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MAY, 1930

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THE FLAMINGO

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SONNET

SINCE haughty Pharaohs ruled Egyptian Nile
And whipped vast armies into Babylon,
Since first the glare of metal arms in sun
Turned black the sight of hostile eyes a mile
From wise Sennacherib's Assyrian smile,
Men have aspired to tyrannhood, outrun
The gauntlet of obliquity, and won
Their goal by ruthlessness and honeyed guile,
Only to glitter from a moonless height
A domineering star, until the law
Of outraged solar planets cut it free
To fall into the void, a nameless blight
On man, who follows soon with breathless awe
Another haughty sire of tyranny.

SYLVESTER H. BINGHAM

Contributed to The Flamingo

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MIGRATION OF THE BIRDS

YULA POWERS

THE BIRDS are flying north again,
Banding with black the evening sky.
Southward in autumn, northward in spring
The wild birds fly.
So many autumns, so many springs
Spent in tuning a broken lyre,
Mending with fagots a futile fire,
Hearing the beating of myriad wings,
Watching the wild birds fly.

BLUFF

WILLIAM GROPPENBACHER

BLUFF may be a thoroughly despicable and totally unmoral trait, but some bluffs are not only put up with but liked. Most really polished bluffers take it in a cheerful, incidental, and matter-of-course way. With them it isn't vicious, like dishonesty, but characteristic, like being left-handed.

Bobby Halpin wasn't that kind at all. He based his whole existence on the fact that he was a better bluff than the next man and that no one had found him out. He made it a profession rather than a hobby. Before he went to school, he bluffed his parents; in grammar school he bluffed his teachers and his classmates; in college he made the pros think he

was good. He made people think he could have played football, if only he hadn't had all the tough breaks.

By the time he was through college he had every one fooled into thinking he was really a superlatively intelligent young man. He never quite succeeded in convincing himself, although most of the time he thought so, too.

He began to sell real estate, still on bluff. His bluffs went so well that people thought it was all right, and he did fairly well at it. Luck was with him, and his Halpin Heights project went over with such a bang that he was named Boom Boom. After that he moved into a new apartment.

He came rushing in the first day, jumped into the elevator, and told the boy he was in a big hurry and to go like the devil. The boy, who was a Swede twice as big as Bobby, just grinned and took his time. Halfway up Bobby wheeled on him.

"Say, I told you I was in a hurry. You can go faster than this. Let's move!" he yelled at him.

Labj turned a mild pair of pale blue eyes on him, looked him up and down, and stopped the car. Bobby was furious.

"Imbecile! I don't want off here. I want the ninth floor!" he bellowed.

The Swede shrugged and slowly went on up.

Bobby became madder as he thought about it. He went to the superintendent and reported it. That gentleman, who was also a Swede, regarded him respectfully and assured him that Labj would be spoken to. Bobby went away swearing that he'd have that boy fired or know why. But he didn't. He could never get anything on him. And he couldn't bluff him.

He began to be a little worried about it. He made a point of bothering the man. In the morning he

would lean on the bell until the elevator came up. Then he would bluster in and start on Labj again.

"What the hell do you think this is, a street car line? I've been waiting for you for seven minutes by the watch, and I'm tired of it. I'll get your job, if I have to run this elevator myself."

Labj would maintain his bland smile and reply, "Yas, Ser. Goot mawrning, Ser." That answer was invariable. He couldn't be shaken from his completely noncommittal attitude. All the way down Bobby would berate him, and Labj was as calm as though the weather were under discussion.

The situation went from bad to worse. Bobby found himself hurrying to dress in the mornings so he could hurry out to belabor Labj a little longer. When he hadn't anything to think about, his mind wandered off to the man he couldn't bluff.

He took to moping around the office, steeling himself for another meeting. He thought up reasons for dashing home three or four times a day. He always quickened his pace as he approached the building, and by the time he was inside he would be in a terrible rush. He would fret and fume if he had to wait or if he found Labj dozing in his chair. On the way up he would spend his energy in berating Labj for his slowness. Labj would just put on a foolish grin and say, "Yas, Ser."

Up in his apartment Bobby would flop into a chair, feeling damp and limp. Then he would pace up and down, muttering to himself.

"Halpin," he would say, "you've got to snap out of it. You damn fool, you've talked your way around some of the smartest men in this country, and now you let this dumb, ignorant yokel bluff you. Just because he hasn't mind enough to register, you think

he has you bluffed. You're losing your mind, man."

Then he would stiffen up and go out and push the button. At the sight of that innocent smile and those wide blue eyes he'd almost go to pieces. He would leave the elevator, shaking like a leaf. Sometimes he'd have to walk an hour or so before he was calm enough to go back to the office.

One day he didn't go back. They found him wandering around, muttering to himself, his mind gone. The doctor pronounced it a very grave case of nervous breakdown. Bobby being fairly well off, they found the best psychiatrist they could. He began an investigation of everything he could think of. When he came to the apartment, he interviewed the superintendent, but learned nothing. Just as an afterthought on the way out he said, "How about the elevator boy? I might be able to find out something from him."

The superintendent chewed on his cigar.

"Naw," said he, "he just came over from Sweden. He don't speak English."

THE DEPARTURE

FLORENCE WALKER

AT GREAT intervals along the narrow cobblestone street, yellow lights shone from tiny windows of respectively tiny huts. They shone feebly, hardly piercing the misty grey of morning. In all there were no more than a half dozen of these lights. No other sign of life could be seen or heard. The hour was early, even for these people who seldom missed sunrise. The light of day had yet to send the ocean's mists back to her and to dispel the shadows lurking beneath each door-way and corner.

A dull whistle sounded from far down the street. Its source seemed interminably distant as it fought its muffled way through the hanging moisture. As though it was a signal, dark forms issued from the illumined homes. They lingered a brief moment in their respective doorways, heavy, dark silhouettes. Then the doors closed on them, and the doorstep shadows scampered back to their places. The silhouettes were scarcely definable now. They moved slowly down the street, heavyset shapes, ponderous yet noiseless in their tread. Each made its way toward the source of the whistle. A loose cobblestone clattered loudly as it was kicked up, and a heavy but low oath accompanied it. As one dim form met another, a subdued rumble of greeting was heard, and then the two melted as into one and went on together.

On nearing the end of the street a dull slush, slush was heard, and through the misty veil could be distinguished the grey line of division, division 'twixt land and sea. At a small wharf at the foot of the street a shadowy ghost rode at anchor. About her centered all activity. But it was a subdued activity. From the wharf to the ship's decks dimly-seen humans trudged. Some bore on their backs great burdens, which, in the indiscriminating light, made them queer, misshapen, hunched-backed creatures. Once, it is quite certain, a very small form darted up the plank and disappeared within the depths of the vessel. Finally with a muffled crash the plank was drawn. Now, as seamen were making their way heavily but purposely about deck, a smothered cry of protest sounded, and with a dull thud a form dropped from rail to wharf.

Over the ocean the mist began to lift, dimly revealing the last of "Misty Maiden," and, as the vessel

mounted to the horizon, the sun used her first gleams to bronze the waters about the sea-goer.

Alone on the dock a lad raised himself to his feet and with yearning eyes watched the departure.

Some days later a deep bell solemnly tolled its message through the gray before dawn: "She was doomed. She was doomed."

STEEL

SARAH HUEY

STEEL, steel,—a hard word,—steel—
Far too hard for what I feel
When I see dust-gold and white
Spouted against a brilliant sky.
Something around my heart gets tight—
The colors thrill me like a cry.

Smoke is too gray, with cinders in each fold,
To tell of the opaque white and gold
That waves from dark tall stalks
Like plants of a giant, great and dread,
One so huge that where he walks
The sore-bruised earth turns red.

Beneath the beauty I know well
There is a glowing, man-made hell
Where metal runs in a white-hot pool
And men walk free as only those who know
That Death is but another tool
Can ever learn to go.

CASPER'S SMALL HOUSE

PHYRNE SQUIER

CASPER had been reared in gloom. He had an old-seeming mother, one of those people who must always have been old from their cradle up, and constantly in mourning over the follies of the world. When Casper had been even a very small child, it was always with caution that he approached her upon any subject. Somehow he was afraid from the time that he could run about and put words together that he was disturbing her, for she was invariably being very busy with no time at all to stop for the briefest glance at anything rare like a bit of stone with shining flecks of mica or red crystals of garnet in it; or when they were walking hastily toward the town in quest of something for which his mother would be in a great hurry, she could never stop to run her fingers through the lavender-red top-drift of sand with which the rain had frosted the roadside after a storm. It was always such nice warm sand that Casper would feel as if he must weep not to cuddle his fingers in it for the space of a breath before he ran on. But when he did that, or when he stopped for the merest space to sail a leaf down the trickle of stream that came out of the side of the hill and followed the roadway for a while, his mother would be so far ahead that by the time he could possibly look up from his sport, he would need to run as swiftly as his fat small legs would go to overtake her. There was a small pond behind their house in which Casper would have liked to fish but he could not because of his mother's fear that he would fall in. Besides the fish were only small worthless things which they could not use if they had them, and his

mother disapproved of spending good hours to acquire worthless things.

Casper was sorry that with all the time there seemed to be, for his days seemed very long, there couldn't be a little bit of time that might be wasted and not matter. He used to ponder about this a very great deal, especially at the time of sunset after he had eaten his bowl of bread and milk and would be sitting on the west door-step waiting for his mother to finish the dishes so that he could be put away in bed for the night. Casper always went out there to wait. Sometimes he begged her to let him take his bowl of bread and milk with him so that he could listen to the frogs in the marsh, if it were spring, or to the whippoorwills if it were summer. But his mother didn't trust his small fingers with handling a bowl of milk that could so easily slip and spill over, making dark and greasy stains that she would have to scrub away. So he would sit indoors at the small table, with his big, silent father on one side of him and his mother, less silent and much smaller, on the other talking always of things that didn't interest Casper or that had no meaning whatever to his small mind. So, after he had finished he would slide down from his straight chair with the three big books which served to raise him far enough toward the table to enable him to reach his food. With the napkin still tied about his neck, he would slip out and perch like some small brownie-creature on the doorstone and watch the bats dipping and sweeping above him or the toads that came hesitantly from under the edge of the stone to squat in the self-colored soil of the path and absorb the dew through the pores of the skin. Somehow Casper understood this was their way of drinking. Casper never could decide which he liked best, the bats or

the toads. He loved them both. He knew where there was a big old ash tree, that had been growing for so many years that there was nothing left of its trunk but the shell. Each time there was a high wind his mother would say, "This gale will surely tear down the old ash tree and smash the roof of the spring house in. I do wish that your father wouldn't be so slack about things."

Inside this tree the bats stored themselves during daylight hours. They were soft-furred like the bodies of mice, with sloping, leathery wings—terribly ill-tempered, too, making small noises like a snarl if one disturbed them during their daytime rests, and biting the stick with which they were poked with teeth like the points of fine needles. But when night came, and before the light was quite gone, they would all be out, swooping and dipping above Casper's head, looking for insects for their own supper. Casper never grew tired of watching them before his mother came and carried him away to bed.

He was past the age of eating from bowls and was in no need to be propped with books at the table when he met Elspeth for the first time. He had been down to the same small stream in which he used to sail leaf boats and was bringing home two great pails of water, for he had long ago dammed it into a little reservoir. His big, silent father had gone, and his smaller and less silent mother had also gone, and Casper had no soul left to keep him company, only the queer wild things which were more friendly to him than ever before. There were bats that had even come inside the house of a summer evening, and it was not at all strange for the swallows living in the chimney to fly into the room. In fact, since the door stood always open, it was entirely a matter of choice with them whether

they went back up the chimney on their way to the outer air, or descended to the fireplace proper and left by the same door that Casper himself used. When they wished to stop for a little and rest themselves upon the back of a chair, it was agreeable to Casper that they should, and if other small creatures such as flying squirrels or chipmunks wanted to come in and be sociable, there was plenty of hospitality for them also. Casper had so few dishes that he did not need all the shelves of the cupboard to store them on, and, when a wee barn mouse felt the need of more secluded chambers than the stable furnished, there was no protest against its establishing housekeeping, or even entertaining its friends behind the door of the same cupboard. So just as in the far-back years, Casper sat upon the doorstone on summer nights as he had sat upon it in summer days, and he watched the swooping of bats above his head, and he listened to the trilling of frogs in the marsh, and just as in the early years he wondered why it could do any harm to waste a little time when there was such an infinite amount of it. There was no one to put him to bed and more nights than one he watched the big dipper lift its handle from the west and saw it lowered again to the east before he went indoors himself, and he never was lonesome because there was always something alive about him that had a voice; if it wasn't from the crickets that lived in the loose bricks of the hearth and came out to run across the floor now and again, it might be the twittering of swallows inside the chimney, or the squeaking of mice from the cupboard. And time went on, and while it took many things away, he knew that it would bring him something more, and always it did, until at last it brought him Elspeth.

Coming with his two pails of water up the hill he saw a girl with the tiniest figure he had ever seen for one who seemed to be grown up, sitting alone in the middle of a field, picking wild strawberries; for it was late June, and the grass was mingled green with red. When Casper passed by quite close to her, she spoke to him. He was a little startled, not because she had spoken but because he was wondering why, when there were so many pretty colors in the world—the girl was clad in pink—his mother had never worn them, instead of brown, gray, or black. So when she asked if the berries she was picking belonged to him, he merely said, "Yes," and walked along toward the house in a queer, dreamy manner that showed he was deep in thought. And the little girl sat there in the grass looking after him in a manner equally dreamy, but, when he had reached the house and vanished from her sight, she did a strange thing for one who was always smiling. She put her little bright head down in her arms and the rest of her body close to the earth and cried. And there she lay with the tops of the tall grasses and the white heads of daisies and foamy sprays of caraway all about and over her, though she couldn't have explained even to herself why she cried.

Presently Casper, coming back down the hill, passed quite close to her again and seeing her lying there, halted. He didn't say anything, but he sat down beside her. His movements were always so without flurry that he made no sound, so that when she had done crying and rolled over to look up through the grass tops and the daisy heads at the sky, she saw him sitting there. Though she did not cry out, she lay like a little frightened animal who knows itself discovered. It seemed to her like a very long space

of time before he looked down at her. Her eyes, so blue that they looked to Casper like the blossoms of gentians, were staring up at him, and Casper, having often held little hurt animals in his hand and pitied them, knew the same feeling for this small creature beside him.

"Are you hurt?" he asked her, and then she knew from his voice how foolish it would be ever to fear him.

"No, but I was afraid."

"I knew," said Casper, "that it was either hurt or fear that caused that sort of look, but of what were you afraid?" He drew his knees farther up toward his chin and folded his hands quite comfortably about them, waiting for her to tell him. Nor did he look at her any more but set his gaze upon the blue color of the hills lying along the sky to westward. Elspeth felt that any reason she might give would sound extremely silly to her own ears, but she knew the need for speech, so she said:

"I was afraid of you because I thought you'd not like to have me picking your strawberries, which I never should have picked had I thought they belonged to anybody." Then, because the man did not answer or show any emotion whatever, she added that from the looks of the house on the hill above, she thought no one lived there, what with no garden and no cut grass or no smoke coming from the chimney and nobody stirring about the place. And even then she could not tell whether her words pleased or displeased him, for still his expression did not change. "Were you terribly angry at me?" she insisted.

"No"; and he shook his head absent-mindedly. "Tell me, do you cry often?"

"What a strange question. It all depends——"

"On what?"

"On other people."

"What would a person have to do to make you cry?"

"They must be very unkind to me."

"And if they were never unkind?"

"Then I should never cry."

"I would be kind to you. I dislike to see people cry." And Casper smiled down at her. But, because he was always being very abrupt in expressing his thoughts and speaking with no smoothing of words, a manner that was strange to the maiden, she did not understand his meaning at once and he had to explain further. "I have," said Casper, "that small house at the top of the hill, that you can see from here. There is never in that house any but myself of humankind. I have friends which fly and perch and scamper about on small furred feet, and though they talk among themselves, there is none with whom I can hold speech, though until this hour I never realized the call for it. Now I think that if I might have a small creature about me who never cries nor scolds, it might be a pleasant thing, and above all, no one with whom I live must be chary of time. Would you like to see my small house?"

Elspeth nodded. "There is nothing in the world which I feel the same liking for as a small house," said the girl, so Casper rose and took her by the hand, and together they went up the hill.

"Oh," said Elspeth, "how perfectly wonderful your small house is." But when she reached the inside of the door, she said "Oh!" again, though in an entirely different manner than she had said the word before, for she was not used to seeing birds sitting about on the backs of chairs, or small mice peering from cup-

boards. And when the swallows in the chimney began to argue among themselves, she was wholly startled.

Casper, who was watching her, was surprised. "Don't you like my small house?" he inquired.

"Very much, if it—if it were—tidier—and with—with—less creatures about."

A queer expression came upon the face of Casper; then, "You do not like my small friends?"

"I am afraid of mice, and it is ill luck to have birds come into the house. But," she added, "if these things were removed and the place tidied, I should be satisfied here and not afraid."

"Afraid?" asked Casper. "But why should you be afraid with me here?"

"Oh," said the maiden again, and she looked up at him with her blue eyes which had become very round. "That is strange, but I had forgotten that you were to be here also. I was thinking only of the house."

Casper was no longer pleased. "With the birds gone, the mice removed, and myself away, what would you do with yourself all day alone?"

"I would clean and clean the house and I would hang white curtains at the windows and put a row of red geraniums upon the sill and make rugs for the floors which now seem very bare. Oh, there are many things to be done. I should never be lonesome, and the days are always much too short if one is busy. But," she said politely, "I should not feel right, kind as you are, to send you away even though I like your small house so much. You may stay, too, you know, if you really wish, but there must be none of these queer things left about to be always startling me with their flutterings and odd sounds."

Casper pondered for a minute before he answered

her, then drew a long, long breath and looked first at her and then at the mouse which was scampering along the top of the cupboard. Finally he spoke:

"I am sorry that you like the house and yet like nothing that is now in it. I should like well to please you—yet if I removed the animals I should have to go with them, for they have been my friends for so long, and since I would not like them to be without shelter and I have no other place provided for them, I can not take either them or myself away. It is a pity, too, for with a small maiden with eyes like gentians, who would never cry or scold, about the house I think I should be more happy even than I am now. However, as you can see——" he waved his hand and the small maiden knew that there was nothing left for her to do but go away through the door by which she had come and down the little path between the grass-tops and caraway lace. But, if she had turned to look back she would have seen Casper standing in the door looking after her, and he stood so for a long, long time.

The next day was rainy and Casper, sitting within the doorway watching the rain-silvered grass and the white-rayed blossoms of the daisies being beaten to earth, felt sorry for the little maid whom he had turned away the day before. "I wonder," he said, "if she had a place to go where it is as nice and dry as this." And later, "She did like my small house very much." And when the chipmunk, which always came in at this hour for nuts, climbed upon his knee and nosed about his hand, Casper did not notice it at all.

By the time the rain had passed and the skies were clean of clouds, Casper had decided what he must do. He no longer sat on his doorstep in the sun

but spent his hours in scrubbing until his worn floors were white and clean and his windows shone in the sunlight. The mouse family he removed to a small cage and their cupboard nest was destroyed. A wire screen covered the opening of the flue. Then, wrapping his few necessities in a small bundle and pocketing the chipmunk, he took the mouse cage in one hand and, closing the door of his small house, set forth to find the maiden with gentian blue eyes and to tell her that the house was hers to keep. Having done this, which was a surprisingly easy thing to accomplish, Casper went on through the hedgeways to the far side of the town and began his search for another dwelling wherein he could live and care for his small creatures as he had been used to doing. This was not so easy a task to do, and for three nights he stayed under the shelter of forest trees, and even the familiar snuggling of the chipmunk against his cheek and the faint mouse twitter in the cage did not ease the sense of loneliness that for the first time had come to him since he was a child.

Meanwhile Elspeth, having gone quite happily to her new possession upon the hill, had scrubbed and re-scrubbed the house from wall to wall and set bright flowering plants upon the sill above which white curtains blew, and settled down to enjoy herself, for she had never had a little home of her own before and she was like a gay child who plays at house-keeping.

It was not long, however, before she began to notice the soundlessness of the place, except at night when there were all manner of queer creaks and stirrings in the walls and floors, and she half-wished that she knew these sounds to be made by some friendly little creature with bright eyes and feet furred.

Though she removed the screen from the flue to let the birds flutter down into the room again, they were frightened at her quick ways and bright frocks and only beat wildly against the windows for escape. And, when another rain set in, she wondered, as Casper had done of her, whether the man had found shelter and whether it was right after all to take his small house from him when he had loved it so much. Too, she was beginning to find that the days were longer than she had once thought them to be, and sometimes she felt that the nights would never come, though they frightened her when they did.

At last she folded her work and put it away and watered the red geraniums upon the window sill, then went out and closed the door, hiding the key beneath the doorstep where the toad lived, and took the path down the hill to seek Casper and to say to him that she could no longer take shelter in his small house. Those along the way told her that a man of handsome face and form but with a strange lonely look upon his face and a cage of mice in his hand had passed that way. By following these clues she came at last to the other side of the town, and there beneath a great pine tree whose silken needles made shelter for him stretched full length upon the purple-brown earth lay Casper. He was asleep and she sat beside him until he awoke, and when his eyes fell upon her, he was not surprised at the sight, thinking it but the continuation of his dream. At last he spoke.

"I have come," she said, "because, though I love my small house, I can no longer bear the great quietness of it, and there came to be so much time there that I did not need. So the key is beneath the doorstep where the great toad lives, and now I must thank you and be on my way." But Casper put out his hand to stay her going and said:

"You say that you are leaving because of the great quiet, and yet that is what you seemed to wish—quiet and cleanliness. I have—until the day that I found you upon the strawberried hillside—never minded quietness because I had my friends to make company for me. After you had gone away I knew somehow that quietness was no longer good, and even these small creatures no longer serve me so, and that in itself is very strange. Stranger still is it that, having seen another of human-kind within my house, I began remembering the ways of people about the place and its cleanliness as it was when I was a child. Sitting here both in the time of night with the stars and when the sun shines, I am quite happy, but when it rained, I could not seek any other shelter for there was in all the town no small house that I could have but where I was alone, and no longer was I satisfied. Since we have come to agree upon so many things, and since you seldom cry and never scold, I think that we should go back to that small house and waste that time, of which you found so much, together."

So, taking one another's hands, they went back through the town and up the little path between the daisies and caraway blossoms and inside the little house again, and the swallows in the chimney ceased their quarrelling and became very still as if to listen to Casper's voice, which was saying:

"The door I shall leave ajar for the chipmunk to come in and out, for his home was always in the wall, but the mouse I shall put back in the stable for you are afraid of mice, and in this small house there shall never be fear allowed again. Besides it is better for each and everything to live with its own kind." And Elspeth answered:

"I should not be afraid any longer even of mice,

since you are returned, but it is true that each of its kind should be one with the other. It is the law of the lower animals and it should be the law of man. We have each been many years alone—"

And Casper interrupted: "But now we shall be many years together, for still there is much time ahead."

"Yes," said Elspeth. "So much time which we may waste with one another."

LODGE NIGHT

ROBERT E. CURRIE

ALL OVER America tonight and six nights a week the big event of the whole month in towns small and large, is taking place—lodge night. Whether it be in the Metropolitan Opera House or the Sunday School class-room, men and women are transporting themselves from desk files, laundry bills and efficiency charts to the mystic realm of the lodge.

It is a disease common to us Americans. We are the world's great joiners, but why shouldn't we be? We have such an inconceivable choice. We can belong to the Rotarians, Red Men, Sheiks of the Mosque, Moose, Bulls, Woodmen, Shriners, Hoo-Hoos, Tall Cedars, Beavers, Lions, Foresters, Benevolent Order of Monkeys, Daughters of Rebekah, Iridescent Order of Iris, Knights of the Flaming Sword, Geese, Roosters, Goats and several hundred others. No one can fail to find a suitable order, his choice only depends on whether he desires to be an animal or a bird or something more mysterious. Any who says we are not a romantic nation must consider our love of the mystical. Our meetings are held in oases, dens, hives, grottoes and forts. Of course, it is still the Sunday School class

room but no one is so crass or material as to admit it.

We have applied our everyday efficiency to all branches of this Bacchanalia. No man is a member; he is a prince or a hermit, a druid, viking, priest, ogre, monk, dervish, Pharoah, or brave. On the dais we do not have a chairman but there sits the Illustrious Potentate, Maharajah, Grand Sachem, or Supreme Monarch. The records are not held by the Secretary; no, we give them to the Thrice Illustrious Scribe and so on. Then the order must needs be labeled in keeping with this important and mysterious atmosphere. We have Exalted Orders, Mystic Orders, Imperial Orders, Ancient Orders, and in a desire for superiority there may be a combination of the finest of these labels as in the Imperial and Illustrious Order of the Mystic and Exalted Cross.

No person can remain unmoved when he possesses himself of a cutlass, a pair of purple silk bloomers, a fez, or two feet of ostrich plume on an admiral's hat. Both sexes are accused of betraying secrets, but after swearing powerful oaths the code, the ritual, and the password are safely locked in a member's bosom world without end. "If I tell," vows a Macabee, "may my left arm be severed from me above the elbow." "If I tell," swears a Shriner, "may my eyeballs be pierced to the center with a three-edged blade, my feet be flayed, and I be forced to walk the burning sands upon the sterile shores of the Red Sea until the flaming sun shall strike me with a living plague, and may Allah, the God of Arab, Moslem and Mohammedan, the God of my Fathers, support me unto the entire fulfillment of the same. Amen. Amen. Amen."

That's an oath no man dare break unless willing to bring punishment unto his children of the third and

fourth generation. Regardless of whom Allah may be, and how much he meant to one's father, it makes a powerful oath.

Consider the thrill which comes to the corpulent Red Man, who has hurried away from the supper table, when gathered at the stake, the chief, stripped to the waist, brandishes his gilded tomahawk and cries "Warriors, prepare for the execution! My braves, make ready and pile on the fagots!" Why, a man can live through a whole month of index files when he can cherish such a memory and anticipate such a delight.

And so we don our bloomers and sword and trudge through the rain and snow to that inspiring gathering where for a few hours we may forget that we are Bill Jones and become Most Worthy Scribe or Thrice Potent Master. It is the spice of our drudgery and we will continue to advance and give the countersign as long as our everyday life is so drab.

CYCLE

CAROLYN HEINE

THE YEARS have fought their battle out.
To him it seems as if from birth
He has struggled with the earth,
The lashing rain, the searing drought.
He rests the plow and looks about
At sterile fields, pock-marked by dearth,
And feels himself of no more worth,
A soul whom Life has put to rout.
Yet Spring may send her heralds when
The steel of Winter's deadly cold
Still manacles the earth. He hears
A child's prophetic voice, and then
He knows it will not end—the old
Unceasing cycle of the years.

OLD MEN IN A GARDEN

DOROTHY EMERSON

THE old men bend over the flowers,
 Prodding the moist earth gently.
 A breeze rides their backs;
 It flutters their white hair.
 The sun slides upon them;
 It brightens their white hair.

The old men bend over the flowers;
 They watch the slim stems tremble
 And petals open warmly.
 They send a shower twinkling
 To brim the hollow petals,
 To slide the straight stems
 And darken the moist earth.

The old men go out of the garden,
 Plodding the dry path slowly.
 The flowers flutter behind them . . .

SINCE A STEP UPON THE GROUND

DOROTHY EMERSON

SINCE a step upon the ground
 Wakened me to every sound,
 All the things there are to hear
 Clamour, clamour in my ear,
 Shout on shout and cry on cry.
 Do you find it strange that I
 Long ago forgot the sound
 Of the step upon the ground?

EXTRAVAGANCE

DOROTHY EMERSON

YOU ARE always thirsting for
 The wine that spills upon the floor.
 You mourn deserted food and hate
 To see a cold, half-empty plate.
 And you regret one surplus alm
 That makes two in a beggar's palm.
 You zealously desire to save
 The soul of one lost to his grave.
 This tear I weep for you shall be
 Salt wasted in a salty sea.

ANOTHER SOUL EMERGES

DOROTHY EMERSON

I HAVE thought to hide my withered flowers,
 Twisting them small for secrecy,
 Crying,

"There has been wind
 Only to ruin my flowers;
 Only my flowers
 Are ruined by the wind."

I have seen one walk, white-lipped and weeping,
 Holding dead flowers,
 Crushing strange dead flowers
 And weeping,

"There has been wind . . ."

S E L F

DOROTHY EMERSON

STRANGE they treat me so.
 They did not prod the snow
 To find a flame
 Or turn to blame
 The wind that could not be
 Solid, shifting sea.

H A R V E S T

DOROTHY EMERSON

THE WISDOM of your choice has been revealed
 With this great fruiting of your autumn field;
 Your acres have returned a bounteous yield.
 My thin earth cannot care though seasons stay,
 And suns go backward and the rains delay;
 A thousand seeds are none within my clay.
 If you had plowed my soil and planted seeds,
 There would be nothing for your winter needs
 Except a harvesting of stones, of weeds.

EDMUND'S BORNEO COMMISSION

B. F. KYNER

EDMUND lay perspiring on a cool bed of fern under a bamboo framework thatched with elephant ears. Even this comparative relief from the Borneo sun could not stir any thought of labor in Edmund's indolent mind, and he sweltered in his under-shirt and hunting boots and trousers. A sensuously beautiful native girl waved a gentle breeze over him with a frond cut from a near-by palm. Once in a while he turned and smiled at her, only to settle back into profound languor.

Edmund had been a conscientious worker, a fanatical patriot, and a former explorer of the tropics, all of which fitted him for a commission in which everyone else had failed. The British North Borneo Company had sent him in to take charge of a small settlement of natives near the Dutch border. With an almost total lack of civilization and a hostile influence from the Dutch side these natives weren't the most easily manageable British subjects to be found. In spite of the numerous agents sent to their little village the natives had succeeded in running affairs much to suit themselves and cheating the post out of all that could be carried away.

For ten weeks Edmund had struggled against the adverse situation with a deep resolve to win out at all costs. This commission could be developed into a very valuable one if the agent cared to make anything of it. He had steered straight for his goal and had won over the natives. But the tension caused by fear of an outbreak broke at the zenith of the prolonged heat, and now, the realization of his ambition already within his grasp, it was plain to see that he had gone native.

He had not yet lost absolute control of the natives, but they were fast realizing that his power was only the reflection of his first ten weeks of industry. His life was perfectly safe, however, because the natives had been under British rule long enough to know that a Britisher gone native was the best protection they could have. Therefore, they gave him little or no trouble and did all they could to keep him in his state of lassitude. The best girls of the tribe were sacrificed for him; and with native rum and plenty of good food what more could the Englishman want?

Once every two months mail was brought in to Edmund's isolated post. At first it had been his recreation, but now it was proving a bore to him. Communication with the outside world always jarred his conscience. Today there were the usual official envelopes, always to be answered in the same way; the papers; and one letter addressed in a woman's handwriting. Yes, that was the one he received from his wife every time the mail came. She hadn't liked his taking the Borneo commission, probably because she was to remain in England until he had arranged for a decent place for a woman to live, but it had meant a big chance for him if he could stick it out.

He glanced through his wife's letter, then sat up and read it carefully, looked around him, breathed heavily, and re-read it. Why did she have to come now? What if he had written he wished she could come and be with him? She didn't have to take it so seriously. He looked at the postmark on the envelope, calculated for a minute, then burst out with, "Good God, she'll be here almost any day now. She's probably already landed at Brunei."

He was confronted by a terrible dilemma. He began to think. "Hell, I'll have to straighten up. I've let

things slide too much lately. She'll want to see me the masterful ruler, and here I am lolling around with a bunch of native women. Come, Ed, snap out of it!" Like most who attempt to reform he wanted one last draught from his life of ease, so he called his favorite to him, then sent her away, and gave orders right and left.

The natives, though, could not be so easily reformed. They had a hold on Edmund they did not want to relinquish. No orders were obeyed, and men skulked behind trees. Menacing noises poured from the interiors of huts. Edmund shrieked and flew into a rage at the opposition of the natives. It took a knife quivering in the ground at his feet to bring him face to face with the fact that he was entirely at the mercy of the natives. He blanched at the thought and went back to his couch. As long as he was quiet, the natives were orderly.

He began to think, but thought only made him see his position in a more shameful light. For three days he lived in a feverish frame of mind, eating little and sleeping less. The natives were peaceful but unsettled and ready to turn at the least provocation.

On the fourth day a scout reported a party of English coming from the northwest. They thought Edmund had sent for reinforcements by some secret means, so began to organize and prepare for a fight.

Self-preservation speaks strongly at times, and Edmund was desperate. In a complete show of friendliness he called his headman. The man came cautiously. When he was close, Edmund, wild-eyed but determined, rasped, "The woman in that party is my wife. She is coming to live here with me." The headman's face softened noticeably. Edmund choked and

went on. "See that that party does not get here and that it does not return."

A MAN WITH A CIGARETTE

B. F. KYNER

HE LEANED against the the side of an old, arched doorway. He wore old sailor trousers, so large at the bottom that they covered his feet entirely, making it impossible to see whether or not he owned shoes. His blouse was so dirty its original color was undiscoverable. It was a streaked gray now and open at the neck, showing hairless skin stretched over his ribs like corrugated iron. His head was thrown slightly forward and inclined to one side. One hand was thrust under his belt, but the other hung straight down between him and the door casing. A cigarette hung from the corner of his mouth, the smoke curling up around his nose and eyes and over his forehead. His face was the yellow of half-bleached sunburn. The eyes were so sunken I could not see if they were open. His cheeks caved in so, and his nose and chin were so pinched that his face from his eyes down had the shape of an overturned airplane. His black hair hanging down over his ears gave his head the outline of a heart or an open clam-shell.

It was cold, and a quiet snow was falling, but he did not shiver. As no wind was blowing, very few flakes reached him under the doorway. He and I were the only ones on the isolated street. The cigarette burned almost to his lips though I had not seen him take even the slightest puff. He couldn't have been old; his face was smooth, that is, free from hair.

I crossed over to him, laid my hand on his shoulder, and opened my mouth to speak—. My mouth re-

mained open, but no sound came out, for he fell forward into the snow when I touched him. He must have died almost at the instant I first saw him. I was relieved—what strange thoughts our brains manufacture at times—to know that the snow would extinguish his cigarette so it would not burn his mouth.

THE SOUVENIR

ELEANOR IRMA KRAUSE

THE boudoir was filled with the blended odor of roses and lilies-of-the-valley. On the bed lay a wedding veil of delicate lace like newly fallen snow. The large windows were covered by tightly drawn curtains, and the room was illuminated only by a dim light from the shaded floor lamp.

The grandfather clock in the reception hall below chimed the eleventh hour in its easy, liquid manner. A sob came from the direction of the *chaise longue* on which Belle was lying. She had rested on her folded arms, and her slender shoulders quivered as she wept. At length, brushing her black hair from her forehead with the back of her hand, Belle sat up and glanced about the room. Her cheeks were flushed deeply, and dark pouches were beneath her eyes. The door opened, and an elderly woman entered.

"Belle, are you nearly ready?"

"Yes, Aunt Margaret. But please don't let any one come into my room, I wish to be alone," she answered, and turned from the door. Her aunt shook her head understandingly and closed the door behind her.

For a few moments Belle's eyes were closed tightly as if to shut out some disagreeable thought or picture. However hard she tried, she could not eradicate the

picture of Lenfrel Martin whom she was to marry, much against her own wishes, as the chimes would ring out the Old Year and welcome in the New Year.

Belle went to her dresser before which she paused. Then with fingers which trembled slightly, she reached for the large photograph of a young man with blond curly hair. At length she replaced it. She looked vaguely before her; her lips moved slowly:

"You said that you would return, Jerry, but you have not."

Then as if in a dream she walked to her desk, and from the bottom of one of the smaller drawers, drew out a five-year leather diary. Unlocking it, she thumb-ed the pages until she reached the entry marked:

September 12: "I thought this day would never end. It's terribly lonesome here, and it's all because Aunt Margaret's silly idea about every Lewis graduating from "dear old Bunnell University." I hate this place."

October 30: "My roommate has a crush on a certain law student who will play a violin solo at the Student's Concert in December. You would think that he was some wonderful creature because that's all I hear from morning until night."

December 15: I met the 'much-talked-of' young man this evening at the concert. His name is Gerald Lane, and he's really quite handsome. He played *The Souvenir*, my favorite piece."

Belle's eyes lighted up, and her lips smiled at the remembrance.

Belle hurried through the following entries, because they were filled with explanations of Jerry, and more Jerry.

June 1: "Love has finally come to me. I'm in love with Jerry. I never realized that I would ever fall

for any one as I have for Jerry. I believe I have loved him ever since I first saw him. I wouldn't admit it then, but now I know that I shall never be happy with any one else."

June 3: "I'm so excited and happy that I can hardly write. Jerry told me that he loves me."

The next entry was bleared, as if tears had interfered with the words.

June 4: "Aunt Margaret met Jerry. She will not consent to our engagement, because she says that he has neither wealth, power nor position."

June 5: "I told Jerry what Aunt Margaret had said, and he told me that he will return for me some day when he can present the proper credentials to her." Here the page was wrinkled where tears had dampened it.

June 6: "This was a terribly blue day. We had our graduation exercises and would have—Oh well, Aunt Margaret has ruined everything, but I suppose one can expect such things from an old maid."

From here Belle turned the pages hesitatingly.

November 16: "Jerry was killed in an automobile accident yesterday."

December 1: "Aunt Margart announced my engagement to Lenfrel Martin this afternoon at a formal tea-dance. I do not love him—how could I just because he's a wealthy clubman from Minneapolis? He likes me and will give me anything that money can buy—but I don't want that."

"It's funny how my Puritan ancestry keeps cropping out. Perhaps I had better listen to what Aunt Maragret says bcause she has brought me up as her own child. After all Jerry is gone, and I don't want to be left alone, since Aunt Margaret is getting old"

Thoughtfully Belle relocked the diary, and after placing it back in the drawer, she walked languidly to the window seat, drew aside the heavy curtains, and looked out over the vast stretches of snow, which gleamed as if covered with diamonds. She watched intently the large snowflakes as they drifted leisurely to the ground. Suddenly her body became tense; her eyes widened, and she clutched the window sill so tenaciously that her finger nails grew white under the steady pressure.

The Souvenir, she murmured as the music became clearer. She listened a moment longer.

"Yes, it's Jerry." Then glancing at her watch, and seeing that it was 11:30, she hurried out of the room.

At the head of the beautifully decorated stairway she paused, and laughed softly as she studied the improvised altar, before which she could picture the bridegroom standing. She fled down the back stairs, through the kitchen, and out through the side door.

The snow crunched beneath her feet as she stepped out of doors. The rising wind hurled and lashed the sleety flakes into her face. Belle winced from the pain it inflicted, but catching the sound of a bar of *The Souvenir*, a smile appeared on her face, and she rushed on, ploughing her way through the deepening drifts. Her stockings of sheerest chiffon were wet where the snow was packed, and her slippers no longer held their dainty shape.

On and on Belle struggled. Her bare arms were blue from the cold and her teeth chattered uncontrollably.

"Jerry, where are you," she called, and then again, "Jerry, where are you," but in answer the wind only shrieked and howled.

"Hurry, Jerry, I'm getting cold," she added as she staggered forward through the blinding snow storm, dragging one foot slowly after the other. They were frost-bitten and tired. Her body shook intensely for a moment.

"Oh, Jerry," she cried, "I can't go any farther."

Her head fell forward on her chest; her hands hung limp at her side, and with a moan she fell with her hands thrust deep in the snow. She lay very still.

As her eyelids gradually grew heavy with sleep she dug her finger nails into her numbed palms.

"I shall not go to sleep. I shall not go to sleep."

Once more her eyelids closed. This time she relaxed her taut muscles and whispered in hoarse tones:

"If I do fall asleep I know that Jerry will waken me when he has finished playing *The Souvenir*."

FORMULA

CAROLYN HEINE

EVERY time I sin a sin
I weave a song to dress it in,
It cannot be so dark a wrong
And still go clad in silver song.

GRIN AND BEAR IT

BENNETT RICHARDS

THE LIFE of a cub reporter is no Sunday-school picnic, and that of Richard Brown, generally known as "Red," due to his strawberry-colored hair, was not made more easy by the fact that he lacked a sense of humor. To him a practical joke was as entertaining as a crimson flag to a bull, and it was for that reason that the office force took such pleasure in "baiting" him. They could get a "rise" out of Red if they called him "Reddy," or if someone mussed up his hair in passing his desk, or teased him about the stenographer in the law-office across the street. He failed to realize that had he taken the badgering good-naturedly or retaliated in kind, they would have accepted him as a matter of course and forgotten that he was a cub. In fact, he was, in every other respect, the equal of the best reporter on the staff, or he would have long since been out of the office. Not that the force resented having him to tease; the boss realized that his attitude was having its effect on the morale of the others, and watched eagerly for signs of sensible retaliation.

One morning the police-reporter had been amusing himself by teasing Red about his girl friend, when the society editor entered. Had she realized the state of mind in which she found him, it is probable that she would have been more diplomatic.

"Oh, Reddy," she hailed him, in a mock-serious, honey-sweet voice, "I want to use your typewriter this morning. Mine is being fixed."

As a rule there was an attitude of friendship between the two, but this, on top of the sly references to his love-affair, was too much.

"You can just leave it alone," he almost shouted,

"and that applies to the rest of you, too." In a temper he left the office.

The next morning Curly, the advertising manager, took time to upset Red's desk thoroughly. It was almost an obsession with the lad that his desk should be orderly, and this was not the first time someone had seen fit to indulge in an orgy of this kind. But Curly was fiendishly methodical. He removed the drawers, one by one, and piled their contents high on the writing surface, leaving the empty trays in a carelessly studied heap beside the desk. Like all other desks in the room, this was a roll-top, with its tiers of pigeon-holes crammed full of odds and ends—clippings and letters, bills and blotters. Curly added these to the disorderly mess of typewriter paper, envelopes, manuscripts, ink stands and what-not, then upturned the waste basket on the whole affair. Shavings from a pencil sharpener added the last touch of utter dissoluteness to the scene, and Curly withdrew to await results.

When Red entered, a half hour or so later, he stopped, open mouthed, at the spectacle.

"Who did that?" he demanded of the room at large.

"Silence is golden," remarked Curly, "but for three cents, I'll tell."

The proper thing to have done was to have grinned. Instead, Red scowled menacingly. "You did it," he accused.

"I cannot tell a lie," grinned Curly, "I chopped the cherry tree."

There was an expectant hush, broken only by a titter from Miss Helms. Red was livid as he turned to clearing up the melange.

No one had ever thought of locking his desk, but as a result of this episode, Red was careful to fasten his thereafter before leaving the office.

Three days later—Saturday, to be exact—he was in an unusual hurry to get his work done, as his girl, May Valentine, had the day off, and he planned to spend the afternoon with her. There was enough typing to keep him until noon, even if he hurried. He unlocked his desk top and attempted to pull it open. It refused to budge, and he saw that it was nailed shut.

It occurred to him that he might borrow a machine and finish in time to keep his date, but he knew that he would be forced to tell the reason for his haste, and somehow it seemed an insult to May to have anyone tease him about her. He glared angrily at the amused faces of his tormentors, and inwardly fuming, went in search of a hammer. It took a long time to find one—the jokers had seen to that—so it was noon when he returned to the office, and the others were gone.

He would have to postpone the date with May; at least he could take her to lunch, if she had not already gone. He phoned, asking her to wait. Then he pulled the nails that held his desk shut. They had been driven deep, and as he worked, the thought of retaliation was born.

Under the safe was a sack of nails—long ones, with small heads—finishing nails. Taking a handful, he secured the tops to all the other desks in the room, pounding the nails home. Then he left the hammer on top of the editor's desk, and left, a smile of genuine satisfaction on his face.

May was sorry that he had to work; but, of course, she assured him, there were other days. She was tired anyway, and would appreciate the afternoon's rest at home. Red did not tell her what had happened at the office. He was in a cheerful mood—unusually so, though he sincerely expected to lose his

job for his trick. Perhaps it was the prospect of returning home that brightened his conversation. Certainly he hinted at seeing his folks soon, and talked of how beautiful the meadows must be, with the bluebells and lark-spur in bloom. May was on the point of asking him when his vacation started, when he forestalled her by deciding that he must hurry back to work. The activity that greeted him upon re-entering the office would indeed have been puzzling to one accustomed to the routine of everyday work. Red grinned, a gleam of good-natured raillery in his eye, as he watched Curly attempting to remove the nails that held Miss Helms' desk shut. The scarred edges of the editor's desk showed with what finessence it had been opened. The office boy came hurrying from the press-room with a pinch-bar and began feverishly trying to open Curly's desk. It did not escape Red that the glances coming his way, though pre-occupied, were not unfriendly. He lighted a cigarette, and proceeded leisurely to his desk to begin typing his morning's work.

Presently he became aware that the editor, Mr. Cantor, was looking at him fixedly, and with a sinking heart he met his gaze. The expression in his boss' eyes was unfathomable, and though Red had anticipated being discharged, he shrank from it inwardly. He felt the corners of his mouth quiver with suppressed emotion. Why didn't Mr. Cantor say something?

Suddenly the boss grinned, and there was an unmistakable glint of approval in his gray eyes as he said, "That's the right spirit, young fellow. Keep it up."

"Thanks, I shall," answered Red, his smile turning to a grin that exposed a row of gleaming teeth as he returned to his work.

THE FLAMINGO

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DOROTHY EMERSON

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EDITORIAL NOTES

At the recent award of prizes by the Allied Arts Society of which Irving Bacheller is President, and the Poetry Society of Florida of which Jessie B. Ritten- is President, the following Rollins students received honors:

The Ponce de Leon prize of one hundred dollars offered annually by the Poetry Society of Florida was won by Phyrne Squier, one of the editors of THE FLAMINGO. Her prize-winning poem appeared as a frontispiece in the last issue of the FLAMINGO.

In the Quill Drivers Contest for the best short story the second prize of fifteen dollars was awarded to Mary Lee Korn, a sophomore at Rollins.

Several of the prizes in color painting, black and white, sculpture, music composition and batik were also won by Rollins students.

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