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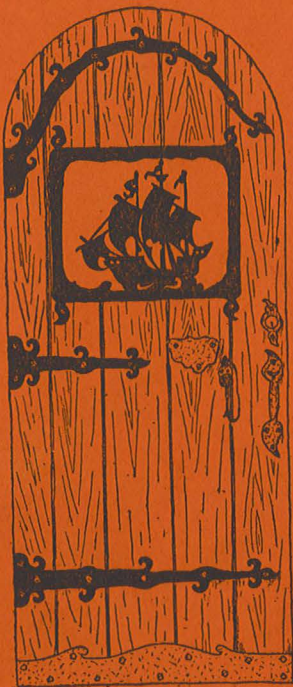
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APRIL, 1927

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THE FLAMINGO

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MY SONG

DEAREST of all, you bid me sing,
And yet you came upon a day
When all the world was white with
spring
And stole my song away.

For how can one who sang of pain,
And of frustration and defeat,
Take up his wonted theme again
When all his days are sweet?

JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE



Contributed to The Flamingo

THE FLAMINGO

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VOL. I, No. 2

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PRICE, 10 CENTS

THE QUEEN'S MIRROR

IWEAR a crown;
She freely nods and smiles.
I pick up scattered papers,
Precious parchments;
She gathers swelling fruit,
Ripened to eat.
I hoard old linen, unlit tapers,—sweet lavender—
She has none.
We are both young—
She sings soft lullabies.
I wear a crown of tears.

BEATRICE JONES

TROIS VIGNETTES

BRENHAM MCKAY

I
JOHNSIMPERTON believed in ghosts.
Every night at two o'clock for eighteen years he
had a fit, necessitating that his wife get up
and mix him a good stiff drink.
"Oh, I won't be here long," he'd groan, "to break
into your rest."

Not that she ever complained. She was patient to
the point of sin. (I wonder if she ever prayed that
each would be his last.)

One winter Martha Simperton died—of pneumonia.
John wept and grieved for a month. Then he told

a wondrous story: how one night at the accustomed hour he lay heaving and panting with pain, unable to lift a hand to help himself; he'd already sunk into the lethargy of death, (where nothing matters, John always said) when all of a sudden there came to him a vision of Martha, dressed in white, (not the ghost of any dress she ever had!) with a golden cup in her hand. She held it for him to drink just as she had through all those years. (John wept when he told that part.) And straight-away he slipped into peaceful sleep.

That had been a week before, and for seven nights every night at two o'clock Martha came again and held her golden cup to him.

So John's got religion and believes in ghosts.

But I don't. I laughed when he told his tale, 'cause if there was a God He wouldn't send Martha down with no refreshing drink for that old damn fool John Simperton in a golden cup—But He'd fill it with the orneriest poison He knew, and Martha—She'd bring it, I reckon.

II

On s'amuse

Ninon lived in "a charming little apartment," all yellow silk. The sunlight breathed through it and it twinkled at night in the electric light. There was a potted daffodil before the window and a canary in its tall cage.

Like the apartment was Ninon with her cropped yellow curls, feathery as the sunlight.

"The sleeping place of sunlight," those young men of the boulevards called her toy salon in their play. Their life was their play and they loved Ninon in their play—twenty—thirty—all of them, variously and individually.

And Ninon—? She loved them as a powdered butterfly passing through a pale lily field—fluttering—poising—never stopping—dancing on. She loved them in her way—and they loved her in their play.

Miguel was tall with sadness in his eyes, though he never had touched sadness—sadness nor joy. He had never played, you see—he was new to life, and never having played he could not know the sadness which is the pay of play.

One of those young men of the boulevards brought Miguel to the yellow silken apartment one morning when there was sunlight.

Miguel—Ninon—they loved, those two. And Miguel because he had never played learned sadness and went back to the grey stones and iron gates of an old castle in Segovia. He was being paid in sadness, Miguel, for his play.

The young men of the boulevards found Ninon on the yellow rug beside the canary's tall cage. And the tiny bird was singing—shrilling—high tinkling notes above the dead Ninon.

III

On fait penitence

Eileen had been always in a convent since she was such a little girl. Going the quiet ways, gathering flowers for the altar of the Virgin, and thinking on old legends like illumined pages as she sat making white laces.

When she was seventeen she went to the village where her old uncle was *cure*. She did not understand this world with its careless, incomprehensibly happy ways. It troubled her. She did not belong to it.

One evening when the Angelus had rung, leaving the fields more quiet with only the tinkling of the sheep

bells like the scattered sound of the faint stars, she came out to the old man sitting beside his doorstep and told him that it was her wish to return to the convent.

She waited patiently while three bright tears fell from the old priest's lids. She knew that there would be no one to care for him but the old peasant house-keeper. It was, perhaps, cruel of her—

His hand, resting on the head of his black stick trembled as he lifted his face with its frame of thin white hair.

"Yes, Eileen, have it so, if you wish—and may the *Bon Dieu* bless you."

He had wished it then, Eileen told herself, his tears were of joy, Eileen told herself again and again.

She went back to the cool walls and quiet ways, hiding her white softness under a grey veil. She gathered roses in the little closed court of the flowers and lighted tapers in the twilight of the chapel. And she thought that her quietness was happiness.

One morning going down a corridor Eileen saw that the barred window in the big portal had been left uncovered, and framed in the brilliant sunlit panel as in a living mirror was a face with light uplifted eyes—In a moment it had passed. And Eileen stood thinking of birds and little children. Then she faltered—ashamed—From that moment Eileen's world was not the same.

She had never understood for what sins the nuns prayed and wept alone in the chapel at night. She knew now—and burned—with her shame—she told herself. Bowed over the white laces for her wedding dress of satin she prayed to the Holy Mother of her Betrothed.

"Ah, she grows humble," said the old nuns, smiling. "Before she takes her final vows."

But there was one dawn when they came to lead her in her wedding dress with tall candles of wax and chanted bridal hymns to make her eternal pact before a bishop in the chapel,—and her little cell was empty. Eileen and her wedding dress were gone.

Running through the streets, her long train of satin and white lace stained on the cobbles, Eileen went crying: "Unworthy! Unworthy!"—with her golden hair tumbling all about her shoulders.

"HYDRA"

CARTER BRADFORD

THE PATIENTS of Dr. Murray Fairchild usually came in limousines. Numbered among them were the socially prominent Mrs. Sylvester Van Landingham, Mrs. Waldo Cabot Chesterton, Daniel K. Landers, the banker, and old Alan Roth, a financier and philanthropist, all leaders in the society and business circles of the city.

On the fifteenth floor of the Clinic Building, well removed from the noises of the busy city, were the offices in which Dr. Fairchild received his clientele. A neatly uniformed young nurse met patients at the door, to take their names and to verify their appointments before admitting them to the spacious waiting rooms.

A decorator might have designed these rooms for his own study. German tapestries on the walls, velvet draped windows and thick russet colored rugs lent a home-like touch to the surroundings. Massive rockers and lounges invited indolence. The room's one table was a wood carver's masterpiece in mahogany.

Simplicity marked Dr. Fairchild's consultation office, however. A desk, a few straight chairs, a surgeon's table and a cabinet of Latin labeled bottles made up the substantial equipment, except that the walls were lined with white enameled cabinets containing rows upon rows of meticulously polished surgical instruments of every description. Not a practitioner in the city was better equipped for his work than was Dr. Fairchild. The cabinets might have been kept for psychological effect by a less successful surgeon.

"No consultations will be scheduled on Thursdays" read a card on the wall, for that day was devoted entirely to the charity ward of St. Luke's Children's hospital.

Periodicals of the medical profession often carried articles by Dr. Fairchild, and at one time Abelmets, the celebrated Viennese surgeon of Chicago, had traveled across the continent to watch him perform a delicate bone grafting operation. Dr. Fairchild had served for two years as president of the State Medical Association.

II

Front street ran for fifteen crooked blocks near the river front, in the most disreputable, rat-infested section of the city. Front street did not put on airs; it shamelessly admitted that its people lived close to the crude, unpleasant realities of Life.

A few steps from its intersection by Market street stood a shabby two-storey brick structure of uncertain age, its windows covered with yellowed newspapers. Over one entrance hung a battered metal sign that read: "John L. Stoltz, M. D." It made no mention of office hours, but it was generally known in the locality that the Doctor was never in his office except in the evening.

A cramped little room with a dozen dilapidated chairs served the purpose of a reception room. A round cast-iron stove stood in one corner winter and summer alike, presiding with mock dignity over the tobacco stained sawdust cuspidor. The Doctor's private office boasted of a roll-top desk, a swivel chair and three shelves of dusty medical texts. Under the skylight an operating table, in handy proximity to a dripping faucet over the sink, and a cabinet of dingy surgeon's instruments made up the professional equipment of the office.

Patients glanced furtively about before stealing into the place. They sat on the hard chairs in strained silence awaiting their turn to see the Doctor. The women frequenters were gaudily dressed, their sin-lined faces painted, and their lips carmined an unnatural vivid shade. A few were pitifully young. There was a still different type of woman who could be seen entering the office at times, the heavily veiled ones who paid a hurried visit and left in large sedans or in curtained taxis. There were more men than women who came, middle aged men with bloodshot eyes, anaemic youths and a few individuals with twitching hands and fever-bright eyes glowing with a spark of anticipation.

Dr. Stoltz had an attendant, a hollow chested youth with a jerking facial muscles and nicotine yellowed fingers. It was known that he assisted the Doctor in the operations performed behind a locked door in the little office and that his discretion was beyond question.

One evening at the Doctor's busiest hour two men wearing blue serge suits, black derby hats and round-toed shoes marched through the waiting room and entered the private office without knocking. They

emerged soon afterward with the Doctor and his assistant, handcuffed together.

Dr. Murray Fairchild did not meet his patients the next morning, nor did Dr. Stoltz ever return to his practice on Front street.

"The case of Dr. Fairchild is almost without parallel, a most remarkable instance of dual personality," the morning papers said. "But for a grain of potassium cyanide, hastily swallowed, the Doctor might have cast some light upon the matter."

MORESQUE

CHARLES MAGRUDER

THE KING slowly opened his eyes and lay still to breathe in the song of the rare bird held in his room by wires of gold.

The early morning sun piercing the alabaster window tracery, gilded the mosaic floor by his silken couch, and told him that he was late in arising on this mid-summer day. A second later the call of the far-away muezzin floated through the room and bade Muhamed Nasar, commonly called El Hazari, leap from his couch and prostrate himself on the prayer rug nearby. His devotions complete, the King called his attendants and went into the garden for his bath. There the scent of dew-frosted roses and the splashing of the clear, cold fountain pervaded the summer atmosphere.

After his invigorating bath Muhamed sought a divan in one of the cool halls of the Alhambra, and there was served his coffee. He was dozing again when a tumult in the ante-room roused him to call imperiously for silence; at the same instant, however, his nephew, Aben Ismael, entered the royal presence. His face

was purple with anger and his clothing dishevelled as though he had dressed hastily. Not awaiting the monarch's nod of greeting, the young man cried out:

"O Allah's Favored One, surely you jest in taking from me the light of my life, my betrothed! When wilt thou return her?"

"On thy knees, rogue! . . . There is one lady whom you did love, but never shall you see her face again, for she is the betrothed of my faithful servant, Jusef the Bold."

Aben Ismael blanched, his eyes glittered and he worked his mouth for a moment, then—

"It is well, O my King," he returned in a grating voice. "May Allah ever give to thee thy just rewards."

He bowed his way from the audience room, and the King arose from his seat and after he had ordered his attendants to prepare for a sally to the city below, proceeded to the Square of the Cisterns, the first court of the Alhambra, where gushes the coldest well in the vicinity. Muhamed mounted his horse and a procession formed and passed through the Gate of Justice, down the steep road where hid the beggars who had been warned by heralds of the approach of the King who detested his people, to Granada. In the city, Muhamed and a few attendants dallied at a mosque while the other horsemen proceeded to the house of the fair Cetimerian, once the betrothed of Aben Ismael, to bid her accompany them to the Alhambra. In a few minutes the party returned to the mosque and started back to the citadel, taking the veiled maid with them. Muhamed was alarmed to see an unaccustomed activity in the horse market and the armorer's stalls, but his companions reassured him by saying that a party of nobles was preparing for a foray on the Christians.

In the Alhambra, all soon was quiet, for it was the hour of the siesta. Muhamed El Hazari, who had dined alone in one of his flower scented rooms, now rested in a latticed pavillion that overhung the ravine around the palace-fortress. He lay there half-awake, counting the interstices of the gaily colored ceiling and listening to the droning of the bees in the nearby garden. Finally he called to the attendant crouched at the entrance to the pleasure house:

"Get thee to the chief eunuch and bid him ask the maid Cetimerian if she wishes a talking parrot, a monkey to act like a man, or one of the black slave singers . . . it shall be her betrothal gift."

The slim boy salaamed and took his way through the garden. Muhamed remained still for a long time, until on the breeze there came intermittently the noises of the wakening city below. When he finally left the pavillion, he crossed the garden, seated himself in the shade of a blossoming orange tree, and clapped his hands. In answer to his signal, an ancient gray-bearded man came, bearing under his arm a large book.

"May Allah be with you, ancient one," said Muhamed. "Read to me now from the true word of the Prophet. But stay a moment . . ." turning to a slave who had followed the teacher:

"Send to Jusef the Bold, greeting and word that his betrothed awaits him here. That will be in the language of fruits, a full-ripe peach with the down still upon it, in a basket of silver wire . . . and now, venerable one, read!"

The old man bowed low, then commenced to read from the Koran. The two read and talked until the nasal call of the muezzin bade them bow to worship the everlasting majesty and greatness of Allah, before the sun should sink to rest. After the prayers, the

two walked to the harem, for Muhamed wished to be sure of his captive. When he arrived at the tower where Cetimerian was confined, he knocked thrice on the nailed door, and said to the slave who put her face at the tiny lattice:

"The maiden?"

"O My King, she weepeth much, but even now she begins to notice the singing girl who plays the silver harp. She seemeth but a little ill with unrequited love."

"Well, she will be consoled with a husband ere the sun hath set again!" laughed the King. He turned and was crossing the garden when a young slave ran to him and fell on the ground, crying as he lay there:

"O Most Merciful of the Favored Sons of the Prophet, . . . thy rebel nephew, Aben Ismael, hath left the city with a mighty train of horsemen, and some did cry, as they passed out the gate, that they go to the frontier to gather thine enemies to revenge some wrong he has borne."

"O Allah, hear thou my prayer! May this scourge of the righteous be cast into the pit of fire! Allah rid me of his ceaseless treachery!" then turning to the boy,

"Go thou," he said in a weary voice, "to the chief of the garrison and bid him light fires on the towers to warn the outposts of the escape of criminals. Perchance they may be trapped in the last pass. Speed!"

Obedying the command to the letter, the boy salaamed hastily and ran from the garden. Then in the dusk of the last rays of light, the monarch prostrated himself and said his prayers, then he arose and went to a tiny terrace under a balcony of the harem. While he sat there eating slowly and gazing out over the moonlit city, he dreamily listened to the dripping notes of a guitar played by some fair hand on the balcony

above, to accompany a soft voice singing of the maid who, when she thought she had been deserted by her lover, gave her whole heart to the lord and husband chosen for her.

THE DEATH OF SIGURD

(After the Volsung Saga)

CAROLYN MITCHELL

Dramatis personae:

Brynhild, wife to King Gunnar.

Gunnar, King of the Guikings.

Sigurd, husband to Gudrun, and possessor of the dragon's hoard.

Gudrun, sister to King Gunnar.

Guttorm, brother to the king.

Hogni, another brother of the king.

Time: 560 A. D.

SCENE: *Palace of the king on the Rhine River. The action takes place in Brynhild's bed-chamber. The room is furnished with a couch at the right of the stage, near which is a small table, on which there is a basket of needlework. At the back of the room is a large window. There are two chairs.*

At the rising of the curtain Brynhild is seen reclining on her couch, motionless. She is dressed in a linen kyrtil, over which she wears a kind of apron, or tunic of scarlet cloth. Around her head, holding in place her loosely flowing hair is a gold band. Brynhild, herself, is a striking character, with red gold hair, very brilliant eyes, and a strong face.

The curtain rises. After a few seconds Gunnar, her husband, enters. He is dressed in linen shirt, tight fitting breeches of scarlet and stockings which are

attached to the breeches. His hair is light, flowing, parted in the middle, and held back with a diadem.

Entering from the left, he sees her lying as if lifeless and approaches the couch quietly.

Gunnar (softly and gently): Brynhild, my wife.

(She does not answer. He calls more loudly and a little emotionally): Brynhild, Brynhild!

(She starts, looks up at him and recoils slightly).

My wife, why do you lie a-bed like this. For seven days you have not eaten nor drunk. Come, forget this petty quarrel with Gudrun. She sent me to tell you she is grieved at your sorrow.

Brynhild (Ignoring him): What did you do with the ring I gave you when you came to me through the fire to seek me for your wife? Ah, unlucky was the day I pledged myself to marry the man who should ride through the flames, for I knew that none but Sigurd would dare ride. And Sigurd it was who came, not you, miserable wretch. You are no champion, no king, like Sigurd. He has slain the dragon, and five kings besides, while you would grow pale at the very thought of it.

Gunnar: This is vile language to come from you, Brynhild—but you are ill.

Brynhild (violently): Yes, ill unto death, because you have deceived me. I never loved any man but Sigurd. Now I cannot have him, and I shall die. Never again will you see me glad in your hall. Oh, how I despise my very life, for I can never have Sigurd. *(She starts up, snatches her needlework and tears it in shreds, midst violent moaning. Gunnar retires hastily, and Brynhild becomes calm, and lies down on the couch. Sigurd enters.)*

Sigurd: Awake, Brynhild, rouse yourself from your

bed, and cast off your grief. Why do you persist in holding a grievance against Gudrun?

Brynhild (Making an effort to control herself): How dare you come to me and speak of reconciliation? You are all against me in this house of deceit, and none is worse than you, Sigurd. How can you be so blind and ignorant that you do not know why I am dying?

Sigurd: I confess my ignorance. No one has told me why you are so grief-stricken. Come, tell me all, Brynhild.

Brynhild (Very disdainfully): Yes, I will tell you. Why is it that Gudrun has the ring I thought I gave to Gunnar on that miserable day? It was you who rode through the fire. It was you who gave me the dower of the slain. No one but you. I knew you by your eyes, but could not change what fate had planned for me.

Sigurd: But King Gunnar is a noble man. There are none nobler than the sons of Guiki.

Brynhild: None can compare with you, my Sigurd. You have slain the dragon and ridden through the fire. I have never loved Gunnar. I shrink with abhorrence when he approaches me!

Sigurd: But surely the love of so noble a king is better to you than gold.

Brynhild: Base Sigurd, I do not want your gold. It is your life I seek now. No greater joy could I have than to see the piercing sword standing deep in your heart.

Sigurd: Do not fear for that. It is fated that I shall live but a little longer. Then will the pang of my death kill you, for our two lives are reckoned as one.

Brynhild (Despairing): Oh, why am I not dead. I can no longer bear this torture.

Sigurd: Ah, live, my sweet Brynhild, and love both Gunnar and me.

Brynhild: It is plain you know not a woman's heart or you would not speak in this manner. Alas, how offensive I must be to you, the noblest of all men!

Sigurd: Gentle Brynhild, do not condemn yourself. I must speak what is in my heart. I have long loved you more than life itself, but have been a victim of circumstances that have affected both our lives. Many times have I been wretched because you were not my wife, and tried to seek contentment in being near you.

Brynhild: It is too late to tell me this, Sigurd. I am Gunnar's wife, and fate has decreed that in my grief I shall die.

Sigurd: Is there nothing I can do to bring back your happiness. Must we go on living in this way?

Brynhild (Enraged): How can you speak thus to me. Do you think I would beguile King Gunnar? Go, and never let me see you again. I will not have you, nor any other.

(Exit Sigurd. In her anger she throws herself on the couch and moans. Gunnar, hearing her, enters with Hogni. As they come in she becomes calm and summons all her will to speak calmly.)

Gunnar: Why do you moan, Brynhild?

Brynhild (In a restrained voice): Sigurd has betrayed me, and degraded my dignity. I must be revenged. Gunnar, listen, there is one thing you can do that will restore my happiness and life.

Gunnar (Eagerly): What is it, my Brynhild?

Brynhild: Kill Sigurd!

Gunnar (He starts back in horror and astonishment, and speaks with great emotion): How can I do this, Brynhild? I am bound to Sigurd by an oath, which I cannot break.

Brynhild (Infuriated): Miserable wretch, you say you love me, and yet prove faithless at such a time. If Sigurd comes before your wife and her happiness, go and leave her to die.

Gunnar: Peace, Brynhild, I shall kill Sigurd for your love. You are above all other things to me, and I shall lay down my life for you.

(She turns toward him.)

Hogni: Be not hasty in this, brother. Think what Sigurd has given to us. No king can be as great as you with Sigurd for a counselor. It is a great boon to have Sigurd as a brother. Consider well, Gunnar.

Gunnar: Nothing must be thought of now but vengeance. Sigurd shall die! *(Pause)* And now, Hogni go seek Guttorm. He will be the one to avenge the honor of the Guikings, for he is full of fire and bound by no oaths. Go seek him, Hogni, and bring him here. *(Hogni goes out and Gunnar turns to Brynhild who is lying on the couch)* Come, be glad of heart, Brynhild, for soon our adversary shall die. Then shall we live in peace and happiness, and possess ourselves of Sigurd's great hoard.

Brynhild (Ignoring him, with impatience): Why does not Hogni return. I am impatient that this deed be done, for I cannot help fearing its success. *(She looks straight at him, and speaks coldly.)* Ah, I see by your eyes that I can trust you. *(Hogni and Guttorm enter.)*

Guttorm (To Brynhild): We have not seen you in court for seven days and the house is much disturbed about your health.

Brynhild (Coldly): Thank you, I am well. Won't you sit down, Guttorm?

(Guttorm sits down and Gunnar and Hogni take the other chairs. While Brynhild is pouring out a drink

at the small table behind Guttorm, the men talk of the murder. She is seen to drop something into one of the glasses.)

Gunnar: Guttorm, we have a plan, which we wish you to carry out for us. Success in accomplishing it will mean great riches and honor for you.

(Brynhild approaches with the drinks, one obviously meant for Guttorm, which she thrusts toward him, and gives the others to Gunnar and Hogni. Guttorm drinks eagerly while the others watch him slyly and smile as he lifts the cup from his lips.)

Gunnar: You asked, just now, about Brynhild's health. She has been exceedingly ill, Guttorm, on account of Sigurd.

Guttorm (Surprised): On account of Sigurd?

Gunnar (With animation): He has betrayed and insulted her, and sought to defile my house. He shall not live under this roof. Avenge us, Guttorm and you shall have the greater part of his fortune. He has betrayed your king and brother. *(Forcefully)* Guttorm, Sigurd must die! *(Guttorm has meanwhile become excited under the influence of the drug. Gunnar hardly finishes when he starts up excitedly.)*

Guttorm: He shall die in his bed this very hour. The wrong is doubly increased because I thought him so virtuous. Oh, wretched Sigurd, no longer will you bring shame upon this house. Tonight you will die for the king of the Guikings must be avenged. *(He rushes from the room.)*

Gunnar: He will not rest until Sigurd lies drenched in his own blood.

(Gunnar and Brynhild talk together.)

Hogni: It is a heinous deed. All for the love of a woman! How could Sigurd remember Brynhild when his mother in marriage drugged him that she

might win him and his gold for her daughter. Alas, noble Sigurd! You—

(A loud moaning is heard that increases, then gradually diminishes. They all start and turn pale. Brynhild rises from her couch and stands motionless and ghostly. Her voice is colorless, cold.)

Brynhild: It is done. That is Gudrun moaning. (Suddenly she breaks into an uncanny, hysterical laugh, which mingles with the groaning and rises to an almost demoniacal intensity. Gunnar and Hogni stare at her with fearful looks. They do not attempt to restrain her.)

The Curtain Falls

EGO

I FOLLOW the train of your thought
And sweep the restless surface of your mind—
And so I pity you,
Because I see
Things you vainly strive to keep from me.

Some day Fame will kiss you
As I never could.

BEATRICE JONES

From "REVERIES"

I DO NOT know. And, yet, somehow, I feel
Tremendous concepts we call Right and Wrong.
Between them there is some vast difference;
Two mighty Things but parted by a breath,
That flow together but never merge as One.

PAUL HILLIARD

REQUIEM

WHILE the jonquils in the valley
Bloom as bright as yellow gold,
Winter crouches on the mountain—
Winter—stark and bleak and cold.

While the honeybees are zooming
Where the appletrees are blooming
And the butterflies are flitting here and there;
Oh, my bonny boy—my Johnny
Plays no more among the flowers,
Climbs no more the willow trees.

When the snow lay on the valley,
Like a blanket large and white,
And the willows all were bending
Neath their load,
Once my bonny boy—my Johnny,
Tired of playing wooden soldier,
Looked out on the frozen valley
To the mountains far away—
Looked and asked me speaking slowly
In a voice so tired and old,
If there'd come a brighter day
When the snow would go away
Leaving only, then, the sunshine and the
flowers.

But the snow, it stayed and stayed
In the valley—
Till my bonny boy—my Johnny
Tired of waiting for the Springtime
With its gorgeous colored flowers,
Tired of waiting, oh, so long, and went away;
Climbed a golden, streaming moonbeam
To those meadows of the Gods

Where the stars like yellow jonquils
Stud the skies.

In the valley there are jonquils
Blooming bright as yellow gold,
But within my heart there crouches
Winter—stark and bleak and cold.

DARKNESS

WHEN I spread my wings above the Earth
Men become devils
Stalking abroad in the land,
Doing hellish things
Of which the goodly light would never dream.
I have seen the rulers of nations
With strife and bloodshed and crime
Go down to death.

When I spread my wings above the Earth
Men at last lie down and sleep—
Grown old with toil and cares.
Under the soft cover of my protection
Men do goodly things
Of which the glaring light would never dream.
I have seen the races of rulers
With joy and sorrow and pain
Go down to death.

NAISSANCE

DARKNESS!
God!
Moaning of the seas,
Wild shrieking of winds,
Distant sobbing of stars,
Low fretful wailing
Of a new-born world.

ELEGY

ON HER small white tomb they wrote,
"Blessed are the dead."

As the years passed fleetly by
No one ever saw her weep,
(Men had said she never could,)
But how could men with human vision
See what she concealed with lies.

The beauty of a seraph child
Soothed the cruel, burning wound
That her pealing, bell-toned laughter
Left within the hearts of men—
Men who went away and died.

Did they wish what they wrote there,
"Blessed are the dead"?

Through the long dark hours of night
Have I heard her sobbing prayers
Calling to the gods for power
Never more to laugh again.

But the Fates had thus decreed—
Casting loaded dice,
Bartered her to the God of laughter,
Left her thus and went away.

Singing, singing, happy soul,
Blessed are the dead!

ALBERT NEWTON

THE HOG

PAUL HILLIARD

IT WAS a sultry September afternoon that Austin Merrill, Jane Merrill, his daughter, and Mark Perkins alighted from a wheezy, wood-burning passenger train in Merrillville; Merrillville of the two streets, one of which was the State highway, or Main Street, and the other a pedestrian's path for cows, hogs, goats, pigs, and negroes.

Jane wore a trim traveling suit; Austin Merrill wore a neat past-middle-age business man's suit; Perkins wore knickers and carried a golf bag. Merrill had discouraged the sportsman's dress, stating that Merrillville lay in the middle of Florida pine woods, that no golf course was available, and that overalls would be more in vogue with Merrillville citizens. He resorted to wit that was intended for subtle ridicule. Perkins had smiled cherubically, had agreed with everything Merrill said, and had continued to wear his knickers and carry his clubs.

* * *

Jane Merrill and Thomas Austin Merrill had returned home from experiencing Europe.

Austin Merrill brought back from his tour three things especially worthy of note: a great admiration for German industry, a high disgust of things Mediterranean in general, Mussolinian in particular, and a fanatical aversion for European cigars.

Austin Merrill was a man of illimitable quantities and definite qualities; his nose was long and lean, and its tip dropped below the lowest level of his nostrils—so much for him.

Jane, however, brought back something quite concrete.

It was Mark Perkins. He had attached himself to her and to her father on ship-board when they were on their way to London. He stuck with them through eight continental nations and remained constant during continuous and varied complications with the natives. He was a genius for inciting trouble, for stepping on the toes of others, for being an unprecedented nuisance.

She did not know why she liked Mark Perkins. Nor, indeed, why she endured him, despite her father's vituperous oration. He was free from conceit and delightfully unsophisticated even though he sometimes smacked of old Scotch. He was short and slight and sleek. She knew of his skill at bridge, of his ease in ultra-polite circles, of his apparently unconscious ability to make friends immediately if they were not already enemies.

When the trio disembarked in New York, a whimsical fancy moved Jane. On the impulse of the moment's thought she invited Perkins to be their guest for a short while at Merrillville, where Austin Merrill's sawmill roared night and day consuming raw timber like a mighty throbbing ogre, and belched lumber for insatiable markets to make money for lengthy European tours.

"Really, it's nice of you to ask me," Perkins replied. Her invitation lighted his childlike face like the glow from a Beatitude. "I'd be delighted, I'm sure—if you'd—like to have me—really."

"Like to have you?" laughed Jane. Her eyes were level with his and in hers danced imps. "Mr. Perkins, you're a joy and a tease, but a greater joy! We'd be perfectly delighted to have you."

"Like h—l!" thought Austin Merrill with sardonic smile as he turned away. His teeth clamped and di-

vided one of his choice cigars. He spat the piece out with a snort.

Not till long afterward did Jane dare reason what force impelled her to invite Mark Perkins to Merrillville. It was the light of deliberate reason that showed her that she had grasped at Perkins as her one immediate hope for companionship when she must return to live within earshot of the hateful Hog.

The Hog! A low moaning of a thousand agonies split by angry growls characterized the Hog; a long, wooden shaft in Austin Merrill's monstrosity called a sawmill, it was. At the bottom of the shaft ripped and tore and growled a massive drum of steel knives for ripping waste slabs to fragments to make fuel for boilers. Above the monotonous buzzing of the edger, the rumble of roller beds, the whir of circular saws, eruptions of steam from the shotgun carriage, above all this uproar snarled the Hog at its work.

Austin Merrill loved the Hog. In his ears it voiced the might and power of the throbbing steel structure that contributed to the progress of one hundred million Americans. Austin Merrill was a born pioneer.

Jane hated the Hog. She hated violently, passionately, secretly, with feeling that had grown upon her since those vivid days of youth when she learned to hate things she disliked.

There had been an afternoon, when she was playing dolls and lady and circus in the backyard, that terrorizing screeches from the mill whistle and men running to the mill, shouting, had frightened her. She could never forget that.

"What's the matter, Mother?" she had demanded.

That evening she had slipped downstairs and had hidden in the hall eager for a more satisfying answer to her question. She heard her father say something

about "'Nigger Joe' falling in the Hog." She thought her heart must stop beating, she felt so cold. After that, more than once she had sprung from her bed with the first dull roar of the Hog in the mill across the tracks, and had fled to her mother weeping.

Perhaps it was her fear of the Hog that caused her to seek Mark Perkins as a companion, for any diversion was preferable to loneliness—and the Hog.

* * *

Merrillville sweltered in the Florida sun blistering and booming to eruptive discharges of steam from the carriage guns, but above everything sounded the dull, jerky, angry roar. The Hog! Jane shuddered and said something to drown the noise.

It was three o'clock when Merrill went to the office and Jane began unpacking.

"Guess I'll have to amuse myself someway, Miss Merrill," Perkins said in his usual apologetic way. I'll ramble about a bit. Delightful place, eh, what? Woods and live stock and—and——"

"Yes, just make yourself at home, Mr. Perkins. I present you with the key to our metropolis, but don't go into the mill unless Father is with you. It's very dangerous."

"Oh, to be sure," conceded Perkins, departing.

At four o'clock the big whistle at the mill began screaming hysterically. A white-eyed negro burst into Merrill's office.

"Mist' Mer'l—de Hog—somebody done fall in dat hole—!"

"What? Good God! John! Not in the Hog!"

"Yassuh, das what ah—"

But Merrill was halfway across the road on his way to the mill before the negro concluded.

It was a hushed group of workers white and black

that gathered around the trough at the base of the Hog, when the mill owner burst through the circle. He glanced at the mill foreman who occupied the center of the circle. The foreman returned the glance, nodded, and gestured toward the trough. Merrill looked. There were a few dark stains along the chain.

"Who—was it?" Merrill broke the silence.

"We ain't certain, Mister Merrill, fer sure. George here says he just saw feet disappear from where he was sittin' in the trimmer's cage. The nigger who was feedin' the Hog ain't here. I reckon——"

A commotion stirred the outer edge of the crowd. Jane burst through to the center. She was pale and excited. At sight of the exposed drum of knives she recoiled as if someone had slapped her across the face.

"Father! Mark—Mr. Perkins! Where is he!"

For a second time within a period of ten minutes Austin Merrill's features grew white.

"Why—I left Perkins at the house with you. Where is he?"

"He said he was going to look—to look around—he left——"

Merrill turned to the foreman. The vague possibility that the Hog's victim might have been Perkins—

"Search for that nigger," he snapped. "Quick! I'll wait right here."

The foreman, with the efficiency for which Austin Merrill's foremen were known, dispersed his men. In five minutes they came drifting back in grave groups of two and three reporting that they found nothing. The negro who had fed the Hog could not be found.

Suddenly there was a shout. A negro searcher ran toward them. Above his head he waved something. As he approached they could see that it was a pair of tweed knickers with a coat and cap to match.

"Mark's clothes!" Jane gasped.

"Damn!" muttered Merrill. It was exceedingly problematical as to what he referred.

The negro had found the clothes at the farthest end of the log pond slightly back from the water's edge.

"What can it mean?" Jane asked tensely. "Surely he wouldn't drown himself!"

"That idiot would do anything! Hanson," Merrill ordered, "drag the pond. I'll be at my house. If you find anything, report to me. Report anyway, if you don't, Morse," he spoke to an office clerk—"call the sheriff. There's something underhanded here. You come with me Jane."

* * *

They went back to the house. Jane was cold with despair. The Hog! She covered her face with her hands, but she did not weep; a wild, dazed, uncertain expression settled over her face.

"Brace up, Jane," encouraged Merrill stiffly. "This is no time for giving way. Remember, you're a Merrill."

He turned to leave the room, but stopped short. In the doorway leading to the outer hall stood an old negro mammy—a relic left over from pre-war days. She was so old that her kinky hair was graying around the edges. She stood there supporting her body against the door frame, a picture of abject fear.

"Hannah!" uttered Merrill sharply. Jane looked up vaguely.

"May de good Lawd take mah soul into his hebenly lan', Marse Mer'l!" chanted the old negress. "Ah'm done sin' but ah ain' gwine sin no mo', Marse Mar'l. I'se done pa'cipitated in de work o' de debbil, Marse Mer'l. Sho' is."

"Yes, yes, Hannah," condoned Merrill, impatiently.

"Go out back and Mary will help you. I'm very busy now."

"Yas'm Marse Mer'l, ah knowed you was busy, but mah boy done kill mah ol' man—oh, great Gawd, hab mercy on dis po' soul!"

"Mah ol' man done beat mah boy in a skin game, Marse Mer'l. Den mah boy tries to borr' back his money, an' he say he gwine kill mah ol' man, but ah'se skeered t' tell. Dat boy snook up an' when mah ol' man ain' lookin' he done shove him right int' dat hog—oh, great Gawd, spare dis po'—"

Jane was on her feet instantly.

"It's all right, Hannah. God will forgive you if you tell everything. Yes, yes," Merrill soothed. "Tell me, where is your boy?"

"He done drown hisself in de pon'," waile'd the old mammy. "Ah seed him do it, sho', at de end o' de pon' an' he dressed hisself in dat house whar de niggers keep dey're clothes, an' when dey ain't nobody lookin' he run an' jumps. An' den a nigger come an' took sumpin from de edge o' de pon', an' my boy hide under dem logs, an' he ain't come up yet! Oh, Gawd, save dis yere po', po' sinnin' soul!"

Jane clutched her father's arm.

"Then Mark is still alive!" she cried.

"If he hasn't killed himself at something else," declared Merrill.

SPRING

I LEAVE your little hearth with its pale hot cups of
tea, your yellow silken rugs,
And go out into the painted world of tall trees and
grassy places
Under a glass-grey sky. BRENHAM MCKAY

THE FLAMINGO

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EDITORIAL NOTES

The reception given the first issue of THE FLAMINGO has been most gratifying. Subscriptions for the three issues of March, April and May can still be received at the special price of twenty-five cents. Why not compliment some youthful-minded friend by sending him the first three issues of THE FLAMINGO?

It is our purpose to present in each issue a group of poems representing the work of a single author. In this issue will be found a poetry section by Albert Newton, whose poem, "My Dad," in the March issue, has attracted wide attention.

The one-act play entitled "The Eighth Day," by Brenham McKay, which appeared in our last issue, was presented recently by the Allied Arts Society of Winter Park, with the author as stage director and Frank Abbott playing the leading part. The performance was in complete darkness, without stage setting or costuming, and the effect was powerful and tragic.

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