the devil's own time persuading him to part with it.

"' 'Taint nothin', Surgeon,' said he, 'and I wish to carry it home as 'tis. They aint a mite of feeling in that leg, anyway.' But at last I persuaded him to let me draw it, for safety's sake. He was more than proud of having been the only man who bled in the engagement. 'Surgeon,' said he, 'the first blood I ever shed was for Her Majesty Queen Anne, at the battle of Cadiz, in seventeen hundred and two. And here I be with a few drops to spare for George the Third!'

"There never was a more contented seaman; and when ye think of it, 'twas a boasting matter to have received wounds in service, the first and last of which were seventy-eight years apart. Captain Didd, who well knew how to enter into the spirit of such an occasion, assembled the *Repulse's* company—save those again at the pumps—and we gave the pensioners as hearty a three-times-three as was ever heard on a ship-of-war, and three on top of those for Dan Ruggles. And there was none that cheered louder than young Sherr, despite the fact that his own wound must have pained him damnably."

"The lad was hit?" asked Balthus.

"Seared on the cheek, Ned, by a spit of flame from the touchhole of one of our own guns. He carries the powdermarks to this day. And an appropriate brand it was for the young rogue.

"And now, gentlemen, I'll spirit ye on to Portsmouth. We bore up between the mainland and the Isle of Wight, and anchored at Spithead on the morning of—"

"HOLD hard!" Captain Tucker interrupted. "Did ye, or not, tell us ye had an engagement with a frigate? Damme, what was she, the *Flying Dutchman*, that ye pass on this way, with no word more of her?"

"Ye might well have thought so, Nolly, for the speed with which she drew off from us was truly phenomenal, though she'd lost her mizzenmast in the action and was badly damaged elsewhere. When I'd first come up, she was a mile distant, and she was soon hull down."

"But why should she have run?" Ostiff asked. "Her captain must have noted that, despite your appearance as a seventy-four, ye were firing but ten guns on a side."

"Aye, but those were served by the pensioners with magnificent results. Didd himself told me that every shot went home. Even our dummies had played an important part in the victory, for evi-

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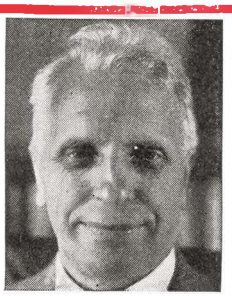

CHILDREN AND WAR

by ANGELO PATRI

"WHAT shall we tell the children about the war?" Parents and teachers are asking this question now, and it is one we all must consider. Are we to teach them that all wars are wrong? What if we are attacked? What if those we love are threatened? Are we never to take up arms? When and why?

Peace is ideal. The people of the world long for peace. If everybody in the world loved peace, loved his neighbor, understood that wrong done to one is done to all, including the wrongdoer, we might achieve the ideal of a warless world. It is for the birth of that day that we work and pray.

Meanwhile what are we to tell the children about the war? Tell them the truth as far as we know it. The children live in this world too. Soon they must take over its troubles, its responsibilities, its joys and sorrows in their own persons. For us to teach them that they can maintain the American way of life without sacrifice, labor and pain, without a struggle, is to do them a grave injustice and ourselves an injury. The truth is that any way of life that approaches the ideals of peace, liberty and justice must be fought for against the forces of selfishness and greed and hate. The battle is always on in the spirit, and if it is not won there, it must be won in the flesh.

We are all likely to forget that everything we value in life must be bought with a price. The generation that refuses to pay in full will forfeit all it does not pay for. There is no other way. The land purchased by sacrifice and labor and pain must be held at the same price. The nation built on the sacrifices of its founders, baptized in their blood, fostered by their selfless devotion, must be maintained at the same price.

The world is fighting now against the forces of evil. Let us say so. Then let us stand by our homes, our traditions and our laws. If we must fight for them, we will—for we believe that life without them is not worth our living. Don't let's cry for peace when there is no peace. The moment we took sides, we went to war in spirit if not in fact. Hate is war, and we hate oppression, falsehood and murder. Our children are not weaklings to whom we must sugar hard facts. They listen to the radio and see the movies and read the papers. Our part is to try to interpret the news so that our children hold to one set of ideals—freedom, justice and truth—for living.

We won't be able to keep our sons from going to war by telling them that peace is beautiful. We stand a better chance of keeping our youth safe if we tell them to think carefully, weigh facts coolly, stand back until the fundamental principles of American life are threatened. These they must defend as their forefathers defended them, so that they may in turn pass them on to their children. Tell the children the truth as far as you know it—and they will do their duty when duty calls.

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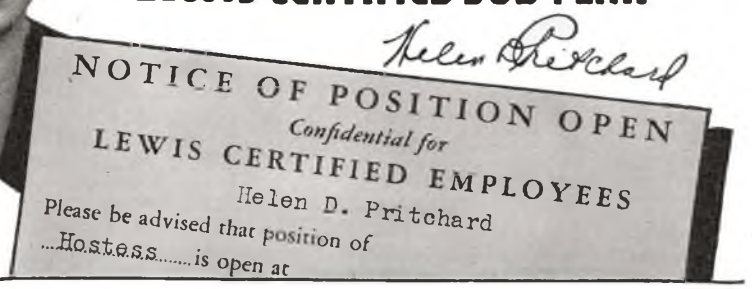

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(Continued from page 123)

dently the enemy thought our confidence so great that we scorned to use the full weight of our armament. 'What,' they must have asked themselves, 'will our chances be if they open up with the rest?' And they didn't stay for the answer; otherwise we would certainly have taken her."

"DID ye reach Spithead in time for the review?" Balthus asked.

"In the very nick of time, Ned. The Channel fleet of twenty ships, under Admiral Kempenfeldt, was anchored in a single line, each ship bedecked with flags, and salutes from those farthest in were already booming their welcome to His Majesty as we crept to the outermost station, where we dropped anchor and made such hasty preparations as we could. The Greenwichers were all concealed below decks. Through our spyglasses we saw the royal barge approaching, and ye'll guess Captain Didd's anxiety at the moment. Heaven be thanked, there was a stiff breeze blowing, and the roadstead was evidently too rough for the royal stomach. When halfway down the line, the barge turned and made for the quiet waters of Portsmouth Harbour.

"'We're saved, Dogbody,' Captain Didd remarked with a sigh of relief.

"'Aye, and the First Lord as well,' I replied with some bitterness, for we had seen Lord Sandwich in the royal barge. 'Tis a pity His Majesty could not have boarded the *Repulse*. He would have learned something of the state of the Navy he'll never learn from the Admiralty Board.'

"'No, no; it wouldn't have done,' said Didd. 'Tis our duty to shield our superiors, little as they may deserve it. And I have been very remiss, of course, in meeting an emergency as this one had to be met. There'd have been the devil and all to pay had His Majesty seen our Greenwichers.'

"He broke off to turn his spyglass on a pinnace putting off from the *Royal George,* Admiral Kempenfeldt's flagship. It headed straight for the *Repulse.*

Admiral Kempenfeldt was deeply respected throughout the service, for he was just and honourable in all his dealings with his officers. Nevertheless he was a strict, sometimes stern, disciplinarian, and Captain Didd had ample reason for the anxiety with which he watched the approach of the pinnace. Word was quickly sent below to Captain Pinney, and the old lads were as scarce and quiet as mice. We had to keep fifteen men at the chain-pumps. This left Didd with seventy-five of his own seamen with which to attempt to make a show of five hundred and twenty. It looked hopeless—and it was.

"As I've said, the sea was rough—the *Repulse* was swinging her masts through a thirty-degree arc, and the Admiral's boat had difficulty in accosting. He leaped to the ladder and then waved the boat off to wait for him. Our men were drawn up for his reception, and Captain Didd, in his shortage of officers, had hustled me into a lieutenant's uniform, so that I was with him when he met the Admiral at the gangway. When the greetings were exchanged, we followed him aft, where he turned to survey the ship with a puzzled expression on his face.

"'You are late, Captain Didd; very late indeed, sir,' said he. 'What is the meaning of it?'

"'I was delayed, sir, by an action with a frigate, off Beachy Head,' Didd replied.

"The Admiral gave him a steady, scrutinizing glance.

"'And where is that frigate, sir?'"

"Captain Didd then explained. The Admiral knew, as well as any officer in his service, the state of our ships and the superior sailing-qualities of French ships-of-the-line in general, and of frigates in particular. He said nothing more for the moment, but continued to regard, in the same puzzled manner, our comparatively empty decks. He was about to speak again when a most remarkable incident occurred. On the deck below, Dan Ruggles, unbeknownst to us, had been having difficulties with his wheel-chair, because of the heavy rolling of the ship. Some of his comrades were trying to make the chair fast, when it broke from their grasp and catapulted down the sloping deck in line with a port where one of the smashed dummy guns had been. Ruggles shot through with as precise an aim as though he'd meant to do it, and fell in the sea a good twenty yards beyond the ship's side. Fortunately the chair was of a light willow wood and floated the old seaman until some of ours could leap to his assistance. Lines were attached to the chair, and he was drawn up by the main-topsail-yard, but with the rolling of the vessel, ye'll guess how he swung; we thought he'd go full circle before he could be lowered to the deck. The seamen cheered him heartily when they had him safe down. Admiral Kempenfeldt witnessed the incident, of course.

"'Captain Didd,' said he, 'I've seen queer things before now, in His Majesty's ships, but this is the first time I knew we have seamen on wheels. Who the devil is this old fellow?'

"The truth had to come out, then. Didd realized that concealment was no longer possible; therefore he begged the Admiral to retire with him to his cabin where he made a full confession. And here, gentlemen, ends the story of the oddest experience that has fallen to my lot as a Navy surgeon."

"The end?" said Captain Tucker. "D'ye mean to say the *Repulse* lies at Spithead to this day, with the Greenwichers aboard, and the chain-pumps still going to keep her afloat?"

"We got 'em safe home, of course. Damme, Nolly! Can ye take nothing for granted?"

The surgeon pushed back his chair, as though about to rise, but Captain Tucker seized his arm.

"Draw in the threads, damn your blood! Draw in the threads! Where did your captain land, after his blowing-up by Kempenfeldt?"

"Blowing-up, would you call it? B'gad, 'twas the pleasantest experience of the kind a ship's commander could wish for. Didd's heart was warmed to the day of his death by the mere recollection. As for the Greenwichers, the Admiral spent the full day with 'em, and was that pleased with the company, he'd have come to Greenwich with us, had duty permitted."

"And what then?" Murgatroyd asked, as the surgeon fell silent once more.

"I could not have enjoyed an experience more, Inky, once we got to Greenwich Hospital. I had every care and attention. Not a day in the entire four months that I spent in bed, flat on my back, did I lack for visitors, and better company than the old lads of Greenwich a man, maimed as so many of them had been, could not have dreampt of."

"What the devil's this?" said Ostiff. "Maimed, you say?"

"Didn't I speak of my unfortunate accident? . . . No—I did not, though I was at the point a moment ago. With the heavy rolling of the ship, one of our twenty-four-pounders that had all but worn through her breeching during the action with the frigate, broke loose; 'twas scarcely an hour after Dan Ruggles' chair was hauled in. I need not tell seamen what a formidable danger a wild gun can be. Short-handed as we were, every man's help was needed in the attempt to secure it. We succeeded at last, but at the cost of one man's leg—my own. It was so badly crushed that immediate amputation was necessary."

"I never heard the beat of that for bad luck, Doctor," said Balthus. "And so many with pegs that might have taken the damage, and no one the worse for it."

"So the Greenwichers thought, Ned; but in the end, I was proud to be a member of their fraternity of one-legged men. And the very first time I ever wore a peg, I clattered in with 'em to a Sabbath service at the chapel. How well I remember that day!"

"What became of young Sherr?" Captain Murgatroyd asked.

"He was in this very taproom not a week since, at the table yonder by the window. A happy meeting that was, for I'd not seen him in a dozen years. He now commands the *Barfleur,* which sailed for the Cape on Tuesday."

THE surgeon rose and took his hat from the wall-peg.

"We compared powder-marks," he added, his eyes twinkling. "Those on Sherr's face are as plain to be seen today as the smudge he made on my snuff-box."

"God bless me, sir! The box was that which you still carry?" said Mr. Dwight.

For answer the surgeon took the small enameled container from his pocket and passed it to the secretary, who examined the lid with deep interest.

"You will observe, Mr. Dwight, the recumbent figure on the whale's back: old Triton with his wreathed horn."

"Damn my eyes if he *aint* smudged!" said Captain Tucker. "Dogbody, I don't wonder ye've held fast to such a keepsake."

"It has well paid for its keep, Nolly. I've carried it for thirty-eight years, this same month of April."

"There'll have been a tidy amount of snuff passed through it in that time," said Balthus; "fond as ye are of the powder."

"Just short of half a ton, Ned."

"Half a ton! Impossible!" Ostiff exclaimed.

"Eight ounces a week, friend Ostiff, fifty-two weeks in the year, and for thirty-eight years. The grand total may be easily found." Then, with a parting nod to the company, the surgeon made his way through the crowded taproom to the door.

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TOO MANY CHILDREN who have "growing pains" pay dearly for them later in life. Actually, these vague aches have nothing to do with growth. Although popularly referred to as "growing pains," they are frequently due to unrecognized rheumatic fever.

Many youngsters, whose parents misunderstand or neglect these symptoms, grow up to suffer or die from resultant, but unsuspected, heart damage. Therefore, "growing pains" should always be given immediate medical attention.

▶ Most attacks of acute rheumatic fever are easily recognized. The most striking symptoms, usually appearing after a sore throat or tonsilitis, are: pain, stiffness, swelling in joints and muscles, with the pain often travelling from joint to joint.

The onset, however, may develop insidiously, revealing its presence by such symptoms as: rapid heart; fever, which may be slight; pallor; loss of appetite, weight, vigor; fleeting muscular aches.

▶ Three-quarters of those attacked by rheumatic fever are between the ages of 5 and 30—and of these the majority are between the ages of 10 and 15. Its most dangerous feature, particularly if not recognized and treated promptly, is that it often does permanent damage to young hearts. Rheumatic heart disease *tops all other illnesses as the cause of death among children of school age.*

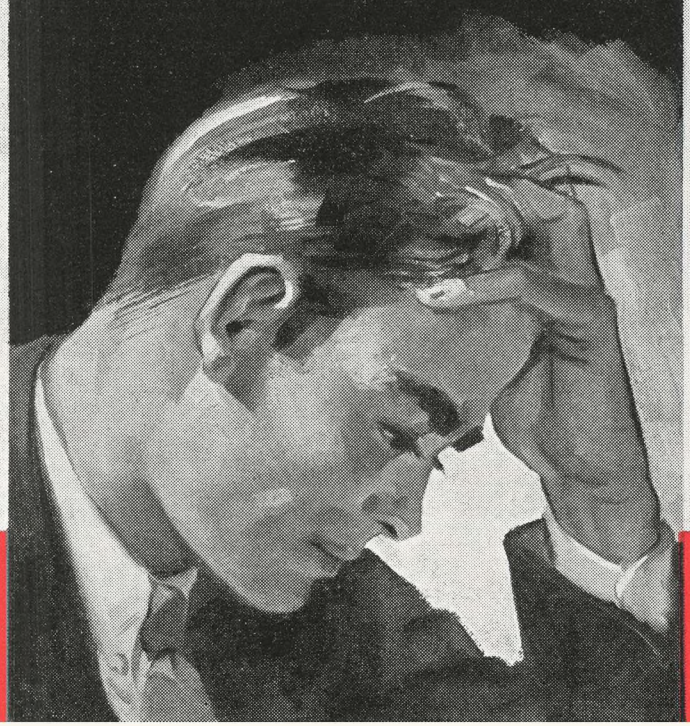
An attack of rheumatic fever may last for many months. Unfortunately, it predisposes the patient to future attacks, often brought on by grippe, colds, sore throat, or other respiratory troubles. It also commonly infects more than one member of a family.

▶ Anyone who has rheumatic fever must —for the sake of his future health—stay in bed under the doctor's care until long after all fever and pain have disappeared, and until the doctor gives permission to get up, however "well" the patient may feel or look. It is vital for a long time afterward to play safe with that threatened heart by being extremely careful about exercise or exertion.

For further information, send for Metropolitan's free booklets, "Protecting Your Heart" and "Rheumatism." Write today to Dept. 1140-R.

THAT WAS HIS HEART

by Virginia Dale



REDBOOK'S NOVEL OF THE MONTH

COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE

That Was His Heart

by VIRGINIA DALE

AT this time in the afternoon Garonne Street was almost deserted. The bank had closed at three; the Emporium had its double doors locked at five; the grocery-store was just being swept out. No one would light his show-windows until about nine, for with daylight-saving time it wasn't necessary. Even the Rosebud movie-house had trouble getting people into the early show except on bank nights. Nate's Barber Shoppe had only one of its three chairs occupied, but Nate would stay open until eleven. So would the diner down the street.

So would Pop's Place.

Later, Pop would have a nice sale of soft drinks up there in front, and small boys would dodge in for hot buttered popcorn or ice-cream. Men who roomed over at Mrs. Walters' and ate at the diner, or traveling-men who stopped at the Garonne House, would come around to Pop's and put dimes in the slot-machines and tell Pop the machines were fixed but they'd play anyway. There wasn't much to do in Hill Valley if you didn't have a home.

If the men who had homes came to Pop's, they brought their wives. They came in through the Oak Street entrance and sat in the back room. The men would usually just order beer; and the women would say, well maybe a claret lemonade with plenty of ice, please. Sometimes the younger married set, on the way back from the country club, would drop into Pop's Place and have highballs. It made them feel gay and daring. It even gave the men up there in front a sense of dash. They'd talk a little louder and keep looking back over the half swinging doors.

When Mark Fieldson came in just before six this Wednesday, he used the Oak Street entrance too. As the screen slapped after him, he thought: "I might as well have fired a gun so that everyone would know." He sat down at one of the bare wooden tables—the one where they always sat—and took a *Courier* from under his arm. He was dead tired. He just sat there, thinking back over the summer; then he caught sight of a fly that had got itself involved in a drop of water there on the table; he watched it battling for a minute. With a match he shifted it to a dry spot. The fly smoothed its legs and flew off. Mark Fieldson unfolded his *Courier*—only four pages today—and kept looking at it as if he'd never seen it before. But he held it low so that without moving it he could see Kate coming.

Pop came back. He had his shirt-sleeves rolled over his beefy arms; and as this was only the middle of the week, his apron was pretty spotty. "Hot enough for you, is it?" Pop asked sociably. "You want somepin, or will you wait?" He too looked toward Oak Street.

"Yes, it's hot," Mark Fieldson agreed.

"This keeps up, I'll get me another fan in here."

"Will you?"

"You want somepin to cool you off whilst you wait for her?"

Mark Fieldson said: "No."

Pop got himself on the edge of the next table and tried to fold his arms. "Well, how's tricks?"

"All right."

"I seen Judge Cressley today. He said your missus and the little girl, they'll be back in the morning. Had theirselves a nice vacation, did they?"

Mark turned to the inside page of the *Courier*.

"Judge Cressley, guess he must set some store on his only grandchild." Pop chuckled. "Much as it's in him to set store on anything, that is."

Mark looked at him over his paper. "I'm sure he does."

"Ol' man Ernst takes a pretty active int'rest in the *Courier*, don't he?"

"It's his paper."

"Active ol' duck. Deacon and all. He and the Judge, they've always been thick as beeswax." Pop craned his fat neck to see what was going on up in front. "You want somepin to cool you off whilst you wait?"

"No!"

"Well, I only ast."

Mark Fieldson put down his paper. "Is there anything else you'd like to ask?"

"Say, keep your shirt on." Pop heaved himself off the table edge. "Man's got a right to ast a feller in his own place does he want somepin, aint he?"

"All right, Pop, all right."

"Don't get all riled up at me, boy." Pop walked over and put his two hands flat on Mark's table. "If'n you only knew it, I'm your friend." His round face, red and sweaty, beamed with too much understanding. Slowly, jovially, he winked.

Mark Fieldson got up so quickly his chair tottered and banged to the floor. "Now look here—" he began. Just then the screen door slapped, and Kate came in.

Mark stooped to pick up the chair. Pop turned. "Hello there, Miss Lauden. Hot enough for you?"

Kate went straight over to Mark. She was aware of Pop and his greeting, and by just that mere awareness and nothing else, she took more out of him than Mark Fieldson's fist could have done. Pop straightened as if he only worked there, and diffidently waited.

"A rye highball, please," Kate said.

Mark Fieldson nodded. "Same for me."

POP hadn't got himself all the way through the half swinging door before Kate pulled her chair closer to Mark. Her voice was low, as it was always—low, and disturbing. Even when she was angry, as she was now, with her eyes more green than gray, that special, sustained depth of voice seemed to maintain her poise and make her master of everything. Mark Fieldson, whose voice could so easily give away all his emotions, was almost boyish in his admiration for Kate's control.

"You know what kept me, don't you?" she said swiftly. "You know why I'm so late, don't you?"

"No. That is, I suppose something came up at the *Courier*."

"I'll say something came up. Old Man Ernst sent for me."

"Kate! Not—"

She gave a quick flutter of lids over the green eyes to indicate that Pop was coming. Pop put down the drinks. "You folks like yourselfs a san'wich or somepin? I just got myself baked up a new ham."

Here was that sly, insufferable friendliness again, the friendliness of Pop, which gathered Mark Fieldson and Kate into a partisanship against that Hill Valley which just admitted Pop's existence.

"No, that's all now."

They watched him waddle off. Mark felt a slow, furious pounding in his temples. "About Ernst: Tell me, Kate."

"He fired me."

"He didn't!"

"Oh, yes, he did. Lovely, isn't it?"

Mark wet his lips. "Because—"

She took up her glass and drank. When she put it down, she looked full at Mark. "Yes, because of us."

"He didn't say that—nothing definite—" But he knew the old man had. If this had been about Kate's work there on the paper, Ernst would have talked to him. He wouldn't have gone behind the back of his managing editor. He never had, in all the years Mark had worked for him. Straight-laced, standing for something in the community matched only by Judge Cressley himself, old Ernst abided by standards of fairness that, up to now, had never been shabby.

Mark Fieldson's voice shook. "If he had anything to say about us, why didn't he say it to me?"

Kate gave a short laugh. "He's protecting you." With the wet spoon that had been in her glass, she traced circles on the bare table. "You're one of his kind, you see. First-family stuff, Judge Cressley's own son-in-law." She threw down the spoon. "I'm an outsider! An outsider," Kate said with bitter scorn, "in a little, insignificant place like Hill Valley!"

"Oh, Kate—"

She glanced toward the front of the place, and seeing Pop leaning over the window-counter and concentrating on Garonne Street, she put her hand, hot and tight, on Mark's. "My dear, don't you see? It's all of a piece: I'm the only one in the world who knows how wonderful you are. The rest, all of them, Ernst and everyone, they think you can be walked on. They think you have to be taken care of. Darling, I'm the only one who knows you can do anything, anything at all, if you'll just give yourself the chance—"

"You're the wonderful one, Kate. You still say things like that; you say them right after being humiliated—oh, Kate, how can I keep from loving you?"

"Love me, Mark. Love me enough." Her hand tightened on his. Then she took it away.

Mark Fieldson stared at the dusty paper roses Pop had tacked up there on the insecure lattice-work leading to the kitchen. But all he thought of was Kate standing in old man Ernst's office. He wanted to know exactly what the old man had said, and he dared not ask. Knowing would mean too much. It would bring him face to face with a decision he knew he had been only preparing to make, racked by the hope that it would somehow be made for him. Then he wondered if what Ernst had said to Kate was not, after all, a resolution and solution ready made. He thought dully: "But so much will have to happen if it is. Can I?"

Kate said suddenly: "I telephoned Flo. She's driving over. She'll be at the Garonne House before eight." Flo was her mother. Kate always called her Flo, except, in moments of great affection, Flossie.

So it was to be a show-down. And that was right, Kate was entitled to it. But Mark Fieldson's feeling about Flo had always been, in a way, something like that he held for Pop. On their two meetings,—when, on the first, she had glowed in her too well-fitted dress and too perfectly set hair and told him to call her Flo,—he knew she was not the sort Lillian and her father, the Judge, or anyone they knew in Hill Valley would be anything but reservedly polite about. It had made him love Kate all the more. When Kate Lauden said, "Flo's sweet," something tender and protective and enormously admiring stirred in Mark Fieldson. "She knows, but wild horses couldn't make her say," he thought.

IT was natural that in this crisis she sent for her mother. It was infinitely pitiful to him that she had only such a weak prop. In a special way, Flo's coming made him realize more than ever that this girl deserved not only something better, but all, everything, he could do. She had no one but him.

"Mark, you'll come with me to see Flo, won't you?"

In the instant before he answered, he thought: "But her mother should throw me out; she shouldn't offer me friendliness and help like Pop did." He hated them both because they stood for a careless code in which he took no stock at all, but which, suddenly, he must make his own.

He said: "I guess the least I can do now is what you want, Kate."

She answered more than he had meant. "You know what I want."

He answered what she had meant. "You're sure, Kate? Are you sure?"

"Yes."

They heard Pop shout something; the place was beginning to fill up. A man in crumpled white-duck pants and a striped purple shirt was playing the mechanical racing game up in front. His jokes with the other customers were easy and loud. Mark said miserably: "Oh, Kate, we should never have come here. I shouldn't ever have brought you."

"We didn't have any other place, did we?"

"No."

She said softly: "I haven't minded. I've been happier here than any place I've ever been. Because I've been with you, Mark. Don't you know? I haven't minded its being cheap and vulgar." She hesitated. "I never thought it was—until today. Today when old Ernst said he couldn't have any girl on his staff meeting a married man in a saloon—"

"So that's what he said!"

"Partly."

MARK FIELDSON'S anger flooded, and he had a strange, despairing perception of the cruelty that can come of conventions, not even beliefs or convictions or principles, but closed, conventional acceptances. Here, on one certain spot of the round globe, such-and-such was enough to damn a person; on another little spot, the same thing would pass unnoticed.

He heard Kate saying: "The way Ernst put it, 'meeting a married man in a saloon,' it sounded awful." For the first time in the year he had known her, he saw fright in her. It sent strength into him, strength and an urgent protectiveness, and at the same time, such sadness as he had never known.

"We've sat here and just talked and been happy," Mark said slowly, "—because, as you said, we had no other place to go. Why should that seem so bad to anyone?"

"Even if we'd never spoken about a thing except the weather or the crops," Kate told him bitterly, "no one'd believe it here. In Hill Valley grown-up people aren't supposed to speak to anyone but their own husbands or wives. . . . Well, shall we have another drink?"

"If you want it. I suppose nothing we could do now would make anyone believe any better of us."

"Mark, do you mind?"

"Of course I mind. For you."

"Oh, my dear, do you know that's the first—well, the first thing you've said that makes me believe, hope—" She stopped. She bent her head, and all her dark, fine hair fell forward like a short silken curtain to hide her lovely face. "It's the first thing you've said, Mark, that makes me hope—everything's going to be—all right."

Pop came in with the air of just happening to be passing by; his look said, "Sorry to interrupt, but after all—"

Mark indicated Kate's empty glass, his own nearly filled one. "Two more, please, Pop. And plenty of ice."

Pop took the old glasses, gave the table a swipe with a dank towel. "I been thinking of putting in booths back here. Make it nicer for folks like you."

"If you'll just get our drinks—" Mark said.

"I was just wanting to kind of know what you thought of the idee, is all. It'd be an investment, and if my customers wouldn't rise to it, what'd be the use? I figgered you might just say before I went and laid out my cash."

"I don't know! We won't be here!" Mark flung out furiously.

"Oh-ho!" Pop shifted the glasses from one thick hand to the other. "Going away?" When Kate turned, he started to go. "May be best," he said in a friendly way.

Kate's green eyes glittered. "Mark, are we? Are we going away?"

He said: "Kate, you're my life. You know that. It's horrible, saying it in a place like this, saying it because a barman—no, not a barman—my employer—" The nerve jerked in his temple. "Oh, my darling, what have I got you into? I should never—it's all my fault—"

"Are you thinking of me? Or—her?"

"I'm thinking of you. I'm hating myself. But yes—yes, I'm thinking of Lillian, too. I must. I have to."

"Does she love you as I do, Mark? Does she? Does she need you? Oh, you know she doesn't! You know!"

"I know. I've known for years. And still, things aren't that simple. My wife—"

"I think love counts first."

POP came back, and nobody said anything at all. Pop put down the glasses and went away. "I'm no home-wrecker," Kate said. "If I honestly believed she loved you, that you meant anything to her even near what you do to me, I wouldn't be fighting for you! But I have a right because I love you! And because you love me. Mark, you do! So—oh, darling, what else matters? No, let me finish. Look, it's this way: all that can hurt her is her pride. That's all, Mark. Listen, are pride and vanity worth throwing love away for?"

"Kate—"

She said stonily: "It comes down to this: if you come with me and she gets a divorce, she'll feel important. She'll feel more dramatic and important than she ever has in all her life—yes, more than when she came back here after her first husband died."

"I didn't know you knew about that."

"Well, I do. Everything that's touched you I know about. Mark, I know things—psychology, psychological effects, things like that; and I know a woman like Lillian needs most a sense of drama, of being the leading lady. That's the most valuable thing that could happen to a woman like that. It'll mean more to her than the first prick to her pride. She'll be the most dramatic person in all this one-horse town. You couldn't ever do anything better for her than that."

Mark Fieldson had never heard anyone speak with the cold precision of Kate Lauden. Sometimes she seemed a child, a child who repeated a lesson, but nevertheless a wise, honest lesson. She had a driving realism that left him dazed. She dug him out and away from traditions that had always been a part of his life. It was only after he left her and went back to the house where he and Lillian had lived for ten years, that he knew himself sucked back, by habit and instinct, to other, older ways.

"What's so terrible," Kate asked now, "about divorce? These days, one out of seven couples in this country are divorced. It's civilized and decent."

He asked: "If we were married, if I came to you as I—as I must go to Lillian—what would you say?"

She told him instantly. "I'd never want you if you didn't want me."

But then she was all done with logic. The frankness of her desire for him made Mark Fieldson at once proud and humble; he had never imagined a girl could be like this; he had never dreamed she could happen to him. She whispered: "All old Ernst said wasn't pleasant to take. I'm not cheap and hard, really—"

"Oh, Kate, no."

"But what he said, even being thrown out like this, doesn't make any difference if it brings us together sooner. You see how I love and need you! And I know what we can do together. I *know!* You've been poked all your life on a little jerk-water newspaper, and all the wonderful things you can do just bottled up inside you. It's only I who know they're there! But we can go away from here and work, work together, darling, where you'll have a chance to do all the grand things I know you can. Oh, Mark, think of us together in New York, where all the right, big people are, doing things with them. You getting something you're crazy about doing, coming home to me, and I'll tell you what I've been writing all day—"

"Kate," he said heavily, "my darling! I'm thirty-three."

"Don't I know that?"

"And you, Kate—you're only—"

"I'm older than you are! I am!"

He took her hand and kissed it, hiding it then in his thin brown one. "You're twenty-four, my darling."

Her fingers covered his mouth. They brought him a sweet and tragic ache. He could have buried his head against her and cried out: "My girl, don't leave me! But only give us a little more time." But he knew there was no more time. Her fingers crept up his lean cheek and pressed against his temple.

Then she took her hand away from him again.

She stirred the ice in her glass. "Of course I'm finished in Hill Valley. I'll go. I'll *have* to go. What else is there for me to do? And if I go—"

A burst of laughter came from the front of Pop's Place. "Why, you old son of—" someone cried, the last of what he'd meant to say lost in more shouts. Mark stumbled to his feet. "Let's get out of here!" He threw a dollar-bill on the table.

Kate stood up too. "Yes. I told Flo we'd be over at the Garonne House. She must be there by now."

They walked defiantly down Oak Street and over to Garonne, the first time they had ever gone down Hill Valley's main street together except as they'd happened to leave the *Courier* office at the same time. Mrs. Walters came out of the Elite Bakery; she looked surprised.

"Good evening," Mark Fieldson said firmly.

"Oh. Oh, good evening, Mark."

He felt Kate's head go up. His thin face settled in fresh anger. There she was, hardly coming to his shoulder, and taking it, taking everything, because of him.

Flo was there at the Garonne House waiting in Kate's room. When Kate Lauden had first come to town and gone to work on the *Courier,* two or three people had spoken to her about living there at the hotel. Mrs. Walters and Miss Print both "took roomers;" anyone would think that a girl alone like that Kate Lauden would much rather get into some nice private home where she could be "one of the family." Kate wouldn't think of it. Living in a hotel, even a cheap little-town hotel, made her feel more cosmopolitan, at least different. Of course no callers—meaning men—were allowed in the Garonne House rooms. (At Mrs. Walters' the parlor could be had for that, if spoken for in advance.) But Kate, arriving in Hill Valley and getting the *Courier* job, which was what she had come for, had believed scornfully there would be no men in all the town she'd want calling. By the time Mark Fieldson had changed her mind about that, Mrs. Walters or Miss Print wouldn't have done, anyhow.

Flo had the door open for them; Mark hoped Bits Butler, the clerk downstairs, knew she was there; then Flo was crying, "Kate, my baby!" and enveloping her in her arms.

Kate detached herself. "Hello, Flo. So you got here!"

"Of course. When you telephoned, I just dropped everything." She looked at Mark, standing uncomfortably by the door. "Well," she said. "Well—"

Kate closed the door. She took off her hat and tossed it on the bed. There was the heap of little pillows she had told Mark about. "I love them. I can't sleep without them. But they're causing a sensation at the Garonne House. I have to pay extra to have the slips laundered."

IT was unutterably strange to him to be here in this room of hers. He knew she had made the curtains, of some heavy white material, herself. The bedspread and chair-coverings too. She had done things to this banal room that made it different from any other he had ever seen. On the desk was a white bowl filled with zinnias, vivid and symmetrical; beside it were books of Freud and Gide, and her portable typewriter, with yellow paper frisked from the office. He turned to look at Kate, her beautiful legs tucked under her as she sat on the bed, leaving the chairs for himself and Flo; she sat there, stroking her instep above her little high-heeled pumps, trig in her linen dress, smarter than anyone else in Hill Valley, her straight, dark hair falling around her lovely face. She was removed and aloof. It was incredible that she, this charming stranger, should want him, that such a little while before, she had been frightened and hurt because of him.

It was Flo who made Mark realize Hill Valley again. Flo was not Lillian's kind, nor old Ernst's, nor Lillian's family's, as summed in dried Judge Cressley. But everywhere there were Flos: laughing, too eager, too generally pronounced. It struck him that in Chicago or New York or even at the State capital Flo would seem small-town and perhaps even funny, though here and in her native Cresford, fifty miles away, she considered herself citified and superior.

"Now tell me everything, tell me what happened," Flo breathed.

Mark, sitting in the white chair, looked at Kate. She said: "I'm fired from the *Courier.*"

Flo waited as if making up her mind what to say. She looked from one to the other. "Because they found out about you and Mark?" She went over and got a cigarette on the dresser. When she turned she cried, emotionally: "Oh, my baby! My baby!"

"Don't," Mark begged. "I'm sorry. I needn't say how sorry."

"But what's going to happen now?" Flo demanded. "Oh, to have this happen to my Kate! Surely, oh, surely, she hasn't got to take all the blame alone!"

Kate got up and went to Mark. "Flo, don't carry on. We're here—because we're going to plan." She put her hands out to him. "Aren't we, Mark? Aren't we?"

His face was white under the summer's brown. "Yes."

"Oh, I knew, of course I knew Mark was a gentleman!"

"Flo, really I shouldn't have phoned if I'd thought you were going to act like an old melodrama."

"Why shouldn't you call me, your own mother, when you're in trouble? You knew I'd stand by you, no matter what you've done."

Mark Fieldson moistened dry lips. "Mrs. Lauden—"

"Call me Flo. We're three against the world now. Call me Flo."

MARK glanced at the transom and saw relievedly that it was closed. "You must understand one thing: I've been wrong—it was downright stupid of me not to know that Kate and I—that we couldn't even see each other outside the *Courier* without people knowing—talking! I never thought, though, that old Ernst—" He stopped. The way Ernst had done this bit into him. It didn't seem like Ernst, but there it was. But whatever anyone believed, he had to make Kate's mother know one thing: "You've got to believe, Mrs. Lauden, that Kate and I—I haven't—well, of course you know Kate. We—we've seen each other, but that's all—"

"All? When my little girl's reputation is ruined? When she's forced out of her job—"

"Flossie!"

"But it isn't fair. It isn't right."

"I know," Mark said, "I know it isn't fair. And so—we're going to—decide things." He tried mechanically to stop that throbbing in his temples, to remember all the clear, reasoning things Kate had said; and over and over he thought: "What am I to say to Lillian? How? And I mustn't think of this Flo. All that counts is Kate."

He heard Kate saying: "Mark knows how terribly I love him."

That was it, that was the thing to hang on to! "That's the only thing," he told himself "—what we think of each other and that because she loves me I've got her in an awful mess."

"But what's he going to *do?*" Flo whimpered. She looked quickly at Kate. Then she went on steadily: "I expect Kate's told you all about us, Mark. How I was left a widow lady when she was just a little bit of a girl. Mr. Lauden, he was doing very well with that washing-machine agency, but he didn't leave anything but the house. It's rented. It's always been rented. I get that forty a month, come rain or shine." She paused, just a second, because after all she was a property-owner, and that was something. Then her mouth, small as a button in her round face, drooped childishly. "I've done my best for Kate, always. It isn't so easy for a woman left with a child, you know. But we've always got along. Any sacrifices I've made—well, I been glad to. She had that business course. And I have this agency for dresses. I sell to ladies right in their own homes. It's nicer. And even when Kate came to Hill Valley to work, I've missed her, but I wasn't going to stand in her way."

"Yes," Mark Fieldson said, because he could think of nothing else to say. ("Lillian," he would begin, "Lillian, I must tell you how things are.")

"Flo," Kate interrupted, "what's the sense of going into all that now? Please."

"Sense? Sense? I'm a mother. You think I don't feel all that's happened to you? Me, so proud of you, so certain-sure you were going to do wonderful things—"

"Well, I am."

"Yes, but—" Flo's china-blue eyes went to Mark. "You know what you owe this precious girl of mine, don't you, Mark Fieldson?"

"Flo!"

"Yes," Mark said, "I know."

Kate spoke distinctly: "He doesn't owe me anything. Not as you mean, Flo. If Mark comes with me, it's only because he loves me as much as I do him. That's all. That's the only reason."

It was the first time he had ever seen that smooth, dark head of hers bent. He took a step toward her, and heard Flo give a quick sigh, triumphant or relieved; and his love, which seemed so inevitable and right when he was alone with Kate, took on the very color of vulgarity when anyone, Pop or Kate's own mother, prodded and examined it. With all his soul, he wanted to be with Kate alone now.

"She leaves this town under a disgrace like this," Flo broke out, "and she'll never get over it! Wherever she goes, it'll come out. She'll never get another position—"

"Flo, don't talk like that. The world's a big place. I can take it," Kate said slowly. "I can—if I have to—alone."

Mark Fieldson's heart seemed to crack. In all this, she had not said one single word of reproach.

"Well," Flo quavered, "it's not right! Mark—" Her voice was heavy with doubt and questions. His name, standing alone like that, asked a thousand things.

"Yes," Mark said. He answered all the tormented questions within himself as he said it. "Yes. Everything will be all right." He turned to Kate. "You understand, don't you? We'll be together from now on."

"Oh, Mark!" He would never, as long as he lived, forget her face as it was then.

He knew Flo had begun to talk again, that she was saying a great many things in a strangled way about the beauties of true love, and being a gentleman, and how much she had always done for her baby. He became aware, ridiculously, that he was looking for his hat. Then he realized he had it in his hand. "I'll be here tomorrow," he told Kate, "about noon, I think."

"I'll be waiting."

She went to the door with him while Flo elaborately turned her back. Her lips parted as Mark took her two hands in his, and she leaned toward him. Then she knew he was not going to kiss her. She drew back. "You're very dear and funny," she said softly. "I'll make you happy. I'll know how."

WHEN he had gone, she stretched her arms high. Now she wished she had not sent for her mother.

"Well," Flo said uncertainly, "well—"

Kate looked at the older woman. Everything was going to be all right. Know what you want and take one careful step at a time toward it.

"New York!" she said. "New York!"

A little panic crossed Flo's broad face. "Yes, New York. That's fine, if—"

"If what?"

"Do you think he's going to break with his wife, Kate? Do you, honest?"

"Flo! He loves me as much as I do him. Can't you see that?"

Flo sat in the white-covered chair, her legs well apart. She felt hot and sticky and upset. With her thumb and finger she shook the damp limpness of her dress around her plump neck, under her arms. "We could go to New York," she said tentatively, "without him. I mean—"

"Yes, what do you mean?"

Flo said hastily: "Oh, I don't know exactly, Kate." She looked down into Garonne Street and wished with all her might that she did know. Kate stepped out of her dress and stood there in tailored shorts and brassiere. "I know you're a whole lot more clever than me," Flo said humbly, "but anyway, I'm your mother. And—"

"And what?"

"Well, what's so terrible wonderful about Mark Fieldson? Why do you have to have him? You can get along in New York without him. Some day you'd find a man who has a whole lot more. Come down to it, he hasn't anything at all—"

"Oh, Flo, you don't understand. I know a girl going to New York, trying to make her way, there'd be a lot of things. Listen: it'd be awfully hard; it wouldn't be any fun. Everything'd be simply impossible."

Flo stared. "Why, you're afraid," she said in wonder. "You're afraid to tackle it alone."

Kate took up her brush and began using it as she looked at herself deeply in the mirror. With every brush-stroke her hair, smooth and dark, seemed to take on a polish. "You don't even begin to see how lucky I am, Flo. Because I won't have to go alone." She put down her brush. "We love each other. Can't you see how entirely perfect that makes everything, for heaven's sake? And if you don't think Mark's wonderful, well, I do. He's got some-

thing about him—you'd never dream he was born in a hick town, would you? He's got an air; he—" Just thinking of him, how he looked, how he loved her, made her happy. She flung herself on the bed. "Flo, I've got everything planned. You know that man Purson?"

"Clare's husband?"

"Well, of course. We've talked about it enough. I think there just never was anything luckier than that you were kids with someone who grew up to marry one of the big publicity men in New York."

"But what's that got to do with us? I haven't even heard from Clare for years."

"What does that matter? She's still the wife of the great Tod Purson."

"Publicity," Flo murmured vaguely, "—I never got it just straight what that is. Is it a business?"

Kate shouted with laughter. "Is it! Putting something over, that's publicity! And does it pay! I read somewhere the Purson Bureau got one hundred thousand dollars last year for just one fee!"

"One hundred—oh, my!"

"Listen, Flo: in a few weeks, as soon as Mark and I know just where we are, you know, I want you to write to this Clare Purson. I'll tell you what to say. Flo, that's the way things are done. It is. People like us, Mark and I, we have to work every angle we can. And if we're smart, it isn't one bit improbable that within six months—three—Mark and I'll be married, and he'll be with the Purson Bureau. He'll be getting a good salary and I can sit down and begin to write—"

"Maybe I could write to her, at that. Clare lived right next to me there in Cresford till she was fourteen, fifteen years old."

Kate lit a cigarette. "There, you see."

Flo fanned herself with her handkerchief. "Why don't we all drive down to New York in my car?" When Kate didn't answer, she stopped fanning. She waited, and then she began again: "There must be something I could work at in New York. If I could only sell the house, it'd give us some cash to go on. Kate, good Lord, I bet I could find a very attractive position down there in no time. Don't you? Don't you, baby?"

Kate watched the smoke drift toward the open window. At last she said: "We'll be— Everything will work out grand, Flo." Her eyes met her mother's. Suddenly, more than anything she had ever wanted in the world, she wanted to hear Mark Fieldson's voice. She got up from the bed and went to the telephone. Then she made herself stop. "Let's have a salad or something sent up here," she said dully. "I don't want to face that silly crowd in the dining-room tonight."

"All right." Flo got up too. "Lend me a kimono or something I can get into, will you? I'll stay here tonight, Kate."

"What?"

"Maybe—you can't tell about men, men like Mark Fieldson. What if he changes his mind? And then there's another thing: what if that wife of his won't give him a divorce?"

"Why do you want to make me feel bad? Why do you?"

"Oh, baby, I don't! I only—"

"Here's a kimono. Please, please, stop talking."

AS Mark Fieldson went up Garonne Street, Pop's Place was lively; he knew the men stopped what they were doing and looked after him; he heard a tail of laughter. He went on steadily past the Rosebud and then the *Courier* office, dark now, and finally he crossed the little bridge that spanned the Garonne River, and he was in the "residence part" of Hill Valley.

It must be later than he had thought. The time he had spent up there in that hotel-room was timeless. But people had finished their dinners; families were sitting on wide, comfortable verandas all down the street; children were playing last tag and hide-and-seek. Someone called, "Going to be cooler tomorrow, Mark?" A dog barked. A woman's voice rose: "Dicky, Dorothy, time for bed. Don't make me call you again now." Here and there a light picked out an upstairs window. Music came from a radio; down the block another told the world, "Douglas Corrigan has arrived in Dublin. The wrong-way flyer, with unparalleled courage—" Was it only this morning Mark had written the story of that unknown youngster? "All the time I was with Kate," he thought, "that boy was flying." But at once he had no room to think of anything except his girl.

Lillian's house—Mark Fieldson had never thought of it in any other way—was the last one north. That was in "the newer part," begun and developed when the country club had built its new clubhouse and given Hill Valley the pleasant illusion of having something like a suburban section. As he went along, Mark Fieldson was profoundly grateful that habit had always made him walk across the way from the Judge Cressley place; this night, of all others, he did not want to see Lillian's father. He had had two stilted dinners at the Judge's while Lillian had been away. "You and Lillian going to get a new car?" the Judge had asked. "Ernst tells me you're doing good on the *Courier* now, Mark. That waterways exposé you handled did a lot for the whole State, he says. No reason why some day, with my backing, you shouldn't own the *Courier*." Mark had taken the Judge's remarks as he always had, as only part of Judge Cressley's picking. Now—he wondered!

LOOKING straight ahead, Mark Fieldson could still see out of the corner of his eye that the Judge had the light on his side porch; in shirt-sleeves and wide slippers, he would be reading the *Courier*. At nine-thirty on the dot, black Hilda would bring him a bottle of ginger ale on a silver tray, and at ten Judge Cressley would wind his thick gold watch, lock the door and, leaving the windows wide open, plod upstairs. He didn't mind living alone with only black Hilda to look after him. After Lillian's first marriage, and she had come back home with her baby, the Judge had made the best of it; but having Lillian there again was rather a trial. Perhaps it had always been.

"But why should I mind if he does see me?" Mark Fieldson demanded of himself. "I'm not a criminal." With desperation, he tried to shake off a sense of guilt, tried to fasten his mind not only on Kate's need of him, but on the rightness of all she had said. Since he had begun to know all she meant to him, his days and nights had been filled with visions of always being with her. How it could happen, he hadn't known. Well, now it was going to. . . .

Over there, on the Judge's side porch, everything leading to all this had really begun. Mark wondered again, as he had a thousand times, what would have happened to him, where he would have been or gone, if he had not run into Lillian that spring day and sauntered back to the Cressley place with her. He had always known her. He was a small boy in school when Lillian Cressley, who had a wrist-watch and a thing called a "permanent," was one of "the big girls." That first spring day when he had met her, he still felt the distance between the Mark of the fourth grade and the Lillian in high-school. She was, moreover, Judge Cressley's daughter, and he was Doc Fieldson's son—Doc who had died, beautifully respected, and with money owing to him by many people who respected him most. He was Mary Fieldson's boy, and wasn't it wonderful how Mary had taken hold after the Doc's death? Handy with her needle, she was—make a dress or curtains or a hat that all the better people went to her for. On that spring day, there he was walking along with Lillian, who was more removed than ever because she'd been married and widowed and had a child. But after that first casual meeting, it seemed that she was always in the Judge's front yard playing with her little girl when Mark passed.

That was just after he had gone on the *Courier*. The next step was to be the *Herald* at the State capital, and then the Chicago *Tribune* and, after that, New York, where great reportorial names like Bob Davis and Louis Sobol and Floyd Gibbons were a lure and promise to every young newspaper cub on every small newspaper in the country. "Nothing can stop me," he'd told Lillian.

But she had.

By the time the spring nights had drifted into summer, Mark Fieldson knew that she was joyless in her father's house. The dark side porch was filled with her unhappy whisperings. "It's hard, I tell you, Mark, not to have any say about running the house. After I've had one of my own, and all. . . . I'm even under that black Hilda's thumb. . . . Papa says the baby annoys him. You can't keep a child like that quiet all the time. . . . I don't know what to do. I tell you, Mark—"

He felt vaguely sorry. When he thought of all that was to happen to him, the places he was going to see and the

things he was going to do, it seemed a shame that as nice a woman as Lillian should be stuck here all her life. He supposed she might marry again some day. He hoped so. Still, all the boys she'd gone to school with were pretty much married and settled.

It was the week after his mother's funeral that he went to say good-by to Lillian. She had been very sweet after Mary's sudden death; she had gone to the little five-room rented cottage and packed and put away things; it had been she who met neighbors at the door and sat in Mary's rocking-chair and smiled quietly when the women wondered what poor Mark Fieldson would do now. It was Lillian who arranged for the colored girl Martha to go over and "do" for Mark in the days that followed.

"So now I can risk leaving here even if I'm not connected with the *Tribune,*" he told her. "When you're alone, you can take chances." He heard the sudden stopping of the heavy porch rocker in which she sat. He got up. He had things to do. "You've been grand, Lillian. I guess you know how I appreciate everything."

She was standing there without saying anything. He supposed she was listening, as she often did, for the Judge's reassuring snore from upstairs, or her baby's wail. Then she said: "I never thought you were really going."

"Why, Lillian! Why, we talked about it all the time."

"Oh, yes—talk."

"But when I gave up the house—"

"I thought you were going to Mrs. Walters', Mark. I really did."

"Oh, no. I'm not going to do that."

"But you've always lived here in Hill Valley. It's your home. You belong here."

He looked out into the still street, and it seemed a dead street. And still he thought that on whatever lighted boulevards he might be—in Paris, perhaps—something of himself would be left here too. He knew it would. "It'll be great, coming back," he said, "for visits. You see, it's different when you're alone, Lillian. About taking chances, I mean." He hesitated. "So this is good-by, I guess, then." She didn't put out her hand, and they stood there; and then Mark, not quite knowing what to do, laughed a little embarrassedly, and bending down, he lightly, quickly, kissed her cheek. How had he had the nerve to do that? Kiss Lillian Cressley! Would she be insulted? It wasn't as if she were one of the girls he took dancing at the Elks Hall, or rode around the town in his tin Lizzie.

"Mark!" Her thin arms were around his neck, her thin body pressed against his; he heard her whispering between her sobs, "You don't have to be alone! Oh, now that you've kissed me, we know."

He went rigid.

She stepped away from him. Even in the darkness her hand quickly smoothed her hair. She said tremulously: "Papa will give me a house, that new one up in the new residence part. I walked past it with Cressie just the other day. It's a lovely house—"

So now after ten years, he was going back to that house.

He wondered if tonight he must pack everything he would be taking with him; he knew he must plan what to say to Lillian in the morning. He must find kind words if there were any for a thing like this. For the first time he asked himself if she knew anything about Kate; and at once, Kate's brave words, "You don't owe me anything," struck his heart again. He felt Kate's fingers on his lips. Then he saw the light in the bedroom of Lillian's house, and he knew that Lillian had already come home.

"Mamma!" Cressie's high voice cut into the dark. "He's coming. Uncle Mark's coming now."

He went up the neat cement walk, and he knew he was not prepared, that he would not know how to start, nor how to go on with all he must say. The porch light switched on, and Lillian stood there, and he had no words at all even to greet her.

Chapter Two

WHEN people tell you of the big things that have happened to them, Mark thought, they skip, maybe they just forget, all the common, ordinary little things that go on happening through everything. When someone dies, a neighbor brings in chocolate cake, and dumb with sorrow, the bereft eat. But they do not remember the cake. . . . Mark Fieldson felt Lillian's threadlike mouth against his cheek; it was the kiss of their habit, and it was just another of those multitude of facile, thoughtless performances that went along in the minutiæ of living. She switched off the porch light, and they went inside. Cressie threw her jacks and little ball on the table in the hall, and Lillian was saying: "You know the drawer's the place for those, lambie." Mark saw himself, as if he were someone else, opening the door of the hall closet and hanging his hat on the third hook from the right; and he thought: "But afterwards I won't remember doing this; I'll remember only how I am feeling; I will believe I had room for nothing else." He went into the living-room. Lillian was fixing pillows. She put the one with the rose tassels carefully on the arm of the sofa, where no one would crush it.

"DID Martha take care of you all right?" she asked pleasantly.

"Why, yes." He added: "Yes, fine." He took the ash-tray Lillian handed him. "How'd it happen you changed your plans and came tonight?"

"Well, I got to thinking, and I decided it'd be better for Cressie. Without the night in the sleeper, and all."

Cressie said sulkily: "But I was just crazy to be in a berth."

Lillian smiled faintly. "Sit up like a little lady, lambie. Don't lounge like that. Even Papa doesn't know I'm back, Mark. I had to have that dreadful station taxi bring us home. Did you see that What's-his-name? The driver, I mean?"

"Why, no, Lillian."

"I just thought you might have. Around town. He might have told you I was back."

He looked at her quickly. Did she mean anything by that?

"Maybe you haven't been coming home this early." Lillian adjusted the shades; the middle one was always exactly half as high as those on the windows on either side. "You haven't, Martha said."

He took his cigarettes from his pocket.

"There's one you just began there on the tray," Lillian pointed out.

"Oh, yes. Did you have a good time?"

"It was a rest, of course."

"Uncle Mark, there was a girl there; she wasn't any older than me, and—"

"Than *I*," Lillian murmured.

"Than what I am. And Uncle Mark, do you know what? She wore—"

"Now, Cressie!"

"I don't care, Mamma. I'm going to ask Uncle Mark. Uncle Mark, she wore kind of sport-suits all the time. You know, in two pieces. Not this kind of kid dress Mamma makes me. Uncle Mark, don't you think I'm old enough to have real sport-suits with a jacket and skirt? Don't you?" Her nearsighted eyes, behind steel-rimmed spectacles, pleaded.

"Now, lambie, what does Uncle Mark know about girls' clothes?"

Mark Fieldson's mind went to Kate in her smooth, straight linen. Lillian had changed to an old last-summer's dress, kept for "wearing out around home." Repeated washings had run its colors together. "Why not let her have what she wants?" he asked with difficulty. He found himself putting the rose-tasseled cushion out of his way, and stopped because it was absurd and out of key.

"Oh, no," Lillian said crisply. "I know best."

He asked curiously and without rancor: "Do you, Lillian? Always know best, I mean?"

"It's time for bed, Cressie." Over her daughter's irritation, she looked at Mark. "I'm not one to give in to people when they want what I know they shouldn't have."

Did that mean she knew about Kate? Did it mean she would keep him from having her?

Mark cleared his throat. "Where's Shep?"

"He's chained out there in his kennel where he belongs, Mark."

"Oh, you know he hates to be chained."

"He was running around my lawn like a Comanche when I got here. I'm certain you haven't had him chained since I've been away. I saw two broken places in my syringa bushes."

"Uncle Mark, tell Mamma I'm old enough for a skirt and jacket. Tell her, Uncle Mark. Please!"

"You heard what your mother said," Mark murmured, and went out in the yard to comfort his dog.

THE day's heat was giving way to a storm. He heard thunder, and saw, far off, a swift flash of lightning. Shep bounded to him, straining against his chain. "Hello, old fellow!" He stood there with the dog's friendly body against his knees. "You want your back scratched?" His strong hands rumpled Shep's long coat, and he kept standing there, not wanting to go back to Lillian. He thought of Mrs. Walters' look, and the way Kate had taken it. Shep's teeth worked gently on his hands.

There was thunder, and more wind, and a rush of rain, and Shep whimpered and huddled close. The light in the bathroom went on. Mark Fieldson stooped and unchained his dog. "Come on, Shep." The collie barked, and he said, "Quiet, quiet, old fellow!" and together they went up the back steps to the kitchen, and he opened the cellar door and told his dog to go down. "Go on, Shep, go on, old fellow." Shep went down to his place on the old motor-rug; but coming back through the kitchen, Mark saw his slightly muddy tracks, and over and above the words he tried to find for Lillian, cut into his constant consciousness of Kate, he could hear Martha's morning grumbling: "Them dog tracks all over my clean floor!"

Lillian had her head bound in a purple net to preserve her hair-wave, and she was turning down their bed when Mark got upstairs. The counterpane, which she had crocheted, to most of Hill Valley's admiration, was neatly folded on the chair near the closet. He looked at the bed. He could really see himself and Lillian asleep there, could hear her breath against the pillows, could hear her saying that it was too hot or too cold; as if it were a picture he had seen in some ubiquitous gallery, he saw himself, taut and still, watching the dawn grow through the east window, hear the milkman, Shep's bark, the mail-train puffing around the bend.

"Mark, did you?"

He realized Lillian had said something. "What?"

"I said are you sure all the windows are shut downstairs? It's going to be a bad storm."

"I can't sleep in that bed," Mark Fieldson said slowly.

Of all the things he had tried to find to say, that assuredly, had never come to him. But now it seemed not only the beginning and the end, but the quintessence.

"I don't know what you're talking about, Mark."

But he had seen her stiffen.

"Why, yes," he said, comprehending her, "yes, Lillian. I think you do. Don't you?"

"I won't listen—I don't want to hear—"

"But you must. I'm sorry. But we must talk—"

"No! I won't! I—"

"We have to. I have to talk to you, Lillian."

"Don't you dare mention that girl's name in my house!"

Though he had suspected she knew, he was appalled now by the certainty that she did. How long had she meant to pretend?

"I won't," he assured her. "I won't mention her name. Since you know something—"

"I don't know anything! I don't want to! All I know is that everyone in Hill Valley is sorry for me." Her head in its purple net nodded. "Everyone!" she added, and he heard Kate saying: "It'll make her feel important. It's the most valuable thing that could happen to her." Lillian went into the closet and came out with her crêpe kimono. "All I have to say is that it's got to stop! You, carrying on! It's got to stop." Her hands angrily crimped and smoothed the cotton ruffle.

"It can't. You see, Lillian, we must talk. There are things now I must tell you—"

"I told you I wouldn't listen! Do you think I want to hear your nasty confessions? Mrs. Walters says every good woman must bear things like this. It comes to all of us, because men are—are what they are—"

"Then," he said slowly, "how can you want me around?"

"Oh!" She went back into the closet, and came out with his pajamas. These she flung on the bed. She turned. "Mark, I'm willing to forgive you. We'll say no more about it."

He looked at the pajamas, and a queer shame went over him. Believing all she did, Lillian was willing to lie beside him. "But how can you?" he asked with dry lips.

"How can I forgive? Because a wife has to forgive. She has to save a man from himself."

"That isn't what I meant. Never mind. Lillian, you don't have to save me. Not from anything. Listen—you've got to listen to me now: Lillian, I'm leaving."

"You're what? Leaving? What do you mean?"

He said nothing.

"You mean you think you—that you're going off with that woman? You don't mean that! Things like that don't happen, not in Hill Valley."

"You told me something like that once before. That I belonged here. And somehow I stayed. But now—"

"And now you're even more part of this town. We're married!"

"Lillian, you don't care. You'd be happier. I really do nothing that makes you happy."

"Happy? We're married!"

"I know. But marriages can be happy. Haven't you ever thought of that? And they can be—unmade."

"Mark Fieldson, stop! Stop talking like a child. Be a man!"

He looked at her for a long time. At last he said: "I am."

Lillian's thin lips tightened. Outside, the rain thrust against the window-panes. Her angry eyes left Mark, and wandered to the window; almost automatically she went over to the east one. As usual, in a storm, a trickle of water seeped onto the sill. Automatically she stooped to the raffia basket kept under it, extracted a bit of one of Cressie's discarded dresses, laid it carefully on the sill.

Mark watched. He had a kind of awe for the hold the infinitesimal details of living had on this wife of his—strength or weakness, he could not tell. Would she feel anything when he went, anything beyond the necessity of filling the gaps of his going with other itemizing? What would she substitute for, "Mark doesn't eat pie. . . . Mark, stop reading those history books. . . . Take your feet off the couch. . . . Mark won't wear woolens." She took some handkerchiefs from the suitcase she had not entirely unpacked, and stacked them neatly in the corner of a bureau drawer. Perhaps she was only calmly certain he would not go.

SHE closed the drawer. "When I went away, I thought you'd come to your senses. Papa said that woman'd be gone when I got back."

"Lillian! Then it was you who—I should have known! You had your father speak to Ernst. You had it all arranged—"

"Papa spoke to old Mr. Ernst the day I left."

"That's funny."

"Funny?" she repeated.

"It's funny he waited all this time."

"Maybe he thought as I did, that you'd realize the wrong you did me. Anyway, what does it matter? I tell you, my father has some influence in this town."

"Yes, I know." But he was thinking of Ernst. They saw each other daily. The old man had never by a word or look indicated anything but gentle friendliness; and suddenly Mark understood that Ernst had hated doing what he'd had to do, had put it off, hoping it would not have to be done. Kate was the kind to make old men remember. In a special way, that sympathy of another man did things for Mark. But still, this did not change the fact that it was Kate and not himself who had been thrown away.

"You had her discharged," he said; "but if you think as you do, why didn't you see that I was the one?"

"You?"

"If you go around having people punished, why don't you punish the guilty one?"

"So you *are* guilty! Oh, Mark! Oh, I had never really believed—"

"You mustn't believe more than I meant. Don't believe more than is so. Lillian, listen—"

"I told you, Mark Fieldson, I wouldn't go on discussing this. All I've got to say is now she's gone, I'll forgive you. And you should be on your knees to me; that's where you should be. But don't think you can ever—ever touch me again. I'll forgive, but I'll never forget. Never."

"No. No, I won't ever touch you again. You needn't be afraid of that."

"We belong in a decent community—"

"I don't. I don't belong here."

"You do! You've always lived here. And your people. You're as much a part of Hill Valley as I am. You'll never be anything else."

He didn't believe it. He couldn't. Not after all the things Kate had said.

"Even," Lillian went on, "if you're a disgrace. Even if everyone in town simply pities me. Everyone wondered why I ever married you in the first place, if you'd like to know."

"You wanted a house, didn't you, Lillian? And ten years ago in Hill Valley husbands went with houses. But now—"

"I'd just like to know where you'd have been if it hadn't been for me!"

Well, that was just one of the things Mark had been wondering for a long time. What he wondered now was why that boy had lacked the courage he had now? "But is this courage," he asked himself, "or desperation?" But that boy had been desperate too.

"I'm tired," Lillian said. "After all, I've had a long train-ride today. I'm not going to say another word. Get undressed, Mark. Don't keep me up any longer."

He stared. He had not reached her at all. He stood there a minute, staring. Then he turned and stumbled downstairs.

He sat there in Lillian's dark living-room, so weary he felt dead. Countless times through those years with her she had deflated him; a laugh or a special silence or a reprimand such as she would have dealt Cressie had made Mark draw away inside himself. It was easier so. Now he felt not only this leaden fatigue, but that old, familiar dumb nonentity, as if he were a child not worth listening to, certainly not worth bothering about. "Is Kate all she is to me," he asked himself, "because she makes me think better of myself?" But it seemed to him it must be every man's right to have at least one person in the world who made him feel right with himself.

After a long time he heard Lillian coming down the stairs. His nerves sprang alert, and he gathered himself together for what she must be coming to say. But she stopped there on the landing where the telephone was, and he heard her giving Judge Cressley's number. So she must have realized finally he was not coming. He got up and closed the door, because he did not want to hear anything at all of what she said to her father.

Presently the door opened. Lillian said coldly: "If you think I'll ever give you a divorce, you were never more wrong in your life."

He got up with difficulty. "Surely your father can't advise that when I leave here."

"You heard what I said. If you go off with that woman, what you'll be doing is living in sin."

He tasted the *cliché* bitterly. "Living in sin. That's the way you would put it."

"That's what it will be."

When she left him, he knew it wouldn't be that. What Kate would say or want, when he told her, he could not think. But all his girl's brave bright hopes would never prosper in the shade. Nor would he let her try it, even if she would. He stood there in the dark with his hands clenched. "My God, what a mess! What a horrible mess I've got her into!" For a quick, sick moment he wondered if it would be best for Kate if he just went off alone, if he let her forget him. What had he to give her? What could he do for her? "But when a woman loves you," he thought, "you're responsible. And I'm a fool—I'm a chained, penniless fool who got her into something I can't handle."

AS down at the Garonne House with Kate, time escaped him. He had no idea of the hours marching toward morning. He heard finally the hustling steps of the milkman on the gravel path, and like a toy whistle blown to surprise him, the mail-train. He opened the door and stepped out onto the porch.

The rain of the night before had stopped, and everything was washed clean and fresh.

"A new day," Mark Fieldson thought, standing there, "and so soon it will be filled with old desires." Was Kate awake? It didn't seem possible that she could have slept through this night. Then he remembered that she did not know Lillian had come back.

Down the street young Billy Riggs rode his bicycle; he had to get to the drugstore early and sweep out before he began his round of deliveries. Mark had done that too, at Billy's age. Only, he had never had a bicycle. He'd always wanted one. Over the way, Polk Gress came out in his trousers and undershirt and dragged the canvas lawn-chairs where the sun would dry them. Next door, Mrs. Peters had left out some tea-towels on her wash-line; Lillian would be upset at such carelessness.

Lillian's smooth, clipped lawn sloped down to the syringa bushes, shining in the clear light with drops of rain. Mark wanted a bath and unworn clothes and a shave; but he feared that however quiet he might be, Lillian would hear him. In their room when he went to get things, she was asleep, her mouth a little open.

HE tried to keep his shower low; he stood under it for a long time, relishing the water on his naked body, clasping it to him, throwing back his dark head to have it hit him full in the face. It was only when his head was good and wet like this that his hair could ever be flat; and when he opened the medicine cabinet to get his shaving brush, he saw, standing in new prominence on the shelf, that hair-stuff Lillian had bought long ago. She had always wanted him to use it. "It's not so awfully greasy, Mark. At least, it would make your hair stay neat." At first he couldn't understand how it was that the bottle stood where his eye lit on it first, and then it came to him that last night, when he had left Lillian to go downstairs, she must have put it there, and he comprehended that then she had believed in her forgivingness, and more than that, in his gratitude for it: that Lillian expected him forever afterward to do anything she wanted. In little or big things, he would be leading a life of due repentance for having been a bad boy.

Everything was still quiet when he left the bath. He went back downstairs, trying to figure what he must do now. See Kate. See Kate— His mind stopped there. It occurred to him he had had nothing to eat since noon of the day before. Coffee, then, and then what? He and Lillian would go over everything again, he supposed. With arriving at that, there was commingled the certainty that Judge Cressley would be coming. Cressie would be carefully sent out of the way, and Martha.

He got to the kitchen just as Martha's broom hit Shep's rump. The dog gave a little yelp and ran out, the screen door hitting him again. "Them dog-tracks all over my clean floor!" Martha flung out. "Had my way, wun' *be* no dogs."

"Let me have some coffee, will you, Martha?"

"Now?"

"Please."

"You have it now, t'wun' be no good for Miz Fieldson. You 'spec' me to make two pots? And clean up my kitchen besides after that dog?" Shep had his nose pressed against the screen, watching Mark. "Go 'way!" Martha shouted. "Miz Fieldson keeps that dog, she goin' lose me!"

Mark went out himself. He knew now what he must do first this day.

"Come on, Shep."

He went down the street with his dog following him. Once Mark felt the rough fur against his legs. He stepped aside, out of the way. Shep ran on ahead, and stopped at the little bridge and waited. "Come on," Mark said gently. They passed the Judge's house, and Shep stopped again, inquiringly. Mark went on. Shep barked joyfully and ran ahead again.

Pop's Place was still closed. He hadn't raised his awning when it rained and the canvas sagged with a weight of water. Later, it was to spill, just missing Mrs. Walters, which would tickle Pop. Mark Fieldson crossed into Maple Street. He had to whistle then for Shep. When he saw the dog bounding to him, he turned his back and walked on. He could hear that soft padding after him. Shep had been a ball of a puppy when Mark bought him. Lillian said she'd never known anyone, ever, actually buy a dog. You just got them when someone had a litter.

When Mark Fieldson went up the path to the old shingle house he thought Fred ought to give it a coat of paint; Hill Valley's sheriff made enough for that. Shep was scratching furiously after something under overrunning weeds by the fence and for just a minute Mark couldn't call him away. Finally, he tried to whistle, but nothing came, and he called, sharply, "Shep!" and went on around to the back of the Sheriff's house. Mark put his foot on the rickety step. "Anyone here?" he shouted. Shep

leaped on him, his paws against Mark Fieldson's chest, his eyes begging. When he and Mark took walks, neither of them ever wanted to stop.

There was the noise of a key in a lock, and the door opened, and there was the Sheriff. "Why, hello, Mark." He snapped his suspenders over his shoulders and tucked his shirt in better. "What brings you around at the crack o' dawn, like the feller says? Nothing wrong, is there?"

Mark began: "I want—" Shep stood beside him, panting.

"You want what? Go on."

"My dog. I can't keep him any longer—"

"Oh, I couldn't have him here, Mark. Not with them chickens o' ours, and all."

Two of the Sheriff's children tumbled out and squatted on the steps. A boy of ten stood in the doorway. They were all barefooted and their faces logy. The girl held out a piece of bread to Shep, and when he approached, shyly, she jerked it away and giggled.

Shep crouched at Mark's feet. "I want—" Mark began again.

"What?"

"Shoot—"

"Oh, well, that's different. I kin do a job like that," The Sheriff nudged his younger son with his foot to get up, and lowered himself to the step. "Yep, I kin do that."

"He mustn't suffer. Quick, it must be—"

"Oh, sure. Best thing to do. Dogs, they're just a darn' nuisance, less'n they be huntin'-dogs."

Mark put a hand in a pocket and found a bill. "Now. Do it now. Right away." He fumbled and dropped the bill, and the girl lurched for it and gave it to her father. "Where it won't hurt—quick—in the head—" He started to walk away, and Shep fell into step. "Call him!" Mark shouted. "You hold him till I'm gone!"

He waited till they got hold of his dog, and then he started to run. He heard Shep barking, and when he was in the middle of the block he stopped again. The barking got quicker; there was a silence and it began again. Then there was a shot.

Mark leaned against a fence.

At last he began walking again. When he got to Pop's Place, it was open and he stumbled in. Pop was surprised. He was cutting the *Courier* into strips to nail on his screen doors. "For crying out loud, you been out all night? My good gosh, you drunk this early?"

Mark dropped down at the table where they always sat. Pop put down his scissors. "I'll git you a hair o' the dog that bit you," he offered sympathetically. He waddled back. "Here's a good shot." His little eyes narrowed. "Somepin happen? I heard Miz Fieldson got back last night."

Mark got clumsily to his feet. "I've got to go. I'm all right now."

He got himself into Garonne Street. He went south to the hotel. Halfway to the rattletrap elevator, he remembered and went back and telephoned up to Kate; her voice came back surprised and a little fearful; and when he got up to her floor, she was waiting for him.

"Flo's downstairs having breakfast. I didn't want any. Mark, have you—is she back? It's so early. Tell me what—"

He put his hands out for her. "My dog—I had to have them kill my dog."

"Your—but I don't understand." She gathered her long white robe about her. "Are you on the way to meet the train, or what?"

"I had to do it. It was the best I could do for him."

His misery reached her suddenly, and putting aside her impatience, letting it rest until he could satisfy it, she put her arms tight around him.

Chapter Three

"COME along, Fieldson, if you're through, let's go down and have a beer."

"No, I don't think I can make it, Sport."

"Why be such an exclusive cuss?" The little sporting editor tilted his hat far back on his head and grinned down at Mark. "A few more turn-downs, and the day'll be here when I won't ask you."

Mark put some copy on the spike. "Chancellor Hitler, in Nuremberg, spoke before 100,000 spectators about the 'shameless ill-treatment' of 3,500,000 Germans in Czechoslovakia." That could ride till tomorrow.

"Come on," Sport urged, "why upstage me again?"

"Can't afford to associate with the lower classes that hang around the State capital," Mark said, getting his hat. He and Sport trailed out into the street together.

"All the boys drop into Mike's joint about this time of day, Fieldson," Sport wheedled. "If you don't know Mike, you're missing something."

"I bet I know him, and his place too. I bet there are two doors there, and nights some of the respectable married couples go in through the side one, and the wives order claret lemonade, and up in front your Mike jokes and looks wise."

Sport laughed. "Meaning things are pretty much of a muchness? Say, you're sort of a mysterious guy, aren't you?"

"Oh, sure. Call me Raffles."

"No, kidding aside, Fieldson, you've been on the *Herald* here four, five weeks, and you keep staying exclusive. What's the percentage?"

"For one thing, I have to save some dough."

THERE was a lot about the little sporting editor that Mark liked. He would have liked going along with him to Mike's, he would have liked to sit and talk, and forget a lot of things. Only, Kate wanted his every free minute—and he wanted her. He had to shut himself away from everything, it seemed, for that desire.

"Saving your dough, huh?" Sport said. "Well, that's either ambition or a dame." He eyed Mark curiously. "In these cockeyed times, I guess a guy's got to find himself something he can hang onto."

"You come down to it, that's about all anyone wants," Mark said.

"Sure. You take me: I'm sporting editor on a sheet that'll never get me into the big money. But I'm not kicking. I been married three times. Wouldn't be without it. In the long run, it's safer and more fun. All three were swell girls, too."

"Three? Do you call that hanging on, Sport?"

Sport shrugged and grinned.

"Hanging on to the married state, sure."

"Oh, I see." Inside, Mark Fieldson churned with futility. How did this little man so casually—and successfully—put over what it was tearing him to pieces trying to do? There were a hundred things he wanted to ask: Did any of those wives of his object? What if they just sat tight and did nothing? Did he ever put a girl he loved through hell?

"You learn one thing," Sport remarked.

"What?" Mark wanted to know.

"You learn, in the long run, nothing's worth a lot of fuss."

"I don't believe that. It's got to be worth it."

"You learn, Fieldson, I'm telling you, one girl's about like another."

"Why did you bother to change, then?"

"Oh, I don't know. Just sort of happened. But still, I don't change conditions, see. Thing is, you get yourself a girl who gets a kick out of the same things you do, and that's all that matters."

Mark laughed. "Somewhere I've heard of a thing called love."

"I heard of it," Sport chuckled. "But I'm telling you, boy: get a girl that wants what you do. Then you're set." They walked along. "What is she, a blonde?"

"No."

"Well, what you waiting for? Get married and get it over, and stop looking like the last run of shad."

"Do I? I know I'm losing weight."

"Give yourself a break, boy. Town girl?"

"No. . . . Well, I'll be seeing you, Sport."

"You're one of those serious guys. I know. All you need is a regular pay-check, and a wife, and to be part of the community."

"My personal history tells me you're wrong," Mark answered. "So long."

It seemed odd to him that Sport should have judged him like that, though. "I'm the only one who knows you can do anything, that you belong where things are happening," Kate always said; and while he didn't at all believe he

could "do anything," it was strange how everyone, always, except just Kate, considered him tempered to a groove.

He gave himself this walk up to her every night. She and Flo had what Flo called grandly, "a furnished apartment," on the other side of Eretria. Sometimes the three of them had dinner on an insecure card-table Kate unfolded in front of the stucco (and impracticable) fireplace; usually they all went to the Blue Plate; occasionally he and Kate had taken Flo's car and driven to the next town and had dinner at a cheap roadhouse on the way. But the last time Flo had said: "Oh, well, just take my car. I'll find a bite here in the apartment. I sort of hate to go to that Blue Plate alone, is all." During the drive Mark had wondered if Kate was thinking of Flo "having a bite" there alone. He hadn't suggested leaving her since. After all, Flo had upturned her life because of them, because of him, really. It seemed he must always be reminding himself of that.

That cognizance of crash he had thought of first when he'd tried to find the right things to say to Lillian, still eluded him. The round of his days was made up again of little things: bathing, dressing, selecting a tie, re-writing, being with Kate, seeing her tilt her hat, order chicken, powder; waiting for Flo to fan her hot self, laugh, glance quickly at Kate. Waiting. "But oh, Mark, we can't wait here forever," Kate said over and over. "We aren't going to waste our lives sticking here."

"When she—Lillian—realizes I'm not coming back, she'll do something."

"How can you be sure, Mark?"

"The Judge will want her to get rid of me. He'll advise divorce. He's bound to."

"Waiting. Waiting, when maybe she'll never—"

"She will." He had to believe that. "Besides," he'd said the night before, "I must get some money ahead. It was pure luck they wanted a man on the copy-desk when I walked into the Eretria *Herald*."

"I'm your luck," Kate told him.

She had a job herself. "I might as well," she said, "while we have to wait. It about breaks us even on the rent, anyhow."

"You—to clerk in a store!" Flo moaned. "I never thought—"

"All right, Flo. This doesn't count. We'll forget all this, won't we, Mark, once it's over?"

He thought with gladness that she would. But he knew there were things he would never forget.

WHEN he had gone to her room in the Garonne House that morning, he had just begun to tell her what Lillian had said, when there was a knock at the door.

"Flo's getting formal," Kate murmured. "Come in." When no one did, she went over and opened the door. Bits Butler, the Garonne's clerk, stood there nervously.

"Oh. Oh, hello, Mark. I didn't know you were here."

"Yes, I'm here."

"Did you want something?" Kate demanded coldly.

"It's like this, Miss Lauden. I—well, I'm sorry, but it seems like we've got to have your room. I mean, well, it seems we, that is the hotel, I mean, there's going to be a convention, kind of. They said they needed all the rooms. Well, they said I was to tell you we got to have your room."

"I see."

Fury swept Mark Fieldson. "Did Judge Cressley come here, or just give you your orders by telephone, Bits?"

"Now, Mark, that's no way to talk."

"Never mind, Mark!"

"Why do you have to have Miss Lauden's room? What has she ever done that a good, decent guest shouldn't? Don't go on about that convention stuff. How do you dare put her out?"

Bits Butler hung onto his belt for support. "You come down to that, we can't have our lady guests having gents in their rooms. Isn't allowed."

"Have I ever been here before yesterday?"

"No, but—"

"Has anyone else?"

"No, but 'tisn't my fault—"

"Mark! It doesn't matter. I'm not staying, anyway. You know that."

"Be quiet, Kate. I'm going to—"

Bits backed away. "Don't you dare hit me, Mark Fieldson!" He turned and ran down the hall. Two chambermaids stood goggle-eyed amongst mops and brooms. By the elevator, Bits paused. "We got to have that room by noon!" he yelled back.

"Mark, my darling, don't look like that. Close the door. Don't mind so. I don't. I promise you I don't. Help me to get my trunk pulled around. Help me pack. Flo and I will leave here as soon as she comes up. We'll leave—" Her voice hung.

"And I," Mark said, "I'll leave with you."

"Oh, Mark!"

"What do you suppose? That you're going to be thrown out alone?"

IT was Flo who, coming back and hearing what had happened, had said: "But how can he just go? Why he hasn't even an extra necktie. He hasn't anything. Why, he hasn't even a toothbrush."

Mark stood by the window. "I've got about fifty dollars in my pocket," he said at last. His troubled eyes met Kate's. "There are a few bonds in a box at the bank. They represent all I've saved in my life. But I don't want to get them. I want—I have to leave them." He stopped. "Kate, you see I have to do that, don't you?"

"Yes. It's all right, Mark. We'll be all right."

Flo wrapped a bottle of toilet-water in a blouse and stuffed it in the trunk. "But that's awful! I never heard of such a thing. She's got plenty! We haven't anything."

"Kate, you want it that way, don't you?"

("Well, no one can ever say I'm mercenary," she thought.) She said, "Yes!" clearly. Mark would always remember how she hadn't hesitated.

"But he won't have a thing," Flo moaned.

"Except me," Kate said. She went over to her lover. "A clean break, darling. It's best. I'm glad it's happening like this. It—it's exciting." Her eyes shone. "Mark, it's wonderful."

"No regrets, Kate, ever?"

"No regrets ever, darling."

"Your shoes. I don't know where to pack all your shoes. Those high heels take room," Flo cried. "Oh, my! He hasn't even an extra pair of socks."

"Flo, stop it. I suppose socks and toothbrushes are still for sale."

"I know. But it all seems so—"

"Mrs. Lauden—"

"Call me Flo, Mark. Oh, I never thought when my baby came here, it would end like this."

"Flo!" Kate snapped the case of her typewriter and turned. "Flo, you behave as if you want Mark to let me down. You act as if you want him to let me take this alone—"

"Oh, no, no, I don't. He's a gentleman. Only—I don't know."

Mark said: "No, I couldn't let you take it alone, Kate." His mind kept repeating that. Whirling along inside it went the old saw: "Two wrongs don't make a right." And over the bustle and slamming of the trunk and torn papers and emptied bureau drawers, he kept answering himself: "But there isn't any wrong. This is the only right."

Kate stood looking about, with a large white straw hat in her hands.

"Give it to me," Flo said. "I'll wrap it. There isn't room to pack it. I'll have to carry it. Oh, dear."

"I'm going to throw it away." Kate flung it over in the corner where discarded papers, magazines, empty powder-boxes, half-filled bottles of nail-polish and lotion, empty jars for cold cream and liquid soap huddled together. She went over to Mark. "When two grown-up people," she told him clearly and distinctly, "have to have each other, it doesn't matter how they do it."

"Why did you say that now, Kate? How did you know what I was thinking?"

"I knew."

"My darling, always know." It was the only time Mark Fieldson ever forgot Flo's presence. "Always know, too, that I mean to do the best for you. God knows that all I've done so far is to make things bad. But after this—"

She knew what to do. Her warm hands touched his face; he felt her breath on his mouth. "I never said it yesterday, did I? But now, since you made up your own mind, I'll tell you: I couldn't have stood it if you hadn't been willing to go with me, to show everyone this isn't just a cheap, horrid affair."

Flo sniffled. "Everyone in this whole town'll say he's just a dog, to run off and leave his wife!"

"Flo!" Kate cried. "Are you trying to make him leave me?"

"No. I—I—" Flo's big bosom heaved. Tears straggled down her plump face.

A strange sympathy for her went over Mark as he saw her valiantly putting aside her own confused convictions to placate this daughter she adored. "Flo,"—he addressed her so for the first time,—"try to believe in me. Say I had no business ever to want Kate. But it happened. It was done. So now I'm going to do what seems the right thing. Try," he urged gently, "to think that way."

"Oh, I do, Mark. I know what you owe her."

KATE broke in—cool, controlled: "Now we're all going to stop this emotional business. What are we, children? There are millions of divorces, aren't there? Who knows what goes on with people who get divorced and marry someone they love? Perhaps they all go through a sort of hell like this. After it's over, who cares? Who knows? They forget, themselves."

Flo blew her nose. "I know. Mostly the trouble is, I guess, about all you know about people is what other ones say. Kate, you haven't even had a cup of coffee. I bet you haven't either, Mark."

"We'll get it somewhere along the road."

"But where are we going?"

They stood there looking at each other. Mark thought: "How funny; Kate looks ahead so far, and I'm so bogged by this moment. It's Flo, with all her poor confusion, who really thinks things through. She's the realist, after all."

"I only got that small room over in Cresford," Flo said. "Course, Kate and me can make it do. But Mark—"

"Mark and I aren't going to be separated now," Kate said. "We're going to be together."

"Oh, baby, you mean—oh, no—"

Kate looked at Flo.

Mark said: "The State capital. We'll go there until—"

"No!"

"But Kate—"

"Why should we waste time? We can go to New York!"

"Kate darling, we have to see what she, Lillian, will do. Besides—"

"Besides what?"

Mark said shamefacedly, "I'll have to make some money. Perhaps the *Herald* at Eretria—"

Kate stood there in her white robe, fighting down her eagerness. Then she gave in—quickly, completely. When she had told Mark she knew "about psychology," she had been right; and she knew that now, at this moment, it was important that *he* make a decision.

"Yes, darling," she said, "all right."

"Well now," Flo broke out. "Well!" She couldn't get over Kate giving way like that. She began feeling a little better.

"I'll make some money," Mark said again. He felt now that nothing could stop him. "Get something ahead. And then—"

"I should say,"—Flo picked up a length of green ribbon from Kate's discards and began winding it around her thumb and finger—"we'll need money ahead, that's sure. We can't all go sailing into New York with just my rent money."

That was the first Mark Fieldson realized that Flo had no intention of being separated from Kate. He wondered if Kate had always known, and he had a sudden, ridiculous picture of himself married to both of them.

It was Flo who remembered the trunk must be checked. They could all drive to the capital in her little car—it was in the parking space next to the hotel; but that car wouldn't carry a trunk too. "Mark, you go along to the station and express it through. Time you get back, we'll be ready. We can all leave this town, and I hope I never see it again, nor hear of it either."

Mark looked down into the street which he knew like the palm of his hand. It was incredible that he was leaving it like this forever. This would be a never-forgotten scandal, with himself, Doc Fieldson's son, the focus. He could see Lillian staying on in that house of hers; there would be no Shep to dig in her garden, nothing at all, really, to irritate her, accepting Hill Valley's pity. Would she, as Kate said, "feel important"? He thought so. The absolute depths of him believed that, believed that his leaving, even this way, would never hurt Lillian as his not going would hurt Kate.

But Kate, this girl who had taken possession of Mark Fieldson's life, as indeed Lillian had that night on her father's dark porch, could follow the secret places of his mind as the other woman never had. She knew that when he went down and through the hotel and into the street, he would be doing the hardest thing he could ever do for her. It gave her a terrible pride, and because of that, a generosity.

She said softly: "You wait at the station, Mark. Don't come back. Flo and I'll pick you up there."

When he left, she kissed him full on the lips.

She kept standing at the window until she saw him pass. When he turned the corner, she slipped out of her robe. She had left out her gray silk jersey to wear because it didn't wrinkle easily, and now of all times she wanted Mark to see her as attractive as possible.

"Well," Flo said at last, "well, you've got him. There's just one thing, Kate."

"What? What do you mean?"

"You can't ever lose him now."

Kate demanded angrily: "Do you think I want to?"

"Oh, baby, you don't now. I hope to God you never will. Because you've taken on a man who's doing so much for you, it'll drag on you all your life."

Kate drew a sharp breath. "Why do you talk like that? It's very different what you've said when he was here. Then all you could talk about was what he owed me."

"You wanted me to, didn't you?" Flo tugged at her corset. "But I never said debtors made good husbands."

"Come on. We'll go to the side door. We'll carry our own bags. Come *on,* Flo." And they started out. . . .

Mark Fieldson had seen no one—that is, he had looked at no one, though he knew people stared at him as he went by. He knew what they'd say when he'd gone. Then he forgot to think. The only thing was, he seemed to hear Shep padding beside him all the way.

In the baggage-room he found Harry Patmer. He had gone through grade-school with him. Now Harry stood there in striped blue-and-white overalls, wetting his stub of a pencil as he wrote laboriously on cardboard checks. Mark remembered how good Harry had always been in spelling; he had won a medal in the fifth grade, it must have been, at a county spelling-bee. Still, here he was, checking a trunk under Mark's direction, looking inquisitively, peering with too much interest, up at Mark. "The Lauden girl's trunk, eh? I heard there was a great dust-up there to the hotel this morning. Now, Mark, I'm s'prised, you a respectable married man, to go get yourself all ge-mixt with a hot baby like that. . . . *Yeau!"* Dazed amazement struck the joviality from him. Mark had slapped his fat face. Someone grabbed Mark's arm. It was Pop.

"Come away," Pop commanded. "Don't start nothin' here. Come on, now."

MARK found himself walking down the platform, his hand still stinging. Pop was in his shirt-sleeves; his hat had fallen off when he grabbed Mark, and he carried it now squashed under his arm. "I run over when I heard things." Pop panted. "I guess 'twas a good thing I did. Who'd it do any good for, if you bust out at a baggage-man?"

Mark said nothing.

A kind of shyness came over Pop. "I thought I'd sort of like to say good-by, Mark. I guess you're goin' too, aint you? I kind of thought I'd just sorta like to say good luck."

"I—thanks, Pop."

"Oh, that's O.K." They got to the crossing and stopped. The Emporium's little car splashed by. Bits' brother Bob was driving—he leaned out and grinned. "I've lived here all my life," Mark said slowly, "and you're the only soul that'd say that, Pop."

"You can't tell, Mark. Maybe a lot o' them'd like to. Everyone always thought well of you, round here. But—well, folks find it pretty hard to go against their bringin' up." The strain of thinking abashed Pop. "You know, that's the one thing that's got me worried about you, Mark. You was brought up here too. Now you're goin' off'n the rails, so to speak—don't get riled at me, Mark. I'm your friend."

"I guess you are."

"I know you wisht I was more your kind, sayin' good-by like this, alone and all. But anyhow, I'm a friend of the tender passion. Yes sir. That's me. And—well, I hope she's going to be good to you, Mark. That's what I hope."

"It's usually said the other way around, Pop. You should be telling me to be good to her."

"No one'd ever worry about you being that, Mark. I know. What I hope's what I said. Because I figger you aint ever known anything about how grand it is to have a woman good to you."

Mark saw Flo's car come jogging down the street.

He said: "Good-by, Pop. And thanks. I never understood—a lot of things. About you, I mean. Before—"

"Oh, good gosh, that's O.K. And the girl, she's a high-class lady, Mark. I always knowed that. I knowed by the way she always high-hatted me."

The car stopped. Mark got in. He sat next to Flo, because Kate was driving. They went on down the road.

Harry Patmer, his mouth open, ranged along beside Pop. "If you hadn't of stopped me, I'd of given him the punch in the snoot he had coming."

"Oh, shut up."

"You didn't even see what he done to me, Pop."

"He hadda. He's wanted to hit out for a long time. You just happened to be in the way when he done it."

"Look, Pop, you figger he's run off for good with that baby? Just left the Judge's daughter and run off for good?"

Pop put on his crumpled hat. "He's gone," he told Harry, "but he'll be back. He don't even know it, but all he's havin' is a joy-ride."

THEY had been on the road about an hour, saying nothing important, when Kate drew up in front of a hot-dog stand. There seemed to be an extension built out on its side where two or three tables lurked. "Coffee," she announced briefly. She opened the door on her side and got out. Mark walked around to her. When she said anything, anything at all, no matter how trivial, everything looked different to him. He just stood there beside her, waiting for her to say something, look up at him, smile. "Darling," she said. It was enough. He would never get over the way she had never reproached him, had not stormed or cried; from now on he would show her he could take better care of her. They waited for Flo. He realized he hadn't helped Flo out of the rattletrap car, and went back to the gravel path. She was breathing heavily.

"My! I bet we'll all be glad of coffee, even hot as it is."

At the bare table Flo put down her spoon dramatically. "Goodness, I just thought."

"What now, Flo?"

"Those pillows—all those little pillows of yours, Kate. And the curtains. My goodness, we went off and left all that good stuff. Yes, just laugh. But it was foolish, wasn't it, Mark?"

"I don't know." Sitting there beside Kate, he felt her knee against his, felt her shoulder brushing his, and he could have laughed with her about little pillows. But he could not laugh, it seemed to him, at anything else in the world. If they were only alone, he wouldn't feel like lead; perhaps, if they were alone he could forget everything but looking at her, listening to her.

"You're all in, darling," Kate said suddenly; "I promise that when you've had a lot of sleep, you won't feel as you do."

"But where," Flo asked, "are we going to sleep?"

There, Mark Fieldson thought, it's Flo again who puts her finger on the point. He tried to think for all of them.

"That's kind of the thing, isn't it?" Flo persisted tentatively. She stirred the sugar in her cup, not daring to look at Kate. "Mark says we're going to the Capital, but—"

"Flossie, Flossie, there are rooms at the Capital!"

The "Flossie" sent a happy glow through Flo. Why, Kate felt close to her; of course she loved her as any daughter loves a mother. "But still I got to know something," Flo thought. She began, "We aren't—I mean, are we all—all going to take a furnished apartment, or what?"

Mark put some change on the table. "I'll get a room somewhere. You and Kate—what Kate thinks best—"

Flo made a quick movement to stop Kate; she had seen her young body thrust toward Mark—oh, Kate mustn't suggest—Mark wasn't the kind—and then everything was all right.

Kate said again: "All right, Mark. Whatever you say."

Flo was too surprised to speak. Think of Kate giving way to anyone like that! Flo looked at Mark Fieldson with new respect.

Chapter Four

BUT when Kate was actually living with her mother again, cooped up in two rooms and sleeping on the day-bed in the living-room, she thought a great many things. "And this isn't what I think best," she told herself, getting up bleakly to smoke a cigarette, trying to read, prowling around stealthily so that Flo would not wake too and want to be helpful at two, three, four o'clock in the morning. Kate Lauden was not good at marking time, and she knew it. She had made Flo write, at her dictation, to Clare Purson; she'd read until she knew by heart Mrs. Purson's gracious reply. This was the next step in the direction she meant to go. It was waiting that set her on edge.

She was not afraid Mark would leave her. His bridges were too well burned for that. His need for her touched the best that was in Kate Lauden, making her weak with love and a sort of terrible and defiant pride. She could not go ahead without him. Pressing her forehead against the window-screen of that foolish apartment, tears of loneliness and longing ran down Kate's white cheeks. Thinking of Mark three miles away, there were times when she hated him for these wasted hours. Who was there to care what they did? Even Flo would pretend not to know. Who back in Hill Valley believed they were apart like this? Nothing she had ever read, nothing in her own feeling, explained this.

One night, before he had stopped taking Flo's car, they had got out by a little stream and stood there together in a profound, dark quiet. "So this is it," she thought, in his arms. Then he had broken away from her so suddenly, she sank to the ground and was shaken with sobs. "Forgive me," he begged, "I never intended—oh, Kate, you don't know how hard it is not—"

"*I* don't understand? I know we love each other! I know—"

"What kind of a fellow would I be if I took advantage of that? You—girls, darling, they can't know—" He turned away from her.

"My Quixote!"

He didn't hear, nor did he come back to her. Words stormed to her lips. Suddenly she stopped them. She must never blame him as Lillian so surely had for many things; whatever he did, she must never throw recriminations at him, because another woman had done it before her. For a second she was appalled. How much, in that life they were going to have together, would have to be unsaid, so that she would not make herself into a repetition? She got up. "All right, Mark," she said again. She kept paying out like that. "You—you're right, darling. Whatever you do—"

"Right? I don't know! Only, so far I've made so much trouble for you. I want—I'm trying—" His voice was lost in the dark.

She had leaned weakly against a tree. From somewhere they could hear a motor chugging up a hill. Now she felt little and unimportant; she could not identify herself with that large, free world she idolized, of which, mostly, she considered herself a part. She wanted to give Mark Fieldson that sense of careless freedom and joy that all the wise people had; what was this but stuffy, middle-class virtue? But she was dominated by what she considered, really mockingly, as "Mark's conscience." She dared not break through. So, "Come along," she said, steadying herself. They went back to Flo's car.

After she began at the store, it was a little better. She got herself together mornings and went, quite empty of emotion. But when she saw Mark Fieldson, fresh excitement ran through her, even when Flo was there. Gradually, she began to know Mark suffered in this special way too. It made her happier. Then she could lie in her lumpy bed, imagining he was awake as she was. Little ripples of grim satisfaction possessed her.

"But why do you go to the station news-stand for all those out-of-town newspapers every night?" she asked him once.

"Just to see what's going on in the great world," he told her.

"The great world? Our world's just us. Mark, I don't care a thing whether Hitler marches into Czechoslovakia or not. Our world is *us!*"

But Mark had not told her all the reason he had taken to reading the papers with a feverish despair. He was ashamed to. It had become an obsession to look for every scrap printed about divorce or remarriage. "So-and-so is being Renovated," Winchell reported casually. "As soon as his final papers come through, he will marry her," he read in New York, Chicago, California columns. Even the quite unimportant people, hat-check girls, a clerk in Kansas, a bond-salesman in Detroit, were easily able to rearrange their lives. The whole world seemed to Mark Fieldson to gallivant through this thing with a light and airy touch. What was there in him that prevented him from handling the situation as everyone else did? How long would Kate's patience endure? He could tell her: "Lillian will come to it. She won't go on doing nothing." But how could he be sure? He couldn't go on wrecking Kate's life; he'd done enough as it was. He had written painstakingly to Judge Cressley, explaining, making his desertion clear. For a week he was mad with hope. Nothing happened. Not a word came from the Judge.

DURING the day when, with mechanical thoroughness, he did his work on the *Herald* copy-desk, when Sport and the other men began treating him with the casual friendliness of just another guy with a girl on his mind, he could see the danger of that obsession. It was with a desperate determination to turn away from it, that one night he had made himself begin to write.

Kate would approve of this, he said to himself. Yet he never told her of it. It was no time to risk her pity if nothing came of the novel; if it was a flop, she'd never have to know he had even tried one. He felt he was flop enough as it was. But for two, three, four hours after he left her, he sat there in his hotel-room with his feet hunched on the bed, his paper balanced on a drawing-board looted from the *Herald* art-department; and by degrees, his pencil went faster.

Then it became easier to leave her; sometimes he did it even eagerly. It would be something to arrive in New York with a finished book under his arm. For this girl of his! And if it was published, it would mean everything—standing, money. Money! He began looking at the film-news for the amounts paid authors for screen rights. "Over fifty thousand," he read, "for 'Gone With the Wind.'" "But, maybe that was special. All right, give me twenty, give me ten. I'll settle for ten. Five? What do you suppose five thousand dollars in one single piece would do for me now, Mister? Say, I'd be glad enough if it's just good enough to be published. At least I can make a connection with almost any New York sheet if I've just had a good novel published.")

But when he was writing, he never thought of those things.

The writing took him back to a peace that was worth fastening on paper. It was odd how he could write about all the little quiet things in Hill Valley which had made up his life until now. He wrote things he had been unaware he knew, described things he had not known he'd noticed; he found an understanding for people he had considered he knew merely by sight. That regular, even flow of living engulfed him. Only the present was an unreality.

"Have you ever thought how it would be to stay here?" he asked one night. The three of them were taking a little walk after leaving the Blue Plate.

Kate jerked her hand from his arm. "Stay here? Are you joking?"

"No. I might get to be managing editor of the *Herald*. Maybe I could own it some day. We could have a house like that." He nodded toward the white house they were passing. A child's bicycle sprawled on the lawn. It would be fun to have a kid he could give one to. He took Kate's hand and tucked it gently under his arm. There were a lot of things they'd never talked about.

"But we're going to *do* things! I want to write smart, sophisticated stories—you know that; and out of the world here—"

He might have told her then about his book if Flo hadn't been there. Instead, he said: "We could write here. We'd have time."

"Time?" Kate jeered. Then she caught herself; she knew that Lillian had too often scoffed at what Mark Fieldson had to say. "Don't you remember all the lines I'm laying down for you already, darling?"

Flo explained helpfully: "She means, about me writing to Clare Purson, Mark. Didn't you tell him yet, baby, about the letter I got today?"

"I had Flo write again about a week ago, dear. She just mentioned that we—that I—well, that we'd be in New York soon."

"Lines?" he repeated.

"Mark, *you know!* The Purson Bureau!"

They walked on, and Mark said nothing.

"There's a real chill in the air," Flo reported socially; "it's the first night I put on this cloth coat, and it feels pretty good."

"What did you say," Mark asked, "to your Mrs. Purson? About us in New York?"

Flo let Kate answer. "Flo wrote that I was going to be married. She said we were going to settle in New York. She said that you were a newspaper man."

"I see. What else?"

"That's about all. Oh, she wrote that you, my fiancé, were interested in publicity. You *are*, aren't you?"

"No."

"Darling, how can you be that way? There's such heaps of money in it."

"I want some money, all right, but I want to make it in my own way."

"Excuse me, but I think that's pretty stuffy, Mark."

"Hasn't it ever struck you, Kate, that no one has to be publicized or propagandized unless they haven't got what it takes?"

"I think it'd be fun to put over anything. I'd like to be put over myself," she laughed. She made herself add lightly: "You haven't a nickel, so I don't see how you can afford to be so high and mighty, anyhow."

"I've always made a living up to now," Mark said.

"But honey, if you were lucky enough to get in with the Purson Bureau, you'd be on the *inside* of things; you'd be one of those who make the wheels go round. I'm one who thinks it's better to be on the inside than forever on the outside looking in."

"Besides," Mark said, "I don't see myself parading up to the husband of Flo's old school pal, and laying down on him for a job."

"Don't put it that way, Mark. After all, contacts—"

Flo tried to make everything clear. "Kate says that's the way to get on, in New York, Mark." She pulled her coat closer. "And you don't have to worry about Clare hearing about that other wife and all. My goodness, I'd die on account of Kate, if she did. But she don't keep up with anyone in Cresford—she said so." Flo steered them all toward the "furnished apartment," because she was cold, and her feet hurt; and besides, she knew how angry Kate was, and this wasn't any time for her baby to quarrel with Mark. "Anyhow," she went on painfully, "I just said Kate's intended. I didn't name you."

Kate said stonily: "Mark, I haven't fussed at you for all this mess, have I? If I've taken it on the chin, how can you blame me for trying to help us? I try so hard—it's been awful for me—"

He had the queerest sense of throw-back. It passed so swiftly there was hardly more than an impression. And then Kate's voice blotted it out: "It's hard, waiting and doing nothing. I only tried to help—"

"I know. My God, I know what you're going through because of me. If I barked at you, I'm sorry. This waiting, it gets us all down. But it can't be long—Lillian will surely take steps before long—"

"My baby's having a hard time, Mark," Flo threw in hurriedly.

"I know. And she's been so grand about it all."

They'd reached the apartment. "Aren't you coming in?" Kate asked, surprised, for Mark had stopped at the street door.

It seemed to him now he could do nothing that was so important, so necessary, as finish that book of his. "No, guess I won't tonight, Kate. I've some stuff I have to do."

Strange new doubts assailed her. Flo went on upstairs; and there in the dark little entrance, seeking to strengthen her chain, Kate Lauden did the best she knew: pressing against her lover, she put her mouth on his.

SHE was awake next morning, but still in the bed, when Flo came yawning into the living-room. "Goodness, you not up yet, baby? You'll be late to the store." She shivered. "Land, I just wonder when they're going to give us some heat around this place."

Kate sat up and felt for her slippers. Her black, shining hair was tumbled, and her skin, without powder, was clear and fine. But her eyes were dark and shadowed. Flo hovered. She forgot she was chilly. She put her hand on Kate's head. "You haven't a fever, have you? You're not feeling up to much this morning, are you?"

Kate shrugged away from her mother's hand. "I'm all right." She stood up and tied her robe tight around her straight body. "As well as I'll ever be around here."

"Oh! Well, can I do anything? Some bi-carb, maybe?"

"Heavens, Flo, no. You can't do anything. No one can. No one," she added, "but me."

"Well I—I'll start the coffee. You'll be late to the store."

"I'm not going to the store this morning."

"You're not? You mean you *are* sick?"

"Not bi-carb sick. But I'm sick and tired of waiting, that's certain."

"Oh, Kate. Oh, dear! Now you just got to be patient. Oh, dear, things'll work out. Mark figures they will. You heard what he said again last night."

"You heard what he said about staying here, too, didn't you?"

"Well, he—maybe he was just talking, like a person will. He won't want us to stay if you don't want to. I guess you know by this time Mark Fieldson won't ever do anything you don't want."

Kate was on the way to her tub. "Maybe he won't do anything I *don't* want." She turned on the water. Then she said, really to herself: "The thing is, he doesn't do what I *do* want."

Flo had the coffee ready when Kate came back. She put their cups on two ten-cent trays, and for herself she dug into a paper bag from the bakery and brought out two sugar-topped buns. "Sure you won't have one, baby?"

"Flo, I've told you every single morning I never take a thing but coffee."

"I know." Sighing, Flo went to get the paper which was delivered at the door every morning.

"Here's an ad of a pre-winter coat sale at your store, Kate. I wonder should we buy our winter coats now, or wait, or what?"

"I haven't thought about it."

"I've been thinking one thing, baby: you know what I could probably get to do when we get to New York? It's be a receptionist. Lady-like. And just sitting, and all. I bet I could find something like that right off, don't you? I think I make a good appearance and all, don't you, Kate?"

Kate put down her cup. "Flo, I'd like your car today."

"Oh, would you? I was going to use it to see some ladies over in Cresford. I still got some dresses in my fall line I want to get rid of. You want a ride? If you can get off, you come along, and we'll have a nice day."

"I want to take a drive. But I want to be alone. You can go to Cresford tomorrow."

"Well, that part's all right. I guess I could. Is Mark going with you, then? Can he get a day off too?"

"No, Mark isn't coming." Kate got up to pour herself more coffee. "Like Miss Greta Garbo, I want to be alone."

Flo buttered a bun.

"Where you going?" she asked timidly.

But Kate had taken her cup and gone into the other room, where she was getting into a suit. Flo made believe that Kate just hadn't heard.

IT was a good six hours' drive to Hill Valley.

Kate Lauden knew so well what she was going to do when she got there, that driving along, she skipped hours, weeks, months in her mind, and fixed it, as people do on a reward they're certain of, to the picture of herself and Mark—Mr. and Mrs. Mark Fieldson—in New York.

And Flo? She skipped that, too. One thing at a time, one step toward what you want; that was the only way. Sure and grim, Kate drove on. After this, she would never be afraid of anything; she would know she could handle anything.

She stopped for more coffee about two, and just on the outskirts of Hill Valley, she halted the car again. Sitting there, she turned the windshield mirror so that she could see her face, and deliberately, as part of her plan, she rouged her lips heavily, took out the new box of mascara and used it on her lashes and brows too; she put high bright spots of red on her cheeks that had never been anything but powdered; and then, from her purse, she took out the violent yellow scarf Flo had mistakenly given her for Christmas, and which she had never worn; and this she knotted with too much coquetry around her neck. She meant to look exactly what Lillian believed she was. You could scare a woman like Lillian into doing things.

Kate threw the clutch in savagely. She drove up Garonne Street, gazing straight ahead. She didn't care whether anyone recognized her or not. It was precisely four o'clock when Kate stopped in front of Lillian's house.

A colored man was raking leaves on the lawn. He stood there with his rake lax in his hands, watching her as she went up to the porch and rang the bell. A colored girl opened the door. "I want to see Mrs. Fieldson."

Martha's eyes popped. She knew who this was. She stuttered, "You—I dun' know—"

KATE stepped inside. She saw Lillian, in a blue knitted dress that did not fit, standing at the door of the living-room, her mouth a little open.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Fieldson. I've come to see you."

"Cressie!" Lillian cried back into the living-room, "Go upstairs—no, go down to your grandfather's! Cressie!"

Cressie peered from behind her spectacles like a scared rabbit. "Mamma—"

"Cressie, go down to your grandfather's, I say!"

Cressie snatched her hat and coat from the hall closet. The outer door slammed after her.

"Martha, don't stand there! Go back to your kitchen!"

"Now we're alone," Kate Lauden told Mark Fieldson's wife, "we can talk."

"You can't force your way into my house, contaminating—"

"But I have, you see. I've just come to find out when you're going to divorce Mark."

"How dare you! But I won't—I'll never divorce him. I told him that. If he chooses to live in—"

"Look, Mrs. Fieldson, what can you gain by that?"

"Gain? I'm not thinking of gain. And you—get out of my house! A woman like you—"

Kate put her hand up to her yellow scarf. "How would you like me as a neighbor, Mrs. Fieldson?"

"What?"

"Mark and I. If you're not decent enough to give his freedom to a man who doesn't care for you, Mark and I are coming back here. To live—both of us, together! We'll live, as you put it, quite openly in—"

"You won't! This town wouldn't let you. They'd run you out."

"Oh, I don't think anyone, not even your father, could really do that." Kate kept cool. She even glanced around the prim room. Quite the Hill Valley standard of perfection, wasn't it? Was that the chair Mark had lounged in? Where had he kept his tobacco? She noticed the neatly-stacked magazines on the table. What would this Lillian do when some day she found the name Kate Lauden in one of her magazines? There was not a thing here anywhere that suggested Mark Fieldson, and she wondered if Lillian had obliterated his traces, or whether there had never been any. Her eyes, quite green today, went back to Lillian. Suddenly, here with the inevitable mistress of this particular house, she felt all wrong, wretched and unhappy. This Lillian had always had everything: money and family backing, and Mark; she'd never had to fight for anything. Out of her real misery Kate cried: "Oh please, don't you see? Can't you understand? Let me have Mark! You have so much! I want him; I need him so much more than you do!"

Lillian drew her thin body taut. "I have nothing to say, except that I want you to get out of my house!"

Kate's hands dropped. For a second she just stood, and then she felt a hot, angry red washing over her, could actually feel, in every single bit of herself, her blood boiling. What had come over her, to plead with this woman? She had never, in all her life, been so angry with herself, with everyone. She'd show this woman! "I'm going. But first I'll tell you that Mark and I are coming back here. We'll take a house—"

"You can't. I know Mark Fieldson hasn't any money."

"How do you know my mother and I haven't?"

"You? Why, you were working yourself. You haven't—"

Now Kate was cold as ice again. She could say very well all she had come to say. "Oh, working—that doesn't mean anything. My mother has a lot of property. She might buy the *Courier* for Mark—"

"She wouldn't!"

"I think old man Ernst would be glad to sell, you know. He's rather tired of being under your father's thumb."

Lillian's pale lips twitched.

"Think it over," Kate said pleasantly. "Make up your mind whether you want to be laughed at because your husband's living across the street with another woman—"

"No one's laughing at me! I have the sympathy of everyone in Hill Valley!"

"Oh, really, Mrs. Fieldson, a woman whose husband leaves her is always just ridiculous." Kate laughed on a high, single note. "A lot of people here like Mark, you know. If he came back, a newspaper-owner, they might switch their sympathy from you to me."

Lillian looked at her in horror.

"Think it over." Kate went to the door. She looked back, and saw Lillian standing perfectly still; she felt as if she had run a long, hard race and, with her heart pounding, had won. As she let herself out, she saw Lillian's hands go out mechanically to straighten the already straight pile of magazines, and it did the same thing to her that Mark had felt that night Lillian had protected her window-sill with bits of Cressie's old dress. Lillian's feeble hold on regularity was portentous.

But Kate drove back churning with gratification. She forgot that feeling that she had been struck in the face; she forgot everything but that she had shown that woman; she thought with grim pleasure of Lillian's fright.

She got out and telephoned Flo when she had gone about halfway, because Mark always called her around this time. "I've had a splendid day," she told Flo.

"Oh, Kate, where are you?"

"I'm on my way home. Has Mark called yet?"

"No, but—"

"Listen, Flo: when he does, tell him I drove quite a way. Tell him I'll pick up dinner along the road. Tell him I won't see him till tomorrow night, will you?"

("And whatever he had to do last night when he couldn't be with me, he can do again tonight," she thought.)

"Kate!" Flo breathed. "You all right and everything?"

"I'm fine. The day's been fine." And Kate hung up.

Chapter Five

MARK FIELDSON was served with the papers for divorce the following week. The charges were desertion and adultery. Kate Lauden was named as co-respondent. He went to tell her, burning with indignation for her, his thin face drawn into lines of shame. "I never thought for a single second Lillian would say anything about you." He said that over and over.

All those nights when she had waited, looking at him expectantly for this very news, slid away. Here it was. "How could you have thought she wouldn't?" she asked curiously at last.

"Because—fundamentally, Lillian's decent. She's fair."

"Is she?"

"Of course, now I'll have to fight."

Kate looked at him, speechless.

"My darling Kate, you can't believe I'd let this stand against you?"

"Mark, for God's sake, fight? And deny everything? What difference does it make if we get what we want?"

"But it isn't true. My little dear, you don't understand—everything it implies."

"But Mark, please listen to me—"

He said gently: "I'll go to Hill Valley and see Lillian. I'll explain. I'll tell her, and make her believe—"

That frightened her. If Lillian told about that visit, there was no telling what Mark Fieldson might do. (They had escaped the "furnished apartment" where Flo's tears threatened to drown them, where her moanings at this horrible insult to her baby had made Kate want to scream; they were walking toward the Capitol, though neither of them, for different reasons, knew where they were going.)

"I'll make Lillian know she must withdraw such a charge against you, dear. I'll make her know there's been nothing that she thinks—"

Kate had got hold of herself. "Mark, can you honestly say there's been nothing between us?"

"Not what she means. Not according to law—"

"Oh, law! Maybe all the law takes into consideration is bodies. Well, it's sure then, all right, there's been nothing." She made herself go on beseechingly: "But oh, my dear, hasn't there been something much more important? Aren't we as close as any two people can be?"

"Kate, yes. But you don't understand—you're so young—" Tenderness for her youth, her inexperience, this love she had for him which had dealt her one blow after another, choked him.

"If you love me," Kate said, sounding brave, "it's all right. I can stand anything if you love me."

She was quite worn out by the time she had made him promise to let Lillian go ahead.

EVEN Flo, convinced that she should be feeling more like "the mother of the bride," found the dusty office of the justice of the peace deficient in romance. Flo thought of the marriage ceremony, notwithstanding dim recollections of her own, as roseately colored by stained-glass windows, in a medley of innocent choir-boys, frocked bishops, stretching awnings outside a church, and a trembling, blushing bride within it. She stole furtive glances at Kate, standing straight and decisively unblushing in a tweed suit, coming just to Mark Fieldson's shoulder; and Flo's mind, recasting itself from the stained-glass atmosphere, felt back and recalled she had never seen Kate blush in her life.

"—and I pronounce you man and wife," the voice of this utter stranger declared.

Mark bent to kiss Kate. More solemn vows than any he had spoken in this musty place pledged him. He had never considered before what a word *cherish* was. He had probably never used it in his life. Cherish, to cherish—it was a lovely thing. It would be a new thing for him to do. He wondered for a struck second whether that other ceremony with Lillian had had that in it; if it had, why had it passed him by as so many other things had too. He had a great, mute gratitude for this second chance that had been given him—the chance to cherish a wife.

"Is that all?" Flo quavered.

"That's all." Kate was flagrantly alive. Her lips parted with quick, caught breaths. The justice of the peace, whose wife suffered from frequent migraines, watched Kate go, and sighed.

"Well," Flo said on the street, "well, and so you're married. Oh, my baby! A married woman! Oh, dear!"

She looked up at Mark and away. "It just does seem awful to have the wedding breakfast, because that's what it'll be, at that old Blue Plate."

Kate chuckled. "Our 'wedding breakfast' should really be in Pop's Place."

"He liked you," Mark said.

"Oh, really? Should I feel all set-up?"

Sitting there in the Blue Plate with its tables painted orange, and elaborate "art mats" of pea green, Flo did cry. It was a little late, perhaps, but in keeping, because the mother of the bride always cried at a wedding, especially of an only child, didn't she? "I've gained a son," Flo announced impressively. (And she thought: "He's glad, like I am, everything's proper; and Kate, she's got what she wants, she'll be happy. Why, everything's going to be all right now. Of course everything's going to be just fine.") She said aloud, being playful: "I guess I'm not needed here. I'll just take myself away." It had been arranged that Flo drive herself back to Cresford for three days, to "wind up" her affairs, possibly—it was hoped—dispose of all her left-over dresses. On Tuesday they were all driving to New York.

"But I didn't think—" Mark had begun when Kate told him about that.

"No, it's better to have Flo," Kate had told him, "at first. That Mrs. Purson wrote and asked her to come to their place for a week-end. All of us, I mean. But if Flo isn't with us, it might be awkward if just we went, don't you see?"

"Kate, why do you make so much of those Pursons? I wish you wouldn't!"

"Oh, Mark, are you going to scold me again?"

He started to tell her then about the novel. But he couldn't. He'd work just a little more first. Two-thirds finished now, it was a burning, secret triumph in his heart. All his hopes were based on it.

On the street again after the Blue Plate wedding breakfast, Flo kissed them both and went on. "I'll be waiting,"

Kate told Mark Fieldson. "Oh, Mark, it's crazy, you going to the *Herald* now!"

He hated it himself. But he had walked out of one office without a bow, and he would not do it again. This would be his last day at the *Herald,* and the ties that had been so short, that he had half hoped he could make permanent, were going to be decently broken. He had already given up his room. He had taken his new bags—one had his manuscript locked in it—to the "furnished apartment" that morning when he'd called for Kate and Flo. The events of these past months had chopped any real routine into pieces; but now, he believed that in just a little while, a few weeks, a month maybe, book or no book, all those pieces would be fitted together to make a future uninterrupted pattern, secure, enduring, admirable.

He would take care of his girl, and let her write her head off. He would give her what she wanted; he would make up to her now all she had gone through because of him. He wondered what kind of a flat they'd have, he and Kate —and Flo?

"It'll work out," Mark Fieldson decided, spiking a news story. As an omen, the last story he sent through was, "France and Germany signed, in Paris, a pact for pacific and neighborly relations," specifying that "between their countries no question of territorial order remains in suspense." *Suspense,* he repeated, the most horrible word in any language.

He opened the drawer which held his slim accumulation of his months here: half-used packs of cigarettes, pipe-cleaners, a worn shirt he had changed one night on his way to Kate, scrawled notes for his book. Except for those notes, it might have been his drawer back at the *Courier* in Hill Valley.

"Why didn't you let me be best man, Fieldson?"

Mark looked up to see Sport grinning at him. "There wasn't even a bridesmaid." He tore up papers. "How'd you know?"

"One of my scouts. Course, when your divorce hoop-to-do came out, Papa figured this was on the cards. Well, am I going to meet the bride?"

"Sure." Mark got up. "I suppose you know I'm leaving here too. We're going to New York."

"Come on out, and I'll buy you some celebration."

Mark glanced at the clock. Sport chuckled. "So you're that kind of husband, huh? Doesn't surprise me. But take a tip from me, brother: get her trained right from the start. Come on."

"You have dinner with us tomorrow night, Sport. At the Blue Plate, about seven."

"O.K." The little sporting editor strolled to the sidewalk with Mark. "On the wing, huh? On the wing with a clipped wing."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Oh, nothing. Most of the world's mixed up today, why not you?"

"I don't get you. I'm on the wing for the last time. The next stop's my last."

"The little lady think so too?"

"Yep, New York, that's what she wants."

Sport said: "She the kind that always gets what she wants?"

Mark answered thoughtfully: "Why, yes. Yes, she is."

He never saw Sport again. Kate pointed out, what was the use? They were leaving so soon. Besides, this was their honeymoon, wasn't it? In white chiffon that made her a fresh promise, she wanted to know why Mark wanted to leave the apartment; and Sport and any other reason under the sun became ridiculous to him too.

THE five-day drive to New York, punctuated by cheap hotels, days of Mark Fieldson wedged between his wife and his mother-in-law because Kate nearly always drove, nights when he was dumfounded by delight, stood forever in his memory. He was released into a happiness that completed him. "Was I right? Is it worth all the hell to be with me?" Kate whispered as he held her. He was hers, she knew; no man had been more to any woman. Triumphant in both her love and his, she had an added triumph in knowing her puissance. "I make you happy, don't I? I said I would. I told you I would."

Flo's tentative tap at the door at the time they'd set ahead to breakfast would bring them back to the small realities: coffee, packing, stowing bags again in the rattling little car, asking directions and getting wrong ones, gas, oil, bills. Mark had set out on his adventure with exactly three hundred and forty-one dollars, the sum he had managed to save; Kate had about two hundred. Flo's finances weren't talked about, but she must have had more than either of them. For the first day or so she had been careful about paying her share. "Now, listen, Mark, my lunch comes to forty cents. . . . A dollar and a half for my room." This was beyond Mark Fieldson's ability to stand. "Forget it, Flo." Kate said nothing. "Well, now, I'm going to keep tabs," Flo said quickly, raising her voice to make sure Kate heard. "I'll keep tabs and some day when we're once settled and everything, I'll pay you back. I insist on doing that now."

IT was the fourth night on the road, in a tight little hotel-room, that Mark Fieldson told Kate about his book. It was still a new delight to her to see his man-things in a closet, strewn about the place, with hers. In a housewifely bustle she got out his fresh shirt while he couldn't get over it that he, Mark Fieldson, was there to see Kate in a nightgown, wash out her stockings, tie a ribbon around her smooth dark hair. "Mark, what *is* all this heap of paper in your bag? It looks—why, it looks like some sort of manuscript—"

His heart pounded. "It is. It's a novel." He swallowed. "At least, I hope it is."

"A novel! You mean you—"

"It—well, it's not finished, of course. I began it there at the capital." Now that he had begun to tell her, he couldn't find words quickly enough. "I must have been thinking of it for years. Because it all came so easily. A thousand things I hadn't known I'd noticed, or believed in, there they were, ready to be written. It's just a story of people I understand, of a town I know—"

"I see."

"Once I started, I couldn't seem to get it down fast enough. Or solidly enough. Oh, maybe it's no good! Only—the thing is, all over the world there are Hill Valleys. You know? People who dig their roots deep and only want to go on their own way. If they're uprooted and torn from their place, they manage to send down their roots again somehow. And in the end, they're the only ones who matter, who endure."

So he was to have a novel before she was! But that wasn't the way she had planned it!

"Kate, what I've tried to say is that just living and taking isn't enough. It's the *kind* of living, the manner and integrity, that count. Without most people counting that way, there wouldn't be any world at all."

"I see."

"I tried—I—why, Kate! Why, *Kate!* What is it? What's the matter?"

"Nothing."

"But you—you're acting so strange."

"Oh, no. I don't think I am."

"But I thought you'd be glad. About the book. It's for you—because of us—that I wrote—"

"You certainly didn't lose any time, did you? While I was dying on my feet in that filthy store—"

"I wrote nights after I left the *Herald.*"

"While I was crying with loneliness all those nights, you could just leave me and go calmly away and write—"

"I thought you'd be glad," he said helplessly.

"It's funny. It's really quite funny."

"What is?"

(But still, if the book were a success, New York would be wide open. "Who is that smart-looking girl?" "She's the wife of the famous novelist; everyone knows he couldn't write a line without her." Only—she was to have had the first book, she thought again; was it her fault that he made her so unhappy all these months she couldn't think of anything else?)

Mark went over to his hard-won bride and took her roughly in his arms. His hands, tight on her bare shoulders, could, even now, have lifted her. It was a moment before she could wrench herself away. Mark watched her walk away from him, stand there at the mirror, take up her brush and deliberately run it over all that dark silky hair of hers. He did not go to her again.

She waited, but he did not come.

He sat down on the tumbled bed. "I thought you'd be glad," he said miserably. "I don't see—"

She took a quick breath. The misery she had created for him out of something he did not see through, gave

her a bitter pleasure. She had not only an undefined sense of retaliation, but of importance again: certainly no other person ever—never Lillian!—had the power to make him feel like this. She flung down her brush and ran to him, kneeling in front of him, and when his hands reached out for her at once, an exultation swept over her, tender and still proud. "Darling Kate, tell me why—" he whispered as he held her.

"You might have told me you were writing, Mark," she answered; and now, really, it seemed to her that had been the whole thing. That storm of jealousy had never happened.

"Oh, my sweet, don't you understand about that? I'm afraid it isn't any good. And if it is, it'll mean so much—I was putting off the fatal day for you to find out—" He tried to laugh.

"Of course it's good. It's *got* to be wonderful!"

"I don't know. Maybe no one'll even publish it."

"Of course they will! Even if they don't, there must be ways to make them."

"Ways?" he repeated.

"I figure New York's just full of ways." She laughed gayly. "I honestly do. Oh, Mark, don't you see? It's just as I always said: you can do anything if you give yourself a chance."

"I don't know. What little I can do is because I've got you, anyhow. That's sure."

"But you didn't have me when you began to write this."

"Oh, yes, I did. You were alongside all the time."

She put her face against his. "Tell me you love me, tell me!"

"You know."

"Tell me."

"I love you, Kate."

"And without me you couldn't—"

"Without knowing you're mine, I'm a clod. Maybe I am anyhow, but swear you'll keep it from me, will you?"

"Mrs. Mark Fieldson," she told him, "doesn't fall in love with clods." The sheets of the manuscript fell to the floor unnoticed. . . .

But when she remembered about the manuscript again and cried, "I must read it right away!" he wanted to put it off.

"Wait, Kate. Please wait—" He tried to draw her back. "Don't read it now."

"I'd like to know why."

"I want to go over it again first. I want it as good as I can make it before you read it."

"I'm not going to wait any longer. Besides, I think I have some critical faculty, and—"

"Oh, God, I know you have. That's the reason—wait—"

But she settled herself on the bed and began.

He tried not to watch her. He kept lighting cigarettes and went to the window, to the mustard-colored chair; he tried to sort his ties and get them back neatly into his bag. He tried to read a magazine, but he could tell by the scribbled pages as she held them just what part she had reached. He kept watching for something to cross her face that would give away an opinion, kept waiting for her to look over, chuckle, sigh, admire, say, "Oh, this bit is awfully good," or, even, "I think you slipped here."

AT last he couldn't stand it. "Going down for cigarettes," he mumbled. In the desolate lobby he wandered about, looked across the way where a wavering sign announced *"Eats."* It made him think of Pop's Place. Did Pop ever think of him now? If the book was ever published, he would send Pop a copy. There was no one else in Hill Valley. He tried to stop remembering that. He bought a newspaper. The Pan-American Conference in Lima, he read, resolved that "all persecution from racial or religious motives which place a number of human beings in the impossibility of obtaining a decent livelihood are contrary to all its policies and judicial rules." As a human being, on the threshold of obtaining, what he trusted would be a "decent livelihood," of settling his life for keeps, Mark was struck anew to a troubled sadness for a world gone so insane that such resolutions had to be taken.

He went back upstairs, alternately seeing Kate in an excitement of admiration and downright scorn. He kept reminding himself that what he really wanted was her cool, unbiased judgment, and he was unprepared to see her sitting there, carelessly smoking.

"You were gone a long time, Mark. Well, I finished it."

He waited.

"I'll tell you, Mark—"

"Yes. Tell me."

"I had no idea you felt like that about your old Hill Valley."

"Not just Hill Valley. It isn't—" He wanted to make her understand, as he had just felt again down in the lobby, something of the tragedy of being unable to count on going on. But if he hadn't said it there on paper, it meant he'd failed. He just fumbled for a cigarette.

Kate shuffled sheets. "I don't know—"

"Of course you do know, dear. You're trying to be kind, to spare my feelings."

"No, I'm not. Listen, Mark: the writing's all right."

"Thanks."

"But a first novel—well, to get attention nowadays, it has to be startling. You know? I think it should be easy enough to do."

"I should think so," he agreed harshly, "judging from the number of startling things that get attention."

"If you're going to be like that, I won't say anything more. I thought you wanted my criticism. But if you don't—"

"I do. Only—"

"Only you don't. Not if it isn't a great, big burst of applause."

"I'm sorry if I barked, Kate. Of course I want to know exactly what you think."

"Well, you're too nice—all the way through, you're just too nice. Why, you write about legs as if they were still a biological secret. Really you do, Mark."

"I guess I wasn't thinking of legs, *per se.*"

"That's the trouble. If the best way to nail attention is by calling a spade a spade, why on earth not do it?"

"Well, Kate—"

"Listen, Mark. I bet I could write in some stuff that—"

"No!"

"Honestly, my dear, there's no use in regarding this as a sacred cow, is there?"

"I don't. It's no good—let it go at that."

"You've done a lot of work on it, Mark. Let's not waste it. Mark, you know what I said: I know I could write in certain things that—"

"Kate, it isn't sacred to me—only the sort of thing you say should go in—well, I can't see it."

IT was the first night they had been at odds. Lying side by side, each felt the other a stranger. Taut, aloof—hurt, she told herself, because Mark wouldn't see how right she was, Kate thought over again what she had read. Well, if he was going to be this stubborn about it, he'd find out; he'd realize when the book didn't cause a riffle, probably wouldn't even get publication, that she had known it from the beginning. Slyly, the idea crept over her that things were turning out according to her plan; she would have the first book after all! Satisfaction lulled her to drowsiness.

"Kate—you're not asleep, are you?"

"Almost."

"Darling, don't shut yourself away from me. I can't stand it."

Every nerve in her had jerked awake now. Once again his need for her, his dependence, flooded her with a glowing sense of power. She kept herself still. "I'm not shutting myself away," she said in a small voice.

"Let's not talk about the damn' book again, ever."

"Whatever you say, Mark."

"You won't say anything to Flo about it, will you?"

"Flo? No, not if you don't want me to. Why?"

In a moment he said: "You always believed I could do stuff. I hate to think of you now talking over with Flo the way I've flopped."

"I won't say anything. I promise."

"Kate, I love you."

"I only want everything for us, don't you see?"

"I know. Somehow I'll get you what you want. I swear I will."

"Honey, of course now you'll have to begin making some money right away, won't you?"

"Yes. But Kate darling, don't talk about that now—not now—"

She held herself away from him. "I can't help thinking how Purson could solve everything." She flung her

arm above her head, her face white, her hair dark there on the pillow. "If we go there this week-end, and he likes you—"

"I'm making the rounds of the papers. I'm not going to Flo's old school pal—oh, Kate, don't talk any more now."

"But—"

"Kate! What is it? You seem so far away again."

"Oh, why won't you just go to Pursons' when I want it so? It's such a little thing to do for me. I thought you loved me."

The first week-end they were in New York they spent with the Pursons.

Chapter Six

THE week-end included New Year's Eve. "If you don't mind just being very quiet," Clare Purson said to Flo over the phone. "Tod and I will be alone." She laughed gently. "We leave the celebrating to the young people."

"It'll be lovely, a good rest and all," Flo answered, trying to be hearty, and hung up after being told about trains. The Pursons lived on the Sound. "Can you imagine?" she burst out at Kate. " 'Leave celebrating to the young people.' How old does she think I am?"

"Two years older than she, isn't it, Flossie?" Kate chuckled.

"Well. Well, anyhow! You suppose Clare's just settled into a regular old grandmother?" Flo marched over and had a good look at herself in the mirror. "I guess you're about the same age as her girl, Kate. She's married too. Listen, baby, maybe I'm not as young as I was, but still and all, wouldn't you say I put up a kind of good appearance?"

"What? Oh, yes, certainly."

Flo sat down heavily. "I know what I'll do," she decided, "I'll ask Mark. I'll tell him I just want a perfectly frank opinion. I only want to really know, honest and truly, because of when I go round to get ready to be a receptionist." Mark would make her feel better about it, he'd understand how she felt.

"Kate!"

"Now what, Flo?"

"How long you figuring on staying on here at this hotel? Because when I think of the cost! You're paying five for this room, you and Mark, and that dark little hole I'm in is three-fifty. Every day! It scares me to think of it."

"Oh, you know not any longer than we have to. But we had to have a good address. No one has to know we've got the cheapest quarters in the place. I wasn't going to get off on the wrong foot, anyhow."

"Well, I don't know. It seems—still. Where's Mark?"

Kate moistened a bit of cotton and wiped her nails free of polish.

"He didn't tell me, but I bet I know," she replied.

"You do? Where'd he go, then?"

"I have a hunch he's rushing around again to newspaper offices."

"Why, I think that's fine, Kate. He don't let any grass grow. I know he went the other day too. But I told him, I said: 'Mark, what's the use in this week between Christmas and New Year's?' I said."

"What'd he say, Flo?"

"He said he'd found out it wasn't any use."

Kate got up to get the little bottle of liquid polish. It was colorless.

"Why don't you use red, baby? Everyone does, and you always so stylish and all."

"Men hate it," Kate told her. "What are you going to wear at the Pursons', Flo?"

"I hadn't thought. But it'll be what I got, of course. This and that old green."

"Do you know what I'm going to do as soon as I finish?"

"What?"

"I'm going out and buy a suit—a good suit, as good as I can possibly pay for. Anyhow, it's going to be the best suit I ever had."

"Oh, baby, do you think you should throw away any money now?"

"Throw away? It's just another little investment, like being in this hotel."

"Well, if you're bound to buy something, why don't you get something real dressy? What do you suppose they wear out there in Connecticut, week-ends, anyhow? I hadn't given it a thought."

"I don't know. I will after this, though, down to the last safety-pin. But I do know that a good suit will see you through anything. Flo, do you know something? I want you to get one too."

"Me? My green's plenty good, dressy and—"

"No, I want you to get a good suit."

"Spend that money when nothing's coming in!"

"Take the money you got for your car."

Far and away the most exciting thing that had happened to Flo since stepping her foot into New York was the unexpected sale of her rattling car. At the garage Mark had unearthed a dealer who had offered her fifty-five dollars for it. For days she talked of nothing else. "It's like finding all that extra money," she said over and over, "Besides, saving what a garage'd cost." New York had seemed the place, certainly, where cash miracles happened, even without asking. A few glimpses of the prices on current menus had made her considerably less joyful about the importance of fifty-five dollars here. And why, fifty-five dollars wouldn't even pay half a month at this hotel!

They had dined at the cheaper restaurants. But Kate had walked alone through the Waldorf, the St. Regis, the Plaza; she had looked up the addresses of the Stork Club and the Colony Club; she had slipped in, alone, defiant, to have a solitary, thrilled cocktail at Twenty-One. This was it, this was what she had come to New York for!

Late on Friday afternoon, they stood on the platform at Wycherly with two fairly good bags at their feet. Besides the suits for herself and Flo, Kate's "investments" had included several other things. She and Flo were wearing the suits now, under top-coats; Kate had made them both white pique gilets; she had made herself an extra one of soft yellow jersey, and she had prevailed upon Flo to leave behind the "dressy green."

SO there they stood, watching sleek cars slide away; there they stood unmet and unwelcomed, Mark unhappy and asking himself again how he came to be there.

"Hello. You're Mrs. Lauden, aren't you?" They turned at the sound of the friendly voice. A carelessly good-looking young woman in a sport coat of sheared beaver, glossy in the station lights, held out her hand. She wore no hat.

"Why, yes," Flo admitted, stunned at seeing flannel slacks and shirt under the swinging fur.

"I'm Nedda—was Nedda Purson, you know. Mother asked me to come for you. And you're Kate, aren't you?"

"Yes. This is my husband."

"Name, please?" Nedda grinned.

"Mark Fieldson."

"Come along, then. I've the station-wagon parked over there." She started to take one of the bags; Mark grabbed it, but Nedda hung on to one of its handles, and all the way down the platform the bag bumped gayly between them. Her chatter was loud and sweet.

Flo had a fresh shock at her first sight of a station-wagon. "Wouldn't you think they'd have a nice car?" she whispered to Kate as Mark and the sprightly Nedda stowed away luggage.

"This is pure swank," Kate said intensely. "I don't like her."

"You don't? Why, I thought she was nice and sociable."

"Why are she and Mark taking so long with just two bags?"

Flo giggled. "If that isn't a bride for you! Jealous if another woman as much as looks at Mark."

Nedda backed herself out of the car and jumped into the driver's seat. "Mrs. Lauden, you and Kate be real ladies. Sit there in the back. Better come here in front with me, Mark. Be less crowded for them." She whirled the station-wagon expertly, and made it fly up the road.

"You two are just married, aren't you?" Nedda tossed back over her shoulder. "Isn't that wonderful, isn't that grand! Been married ages myself. My older kid's three."

"How many children have you?" Flo inquired politely. "Dear me, I just can't imagine poor Clare a grandmother."

"I've two. But there'll be plenty more. Bill and I have a parent complex. You'll see 'em."

"Do you live far from your mother's?" Flo kept the conversation going. She nudged Kate.

"Twenty miles. Dad thinks it's awful. Our house was built in 1780. We adore it. We just bought it—well, when I say *we*, I mean Dad bought it for us."

"How nice!" Kate said.

Nedda laughed. "Too cold for you back there?" She had the window on her side open; her curly mop of blonde hair spun in the wind, and she kept tossing it back off her forehead.

"Oh, the air feels good after the train," Flo declared, shivering.

Nedda whirled in between two high stone pillars, and in and around a wide, long drive. "Here we are, brand-new Georgian," she chuckled. "Over there's the barn, and my father's pride and joy—the cows." She circled the car and stopped on a dime. Fir trees made a full blot of shadow on either side of a white door; almost at once it was open, and two Filipino boys, in white starched coats, became helpful. Flo had just time to nudge Kate again, this time because she was impressed almost to death, before she was heaved down.

Clare Purson came to them, smiling. Her hair, white as snow reflected in a pale blue light, was drawn back from her forehead in a planned softness; the velvet of her long hostess gown was plain and sleek. Kate thought, did she ever really live next to Flo in a place called Cresford, did she ever look like Flo?

"After all these years, Clare!" Flo breathed.

"I'm so glad you could come to us. . . . And this is Kate." Clare put out her beautifully tended hand on which she wore just one perfect diamond. "Aren't you pretty, my dear!" She kissed Kate, first on one cheek and then on the other.

French, Kate thought, that's the French way; of course she must have been there a lot. And suddenly, that soft white hand still holding hers, she wanted to put her head on this lovely person's shoulder, wanted to weep as she never had in all her life, weep for all she had missed and, just a little, because she knew so well all she wanted.

"And this is Matthew, Mark, Luke or John," Nedda cried. She flung her beaver coat anywhere, and stood there, boyish in her slacks, yet also extravagantly well done. "Any word from Bill, Mother?"

"He phoned he has to stay in town, dear. He'll drive out in the small car." Clare explained to the uneasy cluster of her guests: "Tod will be down in a minute. I suppose you want to go to your rooms now. It *is* good to see you, Flo."

"It's good to be here."

"I'll run 'em up, Mother. I know where you've put 'em." Nedda gave swift directions to one of the Filipinos, and ran lightly up the wide stairs with the others following. At the head of the stairs, Kate turned and looked back: Clare's white head was raised to her, as she stood pleased and gracious in the firelight.

"Come down as soon as you can, Kate," she said; "we must get acquainted."

"I will."

Nedda bustled about. "This is yours. Your sitting-room's through there, Kate. . . . Bath. Put their bag here, José. The other to the blue suite—that's you, Mrs. Lauden. Right across the hall."

Flo threw Kate a half-fearful look and vanished after the Filipino boy.

"Don't change," Nedda told Kate. "I'm staying as I am." She gave her flannel shirt a tug. "Kate, have you everything you want? There's the bell, if you have pressing and such. Oh, oh, aren't you tall!" she laughed up at Mark, and was gone.

"WELL!" Mark Fieldson said. He bent to unstrap the bag.

"Don't unpack that," Kate said sharply.

"Why not? You'll be needing things, won't you?"

"I suppose there'll be someone sent to unpack for us."

"I've still got my strength," Mark said.

"I will unpack, after all. I want my silly things put away out of sight. I don't want even a maid laughing at them. My nightgowns—I suppose she, the elegant, careless Nedda, has hers imported."

"She should get a squint at these!" Mark held out his faded pajamas.

Kate said coldly: "I expect she'd like to."

"What?"

" 'Aren't you tall!' " Kate mimicked.

"What's the matter? Don't you like her?"

"No."

"Why, she seems a friendly little soul, Kate."

"You and Flo, how easily you're taken in! Anyway, why shouldn't she be gay? Gay and careless, when all her life she's had everyone jumping sideways to get her what she wants. She's never had to fight or take a beating. She's had a rich father, and now a rich husband and a mother—a mother who—who knows how—"

"Kate!"

"Oh, don't touch me! Just let me alone—" For the first time he saw tears in her gray eyes, and he stood there confounded. Blurred with tears, her eyes took in everything: the silken drapes, the silver lamps, even the tiny crystal ash-trays; they went beyond and through the door to the little sitting-room with the white fur rug before the perfect fireplace, and with a sharp sob, like a child's before the window of a toy-shop, she ran into the bath and slammed the door.

Two glassed-in showers, two sunken tubs with tall jars of bathsalts like jars of jewels—Kate put out her hand and just touched, tremulously, the great soft towels, and made a little crooning sound as her fingers stroked the perfection of the monograms worked on all these masses of towels. She saw herself reflected in surrounding mirrors—Kate Lauden Fieldson, standing there alone, wanting all this, wanting everything, and with no one in the world to get it for her except herself.

When she went back there to the bedroom, Mark sat on the tail of the chaise-longue, smoking. She saw he had changed his collar, at least closed the bag, hung away their overcoats. She pulled off her hat. "Sorry."

"O.K. now?"

"Sustained, sustained and stimulated. Maybe we shouldn't have come, Mark."

He took her in his arms. "Take it easy, my little dear. Can't you take time to be happy as you go along?"

Against his shoulder she whispered: "Make me, Mark. Keep reminding me."

MARK asked, as they started downstairs, whether they hadn't better stop for Flo. He had visions of her, he said, holed there in the blue suite until rescued by a daughterly hand. Kate said there was no use in making up a parade; Flo would come out, and not seeing her shadow, would undoubtedly arrive in time for dinner. It was a surprise to find her deep in a drawing-room chair, holding a cocktail in a jade cup, and trying to make up her mind over an extended tray of canapés. "I know I oughtn't to," Flo confessed. Looking up at Tod Purson, she explained pathetically: "You see, I have to watch my weight."

Clare refused canapés, the velvet of her gown swirling about her tiny silver slippers, and in the instant before Kate saw Purson, she realized with horror the long, dangling earrings Flo had on. Oh, my God, she thought, she went to the Five-and-Ten!

Tod Purson shook Mark Fieldson's hand, held Kate's. This moment to which she had looked forward, for which she had contrived, regarded as an open sesame, was here. Kate had an instant's shock at seeing how blue Purson's eyes were in his flushed face, decorated by a little clipped, blond mustache. He was no taller than she. "But great executives don't look like this," Kate thought; "they're big, and impressive."

Nedda was grumbling good-naturedly: "I don't see why it has to be Bill who must see soap stars at night. I swear, Dad, you'll make a widow of me."

Purson patted her shoulder. "I keep my nose to the grindstone plenty of nights too, don't I?"

"Grindstone? A new name for radio queens?"

"Nedda!" Clare reproved softly. "Tod, spank her!"

"Radio queens who make that great unseen audience box-cover conscious," Tod smiled. He took out a flat gold cigarette-case and sauntered over to Clare. "We hope her own kids have more respect for their parents, don't we, my dear?"

He stood beside Clare until her little smile came back.

"Flo," Clare asked with mock seriousness, "is Kate as naughty a daughter as mine?"

"Kate?" Feeling as if heaven itself had given her this cue, Flo launched herself. "I have a wonderful baby, Clare. I don't just say that because she's mine. I suppose all mothers think—but I *know*. She—Kate's so clever.

She has such ambitions, not only for herself but for this brand-new husband of hers. Kate—"

A wave of pity went over Mark Fieldson, as well as a horrible embarrassment. This was what he had already come to call Flo Going to Bat for Kate. He knew it should be stopped, but he didn't know how, because he could not stand the hurt bewilderment that could strike her plump face. Kate hastily diverted the conversation.

THE next day was filled with the pleasant business of arriving cars, people rushing in and out, laughing, talking, telling what they chose to drink, getting it. Nedda dashed in with her thin, serious young husband; they both wore shorts and sweat-shirts, and Nedda announced: "We've been playing badminton." Their bare legs, clearly, were as impervious to the outside snow as to Flo's startled stares. So if you were rich enough, Kate saw, you didn't have to bother to bother. . . . Hating her new suit, she thought: "My legs are as good as hers—they're better!" A feeling of new helplessness crept over her.

Trays kept being passed, trays of smoked turkey, *fois gras,* tiny hot biscuits with blobs of molten gold—or butter or cheese. Huge purple boxes from Sherry's, ribboned boxes from Dean's, spilled out nuts and chocolates and candied fruits. People were always playing backgammon, bridge, Chinese checkers. Lunch was a buffet of hot and cold, a large table, small tables, smooth, energetic Filipinos. "Well, just another small helping, then," Flo kept breaking down. "I know I shouldn't, but—" She reminded herself this was holiday week, their first week-end in New York too—it sort of excused things. Next week she'd begin to diet.

Clare smiled her gentle smile; when noise burst around her she kept a gracious calm. She came over to Kate. "Can I get you anything, dear? Have you met everyone? Where's Mark?"

Kate made her voice steady, even airy. "Nedda took him to the playroom." She had seen that. She saw everything.

She saw how, through everything, Tod Purson lounged. No one could make any mistake about whose house this was, about who provided everything. His little bulky body was done up in riding-breeches, glowing boots, a thin yellow sweater. He took this one and that one out to see his cows. But he had not taken Kate, nor Mark.

"Well, Kate,"—the sheer hemstitched ruffles at Clare's wrists just moved,—"you'd better find Nedda and ask her if she's going to her house ahead of us or with us. She's capable of having changed her mind about wanting us at all. But I do want you to see her babies."

Tod sat down beside Flo.

In the process of considering a nap, Flo fluttered wide awake, feeling honored. She said brightly: "You certainly have a lovely place here, Tod. I suppose you don't have to go into your office every day, do you? That long train-ride, and all." Flo's notions of a rich man's job were extremely vague.

"Yes, I go in—stay in, sometimes. I keep a suite in a hotel there in town."

"You do? A *suite?* Well!"

"It does for entertaining, or when I'm too late to get out here, you see, Mrs. Lauden."

"Oh, now, Tod, call me Flo."

Her mind circled around Kate; she couldn't think how to bring her into the conversation. "Your son-in-law's in your office with you, isn't he, Tod?" (If she could get them talking about the office, things might work around.)

"Yes, he's there. I don't know that he'll ever be a world-beater. He doesn't take publicity very seriously."

Flo made noises of astonished incredulity. "Imagine! Now isn't that always the way, though? Here he just has handed him such opportunities,—I mean working with you, Tod,—and then you take someone like my Kate, whose heart is set, for her husband, I mean, you know. She—well, I mean, they're both so smart, and she wants Mark—"

Tod touched his mustache with his thumb-nail in his habitual gesture. "They've just been married, have they?"

"Yes, just a few weeks."

"He has money, has he? A private income?"

"Mark? Oh, my goodness, no! Not a cent. He hopes, they both hope—that is, he'll have to get something right straight away—"

"He actually got that girl to marry him without having a nickel or even a job?"

"Well, in a way. It's kind of worked out that way. But—"

"Amazing! Why, the fellow must be over thirty. Most men are well organized by that time. If they have anything in them, anyhow. When I was his age, I was making—plenty."

Flo tried to think of something beautiful to say about love, because Mark Fieldson's being without anything wasn't exactly his fault. And then at Purson's next remark, she lost her breath.

"What possessed him to leave that town of his, then? No trouble or anything, was there?"

Oh, had Clare heard something, after all? Cold fingers of fear pressed against Flo's spine.

"Kate loved him so," Flo said brokenly. Tears, desperate tears of protection for Kate, of panic, crowded in her throat. "He *wanted* to leave that first wife of his, Tod! It wasn't my baby's fault! She's so young—"

"Oh, I see. So that's his kind, is it?"

"I don't know what you mean, Tod. Not exactly. Mark—I like him. Everything's bound to be all right now. I mean—"

"He seems to know how to get around women—Kate and you too. Couldn't you take better care of that lovely kid than that?"

For a second Flo floundered. The thought jumped to her that if Tod Purson believed Mark hadn't been fair to Kate, he might help because of that. And she could see that he was the kind of man who thought women should be protected.

She heard him say: "I'm sorry for that girl." She whispered: "It's hard for two women alone, Tod. Like you said, Kate's so young, just a child. She didn't realize until—till it was too late—he's so much older, a man, experienced and—and—" She fought against the dryness in her throat. "I've always done my best," she ended.

AT four, Nedda began hustling everyone. "Come on, it's time to go to our place. Get ready." Bill counted heads. "Let's see, how many are we? How many cars will we need?"

Kate watched Tod Purson go off among the first. "You go on ahead," Clare had suggested. Her calm, beautiful face had turned to Kate, and she had explained carefully: "Nedda has very high regard for her father's bar-tending." While everyone was bundled into cars, Kate considered. Was it an accident that Clare had dispatched Tod like that? She contrived that she and Mark should ride with the young Harcrofts. She saw Flo go off, relaxed against gray upholstery this time, and wondered again if Flo had deliberately been avoiding her since last night. Oh, why couldn't everyone be simple and honest, why did everyone always try to maneuver and scheme? And then running gayly over to Nedda, she cried: "Mark, you ride in front with Bill. I want to sit in back with Nedda and hear about her babies." She kept on prompting Nedda as they rode along, but all the time she was trying to hear what Mark and Bill were saying. Would Mark have the sense to sell himself up there to Tod's son-in-law?

"Figuring on making a connection in New York?" Bill had asked Mark as they got under way.

"That's the hopeful idea."

"Any lines?"

"Not one."

"Haven't? Gosh, you've got your nerve. These days it's pretty tough."

"Well, I'm a newspaper man," Mark reported mildly. "I think there's got to be an opening on some sheet."

"You are? Swell! You know something? I always wanted to be in the newspaper business. But Nedda and I were married the summer I came out of Princeton, and—" He shifted gears and left it at that.

"Of course my experience has been on small-town papers," Mark admitted.

"You're not throwing down a small town, are you?"

"No," Mark said, "no, I'm not doing that."

"If I'd gone with a paper then," Bill remarked, "by this time I might have been good enough to be sent as a war correspondent, maybe. With all this rumpus, they're going to need good men, don't you think so, Fieldson?"

"They're going to need everything good."

"Gosh, yes. Did you get that broadcast from Madrid last night? Those insurgents celebrating New Year's Eve by firing one shot for each stroke of the clock." He

threw out furiously: "Some celebration! Not giving a damn who they hit!"

"No, I didn't hear that."

"You ever handle any campaigns, Fieldson?"

Mark told about covering the last national convention, and at Bill's eager questions, he went on to that waterways exposé he had broken. Hill Valley stopped being an obscure spot on the map to him again as he went over those things. "Go on," Bill begged. "What did the Governor say? I know he was on the run. I read about it, but I never thought I'd meet the bird who took off the lid."

"It all came from a little town," Mark answered thoughtfully, and once more that little town and all that had happened there became important. And for the first time since Kate had read his novel, he let himself think of it again as valuable.

"Listen, Mark. I know a couple of fellows on the *Times*, one or two on the *Telegram*. Maybe if I gave you letters? Might help. I don't know. But—"

"Lord, I'd appreciate that, Bill."

"What's there to appreciate? You'd do it for me, wouldn't you? —Nedda," he shouted back, "you know Mark's an old newspaper hound?"

Kate came to life. "He was," she corrected quickly, "but that's ancient history now."

"It's what?"

Mark turned. "Kate—"

"We both were," Kate went on sunnily. But she stopped there. Better skip that on the chance that something might come out about all that mess. "But Mark's all through with newspaper work now," she said.

"Oh?" Bill raised an inquiring eyebrow.

Mark said, "That's my bride's idea. But I—"

"Oh, now, darling," Kate laughed, "we can take down our back hair with Nedda and Bill, I'm sure." She made her face frank and friendly. "Can't we, Bill? *I'll* tell you if Mark won't come out and say it: he's crazy to get into publicity work."

"Kate, you know—"

"Don't be so subtle, darling," Kate cried merrily. She threw out helpless hands and smiled engagingly at Nedda. "I'm going to write. I think I can, you know. And naturally we couldn't get along on any newspaper man's salary. There's my mother to be taken care of too," she added pathetically. "Bill understands, don't you, Bill?"

"Yeah." Bill Harcroft stopped in front of his house, and got out, and slammed the door on his side of the car.

THIS house of the young Harcrofts was a fresh trouble to Kate. Nedda, still in shorts, made careless introductions, kept running over to Kate to say: "Did you notice our old beams? Did you see that old clock? Look, it's so tall we had to have a place hollowed out in the floor for it. I mustn't say it, but this milk glass is the one perfect blue." If this house was "right," what of the Pursons'? This shabby mellowness left Kate cold—unless this was the way? She looked for Tod Purson.

"Kate." Mark spoke beside her.

"Oh, what now, Mark? I'm looking for—"

"You shouldn't have said that in the car."

"Shouldn't have said what?"

"About my being through with newspapers."

"Someone had to say it to someone. And you won't—"

"Kate, Bill and I—"

"After all, he's Tod Purson's son-in-law. He could certainly put in a word for you."

"He was going to."

"What? Mark, tell me, what's he going to do?"

"He spoke of letters," Mark looked across the wide, pleasant room, to where Bill squatted by the Christmas tree to hold a confab with his little son. "I don't believe he will now," Mark said. He added: "We liked each other."

"Mark, why do you talk in riddles? Letters to whom?"

"To the *Times*, the *Telegram*."

"Well, now that he knows you're not interested, if he likes you,—and darling, that makes me pretty glad,—why surely he'll—"

"Kate, for God's sake, let me do things my way, will you?"

"When you don't get anywhere? Do you expect me just to stand by when I know my way's best?"

Somewhere a bell clanged in Mark's memory—Lillian, standing thread-lipped, saying: "I'm not one to give in to people when they want what I know they shouldn't have."

"Oh, darling," Kate whispered, "don't scold me! I only want to help—"

"I know. Only—"

It isn't the same, Mark Fieldson told himself, Kate's for me, she keeps pulling for me. I must make her understand, that's all.

"All this—" Kate's eyes, quite green, went around the room, not missing anything. "Bill Harcroft's years younger than you," she remarked, "and look what he's managed to do."

Mark looked over again at Bill, a stranger, a successful, remote stranger, master of a house, founder of a family. "I shouldn't be surprised if he's thinking something like that too," he admitted dully.

Kate left him to think it over. It was, besides, time to show herself as the dutiful daughter. Flo shifted sherry from one hand to another as Kate sat down beside her. "Well, baby, the little I've seen of you, we mightn't be under the same roof."

"What happened there, just as Mark and I came in? You'd been talking to Purson."

"Oh—why, nothing special. We were just sort of hobnobbing like people will. But Kate, he—he likes you."

"Flo, how do you know?"

IT was far too soon to tell Kate what she had done! She saw Mark standing over there by the fireplace alone. "Kate," she said bleakly, "you know I like Mark an awful lot, don't you? You know that?"

"What's that got to do with what we were talking about?"

"Oh, nothing, of course. Only—" Flo's voice dropped tiredly.

"Listen, Flo, I've got to talk to Tod Purson. I've simply got to."

"Maybe you'd best kind of wait—"

"Wait! That's all anyone can think of, except me. Flo, try and get the elegant Clare away from him. It seems to me she sticks to him like a burr." There, by the improvised bar, Clare in English tweeds stood with Tod.

"But how can I, Kate? What'll I do?"

"Just—go over and ask her to show you the nursery. I'll gamble it's a sight, probably solid platinum inlaid with perfect blue glass. Flo, wait till I get in the other room. For heaven's sake, be diplomatic, won't you?"

It was five minutes later that Kate found Tod Purson alone.

Smooth, sophisticated, impressive—that was the way she wanted to impress him. "You haven't had a chance to get acquainted with Mark, have you, Mr. Purson?" she asked.

"Ah, the bridegroom. No. I haven't even had a chance to get acquainted with you. You're a lovely child." He just touched his mustache with a polished nail.

"A child? I'm not! I—I—"

"I didn't mean to make you feel badly, little Kate. I wouldn't do that for the world."

The beginning of a comprehension crawled over her. Flo had been right; he did like her. Now she knew exactly what to do. She said gently: "You see, I can't help it, feeling badly, Mr. Purson."

"A bride of a few weeks. Poor kid!"

She said nothing.

"Just how old are you, Kate?"

"Twenty." She wondered where Flo was; she mustn't forget to tell Flo this. And quite suddenly Kate Lauden Fieldson reached a new high. "I don't know what to do," she said with great simplicity.

"I wish I could do something for you, little Kate."

"Oh, Mr. Purson, if you would! I must find something to do. I must! I want to write, but if I have to sacrifice that now, I will." In a little rush she confided: "We haven't anything, you know, nothing at all. And there's my mother to consider too—"

"It seems to be up to you, doesn't it? How does a lovely kid like you, who ought to have everything done for her, get herself caught—well, never mind that now."

"If I have to put aside my—my dreams of writing for a while, to make a living, I will. Oh, to say putting away dreams, I suppose that seems childish to you!"

"It sounds brave. Yes, we'll have to find a place in my organization for you, I think."

Her heart thudded. "For *me?*"

That night in bed she told Mark that she had a job.

Chapter Seven

MARK began to see that the importance of money was an immutable nucleus. Used as carelessly as an extra sense when it was possessed, its absence could become an actual deformity. It made an eternal vacuum in the stomach no food could fill. It made sleep only a brief anodyne, and a man only a beggar in his bed, when the bed was paid for by his wife.

During those first exciting weeks at the Purson Bureau Kate came back to him at night in a thrilled volubility. "I never knew, Mark, I never dreamed how things are done. You read a list of the Purson clients, and you realize that everything, everyone, has to be built-up, presented, sold. Oh, I always knew that, didn't I? I said that it was just a question of knowing how to get along, didn't I? But I never realized completely how right I was!"

In Mark's arms at night Kate would whisper: "I'm so happy. This is the beginning of everything. I have a job, and you—"

He said nothing at her rating.

"A job, and you, and—oh, yes, of course something will break for you too. It's just a matter of time."

Mark's mind went back to that day at Pop's Place when Kate had told him she was going, and he had wanted to ask her to give him a little more time. Time—time is money, the saying went. Money. . . . Everything, manhood and time itself, went back to money.

When she had told him all she wanted to, or thought best, Kate would remember exactly how things were with him. "Mark, who did you see today? What did you do?"

"I went around."

"Where?"

"The papers."

Kate would bend her head over the fine fresh collar she was stitching into tomorrow's coat, or the blouse she was pressing.

"Something will break for you, darling," she said aloud.

Behind his newspaper he nodded. He read that the Prime Minister of England had pledged assistance to Poland in case of German aggression; he turned the page to the want ads. Wanted: binders . . . . porters . . . . partner with $5,000 . . . . a man with a car.

"Kate, what was that you said there at the capital when we were talking?"

"What? About what?"

"I remember now. You said our world was us."

She glanced at him quickly as she bit off her thread. He had no reason to suspect anything! She put her coat carefully on a chair back. Then she went to him.

"Well, isn't our world us? Haven't you changed your mind?"

"Yes. Yes, I've changed. I didn't know how I had, until just now."

"Don't feel sorry for me," Mark said stiffly.

She caught her breath. "Why do you say such a thing? Mark, love me. Tell me you do."

"Yes, I love you."

"Mark, everything's going to be all right. I—you see, I'm letting you do things your own way. That's what you wanted, you know. I—I've never said a word since—since that day at Nedda's, about newspapers, have I?"

"No."

"Darling, kiss me. Forget things. Oh, just think of me."

"Do you ever see Bill there at the office?"

"Hardly ever. He doesn't like me."

"What makes you think that?"

"I just know. . . . Mark, it's late. Come to bed, darling."

"Why do you think Bill Harcroft doesn't like—us?"

"Oh, how should I know? Unstrap my pump the way you used to, darling. Come, it's late."

"I liked him. That day we drove, I figured he'd—"

"Think of us, Mark, talk about us." ("I still know how to make him happy," she thought. "I can make up to him for anything.")

At first Flo had quite a proprietary interest in the apartment, but it melted gradually. Exciting things kept happening to Flo here in New York; and then, somehow, they ceased to be exciting. "You take for instance the car," she remarked to Mark. "My! When that fellow offered me that fifty-five dollars, I couldn't get over it. And now it don't even seem like I had that extra."

"I'm sorry. It'd be nicer if things kept their shine."

"It isn't your fault!" Flo assured him quickly. She was always telling him that. She reminded him a lot, too, how he'd never wanted to get in with Purson, and so things had certainly worked out fine, hadn't they? "And there's Kate taking to it like a duck to water," Flo sighed. She couldn't help, she said, being proud of her baby.

"Of course."

"Everyone says how fine she's done up this apartment," Flo said, sitting uneasily in a new chair, looking around, "—those new friends all do."

"*Amusing*—isn't that the word they use?"

"Yes. That's what Kate calls it too: 'It's an amusing place.' I don't actually see what—" She glanced with distaste at the wide couch with its black, tailored cover, there against the wall of the living-room. It looked all right during the day, maybe, so why was it that nights, when she had to use it for a bed, it always seemed like an ironing-board? "I guess it's because I always had a bedroom," she said, "Well, there in Cresford that was all I had, I know that; but you can sit in a bedroom, and kind of feel at home."

"Flo, why don't you move into the bedroom here with Kate? I'll sleep out here."

"Oh, Kate wouldn't want that, Mark!"

"But when people come in, as they did last night, it's hard for you to snatch a nap there in the bedroom, and then have to get up again later and come out here."

"It's all right, Mark. Honest."

"It's not all right," he said harshly; "but I don't know—"

"Don't you tell Kate I was complaining, now, Mark. I wasn't. Besides, I have to stir myself and get a position. If I get to be a receptionist like I want, maybe I can take one of those little one-room apartments the other side of the house."

("It wouldn't have to be anything like this; it wouldn't have to be amusing," Flo thought, shaking inside a little at what Kate had spent.) When that house of Flo's back in Cresford was unexpectedly sold, and Flo in possession of fifteen hundred whole dollars—with a balance of two thousand in a first mortgage—there it had been again: excitement, and then just a slow, sure dissolve. But Kate had regarded the windfall as an actual act of God.

"It's really too marvelous, Flo! It's so awfully necessary that I—that we—have a decent place now. The contacts I make down there at the Bureau—well, I have to have a place where people can come."

Flo hadn't followed.

"Flossie, we'll get a little flat of our own, and buy our own furniture!"

"Oh!"

"Flossie, think what fun we'll have, you and I, and Mark of course, buying stuff."

"Yes, but—it's all I got, you know, Kate. Now I won't have that forty a month, even."

"Well, if you don't want to do that much for me, Flo—"

"Kate, don't be mad. It's only—"

KATE said: "I'm the only one around here who's earning anything; no one lifts a finger to help me, not even you—"

"I do. I have."

"When have you?"

Flo was silent.

"All right, Flo. I'm sorry I asked."

"Maybe Mark wouldn't like it," Flo put out helplessly.

"Mark! It seems to me you think more of Mark than you do of me. You put him first—"

"No, Kate. No, I haven't done that. Sometimes I—"

"Anyway, Mark should be rather glad to have a decent place too. We can't go on living at this hotel; you know that."

"I know. Well, all right, Kate. How—how much do you think it'll take?"

"Oh, Flossie, I knew you'd see it! You're a lamb. And things do work out for me! A girl at the Bureau has some friends who have to sub-lease. They have to get to Arizona, and they'll take what they can for their apartment. It's three rooms and a real kitchen—"

"How much'd the rent come to, Kate?"

"That's the wonderful part! I can get it for sixty. They pay a hundred and ten. But he'll be glad to get out from under for about half if he has to. Isn't it wonderful?"

"And he has to pay the rest till the lease expires?"

"He certainly does. Till October. Isn't that a break?"

"Not for him, I guess," Flo said.

Kate laughed happily. "Sometimes you remind me of Mark, Flo. You do, for a fact. Now I'll settle for the place tomorrow. Next day you can go with me, and we'll shop."

"Can you get off from your work to do that?"

Kate leaned over to tighten her stockings, frail, pale stockings that covered her beautiful legs like skin. She concentrated on the insteps she admired so much. "Oh, yes, I can get off."

"Do you have to ask Tod?" Flo wanted to know.

"Now one really good piece," Kate said breathlessly, much as she'd used to say, "One step at a time." She instructed Flo, *"the pièce de résistance."*

"The what?"

"I can build around one really good bit."

The *pièce de résistance* developed into a fairly good Adam mirror. The final fillip, when Flo's feet hurt worst, was a little butterfly table. The drapes were a pale gray that answered the rug. And, "Look how I save!" Kate pointed out over her purchase of coarse sheets. "No one'll see these, so—" She had a chair covered in four-dollar-a-yard chintz, and bought army blankets, tin skillets, paper napkins. But her highball glasses were of crystal. She and Mark would share the bedroom closet—rather lucky, in one way, for Mark had practically no clothes. Flo could do with the broom-closet if the broom stood back of the stove; the large closet off the hall Kate made into a tiny powder-room with velvet hangers on Chinese red hooks. "When guests have to shed a hat, here's where," Kate impressed on both Flo and Mark. "No tramping into that hodge-podge bedroom till I have something to *do* with there. For heaven's sake, you two, remember!"

Flo stood in "the" room when it was done; she touched the couch gingerly, and wondered if the lamp on the butterfly table could be moved if she wanted to read in bed, then realized she'd certainly never move it, disconnect it, connect it, night after night. "It looks very elegant, baby. Kind of like the Pursons', only littler. Are you going to have Tod and Clare down sometime now, Kate? Hadn't you ought to return that week-end, sort of?"

"Now that I'm working for Tod Purson, my dear Flo, our relations are strictly on a business level for the whole family."

Kate said it so positively, that it was a little hard to explain later about the fur scarf.

WHEN Clare telephoned her at the Bureau and asked her to lunch, Kate hung up wonderingly. With elaborate casualness, she got into the front office.

"Did you know she was going to ask me?"

"No, I didn't."

"I didn't know what to say. I—"

"Have a good time," Tod Purson said formally as his secretary came in. "Tell Clare not to keep you away from your job all afternoon." He touched his blond mustache with his thumb and explained lightly: "My wife's very fond of this young lady."

Kate heard the secretary reply dryly, "Isn't that nice," and she thought: "She doesn't like me. Not that I care! No one likes me around here; they're all jealous. But I'll show them. I know how. That's all that matters, knowing how."

Across the lunch-table Clare spoke softly of the continued chill these spring days, the impending opening of the World's Fair, of that coming visit of the King and Queen. Kate answered politely, agreed it was cold.

"Do you like your work, Kate?"

"Oh, I do, Mrs. Purson."

"Then you don't consider it temporary? It occurred to me—a magazine, perhaps."

"Oh, no. I think now that would seem very tame."

Then Clare asked: "How's Flo? Is she liking New York?"

"I try to make her happy. But of course I'm gone all day."

"When you were out with us, she spoke of getting something to do. I suppose it would keep her occupied—"

"Yes, but how I hate to see my mother work! You *know!* Only, well—things are a little difficult. I needn't put up a front with you."

"No."

A funny little feeling that this had all happened before possessed Kate, that vague, baffling sense of duplication that everyone sometimes has. It flitted across her consciousness that this luscious lunch, here with Clare in her poised calm, had the same, though leashed, antagonism of Lillian that day she had gone to her. She looked down at her fork.

"I'm the only one who's working," she said pathetically, "Mark isn't. I—it's queer how a man—how that can happen, I mean." She raised big eyes to Clare. "I try to carry on," she said simply; and back of that, profound and genuine, was the same feeling she had had with Lillian when she had cried from her heart: "Let me have him! You have so much!" It seemed to her again, clearly, that when one had to fight as she did, other people, other women, should look at everything as she did.

The moment passed. Clare said nothing. There they sat, two attractive women in an expensive restaurant.

KATE waited, not knowing how to leave, yet wanting to. She became aware that Clare was staring in the mirror straight ahead. Under that patina of assurance, this older woman with her white, carefully coiffed hair, had something she dared not say; Kate felt it, knew it, and immediately felt better, felt capable and superior and sure of herself again.

"Mark had started a book," she said, pinning wifely devotion to her tone, "but he won't even finish it."

Clare stirred. "Kate, if things get too hard for you, promise me something."

"Why, what, Mrs. Purson?"

"Promise you'll come to me."

"Oh, thank you. I—"

Clare laid down money for the check. "Think of me as a friend, Kate." They got up; and with a swift, pleading gesture Clare slipped the fur scarf from her own shoulders to Kate's. "I want you to have this. Please."

"But I shouldn't!"

"Just a little present—when people are friends—when they like each other—"

Kate's eager hand smoothed the fur. . . .

"I never saw anything so gorgeous!" Flo kept her raptures going that night. She tried the sables on her own plump shoulders, twisting this way and that. "Can you imagine Clare just making a present like this! And after you figured that working for Tod, everything couldn't be nice and friendly. I guess you were wrong that time, baby."

"Oh, she has stacks of furs. You haven't any idea what his income is, Flo."

"But just to hand out sables—"

"She handed them out as she'd give a tip for good service. That's all; I'm not fooled. When you want someone to do something for you, you oil—"

"For land's sake, baby, what does Clare want you to do for her?"

Kate bit her lip. "Oh, how should I know! I only meant—"

"What?" said Mark.

She went over to him. "Darling, I've been thinking. While you're not doing anything, why don't you go over your book? Maybe by this time you'll have a new angle; you might see that what I said—"

"Well, I never!" Flo put the furs carefully on the couch—from which she would have to move them later. "Is that what you been doing mornings, Mark? A book! Is it about a doctor?" For it seemed to her that all books lately were about doctors. Flo's spirit rose, even soared. So everything was coming out all right! It hadn't mattered what she'd said that day; she hadn't done anything to Mark after all; she wouldn't have to think of it any more; things had just switched around so's it was Kate who had the job instead of writing, and Mark who was writing and would make millions—anyway, thousands, and—

"Oh, Mark!" Kate touched his thin face humorously. "Look at you get red. You're not annoyed, are you? I didn't suppose you'd mind if Flo knew now."

"All right, Kate."

"You two are so chummy. Mark, I'll wager if Flo reads that manuscript, she'll say exactly what I did."

"Maybe. But I'd rather—"

"I'm not a critic; I don't know things like Kate," Flo admitted largely, "but I know what I like. I read a lot and—"

"Yes," Mark said in a tight voice. "I know. Let's not —let's let it go for a while. What happened at the Bureau today, Kate? Did you hear the Duke of Windsor's broadcast? He said—"

"I'm sorry if you think I broke a promise or something, Mark. But I do think that under the circumstances, you might at least *try* to do something with your celebrated novel."

"I think he was trying to wangle himself back," Mark mumbled. "Maybe even a Duke can take just so much of being an outsider."

The fact was that Mark had taken out his book again with elaborate care covering his desperation. He figured: "I can't get in to see anyone anyhow much before noon; I can work here mornings." He sat hunched on the unmade bed going over his pages, editing, adding, rewriting. He worked against everything, against a moral and material necessity; and these intruded between the lines he had written and tried to write, furnished a dismal counterpoint to Flo's pottering about. He would try out the book on some publisher soon. If it was any good—"I wish Bill could see it," Mark thought, and tried to make himself stop thinking of Bill Harcroft, his friendliness at first and later his scorn.

ONE Thursday he came in an hour later than Kate had. He had been to see a trade paper again, had sworn he knew a great deal about plumbing. "Well, we've got your name, Fieldson."

"Well," Kate had said, biting into a sandwich, "where on earth have you been, my dear? Flo made some sandwiches for dinner."

For a minute he couldn't tell what made Kate look so different. Then, "What've you done to your hair?" he wanted to know.

"It's up." All that dark curtain that had fallen about her lovely little face was sleekly high. "It's much more sophisticated, isn't it? I look much more New York, don't I?"

"I guess so." He slumped in a chair.

"Tell him!" Flo begged, looking like the cat that ate the canary. But she couldn't wait. "Mark, what do you think? I've got a job!"

"A job?" Mark Fieldson pulled himself together. "That's fine, Flo. That's—"

"Imagine! The very first one I went after—well, you know right from the start how set I've been on being a receptionist—I felt right along I'd be good at it. And well, sir, the very first place I went—I saw the ad in the paper this morning." Flo paused for breath and went on: "Well, they were grand. I hadn't hardly said two words when this dentist—they're four—he said I was just the person they were looking for, he guessed. Refined and—they all chip in. Five apiece, and that makes the twenty a week for me—"

"That's fine, Flo."

"Just think, twenty dollars a week, and all those dentists, every one is a gentleman, I could tell that."

"Look here, my lamb," Kate chuckled, "don't get delusions about how much twenty a week is, will you?"

"Oh, I know. Still, I was thinking I could get one of those little one-rooms. Say I use a little of my house money to buy things, oh, nothing like what you have here, Kate—"

"I thought that was coming. Flo, don't be foolish. Why do you want to do that, I'd like to know?"

"Well—well, for one thing, maybe you and Mark'd like to be alone. It's so cramped. I could spend all my evenings here."

Kate sounded hurt. "I never thought you'd want to leave me."

"Oh, now, baby, it isn't that. Only—"

"If you feel you want to do something," Kate offered generously, "you could give—oh, say, five dollars a week here. I know you'd feel better, and it would certainly help."

Flo made herself ignore that couch. "Yes, I could do that. Of course I want to help. And with my fifteen a week, I bet I can do a lot, Kate. It's all in knowing how."

Kate stretched white arms above her sleek head. "Isn't that what I always say? Everything's just in knowing how!"

Mark got unsteadily to his feet. He looked drunk; in a way he was. "Look here," his voice rasped, "it's I who doesn't belong. Not now. I'm going to get out, until—"

The two women—the two women with jobs—looked at him. "You two, you can get along fine without me. Now. When—if—"

"Mark, are you joking? Are you crazy?"

"No."

"Oh, Mark," Flo fluttered, "how can you, still sort of a bridegroom and everything—"

"Mark, I don't mind carrying on while you—"

"I mind."

Flo was appalled; she looked at Kate, wondering what she wanted her to do. Kate's head jerked toward the door. "I guess I'll go for a little walk," Flo said weakly. She came back with her coat on, her plump face puckered. "Mark, don't blame me. I—I mean, you can't help, the way things are." When neither Kate nor Mark answered, she went to the door and closed it gently after her.

Kate went swiftly to him; she fitted her shoulder under his and her lips parted. But for the first time her magic failed.

"Let me alone," he said. "Go away. Please go straight away from me."

"Mark, I don't know you when you talk like that!"

"My God, can't you understand the only thing for me to do is get out?"

"No. I don't see why you should let me down!"

"Let you down!"

"I suppose you think it's a noble thing to go and leave me after I went through all that hell! After these few months! I said to—" She bit back Lillian's name. "I've always said," she rushed on, "and I mean it, when a woman's husband leaves her, she's ridiculous. She's a spectacle of fun. Even when people sympathize, they're laughing, they're wondering what there was about her that she couldn't hold her man."

"I doubt if my staying like this makes you any less ridiculous."

"But who has to know, exactly, how things are with you?"

"You do."

"Have I ever complained? Just as I'm getting along so well, you want to ruin everything—"

"The successful, the great T. F. Purson knows you're the family mainstay, all right; young Bill Harcroft, who provides his family with the best, he knows; these people you have coming here," he flung out bitterly, "and *I* know! Do you think I can stand it?"

Kate said distinctly: "You can hardly just go on leaving one wife after another."

IT was the first time since their marriage there had been any mention of that other life of his; it was all Mark needed now to make his shame complete. He said: "Yes. Whoever says circumstances alter facts is a damn' fool. Only the fact remains, doesn't it?"

"Mark, listen to me—"

"The difference between that time and this is that I want to come back to you. When I can pay not only my own way, but my wife's too." Her elegant little figure blurred before him. "You're all I have," Mark said huskily.

Kate's heart pounded. For almost the first time in her life, she was in a torment of indecision, not about wanting him to stay, but the manner of making him. Nights when she could forget everything but that he was her lover rose before her, sweet, not to be minimized; she could not see herself again with tears of loneliness running down white cheeks in the dark. "But I could do that if I had to," she thought fiercely. "I can do anything!" But in the deep, newly secret places of Kate Lauden Fieldson her husband had a value as a protection, a symbol on which she could hang her own aversion and her ambitions too. With him she could ward off some things while inviting, even promoting others. She could take without giving. What would become of her important defence—"Oh, I'm not one to deceive my husband! Oh, help me to be strong!"

"Mark," she whispered, "you stand between me and—so much—"

"I know that."

"I didn't mean it that way! I mean—you see—I—I need you."

"You can't, Kate. Not as I am now."

But she had, she saw instantly, struck the right note. Oh, she knew how to manage Mark—Mark and other men too! She stood silently; then she ran into the bedroom—and waited. When he stumbled after her, she kept her

eyes downcast. "I do need you, darling. So much. Is it too much to ask you not to leave me?"

He forgot all the hundred and one quick, sharp thrusts that had come from her. He was humble as a dog that has been beaten, and grateful as a dog called back to his master's grace.

"Oh, Kate, why do you care for me at all? How can you?"

"Sh! Don't say such things," she murmured against his heart.

But her eye was on the cheap little clock ticking on the dresser. Why had all this come up tonight, of all nights? She let him hold her, trying to be careful of the new hair-do, getting ready the words that would let her get away. "Kate," he said, "I love you."

They heard Flo come back. Kate sat up. "Honey, if I'd known how you were going to feel tonight, I wouldn't have said I'd come. Only now I don't see how I can get out of it. Of course with a job like mine, I have to do what I'm told, don't I?"

"Do what?"

"It's only—well, the boss wants me in on a conference tonight. I'm to handle one end of the publicity for this new account. It'll be far and away the most important thing I've done, he says."

Mark wrenched himself back into the working world. He fumbled for a cigarette. "Tonight? Now?"

"I have to. You see that."

She got out the new dress, wondering if he noticed it; she wanted to ask him how she looked, because she wanted, even at this moment, to have him say she was lovely. She wanted that from Mark infinitely more than she wanted it from Purson. "I work and plan," she thought, rouging her lips. "I hold off a man who'd do anything for me, who'd put me at the top—and Mark won't even say I look well." She made a high, crushed collar of Clare's sables. "Good-by, Mark. I probably won't be late."

He heard her say something to Flo, and then the hall door closed.

Mark got to his feet and went slowly to the closet. He stood looking at her things; when he had taken out his own, there was little difference. Kate's clothes, her row of high-heeled slippers on the shelf under her hats, were all undisturbed as he packed quickly. His shirts and ties and socks and shorts lived in only one drawer of the dresser. Kate wouldn't look in it tonight or in the morning either. When he had his stuff packed, he slipped the bag under the bed. Even with his manuscript, there was plenty of room.

"Mark," Flo called timidly.

"Yes. What, Flo?"

"What you doing? You didn't eat a thing, Mark. Shouldn't I make you some coffee or something?"

He went into the living-room. "No, I don't want anything."

"Oh, go on—have one of these sandwiches."

He took one, shrinking from the melodrama implied by a refusal to eat. He told himself: "I won't leave now—out into the night is too spectacular. What do I do? Leave a note on the pincushion tomorrow?"

In the midst of Flo's recital again about what a really refined atmosphere the dentists' office was, he escaped. . . . He was just leaving the flat next morning with everything he owned when the trade paper telephoned.

Chapter Eight

BETWEEN plumbers and dentists," Kate laughed, "I'm certainly the only one around here to carry upward and onward with the arts, as expressed in the Bureau offices."

"Flo and I have our ideals about gold crowns and faucets, haven't we, Flo?" Mark replied. "And porcelain! For plumbing or teeth, we consider it's more artistic than putting over a glamour girl or a politician on an unsuspecting world."

"You take porcelain jackets, now," Flo began. They had, it seemed, opened up a whole new world for her.

Kate could sit there listening to Mark and Flo; the evenings when the family dike was not broken by floods of people, or when Kate had not to go to a "business date" were light and airy enough. She and Mark were having good times again. But she looked around the "amusing" room with disdain; she had seen a little duplex apartment—you could really do things with it, and she was stuck here. She never forgot Tod Purson for a single, waking moment; he overlaid everything.

She picked up an issue of the trade paper Mark had brought home. "How marvelous!" she scoffed. "Listen to this: 'Henry K. Morgan made the best record in his field for the month. His sales—' Heavens, Mark, how can you do stuff like that?"

He looked over the top of his evening newspaper. "That's the same thing to Henry K. Morgan as one of your glitter girls reading in Winchell's column she was seen at the Stork Club. It's even more."

"Oh, Mark, some trivial little man selling a sink!"

"A trivial little man making his little way in his little world. On his own, without a build-up! The earth's filled with people doing just that, or wanting to."

"All right, so what? It isn't the little people who make the world go round."

"Are you sure?"

"They don't do the thinking; they just do what they're told."

"I know. So it's unfortunate they're told so many lies, isn't it? It's mostly done with mirrors," he quoted Bill Harcroft, wondering why they shouldn't get together sometime. Bill couldn't think now he was trying to put anything over.

"You used that mirror line once before, I remember."

"What's it mean?" Flo asked.

"It means if you're greedy enough and ruthless enough, you get promoted," Mark told her, "no matter if you have what it takes or not." He was having time again to feel all the things his own misery had left no room for. And still, for the first time since Lillian's thin arms had fastened on him back there on her father's dark porch, it might be said Mark Fieldson was at peace. A wife,—"a woman who's good to you," as Pop had said,—a job, completed him. The bare fact of his forty dollars a week clocked him to normalcy, and Kate's increase to sixty did not change that.

FLO had her one-room apartment now. Kate called it the Palace in Plush. Flo retired to it beatifically, though most of her time, not spent at the dentists', was at Kate's. It was Flo who laughed best at the repartee of the people who dropped in; she laughed loudest when she didn't know what they were talking about. She was only too eager to get the highballs. "You have to be up so early," Kate said pointedly sometimes; "I know you want to get your sleep."

Mark saw Flo's joy vanish, that look of uncertainty come over her, as she got up immediately to go. She would say bright good-nights to whoever would listen.

"It's simply silly the way she's always here," Kate stormed to Mark when they were alone. "Something's got to be done, that's all."

"Oh, she likes parties so much, Kate."

"I'm sorry, but she makes things difficult. Who cares what a dentist said to her? I can't have her here when people like Bob Casby come. Why, Casby is one of the biggest advertising men in the country."

Mark was too much in love to see anything more than a small petulance, but he was troubled. He turned her face up to his with his brown hands. "You're Mrs. Mark Fieldson of New York City. It's a hell of a long way, high, wide and fancy, from the top gent in Russia."

"What on earth do you mean by that?"

"That bird got rid of his friends when he didn't need them around any more."

She freed herself. "What an absolutely fatuous thing to say!"

"Maybe it is. But anyway—"

"Anyway, I'll tell you what, Mark: I want you to tell Flo to stay in her Plush Palace and read a book or something."

"No, I won't do that."

"You consider her more than you do me."

"I used to adore you particularly when you said 'Flo's sweet.' When I first found out she was coming with us, I was mad clean through. But have you ever noticed how much more fat people mind being kicked than anyone else?"

Kate screamed with laughter. "Darling, that's almost good. Why don't you say clever things like that when we have people here?"

"I don't think it's clever."

"Well, it'd pass. You don't have to have the wit of the ages to get a laugh, you know."

"You bet I know."

"You hardly open your mouth." And yet, she thought, everyone liked him. Still, she felt it was unfair that Mark, by saying little, by doing practically nothing, caused a friendly liking for which she had to work.

"What's become of Ede Blatchforth?" he asked, because he'd had enough of what they'd been talking about.

"Oh, she bores me."

"She does? Why, I thought she was fun."

"That's because she made a fuss over you."

"Did she? I wish I'd noticed."

"Don't go feeling all set up. She only did it to annoy me. She doesn't like me."

"Now Kate, everyone likes you. Why do you go on saying this one, that one, doesn't?"

"A lot of people are just jealous of me. I know."

"You're too sensitive, darling," he told her. And, he thought, so young! Her eagerness for everything touched him to the heart.

IT was two nights later that Kate came home at dinner-time to find him taking a shower. "Casby phoned me," he shouted. "He's having some men to dinner. Someone sent him a fish." He came out, looking scrubbed, his wide shoulders bare as he mined for a fresh shirt.

Kate sat there on the edge of the bed. "Didn't he ask me?"

"It's just men."

When she'd met Bob Casby at cocktails while with Purson, she had managed with casual carelessness to get him to her apartment. You can do those things, she'd learned, when you're married; when you can produce a husband to show your designs are purely social, you can make overtures to those prosperous, professional bachelors who are so wary of getting caught.

Kate took off her hat pathetically. "I'd looked forward so to being alone with you tonight, darling."

"Looked forward?"

"I was going to get Flo off to Radio City, so we could be alone. I'd planned to send out to that Russian place and have dinner brought in. I was even going to get a bottle of wine. It doesn't matter. I hope you have a good time."

"But why all this tonight, Kate?"

Her eyes were big and reproachful and green. "You don't even know, do you? It's our anniversary. We were married just nine months ago today, and—and—I wanted to celebrate—"

"But you never have before."

"You're not very sentimental, are you, Mark? Each month I've waited, I *wanted* you to remember! And so finally I decided to make a little gala for us myself. Never mind, though."

"Well, gosh, Kate, I'm sorry. I guess I'm—oh, don't look like that, my dear. I don't know what I can do now. He said seven, and it's almost that—"

"Oh, but of course you must go. I understand. You mustn't offend a man like Bob Casby, an important man who—"

"His importance hasn't anything to do with it. I just said I'd come—"

"Get into your shirt, Mark. You'd better hurry. Casby is so used to being pursued for jobs he—"

"He can't figure I'm doing that."

"But certainly not. I only meant—I remember now you were talking to him a lot about fishing the other night, weren't you? But he certainly has no reason to think you were trying to touch his soft spot—with so many people trying to do it all the time he'd be too smart not to know you wouldn't—"

He sat down beside her on the bed. "Get going, dear," she begged.

"Yeah."

"Casby is the smart one, all right. He's always rushing around to the Bureau wanting favors. Well, he needn't think that by being palsy-walsy with you, I'll slip through any publicity for his accounts. . . . Darling, you'll have to hurry."

He stood up. "Why shouldn't he just be friendly the way any man would?"

"Oh, my dear, who's friendly in this town without expecting something for it? Why should Casby go out of his way to call you after just seeing you that one time?"

"Yeah, I—"

"What, Mark?"

"I guess I don't know all the angles," Mark said. "I didn't figure that a man with a fish had anything on his mind but a good fillet."

When he went to the telephone, Kate flung herself back on the bed.

"When I'm happy," she thought, "I can make Mark happy too. So he's not losing anything, is he?"

Toward morning of that "anniversary night," Mark awoke with a fresh feeling of rawness about Casby. He'd been a fool not to understand from the start that Kate's position at the Bureau was worth Casby's scheming. He lay there beside her, not wanting to wake her, his mind a rummage of old ideals and new revelations. He wanted to get up, but he was afraid of waking her; she needed her sleep, the way she worked. He turned softly to look at her face, her lips just parted, her white breast just moving with her breath. Her loveliness held him. She was helpless and young in her defenceless sleep. It was a miracle that she was his.

After a while, as she still slept, he got up with infinite caution. If he got to his office early each morning, before anyone else, stayed there nights, all the nights, at least, that Kate had to be at her conferences, he could work again on his book.

This time he returned to it with a confused spirit. It was still for Kate, but he was driven now to prove himself. He must make it impossible, himself too impregnable, for anyone ever again to make overtures only because he had a wife in a position to do favors. "If there's anything in me," Mark thought, "it's time it came out." He thought of Kate's pride if she could say, "My husband the author." He could well understand the difference to her between that and, "My husband's on a trade paper."

He had an added perspective now, and he settled to re-editing and writing with greater conviction in his thesis if not in his presentation.

Wearily, almost without enthusiasm and entirely without expectation, Mark took his book to a publisher one day during his noon hour. As he sat in the outer office waiting to see the great man, only one person was in his mind: Lillian. He sat there thinking of Lillian all the time he waited there with his book in his hand.

"WAR! Oh my, I just can't believe it!" Flo cried, feeling excited and alive as she hadn't for a long time. "That Hitler!"

"Mark, do switch off that radio, will you?" Kate said, "I want to hear myself talk for a minute, anyhow. Listen, the thing to do is buy stock. Steel and aviation—"

Mark said nothing.

Kate turned to Flo. "Flossie, you have a few hundred left from the house sale. You'll lend it to me, won't you?"

"Oh, baby—"

"It's certain to double. Certain! T. F. said—everyone says that if you can scrape up a nickel it stands to make two. For heaven's sake, let's get on the band-wagon. Why should everyone be smart but just us? Oh Mark, if only you had something!"

He had something to say, but it had become so devastatingly insignificant. Over Kate's wrangling with Flo, he turned on the radio again. He thought: everyone must project himself into the conviction he's only part of a mad plan; if he goes on considering himself as an individual, how can he stand it? This is an inhuman machine at work; no one person matters; man makes himself the bloody enemy of his own kind. Why? For what? For he knew that to the living man, only himself is important. Dying of his wounds, hungry, thirsty, hurt, frightened, bored or only covered with lice, a man's kinship is solely with himself.

"Oh, Mark," Kate cried, "talk! Say something. If I make a nice little killing in the market, we can move from this silly place, and—"

"Move!" Flo repeated blankly.

Kate chuckled. "Come back from Over There, Mark. Concentrate on us, me; you remember me? And what I'm going to do?"

"Oh," he said. "Oh, yes. I meant to tell you. My book's going to be published."

"You mean you took it to a publisher?"

"Yes."

But it was Flo who kept on saying: "A book! Oh that's just wonderful, Mark, now it is. My son-in-law a real author! If that isn't something!" Her plump shoulders lifted; for the first time since she had sat in Tod Purson's house and thrown Mark to the lions to make a Roman holiday for Kate, Flo felt fine. "You see," she said over and over, "everything's turned out all right. I mean—"

It didn't matter what she meant. "What a public you have, darling," Kate laughed. Well, she went over and kissed him, she wanted to know the publisher. "Oh, that one," she shrugged when Mark told her. "That house never does a thing for its authors, not a line of advance publicity, nothing; they throw a book out, and just let it sink or swim."

"I'm supposed to believe in that," Mark reminded her.

"Was it the first place you took it to?" Flo wanted to know. "Like me going to my dentists?"

"Yes."

"When can I get to read it, Mark?"

"There has to be a little re-writing, Flo. But it's to be on the after-Christmas list."

"And only last Christmas," Flo beamed, "how different everything was! We didn't know what was going to happen. That week-end at the Pursons', my!" She could think of it now; she didn't have to feel mean about it any more. She gave Mark a friendly whack as he got up and went back to the radio.

"—did not hesitate to plunge the world into war to serve his own senseless ambition," Chamberlain's words came from across the sea.

Mark looked at Kate, his heart in his eyes.

"I hope it's an enormous success, darling," she said quickly. ("Tomorrow," she thought, "I must see Tod alone.")

"A treacherous, two-faced game—" the English voice went on.

Chapter Nine

THIS was the first time Kate had wanted to be alone at a "conference" with Tod Purson. "But I simply can't bear it," she thought, "if he doesn't help me!"

"What are you thinking, Kate? You're a million miles away from me."

"I'm thinking—oh, of a lot of things."

"If you're considering your celebrated bridegroom, who got you, a kid, when he didn't have a dime—"

"Oh, Tod! But you know, there's Clare too—"

"You're not annoyed? I rather thought we could be frank with each other, Kate."

"Yes. Yes, of course; but—"

He looked at her for a minute, and then he stalked to the window. "We'll drop it. From now on, our relations will be strictly business. That's all. It'll be employer and employee. Be better all around."

A chill went down Kate's spine. Had she lost him? "Oh, Tod—" she cried.

He did not turn.

"But I can handle him, I must!" she thought frantically. "Tod," she begged, "oh my dear, can't you understand? I just want a little time, to get clear—"

"O.K. After this you won't have to stew. You'll just be Miss Lauden of the Purson Agency."

"But that's just it!"

"What is?"

She sat crumpled in the chair, a small, pathetic figure with her beautiful legs exposed. "You're so wonderful, and I'm nothing! Oh, I wish I were the most beautiful thing on earth. I want to be celebrated and famous—" Her voice hung and then dropped to softness. "For you, dear."

"What's that got to do with—"

"I want you to be proud of me." She sat up, her eyes shining. "I want to do something that'll make you proud! Oh, make you just one tenth as proud as I am of you. And then everything would be different. Oh, Tod, wouldn't you rather have a girl who was somebody, than just a nonentity? Oh, help me to be somebody, Tod, and then—"

"Be somebody?" he quoted. "And then?" But he jerked himself back to irritation. "You're a putter-offer, that's all."

"All right, Tod, if you don't believe in me, all right."

"Look here, Kate—"

"If you don't see that it'd be for you, and after that, we—"

"Kate, you're such a baby and—"

"Oh, help me, Tod. If you love me, why won't you help me?"

"You know I'd do anything for you."

"I can make you proud of me, if you'll help me." Now she had come to it, her words spilled about him, but she never used one that, reflected by his desire, did not make a shining promise. When the phone rang to announce the broker who was to dine with them, she got to her feet and ran to him—why, he could see it was all she could do to keep herself under control!

KATE set herself to write without trepidation. She had a clear comprehension of what she meant to do. This was to be no ponderous tome; with that devastating faculty for calling a spade a spade, except when she hypnotized herself with self-pity, she classified it in her own mind with a grin as "smart-alec." And so what? That was the thing to do; she could toss off her witticisms and get quick results; with the Purson publicity campaign it couldn't miss.

She did not tell Mark. He hadn't told her when he began writing, had he? And so he'd find out when her little smart-alec number overshadowed his legless and overlooked masterpiece, he'd see how right she'd been all along about the fun that came with success, how you didn't have to be great—you just had to be noticed. She scrawled down her title: "Making the Maiden."

She stared down at what she had written. A slow shame went over her. She wished with all her soul, for that moment, that she had something fine to say—as Mark had. "Oh, I know he's worth ten of me," she thought humbly. But she knew herself too well to believe she could either wait or play second fiddle; she knew her happiness depended on reaching the goal she'd made herself, and she fell back on her old familiar alibi: "When I'm happy, I can make him happy too."

She worked in her office cubicle. She scheduled a certain number of words a day; the whole gay, sophisticated thing was to be not more than thirty thousand words, between gray boards. She struck ahead with that divine impetus of the self-assured; once into the writing, all she had to do was not to think of Mark.

("Luck," she thought, "I have it!" For Flo's check, because of war and disaster, had indeed multiplied itself.)

"And don't run around with that husband of yours," Tod ordered. "For publicity purposes, you're wholly and only Kate Lauden; the wholesome *Hausfrau* angle isn't part of my campaign."

"It certainly wouldn't hitch up with 'Making the Maiden,' would it, Tod?" She read a crack from her manuscript that particularly tickled her.

They both laughed. "Of course," Kate went on, (she'd had to give this some thought), "even though Mark isn't to know about the book till a publisher has it, I'll have to say I'm being built for the Bureau, won't I?"

"Say what you like. I have a strange lack of interest in your conversations with your husband, sugar." He touched his little mustache. "You can go about with an actor or two—I know dozens; and they magnetize attention anywhere." He stood beside her in the cubicle with its carefully closed door, his blue eyes in his eternally flushed face in a level with her own. "Sometimes, not too much, we'll go places together."

She never thought her luck wouldn't hold. She'd managed everything too well. Mark, deep in his own re-writing; Flo, who had developed aches and pains and small complaints—these passed over Kate in the days when the fright she fought against became a certainty.

"It can't be so," she kept telling herself, "not now! Such rotten luck can't catch up with me!" But it had.

"You might say you're sorry," she flung at Mark when she told him.

"Sorry? Kate, I think it's swell."

"Oh, yes, certainly—a beautiful blessed event won't interfere with you."

"Darling, don't take it like that. I know you won't, after you get used to thinking about it. I suppose a lot of girls, just at first, are frightened. But—"

"Now when I'm being built for—for great things at the Bureau! It'll change everything. Everything I've planned, everything I'm doing. I tell you I can't bear it!"

"You'll have to, darling, and so—"

She looked at him.

"And so now we do other planning. Didn't you ever think it might happen, Kate?"

"No, not now when—"

"You know that night at the capital when I wanted to stay there? I saw a kid's bicycle in somebody's yard—" He broke off. "There'll be no holding Flo," he grinned.

"Don't you dare tell her!"

"No, of course I know you'll want to do that." He went on, trying to comfort her. "You won't mind giving up your job, not when you have your baby."

"Give up my job?"

"We can get along. Maybe in the summer we can get a little place in Connecticut; we'll have a baby carriage instead of a taxicab. Imagine me pushing a baby carriage! Oh, gosh!"

"Mark, please—"

"You mustn't worry about anything. There's my book, too."

"Oh, Mark, for heaven's sake, you won't make a nickel out of that book!"

"Well, maybe! Kate," he said, "you always say the world is us. In a special way, it is. In these times it's good, it's specially necessary, to hold fast to each other, and have children to hold fast to also; it's people like us who have to make the world go on."

She shrugged.

"You decorate sentiment very well, Mark—you who get in such dithers about the war and what-not. It's pretty inconsistent that you'd even want a child, when you're always saying you don't know what's going to happen in the world."

"I don't know what's going to be handed out, but I do know it's people like us who have to hang onto all the time-honored decencies of life. Just going on is something—"

"Dear me, how beautiful! But don't you know yet I'm not one of the little people who just take what's handed out?"

He said gently: "Take this, Kate. Take it and be glad."

Mark went through the next few days on his toes. Now again, as when he had married Kate Lauden, he had all the traditional feelings of the circumstance. He wanted to shout and tell everyone. He had just one pricking apprehension. He tried to clear it up.

"Those Pearsers," he said one night when they were having dinner without Flo.

"What about them?"

"Well, they have that little girl. But I'll gamble they wouldn't know their own child if they ran into her unexpectedly on the street."

"I see what you're driving at." Kate's red mouth tightened. "You mean because Marj Pearser has kept her job. Well, that job permits her to have a very expensive nurse for little Marjie. She's being brought up strictly according to Hoyle."

WHEN he came in at dinner-time the following Friday, he was a little surprised to be met at the door by a knowing Marj. "Now you're home, I'm on my way," she threw out.

"Where's Kate?"

"In bed."

"In bed? What's happened? Is she ill? Why wasn't I sent for?"

"Go in." Marj opened the hall door. "And just control yourself, my friend."

Kate looked up at him whitely from the pillow. At first he could not possibly comprehend her sullen explanations; her defiance turned his knees to water. In all his life Mark Fieldson had never been so profoundly shocked. "It was my business," Kate said, turning from his gaze. "You needn't look like that."

He was frozen by the enormity of this, then disrupted with terror at what the outcome might be for her. Through stiff lips he managed, "Will you be all right?" the words sounding the very depths of ineffectuality for all that he meant.

"Of course. Don't take it so seriously, Mark. It's nothing."

"Nothing?"

"My dear Mark, this is done by the dozen every day. I'll bet there isn't a woman I know who hasn't—"

"Oh, no, that couldn't be."

"Maybe not in your Hill Valley. But don't be naïve. Hasn't the dearth of little strangers struck you in our circle?"

He could not speak.

"There's just one thing." The tiredness in her voice became overlaid with vehemence. "Until I—I finish the bit of work I'm doing, I want—I mean, I don't want to take any chances. I haven't time. You—you'll be sweet, won't you, Mark?"

His soul got red with shame. Another woman had told him not to touch her too; instead of Kate there on the bed, he was transfixed by the picture of Lillian giving out her prohibition. For the first time he understood the compulsion that had driven Lillian; reasoning on a basis of rigid morality, she had wished to make herself inviolate. But Lillian had accepted her child.

HE had to know another thing. "Does Flo know you did this, Kate?"

"No. I told her I was going away for the week-end. I'll be back at work Monday."

"I see. Can I get you anything?"

"No. I'm going to have some sleep now."

He turned and went out. Presently he went up to see Flo.

"Why, Mark!" Flo got up cumbrously from her plush couch. "Didn't you go week-ending with Kate, then?"

"No."

"Sit down. I'm kind of lonesome. Why, Mark, what's the matter? You're shaking all over."

"I'm all right."

"But—"

"I got a chill coming home. That's all."

"Oh. It's nice you're here. I've been here all day."

He tried to keep up with her. "Didn't you go to your dentists?"

"No, I felt so mean." Flo's china-blue eyes looked fearfully at Mark. "I don't know what's the matter with me lately. I just keep feeling not up to snuff. You don't think it could be anything much, do you, Mark? Kate says it isn't, but—"

"Why don't you see a doctor?"

"I guess I'm kind of afraid to."

He told her he would go with her any time she wanted, wondering dully to whom Kate had gone. As Flo poured out her small, undefined fears, he nodded, his mind fumbling to piece together all he had believed of Kate, and what she had revealed of herself today.

"What does it mean, Mark?" he heard Flo asking. "This bee that Roosevelt's got about neutrality? Are we going to get into that awful war? They said before we wouldn't, but we did."

He said, "I don't know," smiling a little with gratitude, because he knew Flo was just trying to interest him. He asked her if he could make her some tea. When she said it would certainly go good, he made it clumsily out there in her kitchenette with its red tulips painted everywhere—in her own fashion, Flo had made her gestures toward having an "amusing apartment" too—and brought it to her with faintly burned toast.

"Thanks, Mark. Funny, us sitting here, while Kate—" She hesitated. "I hope she's having a good time. I guess she don't need us, does she?"

He made believe not to hear. When he got back, Kate was asleep. He sat there in the other room all night, thinking. Months later, when Mark Fieldson saw that book of hers, when he read the title, "Making the Maiden," he thought of this night. A murder, he thought, for this.

If Kate did not get back to the Bureau by Monday, she did by the following Thursday, storming at herself for this enforced delay. Her explanations to Flo about having a touch of flu were adequate; her friendliness to Mark was glazed with her preoccupation. Her technique with Tod Purson reached a new high—she took all his help and wondered what the exact show-down would be.

"I'm going to the thit-ah," she told Mark as she dressed one night. "It's going to be a great opening and—"

"The *thit-ah?*"

She laughed good-naturedly: "There's nothing wrong about trying to lose that awful Midwest accent, is there?"

"Not a thing. I'm entranced with all the new words I hear anyhow; *thit-ah*—" Mark repeated experimentally.

"Do you know something, Mark? You're becoming a most terrible grouch."

"Am I?"

"Does it feel neglected? Never mind, I'll be through with this special job soon. Mark, I've got an idea; when I am, let's run off somewhere, even Atlantic City, for a week."

"Plumbers don't gallivant off to Atlantic City."

"Oh dear, couldn't you arrange it somehow?"

"Take Flo, why don't you? She needs a little change."

She went close to him, her words came with the old provocativeness: "But I want to be alone with you. Just us. Don't you know that?"

He held her in his arms, reaching for this moment when her old love came through.

He said: "Don't go anywhere tonight, Kate." Elegant and frail she was, as he held her; she seemed smaller than ever.

"I must. It's business. I have to be seen at openings. Didn't you see me in Winchell's column this morning?"

Out in the hall under his overcoat were five advance copies of his book. He let her go at once. When he put her in the taxicab, he went back and stared at the package. He did not unwrap it. After a while he went into the bedroom to take off his coat, opening the closet door to hang it away. Kate's things were more real than she was. They hung there soft and beautiful, her gay hats above, her rows of slippers with their heels set in pairs. He stood there looking at all the slippers, a queer perception dawning slowly. The row of new shoes were all low-heeled.

He kept on looking at them, remembering that Tod Purson was a small man; and he knew that a girl as smart as Kate, who thought of everything, would think of taking an inch or so from herself to make an important man feel bigger.

"So you have a book first," Kate said, holding Mark's. It had been out three days. Flo had seen the first review. Kate looked up at Mark. "Those two reviews were really good," she said warmly. "I'm so glad."

"Listen to this," Flo beamed. "It says, 'Honest, written with conviction and feeling,' and here in another place it says how Mark ought to be watched, don't sound just sensible, but that's what it says, all right. Mark, do you think it'll get in the movies?"

"No."

Kate lit a cigarette. "We'll just hope the dear public buys it, won't we, Mark?"

IT didn't, Mark was to find out almost at once. The small critics'-success, he reminded himself, certainly puts it up to me as to whether I can stick by my guns, accept that it hasn't got what it takes, and try again. When one of the salesmen down at the office said, "Say, is it you who wrote that book? My wife thinks it's great," Mark had found his sole public, so far as he ever heard.

"After this, maybe you'll think a few legs worth a try," Kate said.

She looked at Mark wonderingly; with her own smart-alec job almost done, she was feverish with anticipation; as she looked at Mark, unexpectedly envy went through her at the thing in him that made him take without yelling what came along. "You're happier than I am, than I'll ever be!" she cried.

"Why, baby!" Flo turned distressed eyes to Mark, begging him to make things right for Kate. "I'll go to my place." She got up as quickly as she could, thinking, if they were alone it would be better. Besides, all Flo wanted these nights was to stretch out with a hot-water bag. "Good night." She hesitated, wanting to get away, but it seemed so queer that Mark hadn't said anything. "Mark," she prompted, "you got to make my baby happy!"

"I can't, can I?" he asked dully when they were alone.

"Oh, I don't know! What is it inside me that pushes me on to things, Mark?" Tears flowed down Kate's cheeks. "I love you, I do! But there's so much besides that crowds in on me."

"You're tired and overwrought. Working too hard—"

"No, it's not that!"

"I wish I could make you happy, as Flo says."

"Say you love me! You don't any more, do you? Oh, Mark, sometimes I think you don't. And I want you to. I do!"

He said: "Yes, I love you. I always will. Nothing can change that now."

"Nothing?" she repeated. She went on: "I do things—I frighten myself, I hate myself!" she cried passionately. "It's only—everywhere I look I see it working out, all that I'm so convinced of. Things come if you manage cleverly, they do! So I have to tear myself to pieces, Mark, to manage cleverly too. And I'll be happy, won't I?" she begged, "when I have what I want?"

"I don't know."

She told him then quite quickly about her own book. It seemed to her that by telling him this secret, which meant so much to her, she would be tearing down this wall between them too. "It's just smart-alec," she cried in an abandon of honesty, "but it's clever. I know it is." As she went on, her tears stopped. "It's not a novel, you know. A series of wise-cracking essays, rather. It can't fail!" She added casually: "Tod Purson—that is, the Bureau, is going to put it over. That's why I was being given the build-up, darling. I was going to surprise you."

He thought of those low-heeled shoes, and with an effort he said: "You have."

"It's simply bound to hit," she went on happily. No one in the world would have believed those green eyes of hers had ever shed a tear. Completely back in her stride, Kate went on: "I'll put it over, the book, I mean. You'll see! One person in this family is going to be on the bandwagon. And then—we'll both be happy."

Chapter Ten

COMING out of the cubicle with its neatly lettered *Miss Lauden* on the frosted glass, Kate saw Bill Harcroft. This time she couldn't get out of his way. "Why, hello," she said, and knew the stenographers in the big room were looking.

He nodded and kept on.

Kate's voice rose clearly. "How's Clare?" He stopped. "What do you hear from her?" She hoped all the little cats had heard that "Clare," and as for Bill, if he figured he could snub her now, she'd show him!

"She's very well." Beside her, Bill Harcroft added: "Would you care to know that my father-in-law is enjoying himself in Florida too?"

"How nice!"

"It doesn't come as news, does it? Naturally, you're in touch."

"I don't know what you mean." She put a smile on her lips for those girls.

"You don't know what I mean? It should have occurred to you we've all seen people on the make even before you and your fine-feathered husband came on the scene."

Keeping her fury under, not forgetting they stood there in plain sight, Kate Lauden put pathos in her voice. "Why, Bill, how can you talk to me like that?"

"For one thing, I happen to be fond of Clare."

"But what has that to do with—"

"Clare never did anything to you, did she? She even tried to be your friend."

"If people around here are just gossip-pots, and you want to believe them—"

"Oh, nuts!"

"How dare you!" It was the first time any man had looked at her with cool hate.

"I'm giving you a chance," he said, "to report me to the boss, sugar."

How had he known Tod called her that? "Listen, Bill Harcroft," she said steadily, "even if you are the Crown Prince around here, you've no right to talk to me like that. I—"

"I've practically abdicated." Bill made a little quick, satiric bow. "The Crown Princess has a straight row ahead!"

Out in the street, going to the newest, most expensive place where "they" all lunched, Kate got hold of herself.

"The jealous whippersnapper," she thought, building up scorn against her anger. "He'll see! They'll all see. When my book's put over, I won't even have to think of such people." Walking briskly, once more on her high heels, self-pity at being so misunderstood overwhelmed her. Why should everyone be so ready to believe the worst?

But buoyed by her preserved chastity, it seemed that fate itself had helped her. Showing T.F. how worn out she was when the book was finished and accepted for publication, she had taken Flo off to Atlantic City for two weeks, putting off, deferring. She could hardly believe her luck when, the day before her planned return to New York, he had telephoned to say he was leaving for Palm Beach with Clare.

"When?" Kate asked.

"Tonight, Kate."

Men like Tod, she thought, they're all alike: cocky enough, being the big he-men; but they're the first to run when their wives crook a finger!

WHEN Kate got to the restaurant a careful ten minutes late to find her publisher waiting, enough people there knew her as that Miss Lauden who was doing such brilliant work, though none could have said in precisely what way. Her publisher, lanky Ray Shirne, would of course launch "Making the Maiden" with a cocktail party. But Kate's *coup de théâtre* was to burst next day.

"That's a good ten days before the book comes out," Shirne pointed out anxiously again across the table.

"Mr. Purson believes that's exactly as it should be," Kate told him.

Shirne thought with irritation of his own publicity department, normally no slouch, which had never been able to figure one like this. Just a little spitefully, he said: "I can't help wondering: take 'Making the Maiden'—it's not exactly good, clean fun, so why the sanctified angle of the *communiqué?* Will it connect up? That's the question."

"Oh, yes," she answered him. . . . .

Mark read his paper these mornings at the drug-store counter where he ate his breakfast. "The birthday, today, of the Great Emancipator," he read, "who had the character and courage to fight for peace but not the brutal greed which fights for conquest—" His eye trailed to the next headline: "Young Career Woman Asks President to Subsidize Newlyweds and Baby Crop." And because career women had a fascination for him now, he read on.

> Hailed by many as a daring, unique and far-reaching plan for the promotion of youthful marriages and the rearing of normal families, Miss Kate Lauden—

Mark Fieldson went on, not believing his eyes,

> young career woman and author, would have the Government subsidize young wedded couples who would bear or adopt children.
>
> Adoption of both American and foreign orphans is the basis of Miss Lauden's plan, which has interesting differences from others in the current crop of suggestions for increase and care of babies—

"No," Mark said to the soda-clerk, "No more coffee." He went on reading:

> Suitable candidates for marriage and parenthood, between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-two, with an annual income of less than $1,800, shall agree to adopt within two years of their marriage, and in the event of no issue of their own, two children of American birth, a boy and a girl, or two children of foreign birth, a boy and a girl, orphaned by war or exile, and upon completion of adoption, the United States Government shall pay to the adopting parents the sum of $30 per month for each child, such payments to continue until each child has reached the age of eighteen, or dies, or until the adoption is abrogated.
>
> In cases of the birth of a child to a couple within two years of their marriage, they may adopt one unfortunate, of either of the aforementioned classifications, and the Government of the United States shall pay $30 each month from the date of adoption until the child adopted is eighteen years of age. Married couples less than thirty-two years of age, without regard to the time of their marriage prior to the enactment of this benefit, shall be regarded as newly married, and may adopt either two children, in case they are childless, or one in case they have one child; but if their child is a boy, then the adoptee shall be a girl, and if their own child is a girl, then the adoptee shall be a boy. Adopted children shall be no less than six months of age nor more than six years of age—

Mark Fieldson put down the paper. . . .

In the following days he was to read a great deal more about the "Kate Lauden plan." Two or three papers mentioned it editorially; some devotees of the California ham-and-eggers hailed it as an "undoubted solving of a persistent economic depression."

Kate was beside herself with delight. "Darling, isn't it marvelous? It's caught hold even more than we expected. Isn't it the most stupendous thing you could ever imagine?"

It was difficult for Kate to snatch time to go up to see Flo, but she telephoned up to the Palace of Plush just before her first broadcast.

"How are you feeling, Flo?"

"Well, all day I—"

"You and Mark will be listening to me, won't you? You'll get a kick out of hearing me, won't you?"

"I should say. Kate—"

"I have to rush now, Flo. I'll come up and see you after the broadcast if it isn't too late."

Flo, whose own career as a receptionist was over, could hardly wait for Mark. She had to find out something. "For goodness sake, tell me, Mark; are you and Kate really going to adopt some foreign children? It don't seem like Kate."

"No, Flo, that really isn't part of the great Kate Lauden plan."

"It all seems so strange, I'm pretty sure Kate didn't ever care much for young ones." She tried to get more comfortable. "You know something, Mark? Since I been home here like this, I even got to thinking maybe I might be a real grandmother." She added quickly: "You take Clare. Her grandchildren seemed to mean a lot to her."

They waited a long time for Kate to come, and Mark was just going back to the "amusing" apartment, when she arrived.

"Did you hear me? Did you like me?" She whirled and kissed them both, her eyes glittering with excitement; she flung open her long velvet coat, her throat white as cream against the black; the whole room came alive because she was there. "Wait till I tell you—"

"Oh, baby, you were just wonderful."

"Tonight was really nothing, guesting on that program. I'll get back to that, though. The thing is, here it's only the third day since 'Making the Maiden' has been out, and Shirne sent word to the broadcasting company it's going into a second printing!"

"Oh, baby!"

"Is that something, Mark, or is that something?" It so obviously was, that she didn't wait for his reply. "Can't you see now it's better to sell yourself than what you do? Well! You don't even know what else has happened. I may get a sponsor!"

"You're to be regularly on the air?"

"Maybe! A spot three times a week for thirteen weeks. They're working out ideas for my program, advice and topical talks and—if it clicks—and it will—it'll go on. There's no telling where this'll lead to. Hollywood!" she cried. "It isn't one bit impossible. Columnists do a picture; they're not real actors. Elsa Maxwell isn't, and she acts. And of course with the book going as it is, the films are bound to buy it, if only for the title."

Mark Fieldson cleared his throat. "What about your work at the Purson Bureau?"

Kate laughed. She looked up at him as she had not looked for a long time. "I'm resigning from the Bureau."

"Resigning?" Flo whimpered. "Oh, my! Can you? I mean, Tod's still away, isn't he?"

"He's still away, and when he gets back on Monday he'll find my resignation on his desk." ("Luck," she thought, "oh, my gorgeous luck! But it isn't all luck, it's management.")

YOU fight for what you believe in; you fight in one way or another, Mark kept telling himself; you identify yourself with your kind. Looking out of the train window at the dark, rushing country, he kept on trying to get the hang of things. He listened to Flo, who had had

her berth made up in her drawing-room the minute the train left New York.

"Mark, you really think Kate'll come out there to Cresford to see me? You really think she will?"

He told her patiently again: "Of course she will. She'll be there to see you, and as soon as you're a bit better, she'll bring you back to New York."

"She's so terrible busy and all," Flo said wearily, "I just don't know."

"That's why she thought you'd be happier back there in your old home, Flo."

Flo gazed at him, puzzled. "But I sold that home! Why, you ought to remember. All those amusing things Kate bought was—"

He bit his lip. "I meant, your home *town,* Cresford. She knows you'll like it there until—she's not so rushed. Going home," he said, as he saw her eyes dim, "why, that's a fine thing." He saw she'd said something, and he asked: "What? The train's so noisy—"

"I remember it's an old song or something; anyhow, it goes: *Home's Where the Heart Is.* My heart—Kate—"

"I know."

"There's something I want to say to you, Mark. I keep forgetting what it is."

"I'll stay until you remember."

He remembered, with a stab because of her helplessness now, how he had not wanted her when he and Kate set out, of that fantastic notion that he'd be "married" to both of them.

Kate had reminded him, when she decided to send Flo back to Cresford, of how he had felt at that time.

"You never wanted her in the first place. Do you think I didn't know?"

"She came because you needed her, you wanted her. It will break her completely if she has to leave you now, Kate."

"With my new broadcasting audition coming up, when everyone's after me for articles and speaking dates, and everything under the sun, I simply haven't time to look after Flo too. You should certainly be able to see that."

He told her then what the doctor had told him. "It's just a matter of a little while, Kate, with a thing like that—"

He saw her battling and then winning through. "I don't believe it! Doctors are always trying to scare people; it's part of their racket. I don't believe it," she repeated slowly, convincing herself. "If I didn't feel perfectly certain she'd be better off in her old, familiar surroundings, I wouldn't want her to go, would I? She can get that room in Cresford she used to have, I'll see she has the best nurse possible. I'll have one sent on from Chicago." She looked up at Mark bravely. "I'll sacrifice having my mother with me, if it's best for her."

SOMETHING Mark Fieldson had never understood before was clear at last. "I know now why I could never write about you. When I was doing my book—"

"*Your* book? Oh, yes."

"It used to trouble me because I knew I couldn't write about you as I did—well, about Lillian and other people."

"Really, Mark—"

"It was because I never knew you at all."

She had looked at him swiftly. "I don't know what you mean. But would you mind not making things harder for me just now? Oh, why don't you help me just a little when I have so much on my mind? New contracts—Flo—everything I do now is simply vital to all my future, and you, my own husband, help me less than anyone."

"Keep Flo here," he urged. "See her when you can, and at least see her when you say you will. If you'd ever seen her wait for you—"

"That's just it! How can I be tied like that now? My time's not my own!"

It was then he agreed to take Flo to Cresford, back where she wouldn't be watching the door for her "baby," all day long. . . .

He sat in the drawing-room, thinking Flo had dozed off, thinking of the night before with Kate. "Flo's got a lot to be thankful for, Mark. Who else that she knows has a daughter that's able to do for a mother what I am for her? The best of nursing and—"

"As you always said, there are ways, and you found them."

"You're not jealous of my success, are you, Mark, like everyone else?"

"No, I'm not jealous."

"You sometimes sound like it. In a way, I suppose it'd be natural. After all, I've rather hopped along, haven't I?"

"Oh, yes. It was just a question of knowing how, as you said."

"Really, my dear, I think it's a little more than that."

"More? How do you mean?"

She smiled, swinging a little foot in its fine handmade shoe. "Really, my dear, if I do say it, one hardly gets to my position without having something rather special. Have you read any of my notices lately, for example?"

"My God," Mark Fieldson said slowly, "you really believe it all now, don't you?"

"MARK," Flo said suddenly, from her berth.

"Yes, Flo, I'm right here."

"Where we going, Mark? Where—"

He said from his heart, "I don't know," because he knew she neither heard nor understood. "Who knows?" he said aloud, the noise of the rushing wheels gulping up his words.

"Mark!" Flo struggled up. "I know what I wanted to tell you. It wasn't your fault. I sold you down the river too—"

"What, Flo? Never mind. It doesn't matter. Nothing matters now—"

Something like a thousand thunderbolts crashed down. Mark Fieldson felt himself hurled through space. He cried, *"Lillian!"*—because the name stood for all he had thrown aside to make his own illegal entry into a transient delight; because he knew, now that it was too late, his part should have been in a persistent orderliness. But no one heard. . . .

Pop had a new radio in his place, and he listened to Kate Lauden. He kind of hoped Mark'd be on too. Maybe she'd say, "Tonight my husband is here." That Saturday night he kept yelling: "Keep quiet with that game there, will you, fellas? Give a guy a chancet to hear a high-class program."

Something had happened to the program, though. There was a pause, and another voice, not Kate's, broke in: "News has just come through that a train left the rails in a terrific railroad disaster. . . . Nine coaches were derailed, while two of the cars collapsed like accordions on the helpless victims—"

THE END

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