

Rollins College

Rollins Scholarship Online

The Flamingo

1-1-1938

Flamingo, January, 1938, Vol. 12, No. 2

Rollins College Students

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.rollins.edu/flamingo>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

The

flamingo



JANUARY, 1938

Contents

THE DEAD AMERICAN SOLDIER	Patricia Guppy
THREE SIDES TO A TRIANGLE	Elizabeth Schoening
POEMS	Elizabeth Schoening
FINDERS KEEPERS	Jess Gregg
"IL PLEUT DANS MON COEUR--"	Charlotte Stryker
SONNET	Walter Royall
A HYMN TO NIHILITY?	Paul Travers

Vol. 12

No. 2

Price 25 Cents

\$1.25 a Year

Rollins College

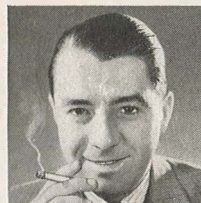
Winter Park, Florida

DO EXPERT MARKSMEN FIND THAT CAMEL'S COSTLIER TOBACCOS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

"YES, SIR, in any bunch of expert shots — Camels are the favorite cigarette," says *Ransford Triggs*, one of the foremost marksmen in America. "Marksmen know that it takes steady nerves to make high scores. And the fact that Camels don't frazzle my nerves goes over big with me. I smoke plenty of Camels every day, too."

And millions of other people — the most loyal group of smokers in the world — put their "O. K." on Camels too — making Camels the largest-selling cigarette in America

TAKING X-RAYS is a delicate job—and a tiring one too. But as *Miss Myrtle Sauler*, X-ray technician, says: "When I'm tired, a Camel refreshes me. I get a 'lift' with a Camel."



"I'M HANDLING money by thousands," says bank teller, *John McMahon*. "Jittery nerves don't fit in with this work. So it's Camels for me."

HOME economist, *Elizabeth May*, says: "There's a world of comfort in smoking Camels 'for digestion's sake,' at mealtimes."



{ABOVE}

Head-on view of *Ransford Triggs* on the firing line. His .22 calibre rifle is equipped with hand-made sights. He uses the sighting 'scope beside him to help get his sights set exactly for the centre of the bull's-eye. The glove helps protect his hand.



Camel pays millions more for **COSTLIER TOBACCOS!** Camels are a matchless blend of finer, **MORE EXPENSIVE TOBACCOS** — Turkish and Domestic.

Copyright, 1937, R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, Winston-Salem, N. C.

CAMELS

THE LARGEST-SELLING
CIGARETTE IN AMERICA

THE FLAMINGO

VOL. XII

JANUARY, 1938

No. 2

CONTENTS

The Dead American Soldier	3	Patricia Guppy
Three Sides to a Triangle	10	Elizabeth Schoening
Poems	15	Elizabeth Schoening
Finders Keepers	16	Jess Gregg
"Il Pleut Dans Mon Coeur—"	29	Charlotte Stryker
Sonnet	29	Walter Royall
A Hymn To Nihility?	30	Paul Travers
Frontispiece by Nan Poeller		
Cover Design by John Rae		

EDITORIAL STAFF

PATRICIA GUPPY, *Editor*

ELIZABETH SCHOENING, *Associate Editor*

Assistants

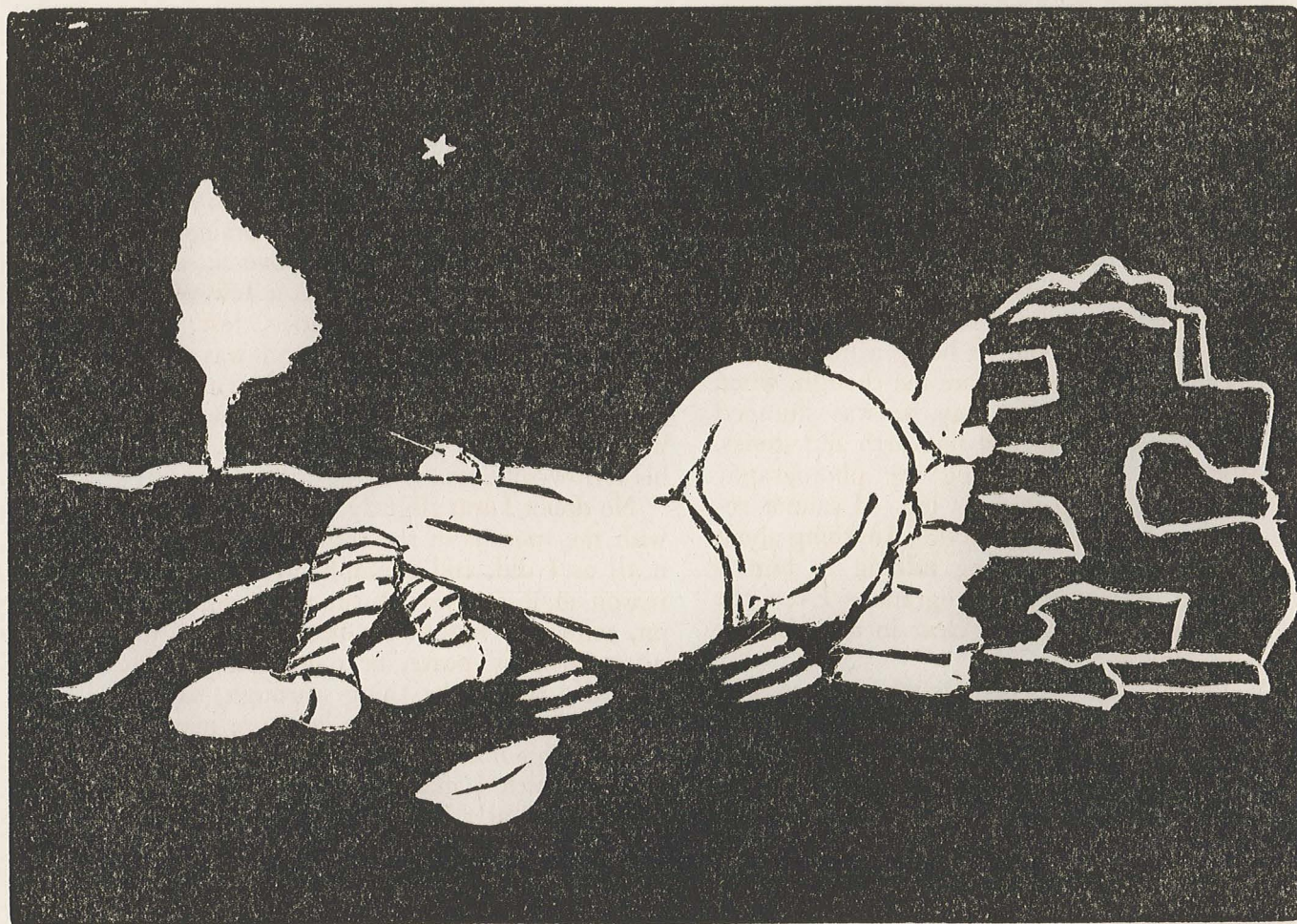
SEYMOUR BALLARD
FENTRESS GARDNER
ELIZABETH HANNAS
NAN POELLER
WALTER ROYALL

AL BRANDON
JESS GREGG
MARIE HOWE
ROBINHOOD RAE
PAUL TRAVERS

LEW WALLACE
EDWIN GRANBERRY, *Advisor*

BUSINESS STAFF

PAUL A. TWACHTMAN, *Advertising Commissioner*
WILLIAM E. BARR, *Business Manager*
DUDLEY DARLING, *Assistant Business Manager*



Linoleum Cut by Nan Poeller

The Dead American Soldier

PATRICIA GUPPY

I OFTEN wonder what they thought of him when they found him, with that revolver wound through the back of his head. Just another American soldier, I suppose, killed in action. It may have been a little strange, his being there in the old deserted ruin between the trenches, alone, quite peaceful, with the revolver bullet through his head from back to front. But I suppose in the midst of war nobody would stop to wonder about its being a little queer.

He is quite plain before me though, when I think of him; the way he was slumped over to one side against the earth and stones. With one hand, holding the photograph, fallen loosely against his leg. I cannot remember his face very well. Anything about him when I was sitting talking to him is blurred, except the photograph. Even the photograph is not very clear in my memory now—the faces.

Perhaps that was because when I was talking to him there, in the ruin, I was exalted in spirit; *tete-montee*. I did not notice him so much as a man, but as the embodiment of an idea, the living confirmation of a theory that had been burning up the quivering tissue of my worn-out brain for months and months—years. I had found what I had been hoping to find in all that time, but never really expecting I would find. Suddenly, there it was. This man, this American soldier, was sitting there talking peaceably to me, a German soldier, between a few sheltering stones and rubbish in the midst of no-man's-land, with the whine of shells over all our conversation. I believe we did not even think of the possible danger there, or at least I did not. All that seemed unimportant in the greatness of the moment.

Because he was an American soldier, and

he hated war as much as I did; a thing I always hoped to find, to prove in my own mind that this war we were in was all sheer insanity, that none of us who were fighting—us on the German side or the men on the Allies'—none really wanted it. Ah, how I had kept this idea seething in my brain, turning it over and over, brooding over it, never daring to let it out except to a few of the most trusted of my comrades, lest I be thought unpatriotic. And now I was seeing the soul of this comrade in the "enemy: that it was so very much like mine, and that there were others who thought the same, among his fellow-soldiers.

No doubt I was slightly out of my mind—with the months in the trenches, and hating it all as I did, and triumphantly finding no reason in it at every turn, yet keeping on, on, with the nightmare because there was no moment of peace, or quietness, no time to really think the thing through, so that my conclusions would not be more insanity.

I say this not because of my denunciation of war which I made to this American soldier—not at all; I believe what I said is still right, and I still hate war; but because of what followed afterwards.

It was a wonder we did not shoot each other at once, when we came face to face, each creeping about the ragged shelter of the torn farmhouse. I had been sent out to investigate an American sniper whom we knew was located there. No, I volunteered, because of this wild, crazy idea I had that I might perhaps meet a soldier of the other side and really talk to him. The fact that I might lose my life in the attempt did not touch my mind strongly. In such moments, when death is so often present, one does not think of such things in a normal manner.

This American soldier was the sniper. He was a man with a long, thin leathery face, creased and weather-beaten; his eyes were intensely blue, and his whole face had a grim, plain look, as if it had been moulded hard from earth and then hewed with a hatchet. He might have been quite young or quite old. His straw-colored hair was the kind that does not show grey. When we saw each other we stopped and stared at one another warily, weapons in hand.

He spoke. "Listen, Fritzie," he said, "Do ye speak English?"

"Yes," I replied, my heart beating thick with the pang of a half-born hope.

"How would it strike ye if we got our breath and talked a piece, 'stead of sending each other to Kingdom Come right off, so to say."

I noticed then that he said "ye" instead of "you", a peculiarity which, I have since learned, belongs, with his idioms, to the region in which he was born.

"I would be glad," I said. He laid down his rifle and crawled forward, so I holstered my revolver and met him halfway. We sat on the earth in the shelter of the broken walls and measured each other with our eyes.

"Bad business, this war," he said, shaking his head.

"Do you also feel that?" I said eagerly. "Is it possible that there are some of you Americans and English also who wish that there might be peace, that you might return to your homes?"

"Seems to me," the American soldier said, "that this war is contrary to the will of God." His was a grim face, which altered little in expression when he spoke of different things. The creases under his eyes would deepen, however, causing the eyes themselves to narrow until there was only a cold blue sparkle between them. "In the Bible," he went on, his harsh voice assuming a striking sonorousness, "God said:

'Thou shalt not kill'; and I've been troubled in conscience about this here war. Preacher I heard down to the city, the same preacher who talked to the boys I was with when I was recruited, he said: 'God helped the Children of Israel in their wars against the heathen; so God will approve this war, and help us.'"

He raised himself upon his knees and stared before him, not at me. He was a strange man; in that moment the expression on his face was like that of Moses rebuking the Israelites. I, who have Jewish blood in me, was impressed.

"But in those wars," he rasped, "God spoke to the Children of Israel through their leaders. He has not spoken to us. And he saith, 'Thou shalt not kill.'" He turned to me. "I do my duty," he said. "Duty to me is next to God. But my duty to God is what I count first, not my duty to man. I have my weapon and killed with it because I was told it was my duty. But I am troubled in conscience now. My conscience tells me it is my duty to God to obey His commandment and kill no longer."

It is peculiar how impulsive I was at that instant. The words in which he spoke were foreign to me, because I am not very religious. But all I cared for was that by whatever roads we had travelled, our conclusion was the same. We both hated this insane war, we both longed for peace. In the midst of battle, between the trenches of our warring nations, we were comrades, meeting in friendship and good will. I seized his hands; I laughed aloud—I do not know what I said. I said many things, I know; all that I had been storing up for so long in silence. Visions flashed before my sight, visions that were like heady wine to a hungry man. The people of the world united—the people, not the handful of rulers or leaders, but the people, making one nation bound by the golden bands of peace. All the men and women of the world, living

like the brothers and sisters of harmonious families over all the surface of the globe! It did not matter that this vision might not be real at once, nor for some time; I was so convinced of its possible reality in a comparatively short time that it seemed immediate, almost accomplished.

I was a little insane, I suppose; it was hard to measure sanity and insanity in those days. The way I went on, laughing and shaking both his hands.

His hard-lined face creased, I remember, into a sort of smile as he knelt face to face with me. Then we sat down together on the ground once more, comfortably and freely this time, leaning back on the bank of earth and rubbish that had piled against the wall behind us.

I offered him a cigarette. His face hardened for an instant and his voice was harsh again as he said: "I have never fallen to the ungodly habit of tobacco."

For the moment I felt foolish, with the worn package of cigarettes in my extended hand, but I judged it best to pocket them again and refrain from smoking. Some chocolate I had proved acceptable to him, so we shared that.

We talked about many things, I enthusiastic, he monosyllabic and impassive. He said yes, to my urgent questions as to his comrades in the Allied forces who also hated this war, but his answers were not as communicative as I had wished. We spoke of our homes, our families, while the machine-guns rattled fitfully in the distance. We seemed to ignore the war, almost forget it.

He was not inclined to be communicative on any subject, this new friend of mine, but after a while he thawed on the subject of his family. I had been married, but my wife had died in childbirth while I was away at the front, and my heart was still very sore. The child died too. I even did what I had done for no one else but my most intimate

friend, a brother-soldier: I took her picture from my wallet, and showed it to the American.

It was then, after a moment, that he brought out the photograph.

It was an unimpressive family group: a woman and two young men, with the same type of long, lined, unsmiling faces as himself, and two children, a boy and a girl. They were all poorly dressed in what were obviously their best clothes, and posed stiffly and uncomfortably in a formal, cheap photographer's setting.

There was nothing remarkable about all that. The only thing that caught my attention in the whole was the fact that another figure had obviously been included in the group, over on the left side, and had been deliberately cut out of it. The narrow white edge of the picture ran around only three sides; and around the shoulder of the youngest child lay an arm, a girl's arm, the only gracefully-posed thing in the picture. The arm, however, ended abruptly at the cut edge, and attempts had been made to obliterate it with pencil-scratchings.

I stared at it. The thing was fascinating. It suggested a mystery. Again, no doubt, my mind was fevered. I do not know. Perhaps in normal life, before or after the war, I would have wondered cursorily, and then forgotten it.

But then there seemed to be some importance in that cut photograph. I put out my hand and touched it. "Some one has been cut out of your family?" I said.

The man's face assumed the same Mosaic appearance with which he had denounced this war as godless, only now with a bitter hardness about the mouth and eyes that sent a chill towards me.

"Speak not of her; she is dead," he rasped.

The words meant little to me. They sounded like a Biblical quotation. "You

mean you had a daughter, and she is now dead?" I asked.

"As good as dead," was the cold response. He turned to put the picture away.

As I say, at any other time I might have left the matter there. And yet, I do not know. There was something about the man's face, as I sat so near to him and looked at him, that I began to see for the first time. Something that chilled me, as I said, and repelled and held my attention at once. Something that cast the war about us completely out of my mind, and made the petty mystery of the photograph a cue to some much more momentous action.

He was so strange, this man. His eyes had in their depths a hard bright gleam like steel, or like ice. They were cold—a cold that no human warmth could reach and touch. His lips ran together in a straight gash across his face. I had never seen a man like this, within a few feet of me.

"What did your daughter do, that you cut her from that photograph?" I said.

The American's blue eyes looked at me, and there was no expression in them except ice.

"Mighty curious, young man, ain't ye?" he said deep in his throat.

I said nothing. I looked at him and saw the things his daughter might have done: committed murder, denied the God he believed in, neglected her duty—

"I'll tell ye," he said. "Ye're a young fellow; it may serve as a warning to ye, and a guide in your dealings with your women-folk, if ye have any, or ever have." There was a black frown on his face; it seemed that the coldness in his eyes descended all over him, and he became a man of frozen stone.

It was painful for him to speak of his daughter. He clenched his hands and the veins in his forehead knotted. I sat and

watched him and listened, my muscles and nerves tense.

"She was sixteen years old," he said. "And I had brought her up all her life in the fear of the Lord, and in modesty and chastity. But of all my children there was a taint of evil in her from her mother's father, who was an ungodly man. She was the diseased branch, which had to be lopped off, that the rest of the tree might be healthy."

"The serpent coiled within her breast, as it doth to all women, doomed to sin and uncleanness as they are, and she put forth no hand to pluck it out. Her mother found her with child out of wedlock by an ungodly young man; and from that day she was no child of ours. One duty we did her before God, which was to have her publicly rebuked in the church, and then the load of her sins bore her to the ground and she fainted, but still would not repent, and still defied me. I gave her money to sustain her life and shut the door on her. From that time I have said, 'God gave to me three sons and one daughter.' She is no kin of mine since then."

The man sat silent with his arms folded against the stained cloth of his uniform.

"Where did she go?" I asked.

He turned on me. "Young man, trouble me not with babbling questions. I tell you she is dead to me."

His fierceness should have stopped me, but I went on as if some force were urging. "The young man," I said, "the father of her child—did he know?"

The American looked at and through me, his eyes narrowed. "Yes," he said, "The serpent points the way to all alike." He raised his voice. "If you're thinking that she went from my door to more sinful pleasure with that devil's son, I thought of that too. My sons saw to that. For the sake of the sixteen years she was under our roof we could see that the reward of her sin would not be the

pleasures of lust, to completely kill her soul."

"What did you do—kill him?" I whispered.

The terrible look of righteousness was turned on me. "The Lord has commanded, 'Thou shalt not kill,' he thundered. 'Are you a pagan? I reckoned that all your talk about this here war was like the talk of a parrot—some mad babbling that came to your mouth without the inspiration of God!' The man moved as if he would stand up. I put out my hand to stop him.

"What did you do to the young man?" I repeated.

"Gelded him," the American soldier replied.

I sat still. "Can you do these things without fear in your country?" I asked.

"Ain't nobody going to stop us where we live," answered the man grimly.

In such moments when the whole being is caught absolutely in an inferno of thought, some little sound or motion of the physical world can recall us partly to ordinary things.

This man and myself both heard at once the slight sound on the other side of the ruined wall. From force of habit we crouched and listened. I had not realized till then that the grey dusk had begun to fall.

"You get your rifle," I whispered mechanically. "I will look out from that corner."

I turned and crept along the wall, drawing my revolver and cocking it as I did so. I reached the turn of the wall and reconnoitered. Then I saw that a large rat was moving among the loose stones on the other side. In that moment I did not even stop my mind over the strange journey of a rat from one of the trenches into no-man's land.

My thought was whirling strangely. I do not know if it can be called thought. I saw the indistinct outlines of the loose stones and earth, and the quick, questing head of

the rat. I remember that very clearly, but I do not remember any connected thought.

I suppose I was thinking of my wife. She was sixteen when I met her, and I was eighteen, a student at the University. We fell in love at once, but I knew my family would never consent to our marriage. They have no claims to nobility, my family, but my wife was a nobody, penniless, an orphan, only knowing that her mother had gypsy blood. And I could not marry without my parents' consent before I came of age.

For a year Marianne and I were very, very good, but after that it seemed impossible. I put my allowance with her earnings, and we rented a little place, and pretended we were married. We were very happy. When I was twenty-one we did marry, legally, though I have never seen my family since.

Of course this must have been at the back of my mind as I stared through the dusk at the pile of stones and the rat, holding my revolver in my right hand.

Presently I turned and crept back to the American. His back was towards me and he did not hear me coming. He had his rifle, and he held the photograph in his hands. He was quite a big man, and as he sat there he seemed a huge colossus, his thick shoulders hunched over, his head bent, staring at the small grey paper. It was growing dark.

It is strange the way I remember it. I can see distinctly the raising of my arm with the revolver, and the slow, deliberate way the forefinger contracted on the trigger. And then there he was. Slumped over to one side against the bank of earth and stones, with the hand holding the photograph fallen loosely against his leg.

At that moment, as I looked at him, I heard the fitful rattle and thunder of guns quite distinctly; they sounded very loud in

the evening air. One will notice things like that, and remember them.

I was quite calm. There was no sense of guilt in my mind. I had decided, before I shot him, what I would do.

That was murder, of course. It was murder more than of the men I had killed as part of the daily routine of war. I wish I could remember by what argument I reasoned this out in my mind then, but I cannot now. I suppose there was really no argument, merely the warm human corpse lying before me, which I had just shot through the back of the head. One does not see the individual men one has killed as near as that in war—or there is no time to stand and gaze at them.

I could not be a murderer; I had decided that. I would kill myself afterwards. I should have done it some time before, when I received the letter from our landlady saying Marianne and the baby were dead. Before that, there had been the war, but there had also been Marianne. After that there was only the war. It was the right thing to do now, to kill myself.

So I moved off, on my hands and knees, a little way from the body, with my back to it. I knelt there so I should not be seen over the wall. The attitude suggested prayer, but the harsh voice of the American saying "The Lord" rang in my ears, and I did not pray. I tried to remember if I had ever heard Marianne pray, on her knees, but I did not think so. Once when we were in a forest she had leaped into a shaft of sunlight and thrown her arms up to the sun, crying "Oh, God, dear God!" but that was not exactly a prayer.

It had been warm in the sun, that day in the forest, and cool in the shadows; and there was that sweet, good smell of clean air and fresh earth which I could never smell again. I remembered, as I knelt and stared down at the stones in front of me, that I had

half-wished I could see the spring come to the woods again. That seems so far away, of course, in the trenches, where living plants look out of place.

Clouds had rolled in over the sky then, and there were shifting flashes against them, round the horizon. Soon it would be night. I reminded myself and raised the revolver to my forehead.

It was then I discovered I could not pull the trigger.

I could not. Sweat broke out over my body, bathing my face in the chill air, soaking my clothes uncomfortably. Pulses in my temples beat, and a feeling of nausea came over me. The whole of my life seemed concentrated on that one act, of releasing the bullet that would put out my consciousness like a snuffed candle flame. It was horrible. I tried to think of time backwards and forwards from the moment the bullet would be released—backwards, my body, my sense, the jagged stones that were beginning to bruise my knees, the place around me, the hard smooth revolver itself clutched in my right hand; forward—what? Nothingness. My brain began to reel, as if I would faint. I lowered the revolver.

The pain of the stones under my knees became intolerable then, and I crumpled down sideways onto the earth.

I lay there for some time. I thought about raising the revolver and trying again, but I could not. I had found I could not commit suicide. I wondered as I lay there if there were others like me, and how those millions who did extinguish their own lives were able to pass over that moment between life and death, when it depends on one's own hand.

Perhaps it was that my brain was weak then. Maybe if I had been in good health and nerves and able to make up my mind rationally to that course of action I could have done it. I do not know. I have never

tried to commit suicide since. I am afraid.

After that I may have slept, or gone into a coma, or delirium. I do not remember. I must have wandered out into the territory between the trenches, and stumbled into the German front lines, escaping death by a miracle, or by madman's luck. However it was, after that I had brain fever, from which I recovered very slowly, so that the war was long over while I was still a weak convalescent.

After that I lived quietly, trying to settle down again. The old halls of my University seemed pleasant to me, and I had still enough income to live a quiet student's life. The young men in the colleges do not seek the society of the grey-haired old fellows like myself—when I came out of the hospital I looked ten years older than my age—and I was grateful for the solitude. So I studied. I had time to think then; and though my mind did not dare approach the huge problem of peace and war which it had leaped upon so wildly and bravely when my spirit was young, it still hovered restlessly around the great thing.

I was content to study, all my days, like that. It filled my life; though I found, as always, that the more one knows in detail of any wide human problem, the more difficult it is to evolve any real generalized solution.

Then of course came the bitter period for all of Jewish race in Germany. I have said I inherited Jewish blood from my mother's side. I came to America. It might have

been any English-speaking place where my knowledge of the tongue would have stood me in good stead. But there was something drove me to the United States. A strange thing.

My life here has not been essentially different from that in Germany before I left. I live near a large University and manage to study there and live simply by tutoring and giving lessons in German. At the University I study Sociology and Psychology, and other related subjects. I go to meetings of students' clubs and listen to their arguments for peace, their denunciations of war.

I am for peace. I am against war. But yet I cannot join these clubs, and shout and clap with the others in applause of peace. I would like to; it is a pleasant sound to me. But inside my mind I see the body of the dead American soldier, and it stops the cry that rises in my throat.

I do what I can to help the cause of peace. I give a dollar at the meetings for the Peace Society, and a dollar has to go far with me.

I wonder what they thought of him when they found him. I suppose it made no difference; there was nothing suspicious about it. And the photograph—I suppose it has decayed in the earth, by this time. As his body has; and my wife and daughter's bodies, far away in Germany; and perhaps his daughter's body, and that of the father of his daughter's child, in some part of this great country.

Three Sides to a Triangle

ELIZABETH SCHOENING

THEY were learning primary geometry in Miss Warren's class that spring. Judy sat near the window and drew patterns on the lined paper of her notebook. Her name on the upper right hand corner. Seven-B, Miss Warren, Geometry. Then a mist of sweeping lines intertwined with circles and leaf shapes.

"Judith," Miss Warren would say, "you must learn not to draw in class. Now you'll have to take a clean sheet of paper for the exercises." Miss Warren moved down the aisle like a lady, always like a lady. She had no bobbing folds of flesh like Miss Macdowell, who jounced easily between the rows of desks, a soft complement to the angles of blackboard and wall. Nor was she stiffly corseted, like the assistant principal, who seemed to be always on the point of bursting from some firmly cemented cocoon.

Miss Warren fitted in well with the room. Her dark dress merged with the boards, and the even waves of her hair were as static as the framed Portrait of Washington above the door. She moved with small, precise steps, explaining, criticizing, remarking, her blue eyes behind their thin pince-nez glasses only a little faded.

Sometimes Judy looked out of the window instead of drawing pictures while Miss Warren explained. She would try at first to listen. But there were so many byroads to take in order to be quite sure about everything that long after the class had accepted a straight line as the shortest distance between two points, she would find herself trying to discover a shorter way by strange mental combinations of arcs and parts of squares, and the rest of the lesson would be a mist.

Because it was spring, the cube of sky with

its circular clouds would be blue and white and very clear. The trees would be misted with green, their trunks brown and alive. They were reaching toward sun, and you could look at them a long time and feel the spring in them before the edges of the picture blurred, and there was a face and words:

"Richard loves Judy, Richard loves Judy! Aw, Judy, Judy has a feller!" There he was, standing at the steps while she walked down; carefully, ah carefully, and slowly that he might not think she was hurrying for him. The hellos then, and the swinging into step, two of them together until they reached Judy's corner.

What did they say to each other? Sometimes she tried to remember, but the words were only a thin bridge between them. The fact, the unalterable fact, was their nearness. That was real. Their speaking was only an interlude.

Richard, I love you. I love you, Richard. The words became part of the pattern on ruled paper, headed "Geometry". They were lost in the scrolls and sweeps of the design. Richard had blue eyes, with silver in them somewhere. Richard had dark hair swept back from a point on his forehead. Not slick hair; soft, with a small curl near the temples.

There had been a few words though; words which stood out like flecks of sunlight on the dark mass of the tree. The way of their coming made little difference. They were there . . . said for all time, graven on air and in the minds of the two who walked.

"Don't you think Doris Baines is the prettiest girl in the class?"

"Well—no."

"I think she is. I think she looks like Janet Gaynor."

"You're prettier than she is. You look like—like Myrna Loy."

Oh all the singing in the wind, and the blinding whiteness of sunlight on cold cement . . . I am pretty. I am pretty. I have straight brown hair but my eyelashes are long and I look like Myrna Loy. This is a thing to think during the long hour of Geometry Class when the ticks of the clock are slow and the minutes lag.

There had been something else too. At Alice Fowler's party, after all the regular games had been played, they had sat in a circle, lights dimmed, to play Truth and Consequences. Forbidden game; two of the boys must stand at the door and watch for Alice's mother while the questions went around and the forfeits were paid.

Jerry was questioner. "Truth or consequences, Rick?" That was Richard, tilted back slightly in his chair, looking across now and then at Judy.

"Aw . . . truth."

The formula question. Judy's heart skipped a little. She felt as one would feel waiting for the announcement of a prize which almost certainly must be . . . and yet . . .

"In this room?"

"Yeah. In this room. And you got to say it out loud."

"Like or love?"

"Well—both. Come on, quit stalling."

"Judy then, I guess. Judy."

Then you looked down at your hands and heard the small wave of hushed laughter and the faint "Ah Judy!" and felt your cheeks become warm. And this was the kind of thing to hold very closely on an April afternoon while Miss Warren's voice said, "Now the isocles and the equilateral differ in these aspects . . ."

The pointer was poised over a figure on the blackboard. The girl looked past it, and simultaneously the woman, had any pupil in

the classroom been aware enough to watch her, ventured briefly away from the abstract boundaries of her exact world. A face—it was a man's face, a near face, supplanted square and circle, and the unreal supplanted drab reality.

He passed by the open doorway once, and she looked up, not seeming to see him. She had trained her voice carefully to mouth its dry words, even after her mind had long since ceased to follow. So too her eyes could move behind their walls of glass, while the children worked on, not noticing that authority remained before them in hollow shape alone.

There was only a small bit of gray in his hair and his shoulders were hardly stooped at all; nothing really professorial about him unless it were the faint, the very faint pinched look of his lips beneath the neat, small mustache. And he was well dressed always. Neatly, with no unpressed trousers or drooping coats. Clothes do make a difference, and one so seldom finds . . .

Strange that with the American History room just next door they had never discovered each other until—when was it? April now, March, February; that was the time. The streets had been slushy; she had worn her new hat because the sun had been shining vaguely, in the sort of false spring which comes to trouble winter.

February, March, April—it had been the hat, possibly. Rather a daring hat, with a veil. Mother had said, "Agnes, do you really think, at your age . . ." But thirty-eight isn't old (thirty-nine in May, but that isn't old) and when a woman keeps her figure. . . .

A coincidence that they should take the same bus. Coincidence the first time, yes. But not that they should keep on taking the same bus; walking to the stop together, waiting under the awning of MacElroy's drug store with its alternate window displays of toothpaste, notebooks and pencils, and shiny

bottles of the newest mild laxative. Not that they should ride back together every evening in the narrow leather seats.

He pulled the bell rope for her when they came to her stop. His own was three blocks farther.

He said, "Goodnight Miss Warren."

And she answered, "Goodnight Mr. Arkwright."

Arkwright. Arkwright. Agnes Arkwright. No, that was too alliterative. Agnes Warren Arkwright. Philip Arkwright, Professor of American History, Washington Junior High School.

Their conversation was very important. There must be no embarrassed little intervals of silence, no furtive glances out the window to fill a pause. She was thankful for his easy flow of words, his brilliant, decisive mind. Not didactic, really. She had thought so once, a tiny bit, but it wasn't really. For herself, she cared more to agree with him, to hear his comments about Roosevelt and the New Deal Administration and the Over-Taxation of the Rich, and Affairs in Europe. She could tell them to Mother at dinner, while they drank their tea, and Mother would approve silently. Such a well-informed man . . . but then, his subject required him to keep abreast of world affairs.

Somehow though, when they were finished, the conversations became a haze of words. Then the important thing loomed large: I have been sitting for thirteen minutes—from thirty-eighth street to Lyndale Avenue—beside a man. Beside Mr. Arkwright. The cut of his overcoat, the almost-newness of his gray hat. His eyes, looking at me, at me. Philip—oh Philip, the dry, the dusty winter has broken to April and the trees are budding. Philip . . .

These things, too, held her thoughts when the two o'clock Geometry Class faded to a background of pencil sounds and muted whispers. Then there were certain others to take

out of the closed box back of the mind, certain words to hear and hear again like a record played over and over tirelessly upon a phonograph.

"Mother objected so much to this hat. She thought the veil might be—oh—a trifle giddy."

The interested, critical glance. Impersonal, but . . . well . . . not quite impersonal. "No, I don't believe so, Miss Warren. I can't agree with that. As a matter of fact, it's very youthful and attractive. It suits you very well."

Foolish for a woman of thirty-nine to dream like a high-school girl. Foolish perhaps to look into the mirror and think: little lines around the mouth, but with the right makeup they don't show so much. And the hair . . . well, thank heaven I have always taken care of it. Neat, brown hair; it could be curled up like this, or twisted down like this, and on an evening, with a blue dress and flowers of some sort . . . very youthful and attractive my dear Agnes, my beloved Agnes; it suits you very well, darling.

There had been one thing more. Only one, but yet so much, so very much.

"You know, Miss Warren, I have always intended to settle down someday. To some men of course work is enough, and their friends, but to my mind a home is essentially the center of a man's existence."

And the blue April dusk had come, with its softened pattern of trees against sky.

This was the faint opening of the door so long closed. All the years of school, of teacher's college, of arithmetic classes in Glendive, of algebra classes in Hibbing, and finally Washington Junior High in the city . . . once on the city pay-roll you were safe, you could have a nice apartment and buy Mother a black silk dress and have a new spring suit (gray or light brown, please, but nothing extreme). You could lend brother

George's oldest girl the money to go through Business College.

And now Mr. Arkwright, forcing the years into their dull, unimportant pattern, leaving the future a breathless hope and the present a precarious heaven.

Now, looking out of the window . . . just glancing toward the window while the children twirled their tin compasses over their papers and bisected smudgy circles . . . there was something in the sky and in the trees. Something faint, half-felt, almost as if spring, true spring, had come again. The spring you might have felt at eighteen, only you were too busy typing lesson plans or drawing ninety-degree angles on a problem sheet.

"Children! There are ten minutes of the period left, and I expect you to work until the end of the hour. Quiet, please; there's no need to consult each other."

Almost the end of the day. Some teachers were leaving already; those who had half-hour classes or study-periods. Miss Macdowell was going, swinging her handbag on its ugly chain handle, faded black rubbers on her feet. There had been a time when Miss Macdowell used to wait for her at the thirty-eighth street entrance, and they would go home together. How long ago it had been, how long ago! And only Tuesday Miss Macdowell had said, with the quick upturn of lips which was her smile, "Well, Miss Warren, I see you have new company home now."

In a short time the bell would ring, and then . . . Miss Kitchener, eighth grade English across the hall, must have dismissed her class early. She was powdering her face as she stepped into the hall; how could she walk on those absurd high heels? She had a new hat, too. Black, with a small, frivolous veil.

Now he was in the hall again; coat on, hat in his hand. He would go slowly down

the front stairs and they would meet as if by accident at the office door.

"Going home, Miss Warren? May I join you?"

"Certainly, Mr. Arkwright. Just a moment while I look in the mail-box."

Afternoons were light now, and there would be sun outside.

She glanced at the clock and toward the door again. He had stopped near the room to fasten the straps of his leather brief case. Why should Miss Kitchener stand there, slowly pulling on her gloves? What a long while she was taking; buttoning them so carefully, and unbuttoning one again to pull it on more firmly.

When the first murmur of voices reached her—impossible to hear words—she still did not realize. It dawned slowly, slowly like a nightmare of darkness. And the heart of the blackness came when they walked away, together, his hand touching her arm slightly as they went down the stairs.

Through interminable seconds the room was still. The loud tick of the electric clock startled her back to consciousness of the room, the pupils, the moving, uncaring pencils. There was the window, and the spring turned suddenly brittle.

From the window, her glance moved over the class again. Motion, motion of compass, motion of book—and here one pencil silent, one book closed, one paper blank except for a confused scrawl of stars and wavy lines . . . ungeometric. One pair of eyes turned toward the outside.

"Judith!"

The sharp words snapped a dream's thin fabric. First Richard, Richard rescuing her from the impending wheels of a car. Richard saying, "I like you and I love you better than anyone in the world." Richard the hero, Richard the knight, Richard beside her, smiling at her. Then Miss Warren, snatching away the picture. Miss Warren, of a

piece with the blackboard and the chalk dust, her sure voice holding no knowledge of dreams or anything outside the diagrammed limits of the Geometry book.

"Judith, you have done nothing all period. You may remain after school and recite the memory work."

Then the sudden shout of the bell, the last bell, the scramble for books and papers, the rush for the door.

"May I go to my locker and come back, Miss Warren?"

How quickly the teacher looked up, almost as if she had forgotten her words and the class. "Locker? Very well, Judith. Five minutes."

Swiftly then, down the stairs, with no backward glance. Her locker was near Richard's. If she saw him, he might wait. It wouldn't be long . . .

"Judy!" Alice Fowler was standing at her locker, putting books in the upper compartment. "I saw Richard a minute ago."

Clear and beautiful name, even here in the wide halls, even spoken by red-haired Alice Fowler who smelled of the cinnamon gum she always chewed. Keep the voice casual and ask, "Oh did you? Where was he?"

"He was talking to Doris Baines. I bet he likes her now, Judy. He told her she looks like Janet Gaynor."

Like Janet Gaynor. Brown eyes and curly hair and a small indentation in her chin . . . the front steps would be bleak and bare, and

the walk home would be so long. . . . Why didn't Alice stop looking out of her small, wise eyes? Why didn't she smile or laugh or do anything but just look and wait?

"I don't care. I don't care. I have to stay after school anyway . . ."

You tried to beat the tears back going up the stairs. People would see, and people mustn't know. That was important. You stopped and took a long drink at the water fountain outside Miss Warren's door. Miss Warren would see if you cried, and Miss Warren would say it was silly. What did she care, with her big books and her glasses and the stiff white walls of her room?

She must be sitting in there now, waiting, prim and dull . . . ah false world, ugly, uncaring, bitter world behind its April mask.

"I'm sorry I'm late, Miss Warren."

"Very well Judith. Sit down and give me your book while you recite."

Hard now to keep the face stern, to force the ears to listen as this child recited the empty formulae which from now on must be life. For the moment she could wish to be in the girl's place, reciting there, her days marred by no sorrow more great than an evening after school. It was so hard to keep her lips in their firm line, thinking of the crowded bus and the long, dreamless days ahead.

"A—a hexagon has six sides, and an octagon has eight, and a decagon has ten and . . ."

"Go on, Judith. A triangle?"

Poems

Reprinted from the November Issue of COLLEGE VERSE

ELIZABETH SCHOENING

AT PARTING

To space and time, to length and breadth of day
We cede the conflict now, foredoomed to part;
Bound each to seek at dawn a separate way
And rest at dusk upon some other heart.
The severed wound will heal and both walk whole
And neither fare the worse for this small death
Which burned so little from the vagrant soul,
Which took so little from the steady breath.

So love, farewell. I swear the heart unbroken,
I swear the spirit free, and nothing lost
Save for the words we knew, the true words spoken,
Scattered and come to naught. This beauty's ghost
Must haunt the pathway of our loves forever . . .
Ashes from flame, and pallor after fever.

REQUIEM

The calm, incurious dead
Survey no luminous sky from where they rest
Lightly within the earth's promiscuous breast.

Shadows take leave of them.
Now, heir to heavy night alone,
They plead no liberty from fretted bone.

The least of us has known
The stark rebellion of a skeleton
Who will have none of thin, unbending grass.

Even this pain must pass
And leave the anguished watcher quieted,
Pale against earth his proud, defeated head.

Finders Keepers

JESS GREGG

MISS WINCHELL heard the front door close and slowly sank into a chair opposite her niece.

"Jannie,—whatever, whatever shall I do? Why, I haven't five hundred dollars to my name, much less five thousand."

The girl shook her head miserably.

"Oh, auntie, why don't you dismiss your boarders and let the old bank have the house. If we could get a smaller place to stay—"

The old lady stood up. Her face was like thin ivory held up to the light.

"No," she said slowly, "no, Jannie, I could never do that. Why, my grandfather built this house for his bride. My father was born here and so was I. All my life I've lived here. I—I just couldn't part with this house. I must, I just must save it."

She looked around the parlor and was warmed by the inexpressible feeling of home. Though it had the appearance of the showroom of an indiscriminate furniture dealer, she saw only beauty. The contents ranged from a Louis Quinze table, fabulous with cupids and vines, to a fumed oak Grand Rapids desk. What-nots, holding a lifetime of unguided bargaining, painted urns, wax flowers and souvenir spoons, crowded the corners. On the mantle, a moulting pheasant preened itself between two candelabra whose prisms were destined to be frustrated since little light managed to find its way through the thick lace curtains and velvet drapes. The wall paper, a combination of Victorian bad taste and the discoloration of time, offered a plethora of scenic oils, family portraits and lithographs hung in ornate cachets of dust. Only the chromium piped chair by the heater was out of place in her room. Its shimmering charms were regarded frigidly askance by the stiff, uncompro-

mising antiques. Miss Winchell resented the chair, too, but was forced to bear it, since its owner, her star boarder, insisted on its presence. She simply avoided looking in its direction when visually caressing the shabby doilie-decked plush furnishings she so loved.

"No," she repeated, "I could never part with any of this."

"Why couldn't you have told me of this mortgage before? We've got to think of something, Aunt Seraphina."

The little old lady waved a blue-veined hand.

"I was never one for mathematics, my dear," she said sadly, "so I just kept putting off telling you."

The two sat silently; even the rain seemed muted. Suddenly Jannie jumped up with a shriek.

"Seraphina," she cried, "we're saved. I've a grand idea."

Miss Winchell turned to the girl.

"Well," Jannie said, "he's awfully nice and he has some money. I know that."

"Who are you talking about, Jannie?" said the other.

"Mr. McGraw, of course. He's a bachelor, you know."

"For pity's sake, child, what are you suggesting?"

"That you marry Mr. McGraw."

Miss Winchell grew quite pink.

"Janet Henderson," she cried, "I think you listened too much to that yellow-haired female that used to board here. Mr. McGraw, indeed!"

"He has the money," reminded Jannie. "It's a choice between him or your house."

"But, Jannie, I know nothing of such things as—wooing." She sat down beside her niece.

There was contrast between the two. Jannie, a personification of today, was young and vibrant, impossibly impish, while Miss Winchell was a suggestion of the past. Her face was a ledger on which Time had somehow miscalculated. In spite of her seventy-one years, the old lady's face was but casually cobwebbed with age. She had no reason to look old, for her life had been a series of expurgated illusions—even her mistakes colorless and undramatic.

The young girl laughed.

"Come on now, Seraphina, you aren't so bad. Ask him down for tea. Have you got something pretty to wear?"

Miss Winchell's eyes kindled.

"My dear, my Paris dress. That's what I'll wear. Gold lace buttons sewed on bands of sealskin. I never wore it that my mother didn't remark, 'Its just like spreading butter on lard'. It's so rich looking!"

"Incidentally," Jannie offered, "couldn't you give him a present? Just to inflate his ego?"

"I've just the thing," beamed the old lady. "Something my grandfather gave me. That little bronze satyr's head containing an inkwell."

"Oh, auntie," the girl said, "every one of your tenants has had that piece of artistic indigestion thrust on them at one time or another, and all returned it. He'd hate it."

The old lady smiled vaguely.

"I like it," she said, and hurried from the room.

* * * * *

Miss Winchell minced downstairs a little later, swishing her bustle behind her.

"If the mothballs do smell," she thought, "he won't be able to smell them for his own."

In sheer devilry, she rubbed a fragrant rose leaf on each pale cheek and on her lips. Then she looked around the parlor. All was ready—the couch before the fire, the odor of fresh tea, the tension of excitement. She

felt young again and brazenly began to hum "Moonlight and Roses" as she heard the man descending.

J. Tippet McGraw was doubtless a nice man. Unfortunately, most people were unable to get beyond his moat of statistics to find this out. The man had a perfect genius for tenaciously conversing on the most obscure details of unknown facts.

"Do sit down here beside me, Mr. McGraw," the old lady said.

"Too drafty there, Miss Winchell. I'll sit in my own chair by the fire," he returned.

"Would you like some tea?" said Miss Seraphina.

"No thanks. Bad liver. Never touch the stuff, Miss Winchell," said Mr. McGraw.

"Oh, why don't you just call me—Seraphina," she said.

The man in the chair crossed his legs and uncrossed them again.

"And would you mind very much if I—if I called you J. Tippet?"

"Go ahead, if you've a notion to," he replied suspiciously.

"You know," Miss Winchell explained, "I wanted your advice, being as how I'm alone and without counsel. I thought to myself, 'Invite down Mr. McGraw. He's just the man to talk to, because he knows so much about so much, and—'"

She was interrupted as all of Mrs. Letha May Abbot entered. Her blue-black hair contrasted fantastically with her grey eyebrows and faded skin.

"I do hope I'm not disturbing anyone," she announced.

The old lady stirred uncomfortably.

"Why, Miss Winchell," boomed Mrs. Abbot, "all dressed up in a fancy outfit." She clacked her teeth, "How-do, Mr. McGraw."

She sat down between the two. Her chair gasped unhappily.

"Miss Winchell," she shook a brown-spotted hand, "I want to complain about

Hester. It's time you got a new maid. She's too old to work. Getting deaf and negligent"

"Hester has been with me a long time," the old lady explained quietly, "and while I'm here, she'll continue to be with me."

Mrs. Letha May Abbot blew her nose and stuffed a lozenge into her mouth.

"Don't stop your talking, folks, just because I came—"

Again the hall curtain rustled. It was Mrs. Humphry. Her face hung in perpetual half mast, the only animated part being the glimmer of her glasses. Behind them were weak blue eyes through which she looked, but rarely saw.

"I thought I'd come down where there was some warmth, seeing as how my radiator hasn't been fixed." She looked at Miss Seraphina and folded her lips as anyone else would his hands. "Don't mind me," she said, "Proceed with your conversation."

"Well, as I was saying, J. Tippet—"

Four eyebrows raised. Miss Winchell swallowed and crept into silence, conscious of the microscopic scrutiny of her two boarders. Mr. McGraw shifted unhappily and looked at his feet. The silence had an unbearable sound.

"I—I do hope the rain will clear up soon," Miss Seraphina quavered.

* * * * *

Jannie slipped into Miss Winchell's room that evening. The old lady sat by the window and was very quiet, but she wore her down-at-the-heel spirit patched with courage and coated with pride.

"Did he come to tea? What did he say? What happened? Did he propose? Oh, Seraphina, tell me all about it."

"Yes," she said, "he came to tea."

"Well, what happened?"

The old lady squirmed miserably.

"Well, he sat down and we started to talk. My dear, I hadn't gotten more than just

primed when that Mrs. Abbot intruded. Oh, how I dislike that woman! Always claiming that her sicknesses are better than mine!"

"Yes, auntie, yes, but what happened?"

"Well, I was hoping she'd leave, when who should come in but that Mrs. Humphry. As if that weren't enough, Colonel Phipps heard the talking and came along with his nasty old pipe. Well, of course, Mrs. Humphry and Mrs. Abbot got quarreling and when I tried to stop them, Mrs. Abbot became positively insulting. And, Jannie," she said, humiliation flooding her face, "Mr. McGraw didn't even offer to help me. He'd gotten up while I was quieting the two women, and—and gone off to his room."

The old lady blinked hard. There was silence except for the monotonous tread of the rain on the roof. Somewhere in the house, Hester could be heard proclaiming, "Dinnerzon!"

Miss Winchell kneaded her handkerchief.

"Oh, Jannie, I can't go down. I don't want to see that Mr. McGraw. I just can't face Mrs. Abbot. She'll be insulting all through dinner."

"We can take it, Seraphina," Jannie said. "Let's go down."

Miss Winchell sat at the table's head, a little thankful that she was the first to come. Then, hearing Mrs. Abbot's decisive footsteps, she drew herself up proudly.

"A Winchell can be strong," she reminded herself, without conviction.

The big woman hurried to her side.

"My dear Miss Winchell, I do hope I'm not late. You will forgive me, won't you, for my horrible tardiness," Mrs. Abbot stated in tones that could frost a cake.

Miss Winchell stared first at the towering Mrs. Abbot, then at Jannie.

"I imagine it will be all right seeing as how no one else has arrived," she said.

"Oh, I know," returned the other, "but as I used to say to Mr. Abbot, tardiness is never

forgivable. Incidentally, my dear," she confided, "do you remember that little inkwell—the one with the darling goat's face? Well, I should like to purchase it from you. It's rather dirty and not very useful, so I don't believe it's worth much. However, if you could find it immediately, I'd be willing to give you fifty cents for it, but you must hurry—"

"Wait just a minute, Miss Winchell. Don't you dare proceed. That little inkwell belongs to me. It was given me on my birthday, and for sentimental reasons I decline to sell it now." It was Ida Humphry.

She stared triumphantly at Mrs. Abbot, who stood hooded in wounded dignity. Miss Winchell rose, fighting back bewildered questions.

"Miss Winchell," called a voice that was immediately followed by a baggy red face and a contrastingly white mustache. "Miss Winchell, I hope you haven't listened to them. That little gadget belongs to me."

A withering chorus drowned him out.

"What is all this?" queried the old lady. "Why are you making so much fuss about my little trinket?"

"Especially since nobody wanted it before," said Jannie, suspiciously. "What have you got up your sleeves?" She looked at Colonel Phipps.

The Colonel cleared his throat, then cleared it again.

"My dear girl, no reason. No reason at all. I just mentioned I was in need of an inkwell, but these hussies beat me to it."

"You seem to be anxious to give your version, Mrs. Abbot," said the girl to the fuming woman.

"I came to claim that which is rightfully mine," boomed the big woman. "It seems besides nitwits and fools, we have liars and thieves here."

"Don't judge others by yourself, Mrs. Abbot," snapped Mrs. Humphry in cold

rage. "It so happens that the vase belongs to me. You shan't cheat me out of anything this time. Losers weepers, you know."

"Please, please, not so noisy. Now, what is all this?" cried the old lady.

"Maybe this will help you, ma'am." Hester, vapid and ageless, wiped her hands on her apron and gave Miss Winchell the evening newspapers.

"I haven't my spectacles. You read it, Jannie."

Jannie took the paper and skimmed over the open page.

"Holy Smoke!" she exclaimed. "A fine bunch of boarders you have. Listen to this, Seraphina:

"'Old Cellini plans found. Designs authentically signed by Benvenuto Cellini were discovered today in a London bookshop. Though it is doubtful whether they were ever created, scholars believe the golden ornaments were to deride certain enemies. This conclusion was reached after comparing sketches of the features on a grotesque inkwell (see cut) with the portraits of the Duke of Florence, Cellini's rival.'

"Now, get this," Jannie cried.

"'Note in the picture above how the Duke's features are cruelly caricatured into resembling a goat. The inkwell was to be sunken into the crown of this bodiless satyr which was supported by the rear legs of a dog. A haunch was to be attached below each ear, while goat-like whiskers formed the third leg of the tripod. It is believed that if actually executed, this priceless relic has been destroyed—'

The room was quiet. Very quiet.

"Why, that sounds just like my—Is that my—?" Again Miss Winchell rose in her chair. "What does this mean?"

"It does resemble our inkwell, but the paper says it's gold, and ours is only—well, it isn't gold," Jannie said. "Maybe it's just

a copy. Let's get it and see. Who has it now?"

There was no answer. Then the crowd, sullen and ruthless, began to talk all at once.

Jannie banged on the table.

"Listen," she cried, "unless we get some order, none of us will ever have it. Who has that inkwell now? Do you know, Seraphina?" The old lady shook her head. "Well, let's begin at the beginning and see who had it first."

"Let's see," said Miss Winchell, "Mrs. Abbot was the first of you to move in here. About 1930."

"Yes, and that year Miss Winchell gave me that knickknack for Christmas. You see? She gave it to me and I can prove it," boomed the woman.

"But, don't forget, my dear," cooed Mrs. Humphry, "that you gave it to me for my birthday after I had moved in a year later. She told me that she gave it to me because it was the ugliest thing she had ever seen. Guess she's sorry now," smiled Mrs. Humphry.

"What happened to it then?" asked Jannie.

"You gave it to me the next Christmas," put in Miss Winchell dryly.

Mrs. Abbot threw back her head and laughed silently.

"Can you remember what happened to it next, aunt Seraphina?"

"Why, I think I placed it in Mr. McGraw's room. On his dresser."

Mr. McGraw contemplated his feet unhappily.

"I was just going to say that," he said, "but folks, you're at your journey's end. I didn't like that ol' inkwell. It was too scary lookin' an' ugly, and I threw it away. I'm sorry, folks. I guess that's the end of that."

Ominously, the room closed in on him.

"I wondered why you didn't claim it like the rest of us in the beginning. It was be-

cause you knew it was lost. You hypocrite!" bellowed Mrs. Abbot.

"Miss Winchell." It was Hester. "Miss Winchell, I took that out of Mr. McGraw's wastebasket. It seemed such a waste."

"I knew I'd seen it since," said Jannie. "What did you do with it then?"

"Why, I set it in Colonel Phipps' room. He said he needed a pin box," said Hester.

"That's right," burred the Colonel. "And it—I—I—oh, my God! I'd forgotten." The Colonel grew fiery red, and began to edge toward the door.

"What's the matter, Colonel? What did you do with it?" said Miss Winchell. The Colonel, seeing no way out, sat down and buried his face in his big, red hands.

"I'd forgotten," he whispered. "I—I gave it to a lady."

"Who?" formed on every lip. Only Jannie said it, and the word seemed to echo around the room.

"I don't know who she is," rumbled the Colonel. The atmosphere grew tense. "She was our neighbor here a few years ago. Moved away since."

He glanced at the various faces and seemed to wilt.

"She wanted something for a rummage sale," he explained.

"A rummage sale! Hear that? A fortune thrown away at a rummage sale," roared Mrs. Abbot.

The Colonel sat down and mopped paillettes of perspiration from his brow.

"Colonel Phipps," began Miss Winchell, "I meant to ask you. How long have you been in the habit of giving my antiques to strange women?"

The Colonel ruffed his mustache and cleared his throat.

"Fortunately," she continued, "I belong to the same club as our late neighbor, and was present at that sale. I found my little knickknack deserted in the unsold section of

the booth. Everybody recognized it there, and I was embarrassed to death at its low position. So I bought it back for eight cents."

There was silence as Hester entered with the soup,—a gesture that was hopelessly disregarded.

"May I be so bold as to inquire what happened then?" questioned Ida Humphry, her pale hands at her throat.

"Yes," echoed Mr. McGraw, "what then?"

"Why, I believe it was next placed in the room of that yellow-haired woman who was here for a few weeks. That Miss Mary Smith."

"That creature with those dreadful red claws? I bet she stole it," offered Mrs. Humphry.

"Well," said Miss Seraphina, "she didn't exactly steal it—"

"What do you mean, auntie?"

"Well, she carried it off—"

"I knew it!" shouted Mrs. Abbot.

"Now, Mrs. Abbot," said Miss Seraphina, "Miss Mary Smith was a nice, quiet girl who never gave me a mite of trouble. Yes, she carried away the little goat—er—Duke-faced pot, but—Hester. Oh, Hester, bring me that lavender note in the hall table drawer."

A few minutes later the old lady unfolded a gilt-edged sheet, and read:

"Dear Miss Winchell: I am so sorry I carried away your vase accidentally. Though I did not have no use for it. I know what you must of thought, since so many of your boarders do steal towels and things and I know you must of thought I'd stole it. Finding it in my trunk, I gave it to the boy friend for a joke, but he says 'God Almighty, Babe, that thing gives me the creeps so send it back too sweet'. And so here it is. Now that I've returned it could you send me the black undies I left at your place. Thanks. Yours truly, Mary Smith."

"Wasn't that sweet of her?" smiled the old lady.

"She'd never have taken the trouble to return that if she hadn't cared about getting those black lace things again," announced Mrs. Abbot. She appropriated the letter.

"Phee-oo, it's perfumed like all get out. And say, if her name was Mary Smith, why is this paper embossed with the initials P. P.?"

"Skip that," cried Jannie. "What we want to know is where the vase or inkwell is now."

"Yes," said Mr. McGraw, "where is it now?"

"Do you know," said the old lady, "I really have not the faintest idea."

The doorbell smashed the silence that so suddenly fell. Hester ushered in several gentlemen.

"Miss Winchell, I presume?" said the leader, a fine-looking elderly man.

She bowed her head and rose majestically.

"I am J. D. Dartmuth of the Dartmuth Galleries—and these, my associates," he explained, and handed her his card. "Without beating around the bush, Miss Winchell, we are prepared to offer the owner, whoever it may be, top price for the Cellini inkwell, should it prove to be authentic."

Miss Winchell stared at the man and sat down.

"Are you surprised that we should wish to purchase so soon?" he said.

"I am astounded," said the old lady, "that you even knew I had it. I was not aware that anyone outside my household knew."

"Why, the town buzzes of it. An extra proclaimed its whereabouts not much after the evening paper announced the discovery of the plans."

Miss Seraphina glanced inquisitively at each person.

"Well," simpered Mrs. Humphry, nervously, "I told some of my friends of my good fortune, seeing as how I'm the rightful owner."

"And I phoned my lawyer to prepare for a fight," blared Mrs. Abbot.

"I acknowledge I, too, made several contacts concerning my claim to the inkwell," put in Colonel Phipps.

"And which one of you has the vase now?" asked Mr. Dartmuth.

"None of us," said Jannie. "It's lost again."

It was then that the door bell began to duel with the telephone for superiority. The parlor became quite crowded with strangers, and a court of confusion held sway.

After two hours of mad disorder, when the last person had been ushered out, and the telephone muted, Seraphina Winchell sat down in her chair.

"I just can't think what I did with it," she cried. "And those horrid newspaper men and collectors didn't help any either."

"We'll just have to go over every inch of this house until we find it, then," said Jannie.

And so they did. It was after midnight by the time they got up to the attic. It was there Hester found them.

"There's someone downstairs to see you, Ma'am," she said.

"Oh, Hester, I told you to turn away all visitors."

"Oh, but Miss Winchell, this is family," Hester protested.

They tramped downstairs to the parlor. A blonde posed on the threshold there. Eyes, faintly boudoir, embraced the room. Preposterous lashes fluttered in doubtful ecstasy.

"Why, it's Mary Smith!" cried Jannie.

"My family!" ejaculated Miss Mary Smith with dainty impartiality through each nostril. "I've come back to you." Carelessly she tossed an unbelievable monkey fur wrap upon a hook. "I've come back, dear Mother Winchell, to stay at your dear, cheery home once more. I do hope I can have the dear li'l room at the end of the hall again. My, how I've dreamed of returning here!" She

smiled confectionately. "The view of the dear back yard where the swallows fly, the comfy bed, the li'l desk, and even that darling li'l inkwell that looked like a goat's head. Can I have them all back again? Do say so. Do!"

It was only the entrance of a stranger that prevented Miss Mary Smith from being verbally crucified. He limped into the room, shadowed by two others. It was not his blue jowls that one noted first. It was not his elegantly cut suit, nor yet his diamonds. It was his shoes. Enormous, they ballooned from his razor-edged trousers in the conventional comic strip style.

"How yuh comin', baby?" he said. "Havin' any trouble?"

"Oh," smiled Miss Mary Smith a bit painfully, "folksies, this is Mr. Chipola. Toes Chipola. He's a art connasewer. Those gennulmen behind him are Mr. Spindretti and Mr. Mulligan."

Though she smiled again, there were unutterable things in her eyes.

"Miss Smith," began Miss Winchell.

"Miss Smith?" roared Toes. His big body shook. "Z'at the name you went under this time? Why, lady, this here's Paradise Parker, the friskiest filly that ever shook a sequin at an out of town buyer."

"Is this true?" Miss Seraphina fingered her lace neck piece.

"Yes, I am Paradise Parker. It's all true, Mother Winchell, 'cept he made me sound like a plain, common chorus girl. I usta be the Fan Dancer at the Club Satin," she said proudly. "But I'm allergic to feathers, so I've reformed. Now Toes is taking care of me, so I don't have to endure the low atmosphere of nite club life."

The people in the room looked doubtful.

"May I have the li'l room?" repeated Paradise.

Miss Winchell rose and somehow seemed very tall.

"Miss Sm—er, Parker, if you have come here to obtain the Cellini vase, your mission is in vain."

"Yeah?" snapped the girl. Impatiently, she pushed the coq feathers that dripped from her hat. "Do yuh hear what they're tellin' me, daddy? Are yuh gonna stand there an let 'em shove me around like a banana pushcart? I want my li'l inkwell again. Get it for Paradise, daddy-poppa."

Toes moved forward and looked at each of them with an unpleasant suggestion in his eye.

"Now listen, my jelly-chinned friends," he said, "I want that vase. An' what I want, I get! You see?" The last was directed to Mr. McGraw.

"Now see here," began Mr. McGraw, "I'm a taxpayer. I don't have to listen—"

"Ah, go button yer nose, you dried up li'l toothbrush," suggested Toes Chipola. And Mr. McGraw was silent.

"You see, we ain't used to doin' things by force. We jest tell people what to do, *and they do it!* Now we're goin' to buy that vase. And You're goin' to sell it to us for our price."

"And what is your price?" said Jannie.

"Not a sou more than three grand," he said.

"How much is that?" asked the old lady.

"Three thousan' bucks. Wassa matter? Don'tcha understand English?"

"Now, just a minute," said the old lady, "The Dartmuth Galleries gave me a much more attractive price. I'm sorry. I can't accept your offer."

"Wait jest a minute, Babe," said Mr. Spindretti.

"Maybe you don't get the drift. We want that vase. We made an offer. You're gonna take it."

The clock's monotonous message filled the silent room.

"Whatever shall we do, Jannie?" whis-

pered the old lady. "We need five thousand dollars to pay the bank."

"No secrets," cooed the blonde Miss Parker.

"Now," said Toes, "here is your money. I wanna receipt an' the inkwell toot sweet."

"I'm sorry, Mr. Chipola," said Jannie, "but even we don't know where the inkwell is."

"What do you mean?" Toes cried.

"Don't let 'em dish you that salami, Toes. They're jest tryin' to keep it from you," said Paradise Parker.

"It's true, though, Mr. Chipola. It's in the house here, we know, but where we haven't the faintest idea," assured the old lady.

"Okay, then me an' the boys here will search this dump until we find it. An' when we get done this place will look like the Fourth of July."

"I don't understand." But Miss Seraphina's voice proved she did.

"What he means is that he covers the place like a Scotchman lookin' for a penny. Tears the upholstery to pieces. Rips open mattresses and couches. Breaks open chests and desks. Gettin' at any place it may be hidden. If all your furniture gets smashed, it'll be your fault for not tellin' where you put it," said Paradise. "Isn't that so, Toes?"

"Yeah, but I don't think we'll have to. This little girl's goin' to tell us where it's hid, aren'tcha, cutie?" he said to Jannie.

"Take your hands off me!" the girl cried. And, in her fury, she stamped full on the swollen feet of Mr. Toes Chipola.

The eruption of Kracatoa was a pink tea-party compared to the roar that the injured man gave vent to. He hopped around the room, holding his foot in one hand, big tears sliding from his face.

"Oh, I'm so terribly sorry, Mr. Chipola. I really didn't mean to," cried Jannie.

"Say, lissen, Jannie," said Paradise, "his

own ma wouldn't dare to have done what you jest did. That man has got the sorest feet in seven counties, including the Bronx. You'd better get to your room, kid."

Toes flung himself into the chromiumed chair and rocked back and forth, caressing his swollen members. Suddenly, a flicker of light crossed the old lady's face.

"Now, Mr. Chipola," said Miss Winchell, "my grandfather had a rare old cure for sore feet. It worked wonders. Truly miraculous. Why don't you let me prepare it for you to soak your feet in?"

The big man merely nodded his head.

"If you think that's gonna prevent the boys from searchin', you're nuts," Paradise offered. "All you boarders get up to your rooms and no monkey business."

After watching them scurry for the stairs, she turned to the two men.

"Now, lissen, fellahs," she said, "if we can scare 'em enough, we've got 'em. They can't complain, once we got the receipt, and if we go about it right, they won't want to. Get the maid when she returns, and begin with the cellar. Don't miss a thing!"

By this time, Miss Winchell had returned.

"Hester is fixing the solution in the bathtub upstairs, and you can sit on the edge and soak your feet. But it may take a little while."

Paradise, Jannie and the old lady half pushed, half pulled the big man upstairs, and into the bathroom. There Paradise gently removed his bulky shoes and placed his feet in the thick, warm liquid in the tub.

"You must keep them absolutely quiet for the best results," said Miss Seraphina.

Toes Chipola did not answer. He sat silently on the edge of the tub, holding Paradise's hand, feeling oddly comfortable. He did not even move when a crash echoed remotely through the house.

"I guess the boys have started searchin' in earnest," said Miss Paradise Parker.

Several minutes later, Hester appeared at the bathroom door.

"What is it, Hester?" said Miss Winchell.

Hester pulled her outside.

"Oh, Miss Seraphinie," she confided, "you know that heavy crayon portrait of your cousin Henry? The one in the big brass frame? Well, it fell down. It's broke."

"But, Hester, how? Did those men do it?"

"No, Miss Winchell, I done it. They said maybe you hid it behind the picture, and so they boosted me up an' when I got hold of that heavy picture, I got awful shaky, an' I let go the picture an' it crashed down on those two men's heads, an' they lay there with their heads pokin' through the picture, jest like dead."

"Bravo, Hester. But they'll be wild when they awake, so we must do something quickly."

"I already done it, Miss Seraphinie. I got my clothes line and tied 'em up tight."

The two women looked at each other.

"Phone for the police, Hester," Miss Winchell cried, "Hurry!"

Hester clattered downstairs. She hated to admit it, but she was having the time of her life. She fairly flew to the telephone, and it was not until she had dialed that she remembered she had cut the wires earlier in the evening to stop the deluge of calls. Fortunately, there was a police station not two blocks away. Hester opened the door and started out. Then she saw something that altered her enthusiasm. She slammed the door and bolted it. Then, with studied hesitance, she parted the drapes and peeked through the window.

This time she was sure. There were some men pacing up and down in front of the house. There was a strange emptiness in Hester's stomach. This could mean only one thing. The house was being watched by Toes Chipola's mobsters.

Picking up her long gingham skirts, she fled up the stairs two at a time. At the bathroom door she motioned frantically to Miss Winchell.

"Whatsa matter, toots? Yuh look white as a snowman." It was Toes Chipola.

"Mr. Chipola, could I speak to Miss Winchell," the maid said.

"Anything you got to say, say it here," he suggested.

Hester hesitated. Then she looked straight into the eyes of Toes Chipola and without a single falter, said:

"Miss Winchell, the grocer wants to take the order now. He's on the phone."

"Say, what is this?" Paradise said. "It's nearly three o'clock in the morning. What's goin' on here?"

Hester tossed her head.

"Our grocer always gets our order at this hour."

Miss Winchell moved forward a pace. Her small hands fluttered about her throat.

"Hester," she said, "Hester, what did the—er—grocer say?"

Hester's bony chest undulated with the ebb and flow of excitement.

"The grocer can't take no orders tonight. He says it wouldn't be wise—not wise at all. But—er—he sends you a prayer. 'A guardian angel stands watch without,' he said, 'and will prohibit escape from the house of our Lord.'" She glanced at Miss Winchell who stood grafted to the spot. "You see," she said to the blonde, "our grocer is a very religious man and always ends his calls with a prayer."

"Say, what is this, anyway?" cried Paradise. "A religious grocer that calls up at three in the morning. Something's fishy in Finland. I'm gonna get the two fellahs."

She started for the door.

"Wait a minute, Lamb-pie, and I'll go with you," flourished Toes. He offered his

arm to Paradise. "Help me out of this mess."

Then a tidal wave of malignant astonishment crashed over his face. He looked at his feet. Then he tried to wiggle his toes. In panic, he attempted to tug his feet from the still warm solution. But it was no use. They were durably and steadfastly anchored in the firm, white mixture.

Then, from his voluminous chest, there issued a low rumble that gradually grew in bombilation and profanity. Could the expression of his face have been phrased vocally, it would have surpassed even the soul-smoldering curses he hung out to dry on the life line of Miss Winchell.

From under his shoulder he produced a gun, and turned to the old ladies, but they had disappeared from the room.

"Toes, honey," cried the blonde girl, "put down that gun and let me help you."

"Do you want to kill me?" he shouted. "That would ruin my feet forever. Just get those two old ladies. I'll fix 'em!" And, mad with pain, he began to shoot wildly in the direction of the departed women.

Miss Winchell and Hester ran into Jannie's room. There, huddled together, they heard through the din someone pounding on the front door downstairs.

Mrs. Abbot burst into the room.

"It's those gangsters," she said, her voice worn down to a whisper. "It's those mobmen come here to take us all for a ride. Do something! They've come to help their leader. We're done for."

"Well, we'll fight to the finish," said the old lady, and she actually looked as if she relished the big woman's terror. "Hester," she cried, "barricade the stairs. I'll get some weapons."

They ran down the hall and rapped at Colonel Phipps' door.

"Being a colonel," she said to the others, "maybe he'll have some firearms."

Getting no answer, they ran into his room. There was no one there. Someone had begun to break down the front door, while the pistol shots and shattering roars of Toes continued to reverberate through the halls.

"Colonel Phipps," cried Jannie, "Colonel Phipps, help us!"

A nose protruded from the closet. Baggy jowls and the white mustache of a very shaken Colonel soon followed.

"Colonel Phipps, lend us some of your guns quickly. Gangsters. Downstairs," called the old lady, breathlessly.

"Guns? Haven't got any," he said tremulously.

"Aren't you a colonel? Don't you have any of the army guns left?" Jannie cried.

"I was only a Kentucky Colonel," the man gasped, and ducked back into the closet.

The women bunched together again, huddled, clinging to one another. The crashes downstairs increased until the front door, at length, fell with a tearing roar.

"Grab something — anything heavy. We'll show these gangsters how we can fight," cried the little old lady.

"Not me," bellowed Letha May Abbot and she stuffed herself into the closet already well stocked with Colonel Phipps.

Now all was silent in the house, but they sensed the movement on the lower floor. Jannie turned off the lights, and crouched down by the barricaded stairway, a poker in her hand. Miss Winchell scurried by, armed with an umbrella, hoarsely whispering:

"Hurry, Hester. There's some in my top bureau drawer. Hurry!"

Slowly, with hesitation, a progression of squeaks intimated an excursion up the stairs. The three shadows at the top waited silently, the only sound being the labored breathing of the ascending party. Onward, upward, creaked the intruders. There was a muffled jolt, as someone marched into the barricade.

Then a circle of light played upon the furniture jammed there.

"What in the devil is this?" whispered a voice. A bewildered face poked over the pile.

In response to his question, Hester let out a wild cry.

"You'll find out, you murderin' gangster," she screamed, and with all her maiden force she flung the contents of a box of talcum powder into the face of the inquisitive one.

"Okay, gang," cried Miss Seraphina, grimly beckoning to her friends, "give them heck!" And she began to beat the sputtering head with her umbrella.

The stack of furniture was quickly knocked to a shambles, and a group of murky figures rushed through the gloom and grabbed the three women.

"Let us go, you mobsters," cried Jannie. "Take your hands off me." She kicked her captor savagely, and was rewarded by a yelp of pain.

"Say, what's the idea, anyway?" cried a strange voice. "Trying to make fools of the Law?"

"W-w-who did you say you were?" whispered the old lady.

"Well, we're sure not the W. C. T. U.," asserted the voice.

Jannie groped about the air for the electric switch string. The light flashed on, blinding everyone with its dazzling brilliance. There, amidst the tumbled furniture, stood blue-uniformed men.

"How did you get here? What happened to the gangsters waiting outside?" Jannie exclaimed.

"What gangsters?" said the man whose upper portions were blanketed with powder. "We been outside for the last four hours and we ain't seen no gangsters."

Miss Winchell and Hester looked at each

other and both had the same mad impulse to laugh.

"Heavens to Betsy," cried the old lady, "it must have been the policemen you saw, Hester. She thought you were Toes Chipola's men," fluttered Miss Winchell.

"Toes Chipola?" cried the captain. "Good God, is he here too?"

"Yes," said Miss Seraphina, "but he's using my bath tub at the moment."

"What do you mean?" said the officer.

"I mean he's in my bath tub. My maid and I made him a foot bath of Plaster of Paris which some carpenters left here," said the old lady.

* * * * *

Miss Winchell, Jannie and Mr. Dartmuth sat on the big sofa in the path of a broad streak of sunlight that burst through the newly opened window. The old lady still wore the elegant gown of her youth, and though she was tired, her face glowed with mirth.

"You know, I thought I would burst with merriment when they carried Mr. Chipola out. It really was worth tearing up the bathroom for. If only he had let them cut him out of the material, it wouldn't have been so silly. Why, he just wouldn't let a person touch that stuff. Insisted only his doctor could handle it so it wouldn't hurt. We couldn't locate the doctor so they just disconnected the tub and carried him downstairs in it."

The old lady laughed gaily and took a sip of her tea.

"I'm sorry the police I sent caused you so much anxiety, Miss Winchell," the man said. "Somehow, I had a hunch someone would try to pull something funny. Since everyone else has tried to get it from you, have you any proof that the Cellini inkwell is yours and yours alone?"

Miss Seraphina reached into the beaded bag she carried. From its depths she pro-

duced a torn sales slip marked eight cents, and the scented note of Miss Paradise Parker. These she handed to Mr. Dartmuth, who studied them with care.

"Just lucky I keep all my sales slips," she explained, "I have such trouble with my budget."

"Bravo, Miss Winchell. I have questioned each of the claimants but you are the first to back it up with substantial proof. Any court in the world would agree that you are the rightful owner of the Cellini inkwell. Now where is this extraordinary relic?"

The old lady looked at her niece, and twisted her bead bag as if to wring the answer from it.

"I'm sorry," said Miss Winchell, "but nobody knows where the little thing is." She tried not to look into his eyes, but eventually she was forced to face him.

"Have you searched every nook, every cranny?" he gasped.

Both nodded.

"Heaven only knows where it is now," Jannie said. "We haven't seen it for nearly a year."

The man looked sadly apologetic.

"Then I'm afraid that's that."

The hall curtains rustled and Hester tumbled in.

"Wait jessa minute, Dr. Dartmouse," she cried.

James Dartmuth stood still and looked first at the maid, then at her mistress.

"I got the inkwell," Hester cried. She stumbled forward and laid a grotesque object into the fluttering hands of Miss Winchell.

"Gracious to goodness!" exulted the old lady. "It's my little inkwell!"

She handed it to the man beside her. Without a word he examined the well, then picked up a letter opener and began to scratch at the thick finish of tarnish and shellac. Except for the gentle scraping of

the knife, all was silent. Then, as the sun rising from a bath of midnight, there came a glow on the murky surface of the object.

"Is it—is that," the old lady clutched his arm, "is it really the Cellini inkwell?"

He pointed to the streak of gold on the under side of the head. There, in thin but distinct letters, were the initials B. C.

Jannie gave a shriek and threw her arms around her aunt.

"It is needless to say," he said, "that this is one of the great art discoveries of our age. Where did you find this, my good woman?"

"Out in the kitchen," Hester replied. "I found it last night, but I hid it in my garbage pail till it was safe. You see, I been usin' it on my stove for the past year to hold burnt matches."

"Miss Winchell," said the man, after a bewildered pause, "may I present my sincerest gratitude to you and your friend. You will be rewarded by the thanks of all art lovers, as well as the more material remuneration from Dartmuth and Company. I have not yet estimated the value of the inkwell, but I can assure you that it will be quite an astounding figure. Incidentally, what do you plan to do with all of this money?"

The old lady sat down and smoothed out the folds of her old dress.

"I think I'll pay off the bank, dismiss my boarders and live in peace in my own home here. Incidentally, Hester my dear, you might go up and tell the people that they'll have to find another lodging. But do it kindly."

The afternoon was a parade of departing trunks and strained goodbyes. It was about three o'clock when Miss Winchell heard the knock outside the hall curtains.

"Come in, for mercy's sake," she called. "No one need ever knock there."

Mr. McGraw fumbled in. Indecisively pressed trousers bagged over shoes that wafted intimations of profuse polishing. He

was ill at ease and a net of perspiration covered his bald head.

"Miss Winchell," he said, seating himself in his chair, "Miss Winchell, you were sayin' somethin' the other day when Mrs. Abbot busted in. All about bein' alone and not havin' no one. Well, I been thinkin'—er—Seraphina, that you an' me—er—what I mean to say is, that you bein' alone and I bein' alone——" He mopped his face.

"Mr. McGraw, are you suggesting that we might become man and wife?" questioned the old lady.

The little man nodded joyfully.

"You're sure that you love me for myself, and not just because of my new fortune?" Miss Winchell continued.

Again, J. Tippet McGraw nodded.

"What is your answer, my love?" he mumbled.

Miss Winchell stood up. Mr. McGraw did likewise.

"Hester!" called the old lady.

"Yes, ma'am," Hester answered, miraculously near. She entered the room.

"What is your answer, my love?" repeated Mr. McGraw, a little louder.

"This is my answer," she said. "Hester, take that metallic excuse for a chair and throw it from the house."

The deed was accomplished to the horror of J. Tippet McGraw and to the extreme pleasure of the two old ladies.

"Say, look here," he grew quite red, "you can't treat my things like that. I'm an American citizen. I'm a taxpayer. I won't stand for that!"

Miss Winchell glanced at Hester and raised inquiring eyebrows. Hester nodded. The old lady leaned toward the little man, aquiver with the excitement of the wanton, and caressing each word, quavered:

"Mr. McGraw—er—do go button your nose!"

"IL PLEUT DANS MON COEUR—"

CHARLOTTE STRYKER

The rain changes tone;
Its fall—pianissimo.
The shadowy corners
Step up to the window.
I hear the wind stop
Its course through the sky.
Silence is audible;
There is a cry.

Quiet as the rain
And as secret and soft,
It comes from my heart,
Cry silenced so oft.
Unappeasable font
Fed through the years
Of unwilling, bootless,
Unsolacing tears.

Strong as a freshet
Loosed in its season,
I let sorrow fall
And know not the reason.
As bitter and deep
And endless as hell
Are the waters that flow
Up from this well.

SONNET

WALTER ROYALL

When carelessly we climbed the pasture hill
And freely laughed into the morning wind,
I never thought that Time would ever still
The trivial days that passed so slow and kind.
I sensed the spicy smoke of burning pine
That August fog had borne in from the sea,
And vaguely felt that in this manner fine
My world would move in sure serenity.
Then suddenly you turned and calmly said,
"How rapidly, my son, you've grown a man,"
And laid your hand upon my youthful head.
So on my bridge Time built its first wide span.
The fog still drifted, you were standing there,
But all my world seemed strangely new and bare.

Noel Coward—A Hymn to Nihilism?

PAUL TRAVERS

YOU ARE probably thinking that I am about to launch out on a table-pounding reaction against current opinions of Noel Coward. Check! I am about to do just that. First of all, to have an opinion of Coward you must be either a theatre-lover, English major or table-talker. If you are none of these, however, do not thumb your way to the next bit of art. I shall give you some opinions which will be, I warn you, one-sided, because I am oh, so heartily sick of the other side.

I shall not even mention "flash in the pan," or "He sinks into overelaborate beds resembling a heavily-doped Chinese illusionist," and there will be no references to "macabre degeneration" or "neurotic homosexuality." The guardians of the muse may murmur or shriek, "unimportant," "trivial," "tenuous," "thin", at everything lighter in theme than Dante's *Inferno*, but I am for Coward lock, stock and barrel. As a matter of fact, I am more for him than he is for himself.

To the crusty scholars who enjoy glooming over bits of historical biography, it will be interesting to note that Coward was born in Middlesex, England, at the turn of the century. At the age of eleven, before which he was educated privately, he made his first stage appearance. He played what we call "stock" for four years when he was somewhat older. After this he had jobs indiscriminately for six years, until the war interrupted his work. Service being over, he went back to acting; and more. He began to write and produce in London and New York. In this period of early twenties Coward wrote more than a dozen plays. All these come before *Design for Living*, *Cavalcade*, *Bitter Sweet*, *Private Lives*, *The Vortex*

and *Post Mortem*, which I will review briefly.

The title *Design for Living* is misleading. It has caused any number of people to associate Coward eternally with cocktails and decadence, because they believe the title to be dogmatic whereas it is, in truth, ironic. The play concerns Otto, Leo, and Gilda: three glib, over-articulate and amoral creatures who force their lives into fantastic shapes because they are unable to help themselves. They are so many moths in a pool of light, unable to tolerate the lonely outer darkness yet unable to share the light without bruising each other's wings. It is excellent entertainment and not much more, proving only that Coward is a first-rate playmaker. He wanted to do a play with the Lunts containing a bang-up part for himself, ergo, *Design for Living*.

Cavalcade is an epic, a panorama of English life over a period of thirty years. From the point of view of subject-matter and the overcoming of gigantic technical demands, *Cavalcade* stands shoulders above his other work. It shows Coward as a master of theatrical mechanics more than Coward as a master of emotional projection. The plot is limitless in its complexities. Coward's ard's painstaking care of detail, his close attention to logical sequence, and his final polish can be compared to the construction of a skyscraper. Each brick is perfectly in its place, covering the firm skeleton, resting on the unshakable foundation. Yet there is never a trace of strain, never a lack of balance. There is beauty in its very completeness. I apply a section of Jane's 'Toast to England' to the play itself. It has "dignity and greatness."

Bitter Sweet is a challenge to anyone hold-

ing the opinion that Coward occupies himself exclusively in the prostitution of society froth. Merely reading the play without prejudice and strictly on its own merits, it is impossible to doubt Coward's sincerity. Hardness is melted by the sheer beauty and emotional appeal of this piece: from the hardened critic who has worked himself up into a frenzy of artistic sophistication to the hardened theatre-goer who is impervious to stage tricks and forced tears. There is enough bitterness in this play to give the heart a tug. The sweetness is never sugary but gentle, intoxicating the senses.

It presents a splendid opportunity for offering two personal ideas concerning Coward which may be helpful in understanding the man. Both, although conjecture and unanswerable, are to my mind highly significant in that they throw light on his temperament. First, *Bitter Sweet* shows us that, in addition to being a playwright, Coward is a musician,

a director, (we must not forget his established position as an actor) and a lyricist. Since I am not at liberty to exhaust the argument of this condition, I want to lay heavy emphasis on one question: Is this an advantage or a drawback? Second, *Bitter Sweet* so recalls a long-cherished idea of mine that its author has much in common with another artist, that I am unable to resist comparison. Chopin and Coward seem to me to have strikingly coincidental attitudes. Consider Chopin's waltzes and scherzos, Coward's comedies. Similarly, Chopin's sonatas seem to be of the same stuff as Coward's serious plays. This comparison is taken up under *Bitter Sweet* because the play so forcibly brings to mind the mood and color of the Chopin Nocturne. The personalities of the two artists are undeniably alike. They are fundamentally sad men. Both have vast knowledge and resourcefulness in their arts, with a firm grip on their materials and the

OL' JUDGE ROBBINS

THIS IS ONE OF THE TWO ORIGINAL ORANGE TREES PLANTED IN 1873!

GOODNESS, THEY HANDLE THE ORANGES AS THOUGH THEY WERE MADE OF GLASS

YES, MISS CHUBBINS, THE BOXES EVEN HAVE ROUNDED CORNERS INSIDE TO PREVENT THE FRUIT GETTING BRUISED

GOLLY WHAT'S THAT QUEER-LOOKING CONTRAPTION?

IT'S A TRAVELING BURNER THAT CLEARS THE BRUSH OFF THE GROUND

HERE'S HOW AN ORANGE TREE STARTS, CHUBBINS. THEY GRAFT THE BEST TREE STOCK WITH THE BEST ROOTS TO IMPROVE THE FRUIT

THAT'S RIGHT, JUDGE, AND I SEE YOU'VE HAD SOME EXPERIENCE WITH OTHER IMPROVEMENTS ON NATURE, JUDGING BY YOUR TOBACCO

WELL, I GUESS YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO HOW THE PRINCE ALBERT FOLKS TAKE CHOICE TOBACCO AND MAKE IT EVEN MILD, MELLOW, AND TASTIER

YES, PRINCE ALBERT MEANS REAL PIPE-SMOKING WITH THE NO-BITE PROCESS AND CRIMP CUT AND IT'S GOT REAL BODY WITHOUT HARSHNESS

THERE'S ONE SWELL FRATERNITY ALL PIPE FANS SHOULD JOIN—THE PRINCE ALBERT JOY-SMOKERS. THEIR MOTTO IS —P.A. FOR GOOD PACKING, SMOOTH DRAWING, MILD, YET TASTIER, SMOKING!

PRINCE ALBERT
THE NATIONAL JOY SMOKE

SO MILD!

50 pipefuls of fragrant tobacco in every 2-oz. tin of Prince Albert

P. A. MONEY-BACK OFFER. Smoke 20 fragrant pipefuls of Prince Albert. If you don't find it the mellowest, tastiest pipe tobacco you ever smoked, return the pocket tin with the rest of the tobacco in it to us at any time within a month from this date, and we will refund full purchase price, plus postage. (Signed) R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, Winston-Salem, N.C.

skill of fluent expression. When they are not heavy, I dare to say that both are unequalled. There is obvious evidence of laborious and fruitful re-writing, grinding to smoothness, working out each squeak, and applying the final gloss. Their work gives the impression of bubbling water over shiny pebbles, rushing pell-mell but with carefully restrained boundaries on the outskirts giving it definite form. Both are so illusive under their bronze technique. Now they dance for you,—and they take pleasure in watching their own pirouettes, mock arabesques (sometimes they cut a sudden, grotesque caper, startling and charming); then, before you know it, they have skipped behind you, thumbing their noses at you. And even if you are quick enough to catch them at it, you know it is all in fun and it is impossible to take offense. But then there are stretches of beauty, stillness, complete understanding, that at once exhilarate and calm you, and puzzle your brain. And the last likeness cannot be overlooked. Both give tremendous satisfaction in the actual architecture of their work. Each has the two elements which bring his workmanship to its highest effect—that instinct, taste, or intuition, and that sound, heart-felt (and head-felt) experience in their trades.

Both have the imp in them. This leads people to believe they lack dignity and scope so that they are pigeon-holed neatly and smugly with, "Oh, they have their place but, etc." The answer is, "Yes, they have their place, but their place is not with the tin gods. They are living men, in the richest implication of the term."

To convey the mood and texture of *Private Lives* it will suffice to say that it sustains the polish of dialogue, emotional impact, and, generally, the sound dramaturgy established by *Design for Living*. And, although the characterization falters (Coward, here, is unmerciful toward his secondary characters) the play has some definite ideas about marriage

which are worth considering. Hence, it transcends the sheer entertainment category. Do not presume that it is superior work because of that, however.

The Vortex and *Post-Mortem* are "problem plays." Here are overwhelming attacks on motherhood (in *The Vortex*) and war (in *Post Mortem*). The temper of this work is like terrible unheard music, atonal, clawing "au fond de l'ame," with crashing, dissonant chords and chromatic passagework in the minor. Find me that effete gentleman in dinner jacket—"brittle", "gossamer", "iridescent". Here is a transfiguration! He has become monstrous and overpowering! There is a touch of hell-fire in his mirth. He is vehemently intolerant, passionately sincere. He renders these unofficial criminals excessively uncomfortable by his sudden harangues, refusing to stop for any consideration whether of courtesy or forbearance. There is something heroic in his snarls and rages. He is swift, sure, undeniable. You feel a murderous white-heat against "Those brave women of England who are proud to give (to war) their sons, husbands, lovers and even their photographs." He sets off a blaze. We are at the rock bottom of Coward's purpose and method. His purpose is to make a human being of you. His method is, in comedy, to embarrass you, shock you, kid you into it; in tragedy, to inspire you, shock you, bully you into it.

GROVER MORGAN Jeweler

COMPLETE LINE OF
Hamilton and Elgin Watches
Parker Pens
Ronson Lighters
COLONIAL STORE PHONE 402

FOR SATISFACTION

The

MARMALADE

Restaurant



First National Bank Bldg. Orlando

WE WELCOME ACCOUNTS OF STUDENTS

FLORIDA BANK

AT

WINTER PARK

Member Federal Deposit Insurance
Corporation

Compliments
of
John Epperson

Ray Greene

Rollins Alumnus

REAL ESTATE BROKER

Tel. 400

100 East Park Avenue

THE BOOKERY

WINTER PARK, FLORIDA

NEWEST BOOKS REPRINTS
PLAYING CARDS STATIONERY
BRIDGE SUPPLIES
GREETINGS CARDS ETCHINGS

Telephone 282-W
252 E. Park Ave. Winter Park

Bennett Electric Shop

242 E. Park

Phone 79

HOUSE WIRING

PHILCO SALES AND SERVICE
ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES
OF ALL KINDS

Phone 29

Winter Park Electric Co.

138 E. Park Ave.

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS
REPAIRS RADIOS

Chesterfield

*Let me wish you
MORE
PLEASURE
for '38*

