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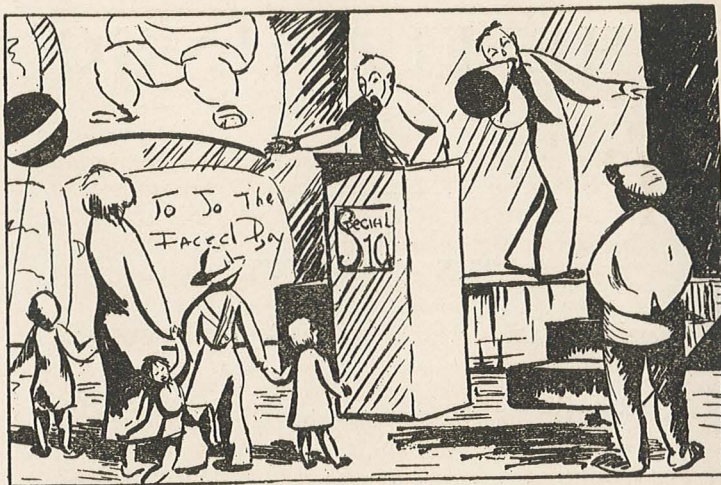
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THE FLAMINGO

Vol. VIII, No. 5 March 15, 1934 Price 25 cents

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ORLANDO FAIR

Blanche Fishback

THE FLAMINGO

MAN OF HEART

BONAR COLLINSON

THE BATHROOM reverberated to the stentorian bellowing of "Shadow Waltz". The gurgle of water in the drain mingled with the stamping of bare feet on the shower tub.

A particularly violent burst of song crashed down from upstairs. "Jimmy must be in love again," thought Mrs. Walters, and resignedly went on reading "The Quiet Soul."

Jimmy *was* in love again. In his broad adolescent chest was swelling such a feeling of tickling and energy that he must, like the robin, give vent to it in song and motion.

He was sure it was love. Every time in the past, such an amorous venture was preluded by the same feeling. After several such attacks, he could recognize the symptoms.

The sting of the needle spray gave him a sense of power. Vigorously he twisted the tap and yanked aside the curtain. It ripped loose from its metal moorings with a loud jangle. Below, Mrs. Walters offered up a silent prayer.

With a glance of disdain at his feeble opponent, Jimmy gathered the folds of his towel about him like a toga and stalked from the room.

Once in the hall, his muscles demanded greater action than a dignified walk. He crouched and sprang ahead with an imaginary pigskin under his arm. Down the hall he thundered, reversing and dodging heroically.

He brought up against the door of his own room with a crash that shook the house.

Entering, he swung playfully at the light shade, sending it bobbing and swaying through the air.

"Gracious! Is he trying to break his neck? Don't let him kill himself or the rest of us," his mother thought.

Suddenly Jimmy stopped and his mood changed. Carefully he began to plan his campaign. What should he say, and how should he act?

He must be suave and polished. Women always fell for sophisticated men of the world.

His eyes came to rest upon his image in the full length mirror, and he bowed languidly and gracefully over an imaginary hand. She would go for that in a big way. He repeated. His hair fell down in his eyes.

How much he resembled Tarzan like that! He straightened and beat upon his chest till he began to cough.

With an exaggerated whoop and a dervish whirl he flopped on the bed and began to put on his socks.

The socks were silk and the feet were wet. No socks were built to stand such strain. Jimmy contemplated the large hole with pained surprise. To think that a sock of his couldn't take it. He flung it from him in disgust.

Without further mishap other than a bruised shin from falling against the bed while putting on a shoe with only one foot on the floor to uphold him, he stood arrayed in shorts and shoes and socks.

Back to the bath to brush his teeth. He must have pearly teeth for his new love. At thought of her, his heart turned a flip, and he began to croon to the bathroom mirror in a voice dripping with emotion and toothpaste.

The froth at his lips captured his attention. The light of the artist came into his eyes. For the next three minutes he went into Hyde-like convulsions interspersed with Frankensteinian gloatings that scared even himself.

Abruptly he ceased and began to rinse his mouth, at the same time resuming his crooning.

Eight o'clock struck somewhere below. He must hurry. He would have to step on the gas to make it. He must be on time so he could sit and talk to her father about the market. All afternoon he had studied the market sheets and memorized quotations so that he might impress father as a young man of the business world. He still couldn't remember whether the market was bull or bear just now, or even just what those terms meant, but perhaps he could keep the conversation away from such dangerous fields.

He began to gargle in imitation of the car motor. First a low deep rumble in first gear; then the shriller sound of the second and finally he launched himself triumphantly into high.

The gurgle rose in a crescendo of sound till it filled the upper hall and overflowed to the rooms below. Gradually new variations crept in. The tempo grew more abandoned.

Mrs. Walters frowned and tried vainly to concentrate. The sound rose and fell with increasing volume. Suddenly, as it was approaching a high whine there was a violent break; a gasp, followed by a sound like a man in the last stages of drowning.

Mrs. Walters was terrified. She always expected something terrible to befall Jimmy. Quickly, she hastened upstairs and rushed to the bathroom. At the sight before her she moaned, but not from fright. It was the sound of an outraged housewife who sees her spotless white tile violated. She groaned again with rising wrath.

Jimmy, standing in the midst of the havoc, could not miss this new note, and all thoughts of love and speeding cars fled from his mind. Through sheer instinct he began to plan an alibi.

His roving eye passed from the frowning face of his irate parent to the toothpaste and water stains all over the mirror and wall, and finally came to rest upon the toothbrush clenched in his hand.

Light! He launched himself into his alibi with all the vigor of a high pressure salesman.

"You see," he began, brandishing the toothbrush, "I was brushing my teeth."

Mrs. Walters looked unconvinced, and began to tap her foot. "Go on."

Jimmy moistened his lips and regarded the tapping foot. He smiled feebly.

"I was brushing my teeth," he reiterated, "and you know how you have to brush way back to get them clean?"

"Well!"

The pause was tense with emotion. Jimmy gathered himself for the crowning attack. "Well—the brush must have slipped. It went down my throat and made me cough." He ended with a long, racking, consumptive cough, intended to bring tears of pity to the eyes of his mother. Hopefully he gazed into her face.

The silence became uncomfortable. Jimmy shifted to the other foot. A hundred and fifteen seconds later he shifted back again. No response—just that stern unchanging look. He essayed another half-hearted cough, but it died in his throat like a death rattle.

"James, you have exactly ten minutes to finish dressing. Go to your room, and no more of this fooling."

Jimmy wiggled and opened his mouth to speak. He closed it again with a snap that made his mother start.

She turned and moved through the door with dignity.

Jimmy gathered his shattered spirits about him and stalked to his room.

The physical exercise of putting on his button-up-the-back dress shirt quickly revived him.

Then came the collar. This was a touchy business with Jimmy. It was a delicate operation requiring all his concentration. Everything must be done by a certain ritual.

First the back collar button must be fastened. He breathed a sigh of relief when this was completed. There was one button that wouldn't be lost. He paused a moment, slightly red in the face, to rest up for the remaining battle.

The collar ends flapped gaily as he turned his head.

Now for it! Seizing the front of his shirt in one hand and a collar in the other, he struck a wrestling pose and went to work.

After three minutes he began to puff audibly. At the end of two more he was nearly purple and rasping horribly deep in his throat. He stopped to collect his scattered forces.

The collar ends still waved gaily in the breeze, albeit somewhat crumpled. Now, however, they seemed to have taken on an air of defiance.

Gritting his teeth, Jimmy reached blindly for a collar in order to begin anew. Ye gods! The collar button at his throat was gone. Feverishly he felt around his throat. He groaned. No doubt about it, the thing was gone. What would he do now? No time to waste. He must find that button at once. Down on his knees he went and began a frantic search for the missing article. Over the entire floor and even under the bed, he crawled. Minutes passed and still no trace of the button. Jimmy began to lose his temper. After all there was a limit to which a man could be driven. Under the bed again.

On the way out he cracked his head smartly. This was the last straw. "Damn" said Jimmy. He crawled to the middle of the room and sat there nursing the bump on his head. One end of the offending collar

waved tauntingly before him. Savagely he bit at it and uttered a howl of pain and rage.

Instead of the semi-soft collar, his teeth encountered a piece of hard metal that nearly broke them off. There fixed firmly in the collar was the much sought after button.

Jimmy growled and leaped to his feet. He just had to get dressed, his rage could wait. He prepared himself for another struggle with the button.

As if tired of the sport, the collar slipped into place with deceptive ease, and Jimmy stood triumphantly before the glass. He was panting, his face was a ruddy red from exertion, and he was generally dishevelled, but he was at last ready to go on with his dressing.

The rest was comparatively simple. Within ten minutes Jimmy was racing down stairs, his hat over one ear, his coat under one arm, while he tried to button his vest with one hand and find the car keys with the other.

Mrs. Walters was awaiting him at the door. She didn't dare let Jimmy go without a final inspection. No telling what he might forget in his present state.

He tried to get by her in a hurry. "Jimmy, where is your tie?"

He felt for it. Back upstairs again and down with the tie. While his mother tied it Jimmy danced from one foot to the other in a frenzy to be off.

At last it was done to suit her, and he was off like a shot, only to be stopped half way to the car.

"Jimmy, have you got a handkerchief?"

Of course he *would* have to forget a handkerchief! Back upstairs for a second time. This time he made the trip down in three steps. On the way down he heard the 'phone ring. Perhaps it would be someone to talk to Mother and keep her from calling him back again. He took the door with scarcely a pause in his stride.

He could just make it if he hurried. Never do to be late. He wanted to make this evening as long as possible.

He was almost to the car now. Darn, there was Mother again. What did she want this time? Someone on the phone. Perhaps the clock was wrong and he was late. She was calling to see where he was. His hand shook as he took up the receiver. "Oh! Hollo Jane, (it was she, good Lord!) you have a sick headache. You won't be able to go with me. Why, of course I understand. No, it doesn't put me out at all to call up this late. Goodby!"

The world was tottering. Automatically, Jimmy reached up to straighten his tie. She couldn't go. He kept repeating it as if the sound of the words gave him pleasure. He remembered without trying how the stricken lover in the movies behaved, and began to act the role. First it was only the pained look in his eyes, but as he warmed up to the part he began to supplement the expressions with appropriate actions. He moaned. It was a lovely moan, full of pathos, with a tremulo at the end to give the heartbroken effect.

In the living room Mrs. Walters idly wondered if there was a calf in the neighborhood, and if so, why didn't they keep it quiet.

Jimmy staggered with unseeing eyes toward a hall chair. With a hand over his furrowed brow he sat down—with a crash. By a fraction of an inch the unfeeling chair had missed being under the descending Jimmy. This ignoble climax to his act was too much. He fled from the house and leaped into the car. He must get away. Be alone. After a time he would go to the dance alone, nursing his grief. Everyone would pity him. Already he began to construct his evening around the new circumstances. He would literally stop the show. Down the street he drove, completely immersed in the new developments.

PEDDLERS

DOROTHY PARMLEY

LITTLE boy,
Crying your timid, pink sweet peas
Through the jostling, hurrying crowds—
They have passed all day
And never saw
Nor heard,
But I—
Seeing your cramped short fingers
Curled tightly,
And the trouser legs,
One pulled up,
The other flapping dismally—
Bought all your bunches,
Seeking the innocent wisdom
Of your eyes
Over the blossoms.
But you,
Instantly free,
Went running off
To play a game of marbles,
While I
Go sighing through the streets
Peddling my loneliness
In an armful of pink sweet peas.

THE BOUNTIFUL AID

AGATHA TOWNSEND

TWO MEN were standing in a very small room in a house surrounded by a garden. In the garden, which had once been a convent yard, was a beautiful statue whose colors had faded. It was a statue of Our Lady. The garden was in France, but the two men in the room were Americans. One American was very rich. He had a heavy gold chain across his chest. But he was not like most men who wore heavy gold chains. He had a sensitive face. But the other man was not rich. That was hard for the people who lived around the garden to understand. They preferred the rich Americans. This man also had a sensitive face. And he had beautiful eyes. But he had no heavy gold chain, it had long ago gone to help pay for the good piano which stood in the room. This man crossed to the door in two long steps and called into the garden.

"Esperance, come here quickly. Come at once."
This he said in French.

"Yes, yes. I am here." A girl with shining hair came in out of the garden. "Yes, Leo, what is it?"

"You must play these things for Mr. Ewing, at once."

Mr. Ewing looked at the slender girl and saw that she had grey eyes which were afraid.

"It will be very nice of you to play them," he said, because he did not like to frighten people, although he was very rich.

"Here," said Leo, who no longer looked at her eyes often. "Play this, and this. Only these two."

She sat down at the good piano and played. The first was a dance. It began as if it were silver and frosty, with small runs and light chords. Then it

changed, like two moods together, like love and hate. Then it was altogether black, and ended sharply, as though a woman had been stabbed by her lover.

"You did not play it well," said the man who had written it, angrily.

"I have never played it before, Leo, please. I will do better with this."

The second was quite different. It might have been a dirge, with black-hung carriages, or sometimes it seemed to Esperance like a march of triumph. But at the end it was nothing, yet all things. It existed because it was almost perfect, like the soul of music.

When it was finished, Mr. Ewing said nothing, but looked at her again. Her head was bent a little forward, and her hands had fallen in her lap.

"Well, sir?" said Leo, a little more quietly.

"I knew I was right to come to you," said Mr. Ewing. "This last is much better than anything which has ever been known of yours. I think your music has changed since you left America."

Esperance, who remembered that he had written these when he first knew her, blushed.

"But the question is, will you undertake to do this for me?"

Esperance looked from the rich American to Leo, and Mr. Ewing explained.

"My wife, who came from your country, died. I am an old man, but I have not had any peace in my old age. So I came back to her home. One day I saw a beautiful statue in an old church which was to be torn down. It was a statue of Our Lady of Bountiful Aid. I am going to put it in a chapel to the memory of my wife. She loved beautiful statues, and also beautiful music, so I want your husband to write a hymn for this Virgin, to be only for her." He said this slowly, in very simple French, and Esperance saw that he had understanding eyes. They all fell silent.

"Well, I said I'd try," said Leo, curtly.

Then Mr. Ewing was gone, and Esperance looked for a moment at Leo, and in an instant was out of the door. She went to the gate, and through it, after the other man.

"Sir," she cried. And then because she could not remember his name, she called, "Monsieur l'Americain."

He turned, and she caught up to him, panting.

"Sir, he will do it. He is very tired. He is ill, even. But since he has this to do I hope he will be better, and I know it will be beautiful, for Our Lady of Bountiful Aid."

Mr. Ewing did not look too long into her grey eyes. He said he understood, and that she must take good care of Leo. Then he went on. She turned to the gate, then went slowly in, back to Leo.

"You didn't play well, you played terribly," he said.

"I'm sorry," she said. Then, facing him, she asked, "Why didn't you play for him yourself?"

"You know I can't play my own things any more," he shouted. "Or anything else, either, unless I'm drunk. I haven't been able to play for weeks. I've tried, heaven knows, but I can't even touch the piano."

She thought of the times when he had fingered music, touched the piano gingerly, then sat with tears in his eyes because he could not bear to play. She nodded.

"I don't know what's the matter with me. I think I must be going mad," he continued. "I used to play. At first I played better than I ever had before."

He played because he loved her then, she thought.

"Now there is nothing to make me play," he said, as if answering her thoughts. "Nothing touches me. I'm not getting anywhere, we don't have enough to eat. God! Why do I go on living?"

She touched his arm. "Leo, Leo," she said helplessly. But she didn't dare comfort him, any more.

He turned around sharply. "Get me something to drink," he said. "Thank God I can still play then."

"There is nothing."

"Get something, then. Can't you see I must play?"

"There is no money."

"So it has come to that," he said. He did not say it angrily, but in a dulled, queer voice. "Everything I touch crumbles into pieces. I can no longer play, I can no longer write. And now I can no longer give you anything to eat." He wheeled away and walked as if to go into the garden. Then he turned at the door and came back to where she stood in the center of the room.

He stood before her and she looked up at him. He put his hands on her elbows and drew her toward him just a little, so she placed her hands upon his arms.

"Listen," he said, still in that voice. It seemed that a shudder rather than a word had come from his lips. "Listen", he repeated. "It is not that I want you to pity me, but I want you to understand something which I think you have never understood." He looked down at her, and then over her head, speaking, perhaps, to someone behind her. He spoke like an honorable and a proud man pleading a case before a judge.

"You know that I have lived for the most part almost without friends. But this in itself is not important, because a man may have only a few who hold everything which has meaning for him. But what I have is utter loneliness. It is not a new thing for most people, to stand in a crowd and feel alone. The harder part is to be with a friend, to be with someone you love dearly, yet to remain quite alone." He was silent, then he spoke directly to her, silencing the words on her lips.

"There are now two things in my life. There is yourself, and there is my music. For a long time I lived for many more things than these, but they have all gone. First I could not believe that I was alone,

and I sought people. I tried to tell myself that I was like any of the men who surrounded me. But this I saw was not true, and could never be. I still had refuge in music. There I could say what I felt, and there the music spoke my own words back to me, so that even though I was talking to my own shadow, I was not alone."

He looked down at her, not quite reproachfully, "Then I found you, and with your symbolic name, I thought I had found Hope again. You were kind to me in your body, and I thought your soul, too, was kind. But even if I did not quite believe this, I thought that your beauty was enough. I thought that if I could live for nothing else, that beauty I could still live for."

"But this is not the worst. I had dreaded the time when music or you might fail me, but I had not realized that I could ever fail you. Perhaps my shell has grown too thick. Heaven knows I wanted a shell, because even though I am not a part of the world, it could then touch me. But now nothing seems to come through it. I cannot burst out of it. Where pain cannot come through, beauty cannot either. So I am shut up inside myself and left without anything. I am alone, without purpose, without care, almost without feeling." Again his eyes left her face and looked beyond her.

She looked up at him, feeling almost that if he would only look at her, he could see what she wanted to say. But there were no words to tell him. She did not want to give him pity. What she had for him was something more than understanding. It was like two people standing together, or one man with his soul. It may be called identity.

If he could have looked at her, he might have seen this, for perfect beauty is not to exist without soul.

He said nothing more. He sat down and put his hands over his eyes. She knew he was not thinking. He had passed beyond thought.

"I am going into the garden", she said, and walked slowly past him to the door.

She walked across the garden, and then back again to the old statue. She looked up at it.

"Mother!" she cried. Then in one motion she was kneeling at the feet of the Virgin.

For a long time she did not pray at all, but knelt with her head bent and her breast tight against her arms. Fragments of her life with Leo came rushing through her head. She remembered how he had begun to know her, and had said once, looking gravely down at her, "Now Hope has entered my life." Then she remembered how it felt to have him kiss her, how he teased her. Memories of his music came to her, and how he had said, "Yes, of course my music has changed. You have come into it. Indeed, I could scarcely keep you out of it."

Then her mind returned to what he had just said. She threw back her head to look up at the statue.

"Notre Dame," she said. Then, "Our Lady of Bountiful Aid."

She had to pray about the things which were in her heart. But did one pray for such things? She looked up at the calm face, and went on.

"Mother, has he stopped loving me? I can't tell, though I was sure I would know. Or, has he finished with love, just as he finished with other things, and left them? Mother, tell me." She was silent for a moment, and then burst out, "But I cannot live without him."

Somehow she was sorry that she had said this, it came to her that this was not the important thing.

"I want to show him that I do understand. He thinks he is alone, but I want him to see that I am alone, too. I don't know how to tell him that really he isn't alone, because I am with him. I feel it all, I feel

everything he can. But I can't tell him so, and he no longer sees it."

"Mother, it isn't as simple as I used to think it was. But isn't life still the same? Isn't it love that means everything?"

These same things she said over and over again. And more and more there were only the two things in her heart, love and pain.

Suddenly the sun shone through the trees, flooding her neck and hair. Her hair was neither gold, nor grey, nor brown, but all of these.

"Esperance!" Leo stood in the garden. "Esperance, how beautiful you are!"

He stood quite still, with a light in his eyes.

"My dear!" he cried. "I hear the music of it. Listen, listen."

She was at his side as he said it, looking into his eyes. Then they laughed and ran to the house like children.

"Listen!" he repeated, and she sat at his feet as he started to play. "It is the bountiful aid of love and pain to life."

He played, and as she listened, things seemed to become simple again. There was no difference between confusing things any more. In the music there seemed to be a miracle. In the hymn it was God and in her heart it was love. Then sorrow and pain came again, and they seemed like joy, and the soul of exaltation.

Then, she forgot all this.

ART 137W

MARION TEMPLETON

MELISSA AGNES stared at her toes reflectively. Italian primitives—what did she know about those old stogies—or care? She wanted to study about art and learn to draw pretty pictures—not to remember dry facts about dusty ‘primitives’.

The art instructor with the handsome profile repeated the question: “Melissa, name some of the Italian primitives.”

Tears filled Melissa’s eyes when the instructor was so insistent. “I don’t know any,” she whispered, “I only started studying Italian art last year.”

The instructor brushed his hand heavily over his jaw—a nice jaw with a dimple in the middle of it. “Well, name some Italians then. Any Italians! Only name something!” He spoke as if straining his words through a fine sieve.

“Oh, you mean Italian painters! That’s different, Mr. James. I know something about Michelangelo,” she said, with just the faintest suggestion of baby-talk.

“What do you know about Michelangelo?” continued Mr. James, quite oblivious of Melissa Agnes’ blue eyes and Betty-Boop lips.

“Well, he painted in Italy a long time ago—pictures of angels and saints and little boy angels with fingers stuck in their mouths.”

“Do you happen to know anything about his technique?”

“His what?” drawled Melissa Agnes.

“His technique—the way he painted, the methods he employed.” As if in despair he added: “Tell me anything else you know about that great master.”

Melissa Agnes hung her head and said in a weak voice: “I don’t know anything more about him.” After

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MARIAN TEMPLETON

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a moment’s silence she gasped out: “I know something about Leonardo da—da—,” she faltered.

Mr. James fulfilled his duty as prompter and said: “Da Vinci. Leonardo da Vinci.” A faint gleam of hope and faith in the intelligence of his pupil glimmered for a moment in his eyes but died suddenly when Melissa Agnes continued bubbling:

“He was in love with Mona Lisa, and her husband didn’t like it a bit!”

“I suppose it is that fact—his loving Mona Lisa—that made the picture famous,” he offered.

“Of course,” churged Melissa Agnes. “Poppa told me it isn’t the thing that counts—it’s the story behind it that packs a wallop.”

Mr. James was quite stunned. “I see,” he said slowly. “What business is your father active in?”

“He’s a newspaper reporter.” Melissa Agnes fairly shown with pride. “He writes the gossip column for a movie magazine column too.”

“That explains everything,” mumbled Instructor James under his breath.

Just then the young English teacher came into the studio. She was modeling for the school class in ‘Portrait Painting, 137w’. The fact that she had majored in English and minored in the history of art gave her a distinct preference to friendship with Mr. James over the other female members of the college faculty. She thought it disgusting the way some of them pursued him: for instance, there was Miss Brown—her only asset was a full set of teeth and newly hennaed hair; there was Miss Folsom—bleary-eyed from years of peering through a telescope to earn a Ph.D. in astronomy (her personality was as vapid as the atmosphere she gazed into); she hoped that by the time she reached that age (but not that condition) her name would not be Susan Matthews, A.B., Blutgers College,

Instructor in English, but Mrs. Frederick James, 'vivacious wife of versatile artist'.

Mr. James got up with a jump and bowed like a snapped garter as Susan Matthews walked up to him. "We shan't need you to pose today, Miss Matthews," he said hurriedly. "I've decided to give Melissa Agnes an oral examination instead, to find out just what she has learned in almost two year's study of painting."

"I don't like Italians," pouted Melissa Agnes. "I like the French things that Botticelli does best of all!"

Mr. James appeared on the verge of an apopleptic stroke. Susan giggled: "Melissa! How could you say Botticelli was a French man when you know perfectly well he was a Dutchman!"

"Oh, I'd forgotten," answered Melissa Agnes. "Mr. James makes me remember so many horrid names, and all I wanted to do was to make pretty pictures with the nice set of oil paints Poppa gave me for Christmas."

Susan Matthews turned her charming smile towards Mr. James. "Let's you and I talk to Melissa Agnes about the modern American painters. I'm sure her father would rather she knew about them than about a Dutch Botticelli. After all, Melissa Agnes is a junior in college, and has managed to pass all the courses in literature and languages—so she ought to be able to recognize the names of living American painters." Susan Matthews added a slow wink to her charming smile. Mr. James never was quite sure whether she was serious or not. But if she could make an examination with Melissa Agnes diverting and even entertaining, he was willing to endure it until the close of the second period. Then he could call his dog and retire to his hermit quarters by the lake to study and paint during the long, sunny afternoon. And if those confounded school teachers didn't come traipsing down to drag

him out to tea, he might finish his preliminary sketch of the first trustees of the college, now lying peacefully under a scrolled marble slab.

"Now remember, Melissa," continued Miss Matthews, "I want you to name some living American painters. Mr. James and I will help you in case you're in doubt. What great man do you know best?"

"I have a painting of the Blue Boy in my room at home. That's by Gainsborough. It's a pretty picture of a boy with a blue satin coat on like they wore in Colonial days." Melissa liked this sort of an examination much better. She really ought to insist on studying American painters if she was going to be one of them.

"But—Gainsborough's dead, and besides he isn't—" spluttered Mr. James, only to be silenced by another slow wink from Susan Matthews.

"Oh, I didn't know that," said Melissa slowly. "Well, there's Rockwell Kent. Poppa has a lithograph of his above his desk in the library. It's a gorgeous figure of a man floating naked through the air—sort of symbolic of modern man, I guess."

Mr. James could have cheered at the suddenness of this correct knowledge. He decided to test his pupil further. "Has your father anything by Washington Irving? He's quite prominent, you know."

Melissa Agnes wasn't quite sure. Poppa had all the latest things, of course, but she wondered if that very modern, blocky picture of someone descending a staircase was by Mr. Irving.

"Of course not, Melissa!" interrupted Miss Matthews. "Mr. Irving only draws pictures of dogs. But then you've heard of Maurice Sterne?"

"Oh, yes," prompted Melissa, "Doesn't he paint stiff pictures of girls holding apples?"

"We aren't interested in painters of still life," added

Mr. James. "I think you should know about the great portrait painters who paint pictures of famous men like the President?"

"President? You mean the president of this college?" asked Melissa.

"No, the president of the United States," corrected her instructor. "Can't you name one great living American portrait painter?"

Melissa rubbed her head slowly from one side to the other. "How stupid of me. Gilbert Stuart, of course! He painted the picture of George Washington that hangs in my history class room."

"How about Upton Sinclair??" suggested the English teacher.

"Now you've made a mistake, Miss Matthews," interrupted Mr. James. "Upton Sinclair is best known for his wood-cuts, not portrait painting." Much to his amazement he returned a wink to the model for Portrait Painting class 137w. This was rather amusing—taking a junior art major for a ride.

"I know one!" rejoiced Melissa Agnes. Mr. Whistler painted a picture of his mother and I saw it at the World Fair. He must be quite old because the picture of his mother shows her as a really ancient woman. He's living up in Maine somewhere now, isn't he?"

A whispered "Yes" fell from the art instructor's lips.

Melissa wanted to air all her ideas on Whistler so she continued: "Pictures of mothers are frightfully old-fashioned nowadays, so I suppose he's not very well known any more. Anyway, old ladies don't wear the kind of dresses his mother had on—My grandmother wears clothes almost like mother's and mine."

"Your grandmother would!" thought Mr. James. "Melissa," he added, "you copy down the names Miss Matthews and I have been mentioning and spend the

rest of the period in the art library looking them up. I have a headache and think I'll go home now."

Melissa was very concerned. "Oh, I'm so sorry. Can I do anything for you?"

"Just do me the favor of studying in the library, that's all." Melissa picked up her notebook and sauntered off for the library, Mr. James sank his discouraged head between his paint-smeared fingers. "And this is what I find after two years of teaching history of painting! What is there left in life that's worth working for?"

Susan Matthews, A.B., Blutgers College, knelt beside him and smiled a most charming smile. Then she winked slowly enough so Mr. Frederick James might comprehend and return the wink.

SWAMP

MARLEN ELDRIDGE

DAMP muck oozes
 Around the cypress roots
 Where dark water
 Flows silently;
 As quiet as this river
 Is my heart,
 But far more deep:
 Grief sucks the roots
 Of my heart, evilly;
 And there is not one cypress,
 Staunch with hope,
 To raise me from despair.

RIVER COURTSHIP

JOHN BILLS

JAKE FENNO drove back from the cemetery with three children astride his dented fenders. Four more were crowded into the narrow rear seat. They all seemed small, undernourished. Even the oldest girl, who was holding the baby and who must have been past sixteen, was a "sickly mite of a thing". There was a certain likeness in their drawn faces, in the stoop of their shoulders and while Fenno was a short, leathery man, the resemblance was not to him.

"Mought have knowed she couldn't tol'rate th' river livin'", he grumbled to the big blond girl who occupied the front seat with him. "Oughter left her when me an' yore pap built th' camps on th' river ten year ago. Hit want right by me neither, these ten year o' her whimperin'".

"She shore were a complainin' critter", the big blond comforted. "Allus havin' kids, too".

The older girl in the rear seat listened, pale and dry eyed. A half hour before they had chugged from the little cemetery back of the church. The old sexton was shoveling sand in an open grave. At three o'clock that morning her mother had turned a death-marked face to her and whispered, "I am leaving the children in your care, Elaine." And now they were hers to sick-tend and care for and love.

While in the front seat her father, and the father of the three on the fenders and the three crowded beside her, nudged the firm arm of the eighteen year old daughter of his river-fishing partner. Her mother's mantle had descended upon her. It was woven with sunrises and colored with sunsets but it was a heavy mantle for her fragile shoulders. And her slender feet were muck-bogged in the river shack which was all

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JOHN BILLS

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Jake Fenno cared to provide for his motherless offspring.

"Tell yeh, Sue," Fenno went on in a voice drowned from those in the rear seat by the laboring motor. They had turned from the narrow paved road into a sand trail which would bring them to their shacks five miles in the back lands. "Tell yeh, let's me an' you sort of take on t'gether. Yore pap won't mind, he says yore gittin' bossie now that yore all growed up. An he don't need yeh no more now that Sadie's gittin' so growed up."

"What pap'll say'er do nobody can't tell but I'll weedle him. I'm shore wretched with his bossin'."

"I won't boss yeh, Sue".

"You'd better not . . . but I knows yeh wunt try neither."

"'Twouldn't be fittin fer me to come-git yeh today. I'll be over tomorrow."

The steaming car lurched. "Hey, you, Annebell, hang tight t' thet front light. Iffen yeh fall off I wunt stop fer yeh."

Elaine saw big Sue cuddled up to her father. They had been raised together over on Palmetto Ridge by the St. Johns. Always the older and stronger one had had her way. Always the younger, slender one had been forced to follow. Now it was the crisis. If she were pushed aside now . . . she had promised her mother . . . that morning at three . . . as the death-marked face had turned pleadingly toward her . . .

Jake Fenno was five foot six; his fishing partner, Henry Sutton, was nearly six foot five. Sutton's hair was red and his smile as alluring as his fishing skill. It was he who pulled the long seine through the deep waters while Fenno pivoted near the shore. But it was Fenno who had made and saved money, often at Sutton's expense; and the latter had no part in the

profitable still which Fenno had run for six years. So it had come about that Fenno owned the boats and the seines and it was he who knew the markets where their fish were sold.

Elaine knew this. So did Sue. So Sue cuddled up to the man, no taller than herself, who glanced down at her shapely legs and nudged her arm.

"Allus was a ailin' critter" he grumbled. "Couldn't help a man non."

"I'd shore help him", said Sue.

Then they came to the swamp which paralleled the ridge along the river bank. The car went into black water up to the axles, up to the running board. The three on the rusty fenders raised their feet and clung to headlight and window ledge. The car rocked crazily.

"Oughter have hit filled in", said Sue.

"Bottom's sand; th' car'll make hit", Fenno said.

There were grey cypress trees, their barkless knees rising above the water about them. The delicate green Spanish moss hung in scraggly hair-mats from the branches. A half-night shut them in.

"We'll make hit; th' damn waters is risin' an' we wunt git out 'ceptin' by wadin' iffin hit keeps on rainin'," grumbled Fenno.

Then the car struggled from the last of the muddy water of the swamp and wheezed up on the hard sands of the hammock. There among the palmettoes on the river bank were two shacks, a creek separating them. For ten years the Fenno and Sutton families had known no other homes and weeks had passed when the mothers and children had spoken to none save members of their own families.

The roofs of the dwellings were covered with battered pieces of zinc and tin, mostly old oil cans. The walls still proclaimed the virtues of soaps and canned goods, broken flotsam of the river. Each possessed a

crude fireplace which rested on the split palmetto floors. The grounds about were bare and hard from the patter of many bare feet. In the rear were thatched lean-tos where, rain and sunshine, the weary womenfolk had cooked.

That night Elaine set their crude table with a bowl of hyacinth flowers in the middle and flame vine about it. At her father's place she placed a pure white water lily. With her frail hands she had cut a swamp cabbage and then stewed it with white bacon. There were also boiled black-eyed peas and corn bread and cane syrup which she and her mother had boiled down the fall before. It was all she had to offer.

"Aain't fitten t' have flowers on th' night of a funeral" her father grumbled. He hid the lily under his deal chair. Elaine saw and understood.

"Git rid o' them yellor posies, too," he commanded. "We'll put th' hi'chinths on th' grave Sunday. She was allus a-admirin' of 'em."

Then he bolted his supper and left. "Got t' see about th' boats", he murmured.

Elaine put the younger children to bed and left the two older girls to wash the dishes. Then she too walked out into the moonlight. The palmettoes shaded the banks of the river and somehow she found herself seeking their shadows. So she came to the creek which separated their place from Sutton's camp.

"Hit's shore purty. I loves water lillies more'n eny flowers that be." It was Sue's voice and Elaine overheard.

Weary in body and crushed in spirit she sunk on a log and sobbed, noiselessly. It would only be a few days; Sue would be sitting in her mother's place. She had given her promise that morning at three. It wasn't that she cared for herself, but the children—her little brothers and sisters, her mother's babies . . .

Then the voice of the big river breathed in her ear. A big hand was laid tenderly on her shoulder.

"I sees hit, too, Elaine. She's bin that-a-way since mom died three year ago. She growed up too fast. You knows hit."

"Yes, Mr. Sutton". Her shoulders quivered silently.

"You jist leave hit to me." The big hand gave the slender shoulders a pat which shook her body. Then he vanished in the shadows.

There were storms in the northlands. The winds were from the northwest. Florida shivered. The dishes were washed and the children all in bed. Elaine sat by their crude fireplace waiting . . . waiting . . .

Suddenly the slab door flew open and the wind fanned the fat wood to a bright flame. Big Sutton, his red hair glowing in the firelight, stood beside her. In one hand he held an obstreperous daughter, in the other a whimpering partner.

"Th' 'greement were made ten year ago" he rumbled. "Hit saays that we goes fifty-fifty an' I means t' stick t' th' 'greement."

"B— b— but th' boats an' th' money's mine," Fenno ventured.

"Who saays hit?" With one wollop of his mighty foot he kicked Fenno across the room and into the wall. Then he strode to him and dragged him back to the fire.

"Anythin' t' say afore they gits out?" Sutton asked Elaine. "I've got th' money thet's coming t' me an' you an' the' boats an' nets. He's got th' law but I got him—five miles from th' hard road."

Elaine's shoulders shivered. She thought of her father coming back from the cemetery. She thought back ten years, her mother's life by the river, Sue and she playing, six little ones who must be fed and clothed and go to school, seven miles away. She said nothing.

"Git!" said Sutton, and his daughter jumped to the door. "Now you git!" But Fenno was too slow to escape that mighty foot. The ramshackle door went out with him.

"Hit's all right, Elaine," Sutton grinned. "He had th' money hid under th' shed an' I got all of hit. We'll git t' town tomorrey and git clothes fer th' kids. Then we'll take 'em t' school. . ."

" . . . an' Mr. Sutton, I ain't fitten for all this goodness . . ."

"Waal, mebbey yeh'll sort o' look after my young 'uns, too," he suggested as he left, forgetting his hat.

YOU ARE

DICK LEE

. . . cold clean water
Slipping over white stones
In a twisting brook
Hidden in afternoon's dark green shade.
You are a summer wind
Bending white flowers
On the tops of far-off purple hills
Restful under wide clear skies.
You are sunlight sparkling
On the distant waves
Of a blue bay
An hour before the sunset.
You are the horizon
Distant and clear
Stretching outward
Ever farther than my soul can reach.

THE OPEN WINDOW

A One Act Play, by ALEXANDER S. LAWRY

*An adaptation from the short story
"The Open Window", by Saki*

Characters

MRS. SAPPELTON

MR. SAPPELTON

VERA *Mrs. Sappelton's niece*

RONNIE } *Mrs. Sappelton's brothers*
CLYDE }

BRUNDY *The Sappelton's Maid*

MR. NUTTEL

The Scene

A country house on the Scottish moors. The action takes place in a large sitting-room, which has a rafter ceiling, dark oak panelings, and a highly polished floor. The walls are lined with books and there is a stone fireplace at one end of the room, with a mounted trophy above. The furniture is heavy, the rugs and draperies are a dark red. In the back-center of the room there are open casement windows.

Time

October of the present year, at four o'clock in the afternoon. Sunlight fades to dusk as the play progresses, and shaded lights are subsequently turned on in the room.

As the curtain goes up Brundy is in the room dusting. She is middle-aged, rather short and brittle. Vera enters. Vera is about sixteen, quite lanky and boyish, though trying hard to grow up, and almost succeeding. She is carrying several books and wanders aimlessly around.

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Vera: I have absolutely never felt so wasted in all my life. Here I am practically in the prime of life marooned in this rural graveyard.

Brundy: Why Miss Vera, you are only a child. Seems like just last year that I was dressing you for your christening. Such a pretty bonnet you had too, all hand-stitched with the most beautiful—

Vera: I don't know why it is but old people never want anyone younger than themselves to ever grow a day older than cutting their first tooth. Some sort of defense mechanism I suppose. At least that is what dear dull Mr. Spencer is always preaching to me. I don't see why I have to have a tutor anyway.

Brundy: Mr. Spencer is a very bright man and you are lucky to have him. He doesn't usually take on young misses you know, says they aren't worth the trouble. Always getting themselves married just when he is beginning to teach them something. He took you because he admired your father so much.

Vera: Well I wish he hadn't admired my father. It's really terrible to have had intelligent parents when you're not inclined that way yourself. I must be a throwback to that sister of my father's, you know, the one they never speak of who was some sort of an actress. Brundy, I know that I have a dramatic instinct, but my talent is being absolutely smothered in this unappreciative atmosphere, and what is worse no one ever takes me seriously. I'll probably contract inhibitions or worse if I don't find some way to express myself.

Brundy: Just sit down, Miss Vera, and I will get you some tea. Maybe that will make you feel better. Try and keep yourself quiet. It's probably growing pains that you've got.

(Brundy leaves the room).

Vera: Growing pains indeed. I'm probably on the

verge of emotional deflation . . . (*She begins to read aloud from one of the books she has been carrying*)

My soul is but a drifting feather,
Steeped in sorrow, bound in leather,
Blown by winds in wrathful weather,
Doomed to wanton wondering ever.

So saying the melancholy maiden drew the shining sword from its jeweled holster and plunged it . . . (*While reading she has picked up a poker from the fireplace and waved it wildly around. Brundy reenters and she pretends to be poking the fire*).

Brundy: Miss Vera, a Mr. Nuttel has arrived to call on Mrs. Sappelton, shall I show him in?

Vera: Yes, do. I saw the letter his sister sent Auntie. He is down here on some sort of a nerve cure, maybe he has had a great tragedy in his life. I always adore people who have had great tragedies in their lives. I always feel we have so much in common. It is too bad that he had to come down today though.

Brundy: Yes, it is too bad he had to come today. He looks to me like the only thing he ever had in his life was too much bad tea. (*She motions Mr. Nuttel to enter. He is about thirty-five, rather undersized and anemic looking, with a wee wilting moustache and an atmosphere of pills.*)

Vera: I'm Miss Vera, Miss Sappelton's neice. Won't you sit down? My aunt will be down in a few minutes. In the meantime you will just have to put up with me.

Nuttel: I'm very glad to know you, Miss Vera. (*He sits down.*)

Vera: Do tell me how you happened to come down to this dull place?

Nuttel: Well you see, that is, I'm down here because of my nerves. My physician advised it—otherwise I don't think I would have chosen—of course, it's grand hunting country.

Vera: Oh do you hunt, Mr. Nuttel? How thrilling. If you'd like I could arrange to—

Nuttel: No, I don't engage in physical encounter. All my interest centers in the mental. You see I have spent most of my life with the old masters, music, literature, art, philosophy—all great fields of controversy. And then of course there is analytical psychology, an interesting study, especially the timely discovery of the new theory of self preservation or defense mechanism so vital in the understanding of the human character, which is—

Vera: Pardon me, Mr. Nuttel, but are you acquainted with Mr. Spenser?

Nuttel: Mr. Spenser? Afraid I haven't the pleasure, Miss Vera. In fact I don't believe I ever heard of him.

Vera: Well how did you know about the defense mechanism?

Nuttel: My dear young woman, the promulgated theory of defense mechanism is common knowledge to the entire intellectual world.

Vera: Oh! (*Silence Follows.*) Tell me, Mr. Nuttel, how did you acquire your nerve trouble? Probably some terrific shock or disappointment, wasn't it?

Nuttel: Not exactly—you see, I have been under medical observation for years. I've always been high strung, quite sensitive to my surroundings.

Vera: Then it didn't happen suddenly?

Nuttel: Quite the contrary, it was the culmination of several year's strain and stress. As a matter of fact I was first stricken at the opera—most embarrassing—my knees began suddenly to—

Vera: Oh dear, I had rather hoped nerve trouble came suddenly. I might have escaped by having a breakdown.

Nuttel: I beg your pardon?

Vera: Not at all, Mr. Nuttel. Do you know many people around here?

Nuttel: Hardly a soul. My sister was staying here at the rectory some years ago and she gave me letters of introduction to a few of the people here.

Vera: Then you know practically nothing of my aunt?

Nuttel: Only her name and address. I left rather hurriedly, you see, otherwise I am sure my sister would no doubt have acquainted me with—

Vera: I see. I thought that because you came on this special day it was to observe my aunt, as a case, I mean.

Nuttel: Certainly not, my visit is purely social. Besides I see nothing special about the day and your reference to your dear aunt as a case, leaves me in total incomprehension.

Vera: Then you haven't heard of her tragedy?

Nuttel: What tragedy?

Vera: Perhaps you wonder why we keep that window open on an October afternoon?

Nuttel: It's quite warm for this time of year, but has the window anything to do with the tragedy?

Vera: Out of that window three years ago today her husband and her two younger brothers went off for the day's shooting—they never came back.

Nuttel: Most astounding, rather wholesale desertion I would say.

Vera: Why Mr. Nuttel, it was nothing of the sort, they were—well they met with a dreadful disaster.

Nuttel: Oh, I say I am sorry, so stupid of me, but in this modern age one never knows. A dreadful disaster you say?

Vera: Yes, dreadful, in crossing the moor to their favorite snipe shooting ground they were all three engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog.

Nuttel: Ghastly, buried alive, unthinkable ghastly.

Vera: It had been that dreadfully wet summer, you

know, and places that had been safe in other years gave way without warning.

Nuttel: The unfathomableness of nature, it has always intrigued me. Trapped so unwittingly, the expressions on their faces were undoubtedly—

Vera: Oh, but that was the horrible part. Their bodies were never discovered.

Nuttel: Never discovered. Incredible.

Vera: There wasn't a trace, nothing, just nothing. Poor aunt always thinks that they will come back some day, they and their little brown spaniel that was with them, and walk right in that window just as they used to do.

Nuttel: So that is why the window is kept open?....

Vera: Yes, that is why the window is kept open. Poor dear aunt has often told me how they went out, her husband with his white water-proof raincoat over his arm, and Ronnie, her younger brother, singing, "Bertie why do you bound", as he always did to tease her because she said that it got on her nerves.

Nuttel: Most distressing.

Vera: The saddest thing of all is that she was knitting Ronnie a special kind of hunting sock the day that they disappeared, and she didn't have his heel measurement. She keeps right on knitting the socks as far as the heel, and then sits and frets because he doesn't hurry home, so she can finish it. He was to have gone to a match in Irvine County the next day, and especially wanted them. She has knitted literally dozens of toes, no less. (*Vera has been flouncing around during this discourse.*)

Nuttel: That sort of delusion is typical in such cases, I suppose she doesn't realize how many toes she has done?

Vera: No she doesn't, I always sneak all but one or two out of her basket and burn them.

Nuttel: Very intelligent of you.

Vera: The doctor said that it is best to indulge her, as much as we can without her suspecting we are doing it.

Nuttel: Most difficult for you.

Vera: It's not hard. She's so childish about it all. Be careful not to show that you notice anything unusual when she comes in, it might upset her.

Nuttel: But, of course I shall be very careful.

Vera: Do you know sometimes on still quiet evenings like this I almost get a creepy feeling that they will walk in right through that window.

Nuttel: Now Miss Vera, you musn't allow yourself to—

(Mrs. Sappelton bustles in, dropping a basket she is carrying. Knitting needles, yarn, and an unfinished sock fell on the floor. Nuttel jumps to recover them and carefully seats her in a chair. Mrs. Sappelton is an attractive woman at the comfortable age of not quite forty, seemingly rather competent and appears momentarily puzzled by Nuttel's solicitude. However, she is not one to ponder unduly.)

Mrs. Sappelton: How do you do, Mr. Nuttel, so sorry to have kept you waiting, but I simply had to get started on these socks for Ronnie, he especially wants them for the hunt at Ervine tomorrow. This time of the year is always so busy for me anyway, so much to do, don't you know. How is your charming sister? I do hope Vera has been amusing you.

Nuttel: (Somewhat taken aback in spite of himself) She has been very interesting.

Mrs. Sappelton: I do hope you don't mind that window being open, my husband and brothers will be home directly from shooting, they always come in that way. They have been out for snipe in the marshes today, so they will make a fine mess of my poor carpets, so like men folks, isn't it?

Nuttel: Yes of course—My sister asked particularly to be remembered to you, Mrs. Sappelton.

Mrs. Sappelton: How sweet of her. We had a delightful season the year she was down, let me see, she was here the year before we had that dreadful rainy summer. I remember the game was very plentiful. This year there is a frightful scarcity of birds, one can't tell about the winter season as yet. Do you hunt, Mr. Nuttel?

Nuttel: No, I never have and now of course it would be impossible—because of my nerves. Any undue excitement would only aggravate my condition. The doctors agree in ordering me complete rest, an absence of mental agitation, an avoidance of anything in the nature of violent physical exercise. I never was physically inclined of course, but separation from my books is proving most trying. I'm allowed two books a week though.

Mrs. Sappelton: How nice, I mean nice that you are allowed two books a week. Personally I have always wanted to devote more of my time to literature, but I never seem to have any time to myself. Having three men in the house keeps me constantly on the go, what with knitting them socks and the like. Not that I mind though, I'm sure I wouldn't know what to do with myself if I didn't have my three boys to look after. Vera adores them too, don't you dear?

Vera: Yes, of course. *(She nods sadly and knowingly to Nuttel)*

Nuttel: *(Taking pill)* You'll pardon me? But, I have to take these powders every quarter of the hour—they quiet my nerves no end—helps my digestion too. The doctors are not so much in agreement as to my diet. It places me in a rather difficult position as I am in an constant state of expectation regarding the nutrient reaction on my system.

Mrs. Sappelton: How dreadful! It must be annoy-

ing. I've always been thankful that my husband has such excellent health. He can eat anything. I honestly think he will live to be a thousand. I suppose it's because he has always led such an active outdoor life—he practically lives on the moors. He is just the type of man who will die with his boots on. Don't you think so too, Vera?

Vera: Undoubtedly (*She nods again to Nuttel*)

Nuttel: (*Sneezes nervously*) So sorry, it must be the beastly fog. It gets so damp this time in the evening. I'm sure I shan't live long in this fearful climate.

Mrs. Sappelton: Now Mr. Nuttel, don't take that attitude. I'm convinced that the best way to overcome misfortune is to completely ignore it.

(*An uneasy pause follows—Mrs. Sappelton gazes out of the window to the lawn beyond*)

Perhaps you'd better ring for tea Vera, it's getting rather late. I suppose we'd better not wait any longer. I do wish they would hurry though, I don't see how I'll ever get these socks finished if I don't get Ronnie's heel measurement.

(*Silence—Mrs. Sappelton continues to gaze out of the window—Vera rings for tea—Mr. Nuttel coughs and cautiously moves his chair out of the draft from the window toward the fireplace*)

Nuttel: You wouldn't be offended if I just had hot water instead of tea, would you Mrs. Sappelton?

Mrs. Sappelton: No of course not (*She jumps up and goes to the window*) Here they are at last, just in time for tea, and don't they look as if they were muddy up to the ears?

(*Nuttel shivers noticeably and turns towards Vera with a look intended to convey sympathetic comprehension. Vera, however seems to be entirely engrossed in one of her books. Uncertainly Nuttel goes to look out of the window, just then a hoarse young voice chants from out of the dusk: 'I say Bertie, why do you*

bound?' Wildly Nuttel grabs for his hat and stick and bolts hurriedly from the room as three figures enter the window, coming in from the descending gloominess of the lawn. They all carry guns under their arms and one of them is additionally burdened with a white coat over his arm. A tired brown spaniel is close at their heels.

Mr. Sappelton: Here we are, my dear, fairly muddy, but most of it's dry. Who was it bolted out just as we came in?

Mrs. Sappelton: A most extraordinary man, a Mr. Nuttel—could only talk about his illness and dashed off without a word of goodbye or apology when you arrived. One would think he had seen a ghost—horribly neurotic person.

Ronnie: Some chaps seem to think illness an excuse for poor manners.

Clyde: Glad he left if he was such a bore.

Vera: How unkind of you to blame poor Mr. Nuttel, when he has suffered so much, and besides it was Bertie's fault.

All: Bertie's! !

Vera: He told me he had a horror of dogs—in fact they caused his breakdown.

Ronnie: Why?

Mrs. Sappelton: What breakdown?

Vera: His nervous breakdown, he told me all about it.

Clyde: What did he tell you?

Mrs. Sappelton: When did he tell you Vera?

Vera: Before you came down. He told me he was once hunted into a cemetery somewhere on the banks of the Ganges by a pack of pariah dogs, and had to spend the night in a newly dug grave with the creatures snarling and grinning and foaming just above him. (*Vera hesitates every now and then while she is*

telling this, as though to remember more graphically what Mr. Nuttel has told her)

Ronnie: Whee! ! That's enough to make anyone lose their nerve.

Mr. Sappelton: (*Turning to his wife*) Why didn't you call out, we could have left Bertie down at the lodge. No need to frighten the poor fellow.

Mrs. Sappelton: He didn't say a word to me about it. I'm sure I would have been less bored if he had. Hurry now and wash up, tea's been ready hours. Ronnie, I'll never get these socks finished if you don't let me measure your heel. (*She pushes them out of the room showing Ronnie the sock as she goes with them*)

(*Vera is left alone in the room with Brundy who has just come in and is arranging the tea service*)

Vera: Oh dear, life is too utterly dull. Still, Brundy, I'm more than ever convinced that I have a great dramatic instinct, if only someone would take me seriously.

Curtain

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