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Flamingo

Flamingo

LITERARY QUARTERLY

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Flamingo

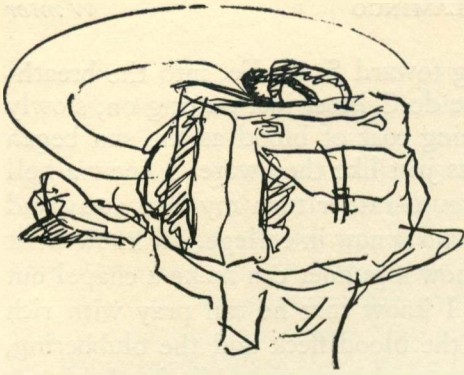
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EDITORIAL

The past few issues of the Flamingo have been built around fiction and poetry. In this issue, we have included some writing of a different sort. We believe that good, clear writing in a theme-type piece is as desirable as the same in a plotted yarn. You will find, among the stories in this Flamingo, some non-fiction which we found to be most satisfying. We regret that we had to turn back so many good manuscripts along this line, and hope that in the future there will be room for more.

D. W.



A JOURNEY ENDS

BILL COLLEY

I WAS on my way to see a girl in Santa Fe, and it had been a long time. Seven years and one war since I had said good-bye to her in Santa Fe.

The war—seventy-four missions and all the fabled things which had happened to me since I'd stopped flying and took my discharge in Europe and went with the State Department—seemed incredible to me. How could anyone ever come back to the States after all that, much less after seventy-four missions? The time had gone rapidly on the other side. It was only when I returned to the leisurely pace of a fat, rich land happily thinking itself still at peace and saw again half-unfamiliar scenes, that I realized I'd been gone a long, long time. How could anyone step off a DC-6 in Santa Fe and quietly take a taxicab to La Fonda Hotel after having been over Europe seventy-four times and trouble-shooting ever since?

I was doing it though, I'd thought. I'm home in Santa Fe. And I was not being sentimental when I said that it was damned good to be there.

I was just like them now; I mean all those others I knew in training just before I went overseas seven years ago—the exotic GI's with many missions, with their wings, their rainbow service ribbons, their medals and the quiet, easy way they had about them. They'd say: "You'll get your chance, kid." "Yeah, it's kinda rough up there." I'd wanted someday to be wordless, humble and friendly with some other eager kids the way they were with me. How far away it had all seemed then, the ribbons and the quiet, easy manner. How far away it all seemed now; seventy-four missions, one war plus five years later.

And now I was riding toward Santa Fe, into the breath-taking shelter of the Sangre de Cristos, just putting on, slowly and sensuously, their evening coat of blood as the sun began to lower behind me. I was just like they were: I knew a hell of a lot of things, but I would rather turn my face away and ask about your little sister who is now in college. I know what flak is like now. I know how a gunner can make a chapel out of the Sperry lower ball; I know that he can pray with rich eloquence. There is also the blood-fleck and the blubbing, steel-given death of the nice guys who were hilariously drunk with you a few nights before. And I knew other things, too; the despair of thousands who saw the dream of peace which alone had sustained them through years of anguish slip through their parched fingers. I knew the heartbreak of those who clung to an ideal because all else was dead, those who saw the practical nature, whose hearts were untroubled by abstractions desecration of that ideal by those whose affairs were of a more and concepts. And I had learned and knew the headspinning alliances which "peace" had forced on those who still believed in it. Strange bedfellows: allegiances which had turned friend into enemy, traitor into brother, lover into stalking killer. And now I was seeking my peace where it had begun and where it had been snatched from me.

I was looking at Santa Fe. My taxi driver was a maniac at the wheel, as all taxi drivers were. He was doing forty-five miles an hour through this narrow city street. On a street in Berlin five years ago he would have been listening for the menacing wail of the air raid sirens.

"Here you are, sir," the *hispano* taxi driver said in that soft, gentle manner of those people of the Southwest which I had almost forgotten.

I got out, I paid him, I walked into the beautiful, dark-waxed, tiled Santa Fe hotel and I got a room. It was a room on the third floor with a balcony. My stuff was all unpacked and I stood by the balcony looking out. I stood looking at the plaza and the golden cottonwoods shimmering in the last flamboyant gesture of a dying sun. And I saw only the face of a nun.

My girl Charlotte was a nun now. We were going to be married, but something struck her, some kind of spiritual

revelation. And now she had gone off and become a nun.

She was here in Santa Fe now, in some kind of a convent, and I was on my way to see her. I had figured years ago that the seventy-four missions wouldn't let me see her again; and later, if not that, most any of the occupational hazards of working abroad. I had been almost sure of it, but here I was in Santa Fe looking out a window.

The de Vargas Hotel was over that way. On the other side of it, about four stories high and facing the plaza and the old Governor's Palace there was a little wooden balcony. The night of my college senior prom I had thrown highball glasses into the plaza. I liked to hear the tinkling clatter of the glass against the cobbles and I had wanted to do it again.

"Bill, come inside," was all Charlotte had said.

I went inside. I loved her greatly, more than even the sound of breaking glass, and I always did what she said.

The lights were beginning to come on around me. Over there to the right was Tesuque. We had liked that place very much. Before I had left, Charlotte and I used to walk all over its narrow streets in their semi-dark, lit only by an occasional stray carriage lantern hung from the warm adobe walls. We had known all the places—the quaint, cobbled, snaky alleys, the huddled coffee nooks where you could drink thick Mexican chocolate and dance the Varsoviana, the little barny theater where you could see plays for twenty cents, the old tired doorways leaning against one another, tolerant of anyone after three centuries of passersby. We'd used to sit in those doorways, on the worn granite steps, at midnight, on our way home; I used to kiss her there a lot. We'd pretend we were locked out, and sometimes we'd yell loudly for Maria or Pepe. If anyone came to the door we'd jump to our feet and run like scared rabbits all the way down the hill to the bus station.

And there, farther out, was Pojoaque. That's where I used to live; that's where Charlotte had lived. Our museum wasn't far from there, either. In the summertime I would come up from the university at Albuquerque to work in the Anthropology Museum and Charlotte worked in the library there. There was a sun-baked clay rectangle back of the big, pueblo-style museum building, and there the half-wild Mexican kids from the sagebrush foothills would come and watch us work on our pots and charts in the sunshine. Sometimes they would bring things they'd found to show us.

Charlotte wouldn't say a thing when I came in in the morning, usually an hour or more late. Sometimes she'd pretend she was peeved and would go on with her cataloguing with frowning intensity. Sometimes she'd bring some of her work out in the sun back of the museum. She'd sit there in the sun at a ridiculous little camp table wearing a colossal Mexican straw hat, and she'd prattle merrily but exclusively to the flashing-eyed little children gathered curiously about her feet.

I would keep teasing her. I'd roll a stone over to the kids near her; I'd have the kids trot over with notes asking for stacks of unnecessary reference books with "I love you" scribbled on the bottom of each. I'd manage to trip over her little table and scramble the cards while helping her retrieve them. After awhile she would burst out laughing and come after me with a stick, a shrill chorus of voices urging her on.

It was on that ground, too, that I really became infected with the planes. The P-38's would go over at about 12,000, and I'd stand up from my shards and crane my neck until the planes were little silver winks way out to the west.

I never knew about Charlotte leaving me then, but I did know that someday I was going to be up there in a plane.

About 4:30 in the afternoon we used to quit for the day and lock up after all the rest of the staff had left. That was when Charlotte and I played our own little game. I'd go in the front door of the museum and she'd go in the back. We'd slam the doors and run quickly toward each other.

I would take her in my arms, then I'd kiss her hair, her eyes, her lips and the very tip of her nose. I'd hold her close in my arms and we'd talk about being married and having a little place in Taos of our own; we'd wonder what our children would look like and if they'd be scampering off to a place like this every day.

Then the kids would start banging on the door and hollering for us to come out. We would kiss a few more times and walk innocently out to them, and they never said a thing about the kissing, even though they knew, as all kids know. Then they would escort us part of the way home.

That was the way it used to be. It was a good way to be living and loving. It had all changed long ago. I opened the door to the balcony and gazed tenderly at the glowing

city intent on its night activity and sniffed in the heady incense of pinon fires set to ward off the autumn's first chill.

Well, anyway, I was going out to the convent to see her and I'd best be on my way. It was a place near the Cathedral School which was only a short ride from the hotel.

A girl who used to double-date with Charlotte and me wrote to me shortly before the end of the war when I was in France. She said she'd seen Charlotte and that Charlotte had told her to tell me that if I ever came back to the States I was to be sure and make a visit to the convent. I wrote the girl and said I would.

I was in a taxi again, rushing across the little, arched bridge over the Santa Fe River. The State House and the new Supreme Court building were off to the right as we turned and went very fast up Canon Road.

The taxi turned off into Acequia Madre and climbed up toward the convent at the top. It was soft, warm adobe, almost white in the early moonlight and it had a high adobe wall around it. It was low and rambling and there were those curved, hand made red clay tiles all over its roof and on the top of the adobe wall.

I entered the low gate and crossed the still, silver-flecked patio and rang the little front-door bell. You only ring once in a convent because that ring, however slight, is amplified by the silence and the distance that fills the inside of the cloisters until the ring becomes something like an echoing clap of thunder.

A little nun let me in. I asked for Charlotte. Charlotte's nun name is Sister Felicitas. I pretended I didn't notice, but I saw the little nun who let me in eat up my masculine strangeness and the curiosity of my definitely non-western appearance. I went into the whitewashed parlor and waited. There is always a large wall clock in that kind of parlor, and it always says: "Wait, wait, wait." It says this over and over again. You heard a door softly open and softly close way off in a cool interminable distance. You knew then that someone was coming.

Charlotte came into the parlor.

She was just as I had imagined she would be. Her face was white, her eyes were sparkling, brown pools of goodness and mischief, the backs of her hands had little red and creamy blotches as though she had done a lot of dishes and scrubbed a lot of floors.

She was all swaddled up as I was afraid she would be, wound in endles and oppressive bolts of black cloth; she wore a tremendous white starched collar and a black veil over her head. But she was my Charlotte, all right, she was my Charlotte.

She stood in the middle of the room and looked right at me for about a minute.

"Hello, Charlotte," I said.

She didn't say a thing. She walked over to me and took hold of both my hands; she came up as close to me as a nun can and squeezed both my hands until they stung.

She stayed close to me for a long time it seemed. She eased the pressure on my hands and looked strongly at me so I could see that everything was there just as it had always been; all the love and light and music were there for me in just the way they used to be, and even though those things were someone else's now, I could somehow see and know they were still mine, too.

"Oh Bill," she said, and her eyes were a little wet, "I'm so glad, so very, very glad to see you. Let me look at you."

She stepped away from me, and I noticed that her step, as light and graceful as ever, was now a swish instead of a swirl as it had been once. A girl had become a nun. An elfin skirt had become a ponderous petticoat.

"My, what a handsome man you are! I can't believe it's been so long, it's like yesterday. You seem taller, though, straighter, and the little bit of gray hair. It looks nice. But it *has* been seven years, almost eight. Bill, you're really a man now, aren't you!"

"Am I, Charlotte " I gulped, fumbling desperately for words. "Wasn't I one before?" I finally asked.

"Of course you were," she said, "but you were a boy's man then, Bill. You're a man's man now. The kind I always knew you'd be. But come, let's sit down."

We sat in separate, straight-backed wooden chairs. Those chairs were cold, unyielding symbols of poverty, chastity and obedience. We sat in them a while and, although she did not come right out and say it, I thought she wanted me to talk.

But I didn't want to talk. I wanted to be with her, to be near her, to hear her voice and watch her eyes. I wanted to sit with Sister Felicitas and think about my Charlotte.

She guessed that I didn't want to talk.

She said she liked it there; she had prayed for me night and day; she was happy teaching fourth grade to the Santa Fe urchins; she was proud of me and told the kids in her class stories about me all the time; she had read everything in the Albuquerque *Journal* which someone sent her, and she didn't care if I never uttered a syllable about airplanes or my post-war world.

I had not changed greatly, she said; the impudence was still in my face, along with the lop-sided smile; my eyes had a distance and age in them that weren't there before; I was not as loquacious but—"Glory," she said, "things have happened!"

I had had enough of looking at her. I began to ache for her like when I was away. I began to want her in my arms, and I knew that it was time for me to go.

I said I had to be going. We stood up. She looked at me a while and took both my hands; she made them sting again.

"What happens now, Bill?"

"They're sending me on to Indo-China as an observer. I'm on my way to the coast now. I don't want to go, but you just go, that's all.

"Well, I suppose this is good bye, Charlotte. I hope you'll be very happy, kid." She hadn't heard me call her "kid" for a long time..

I turned to go.

"Wait," she said quickly. "Come into the Chapel with me, Bill, and we'll say a prayer together. It's down here."

We walked down the dark hall toward the Chapel.

"You can leave me inside. You can go out the front door of the Chapel and into the street."

She hesitated a little, then she said quietly, "I love you, Bill; I'll always love you and I'll pray for you constantly all the days of my life."

She turned away quickly and moved to a pew at the opposite side of the chapel. She began to pray.

I knelt down and prayed, too. I said I was sorry for not wanting to come back from my seventy-four missions, my war and my life these past long years. I thanked God for bringing me back even though I had not wanted to come. Thanked him, for now the years ahead would not be so bleak

or so lonely. I got up and took a long look at Charlotte. I quietly let myself out of the Chapel into the street.

The pungent smell of the pinon fires settled over the still night which had the crispness of a first frost. The moon moved with regal slowness behind the embrace of a waiting cloud. I turned my collar up and slowly descended the hill toward the lights and my hotel.

DESPAIR

I'm walkin' the weary road,
I'm walkin' the dreary road
To an empty bed
And a lonely room.

My heart's an aching load.
My body's a heavy load.
The fire went cold
When my woman left.

My throat's gone dry
And I've got a thirst.
The sun is hot
And my eyes are moist.
I'm alone now
'Cause my gal is gone.

She left me this aching load
She left me this heavy load
She left me this narrow road
Leavin' the buryin' ground.

All I can feel is this achin' load.
All I can see is that dreary road.
My heart's been torn
For the gal I mourn.

So I'm walkin' the weary road,
To my lonely room
And the empty bed
'Cause my gal is dead

Jerome E. O'Brien

Editor's Note:

The essay printed below is one of the winners in the 1951 Reeve Essay Contest. In this competition, the contestant choose to write upon one of a number of given titles. We have chosen to print this particular one, not because we are in whole-hearted agreement with the views presented, but because we like its lively quality, its fresh outlook on a perennial question, and because we think it makes darned good reading.

DO THE GREEK LETTERS SPELL SNOBBERY ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUS

DAVID ESTES

Do the Greek Letters spell "Snobbery" on the College Campus?

Are fraternities and sororities guilty of snobbism?

Oh, mister, what a title *that* one is!

That title—that clever, tricky, wicked title—should make anyone who really reads it see all the colors of the rainbow and the venom in the clouds beyond. That title is loaded to the eyes. It's loaded to the ears.

It's like the naughty, nasty use of statistics when statistics become euphemisms, the statistics that congressmen and women and advertisers and phonies use to sell any kind of a bill of goods.

Which sounds better? "80 per cent of the men in America are faithful to their wives," or "20 per cent of the men in America are unfaithful to their wives." One of those statements has a negative idea in it, an unpleasantness, a foul taste implying that we should all run right out and arrest the unfaithful men in this country, throw them into jail, cut off their heads—anything. The other statement doesn't read nor sound too badly. You can take it or leave it. Nobody has to do anything about it, really.

But put the negative idea in a statement, in a question like "Snobbery on the college campus," and the answer is already inferred. A man would have two strikes against him before he started if he blurted out a fast "No—no! Greek letters don't spell snobbery."

So O. K. The title is loaded. It gives the answer before you begin.

Frankly, though, it makes me think that the little number who arranged those words that way must be pretty well disgusted with fraternities and sororities, maybe because he or she was never bid by any decent one, maybe because he had to settle for a lesser bunch, or no bunch at all, and the social slight has rankled him all the rest of his life.

(You see, anybody can play that kind of a game. Just dig the other fellow between the ribs, and keep digging at him, and digging, until something gives. Something's always got to give.)

But the loaded question doesn't deserve the answer it wants. Actually, and you don't have to give much thought to it, the ultimate answer would be something along this order: fraternities and sororities turn out a yearly crop of snippity little snots who go through their lives being anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic, anti-foreign, selfish, useless, American snobs; so let's do away with fraternities and sororities and replace them with a lovely Utopian college campus, oozing with sentimentality and love for all. The answer would be couched in psychological goobledegook and case histories and highfalutin' nonsense.

Some drip will play the game that way, right down the alley, right into the clouds where the question wants him.

Of course, that's the next step in that title. Beat you with bumptious bias and then lay you gently aside where honey-bun wants you. And honey-bun will have you unwrapping lolly-pops next.

What does that mean? It means that there are some who want and are working for a great levelling off in this country. There's a great effort to stylize, to mass produce similar models, to steamroller the boys and girls flat, down, alike, sub—sub anything you want. Just sub—meaning under. The little number who does away with Greek letter snobbery will do away with initiative next, and then ability and talent after that. Just level it off so we're all in the hodge-podge together, but where nobody can do anything about it.

I said Greek letter snobbery, didn't I?

It seems I've admitted that the Greek letters spell snobbery.

Now, really. The thing shouldn't get out of hand. A dope knows it. If a dope knows what snobbery is he knows the rest.

Cadillac cars spell snobbery.

The First Families of Virginia spell snobbery.

So does The Country Club in Brookline, Massachusetts.

And Cat Cay in the Bahamas.

And the Benevolent Order of Fraternal Monks.

And the CIO and the AFL.

And the Union League in Philadelphia.

And the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

And the Women's Club of Winter Park, Florida.

And the Democrats.

And, bless them, the Republicans.

Why go on?

They do it by their very nature of restricted membership; they do it by the perpetual renewal of affectations and mannerisms, some accepted as the years go by, some of which are questioned, dropped, while the new ones are being added.

Now one thing to keep in mind. This isn't going to turn into a whitewash of fraternities and sororities. But opposed to snobbery there are such things as fellowship, friendship, taste, judgment, teamwork, cooperative living.

I've often wondered why this thought never occurred to college Deans: the most severe critic of a college undergraduate is another undergraduate. Have you ever heard a group of girls talk about another girl? And it doesn't matter whether they're leaders or not. Let the ringleader, the really big wheel, as they say—let her leave the room and later turn the discussion back to her. And hold your ears. Same thing. It doesn't matter who she is, or what.

The act would be the same within a group of male undergraduates. They might be less harsh. Not much, though.

So if you had a mixed group of undergraduates, off on a big Saturday afternoon-evening party, with all the booze and beer they could drink, with all the opportunity to misbehave—and some attitudes toward *that* are worth a thousand laughs—but if you led them to the den of iniquity and left the door wide open and said, go to it kids, have a whirl—then it would still be the keen, painful, accurate criticism of each other that would keep them out. They might look in. You would. And so would Junior High School students. But they'd stay outside.

College students plainly and simply don't know *how* to misbehave as well as their adults. They haven't had the time to pick up the tricks of the trade. They haven't had the years and years of experience in misbehavior. They haven't got their judgments and prejudices and loves and hates as firmly established in their minds and hearts. They're like so much putty, really, and any good teacher will tell you so. And if he's a better teacher he'll tell you how that one fact keeps him on the job.

College students aren't very effective snobs. Young people never are.

Anyway, they keep one another toeing much closer to that line. Much closer than their elders would suspect.

And what is it, really, but a form or extension of snobbery that makes them this way?

Unfortunately, sometimes they lean too far the other way, too far away from snobbery, if you will. They lean toward what they think of as security. They acquiesce.

Perhaps the great levelling-off process *has* taken hold. The effort and the earnestness are there, but directed toward a very meager goal. Security means a berth in a large corporation or with the government. Security means suburban living. Security means birth to the grave, and please don't make the knocks too hard.

Maybe it's two world wars and the prospect of a third that make young men and women think more about security. Perhaps it's the idea that they might be blown to smithereens any minute. But I rather think that's a different type of security.

One sometimes wonder what has happened to the zest for risk and excitement and for protest and revolt and experiment. The best kind of security is earned through those . . . it isn't bequeathed by a third party.

And it can't be this which makes men join together in organizations and clubs and fraternal orders. There's too much chance involved with that kind of affiliation. For instance, new students choose and are chosen by a fraternity or a sorority more by pot luck than anything else—and this is true, regardless of what any of them say to the contrary.

But the absence of fraternities and sororities isn't going to make the desire to join together any weaker. And when two men or two women gather forces, for whatever reason—foolish, athletic, intellectual, strange, or snobbish—when they are

together their power of discretion is doubled, and with any meeting of the minds they can that much more effectively exclude others from their company.

What of the people who realize that there is good in everyone? What of those who know that the rich are both bad and good, that the poor are both bad and good, and that all the dopes and the ninnies and the dregs and the leftovers have some good within them? What of those who like good conversation or good music or good books or good sport or good whiskey or good love or good living? The ninnies and the dopes will catch up, but only to a point; and while they're doing it there will be some who'll slip into the ninny class while a ninny climbs out of it.

But if it makes the snob work hard to seek out his company and fun, and if it drives him toward snobbery with more vision and more understanding—then I say hats off and hooray!

Snobbish? Sure. Greek letters spell snobbery on the college campus. And maybe they have to be taught more about when, where, why, how, and who to snub. Perhaps they've so far overlooked many opportunities to give to their members the keys to better and more fruitful and more wholesome and happier living.

But we're all snobs, fraternity and sorority members or not.

We just have to be better ones.

THE DUDE'S FOLLY

A desert, a desert
Is golden and peaceful;
It stretches, it stretches
For many a mile.

A desert, a desert
Is golden and leastful
Of people who like
To ride eastern style.

—Ad Warner

THE VOICE OF MY TURTLE

I always had pet turtles, little baby green ones,
Ever since I was sick and Mother gave me some.
The one I remember well was "Kayo."
Turtles are either sleepy-ignorant or trying to climb out,
Out of the glass bowl—which "Kayo" did.
We were in Maine, and I kept the bowl on a table
On the long back porch—because it was summer
And that seemed like a healthy place to keep little turtles.
I can remember getting up and going out to see how they had
 fared
The night, and finding one was gone—that it was "Kayo."
The table was next to the rail, and from the rail to the rocks
 below
Was thirty feet: the house was two hundred yards from the sea.
I looked around but couldn't find him.
He was two inches long and green as the fronds of fern
That grew where he must have fallen.
I had turtles that had crawled off the window sill,
And through the heater outlets—to die between the walls.
It seemed funny to a child that the lively ones
Who wanted out should fall, and the ones who lay sleepy-
 ignorant
Should grow, grow, and grow.
But the wounds of youth are only shortly tender,
And I had forgotten "Kayo" two weeks later.
A sorrow is only a sorrow when it releases sorrows of the past.
I was swimming, and he was there on a rock,
Sunning himself at low tide, looking very perk,
And then I thought, "He has fallen but he didn't die."
I should have taken him back to the glass bowl,
But it didn't seem right—and as I walked away,
Away from his little bright eyes,
I wondered at my decision—and I was growing too.

—Peter Sturtevant

"SPAREPARTS"

MARION LENORE

SSPAREPARTS, the canine mascot of a Marine Company training in Cuba during most of 1940, was the most paradoxical mutt I have ever seen and the cause of the most controversy. No two plus two concerning her ever equaled four. She was born without a tail; so were about half the pups in her many litters. She, and half her offspring, had one blue eye and one brown. When found in a Guantanamo City gutter she was a tiny, diseased, filthy little ball of matted cotton with festering eyes, swollen shut by some tropical infection. When he first saw her the Division Medical Officer exclaimed, "Take that fleabag out of here and drown her—she cannot possibly live. And even if she should live she would be blind."

"Spareparts," ever the unpredictable, not only lived, but her sharp little eyes were as strong as any dog's. After her biggest meal (and she was quite a chow hound) she could not possibly have weighed two pounds; yet she would snap, growl, and bristle like a porcupine at a Great Dane if one should have the temerity to venture into *her* company area. To one half the company she was a magnificent, beautiful, talented "Cuban." (What, you never heard of a "Cuban" breed? Well, you just listen to this . . .) To the other half of the company she was a dumb, horrible mongrel. (Don't you dopes know that only bulldogs are mascots in the Marine Corps?)

Nevertheless, I cannot help but feel certain that, deep within them, even her most vociferous detractors had a warm, soft spot in their hearts for this contrary, always amusing little mutt. With all the extremes of opinion regarding her so freely expressed I think it significant that no one ever physically mistreated "Spareparts." In fact, a couple of our very tough sergeants, loud and vulgar in their references to "Spareparts'" ancestry, appearance, and general suitability as a mascot of Marines, would be horrified if they knew that I had seen them feeding our heroine surreptitiously while we were on maneuvers out in the Cuban "boondocks." Or rather, trying to feed her—she got her chow piping hot directly from the rolling field kitchens. Therefore it was not necessary for her to accept

cold handouts from those ashamed to openly proclaim their love and respect. There could be no Back Street for this proud lady.

Her sleeping place at night was under the softest blanket of the most understanding, kindly Marine in our Company. "Spareparts" was a gal who appreciated the good things of life and, like some females of the human breed, knew how to get them.

In spite of this she was so stupid she would trot, on her little two-inch legs, into the heaviest stream of traffic, with never a look to the right or to the left. If her womanly intuition told her that there was no danger it was developed remarkably because she was never run over nor hurt in any way.

But if her stupidity was remarkable, so was her intelligence. She was known as the "Nickel Pooch" because five minutes before every call she would trot to the bugler's tent, and wait impatiently to add her high, piping tenor to the call of the moment. She was solely responsible for the only reveille assembly I ever witnessed that was answered by happy, laughing men. Her professional handling of high "C" made the sleepy-eyed men forget their warm bunks, and the dreary prospect of their training schedule in preparation for making the world safe for democracy.

Sharply at five minutes before mealtime she would head for the galley and, with great dignity, report to the cook on watch. He was, of course, one of her devoted, generous admirers. All the cooks were. In retrospect, every person, without exception, in a position to be of service to this young queen was in loyal attendance at her court. And this is, I believe, a completely accurate indication of the sagaciousness of this pesky pooch. Yes, "Spareparts" cultivated all the "right" people, and they were her warm friends.

Even the manner of her death was controversial. On the homeward voyage she simply disappeared, and to this day old Marines are arguing whether she was thrown overboard—probably by the long-suffering bugler!—or whether she just absent-mindedly forgot to stop when she reached the rail on one of her meditative walks about the main deck.

FOREIGN STUDENT

BILL LYELL

Meshed, Oct. 19

My Dear Son,

My heart rejoices that you are safe in America. I know that you must be very lonely in a land where you do not know the language or the customs of the people, but, my loved one, you must not let the people see that you are not happy. Though it will be very difficult for you, you must study. You know that you are all I have left in this world and though I am not with you in body, my heart is and always will be with you. You are in your first year of college now, my son; you are a man, and I shall speak to as a man and my son.

My youth has long been gone, and my importance in this world is not much except that I bore you. My life is now your life; you came from my womb and will always be a part of me. Now I content myself with the little things of life which Mohammed has taught us to love. I content myself with these things, my son, and with you.

I know that in your youthful zest for life you would be happy to run through the fields which I can see here from my window. They are green with the new birth of the year and sing of God's glory. As I sit here, I can see my beloved son's horse grazing in the meadow, and I can almost see you riding him with your proud head held high, and come with laughter into the house to roughly catch me up in your arms.

The people, though they do not show it, are unhappy. Word is again passing from man to man that the Kurds are remassing in the mountains and will soon attack. For my people and for the property which is my son's I grieve, but I do not grieve for myself.

As you have time, my son, take your pen and write to your mother, and tell of your doings and of your problems. Remember I am always with you—

Your loving

Mother.

The sturdy young student's brows tensed as he folded the letter and put it back into its envelope for the third time. He

sat in a chair at the College's Student Center and for a long time made no movement or sound. Abruptly he rose from his chair and went toward the door. He stopped at the pin ball machine, wrenched a nickle from his pocket and thrust it into the machine. He played quickly and with a serious intensity; he won no games.

Back in his room, he checked the amount shown in his bank book, looked up the address of the nearest immigration office and began packing his trunk. "I must be with my mother," he muttered. He threw his clothes into the trunk savagely until he came to a hand knitted sweater which he fondled for a few moments, as tears welled in his eyes. He finished packing, and sat down at his desk and took out some writing paper and a pen. His mother would know that in time of need her son would be with her.

The rural postman hurriedly approached a large home in the outskirts of Meshed. He rapped on the door impatiently. A tired woman well into her fifties opened the door.

"You're lucky to get this," the postman said, "it was the last mail that got through before the bridge was bombed."

She took the letter, saw the postmark, and smiled with joy. She opened it eagerly, but when she had finished reading it, the smile was gone. "He must not come back—he must not." Her voice was tight. The postman was embarrassed as he turned to leave.

She started to close the door behind him, but saw that she had another visitor; it was a policeman. He pushed past her and into the living room.

"We're evacuating all women and children to the capital. It isn't safe for you to stay here any longer."

"This is my son's land," she said.

"If you won't come, I'm afraid I shall have to take you." In the distance she could hear the sound of cannon. "Give an old woman a little time to pack a few cherished possessions." She smiled as she asked him this favor. The policeman said that he would wait outside.

She went into her bedroom and sat by her desk next to a large window from which she could see the land. She took some paper and started to write. The sound of cannon was coming closer.

My Son,

Would that you were an older man when you receive this, for when you finish reading it I know that you will be older. My aging heart is glad because I know that as you read this there will be no reason for you to come back to your home, but my heart grieves that you are now without home or country.

I fear not as I hear the sound of the shells grows louder, for I was born of a tough stock and my people have endured many wars. Wars change the material things of life my son; they change geographies and fortunes and people, but they can never change the beauty of life. They can never change the love I bear you—the love which had to be doubled when your father died. Remember that my son, and remember that as I am of tough stock so are you that was born of my womb.

She heard the sound of the policeman coming through the living room. She rose and locked her door. She could hear the whistle of the shells.

I have but little time left my son. There is nothing that I really have to say. Our life together has been good and I am sure that we are as close as mother and son can be. We will always be as close as we are now my son, even though I am gone. My spirit is always with you.

The policeman was pounding on the door. The frame of the house trembled as the shells came closer.

My own dear son, goodbye. I commend you to God. You have his strength and the strength of my love.

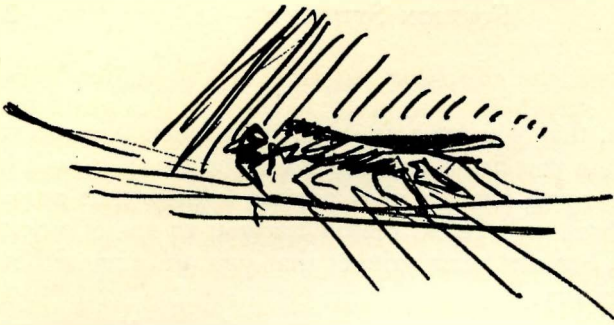
Goodbye for this world,

Your Mother

and her undying love for you.

She slipped the letter into an envelope and addressed it. She slid it under the door and asked the policeman to mail it. He remained outside the door as long as his courage permitted, but as the sound of war became deafening, he left and ran toward the town.

The old woman sat smiling by the window. There was a flash followed by a tremendous roar, and the large home in the outskirts of Meshed was no more.



THE CRICKET

JEROME CLARK

I CAN remember those dog days as clearly as anything in my life. Our summer house, which belonged to an itinerant rich uncle, was to be found in a secluded spot on the coast of Maine about eight miles from nowhere. A long heat wave had brought on thousands of grasshoppers and crickets which our gardener, Tim, had endeavored to exterminate. After much spraying and collecting, he was sure there were none left, but—

We always considered Tim a little unbalanced but harmless. That is the reason we did not think much of his jabber about not wanting to kill insects. Strangely enough, while picking them out of a flower bed, he was bitten by a small black cricket. This left a huge lump on his hand which lasted for about a week. Then things began to happen.

In the moonlight one evening my wife and I were sipping frozen Daiquiris when we heard the chirp of an unwanted cricket. I set out to seek Tim so he could get rid of the annoying creature. Tim was nowhere to be found. This was very strange because Tim rarely went out and when he did he always told us.

A few nights later he repeated his disappearing act. I approached him the next day and asked him where he had been. He just said that he must have been "around somewhere."

Every night the chirping of the cricket seemed to edge closer and closer to our home,—to us,—to me. All was quiet by day, but from sunset to sunrise this black bug would creep nearer and nearer to us. It got so nerve-wracking that I couldn't sleep at night. Every morning my ash tray would be full of butts, and soon my fingernails disappeared. Then I took to coffee—strong black coffee—and sat waiting for that eternal chirping.

Before long the chirp seemed to be right in the house, but we could never locate the pest. At first I thought I was losing all control of myself, that I was drinking too much or smoking too many cigarettes, but my wife said she heard it, too. Tim? Yes, he had also noticed it; at least he said he did. That left only Pat, our Irish Setter, and he had acted quite oddly as the cricket moved in to checkmate us.

On the eighth night there was no chirping. As a result I slept for the first time in over a week. Then I was awakened from my nervous sleep by a scream from my wife. There she was, lying next to me in a faint. Who or what could have scared her? No one was in the room other than my wife and I. The only possible way in and out was through the door. That was open just a little, as I had left it. Certainly it would not have been possible for any human being to get across the room, out the door and past the dog from the time my wife screamed to the time I woke up startled. Then I heard it—

“Chirrrp. Chirrrp.”

There was that little black devil in the middle of the floor. I started toward it but fell back more dazzled than frightened, for there was the angered, raging form of Tim emerging from what was that tiny cricket.

As the second ticked past, I became more and more frightened. He started toward me and I knew what he wanted. Being helpless with fright, I could not stop him. But—

We both heard it at the same time. Someone or something was ascending the stairs. As quickly as Tim had emerged, he changed back again and started for a hole in the woodwork.

Into the room clumped my Irish Setter, still half asleep. Faithful old Pat had come to investigate my wife's scream. As he came from the door to me, he crossed the path of the scurrying cricket. Then I started to pass out. All I heard was,

“Chirrrp—.”

When I came to, Pat was patiently snuggling his face against mine, and my wife was sleeping soundly. As the sun streamed through the window, it illuminated the flattened body of a cricket. As for Tim—well, we never saw or heard from him again.



MISS JESSIE

G. W. COX

LIFT my head to the hills Lawd, not to see you comin', fer I knows You is already here. I just wants to see the direction you come frum. I can feel you all about, oh God, and I knows you is doin' right by this white woman laid out afore me. She never done no harm Lawd, all she ever done were fer the gude ob man, tryin' to help 'em to see de light ob a new day.

"I thinks, oh Lawd, at dis time de scales be in balance. I believes you be subtractin' de gude frum de bad. So let me Lawd, speak fo the gude I knows she done. As fer the bad, if she done any, it were done in complete ignerance, 'cause her heart had no meanness fer no man, black 'er white."

"It all started a long time ago Lawd. I wuz only a little tyke when I fust seen Miss Jessie. She struck me so powerful purty I axked, 'Uncle Bruce, who that 'oman be?'"

"She be one ob God's angels treadin' de airth in body form, li'l Sammy," replied Bruce.

"But how come de peoples don't treat her wif polite like dey do de utter womens? See how dat man almosten shove her offen' de 'bord walk—and dat utter 'oman dere, she look as dough she could spitt'er eye. How come God lettin' His angels be treated that'a'way, Uncle Bruce?"

"Hesh, Sammy hesh. Come along home so I can tell you about this fine woman."

"Den Lawd, mah pore ole' Uncle Bruce poured out to me de story ob his life. "Sammy," he said, "When I were a little boy like you, I knew Miss Jessie real well."

It were a long long time ago when my pa worked fer Miss Jessie's pa on their farm. We wuz real little chillen and played together. It were fun to sit fer hours in de dusty road, playin' in de mud hole makin' mud pies. Den I would play

like a hog and lay in de mud, and Jessie would say, "Roll over ole hog." I'd roll over. Den she'd say, "Roll back ole hog," and I'd roll back.

An sometimes we'd go down to de pond to catch tadpoles. It wuz lotsa fun to make little taddie ponds ob our own and put 'em in it. Den we would wade and splash in de muddy water a long time afore we finally tooken de tadpoles and drapped 'em in de cistern. Dat business sure stopped sudden like when my pa tooken a drink ob warter, and pulled a taddy out by de tail jus' as it wuz swimmin' down his froat.

Atter a while, hit didn't seem so long, li'l Jessie started goin' to school. At fust I would walk down de road wif her a'ways. It were fun to show her how fur I could fling a rock. An' wen I'd kill a rabbit she'd clap her hands and laff 'till de tears run down her cheeks. When she bragged on me this'a' way, I feel all warm and full inside, jus' like I wuz goin' to pop open. She'd allers say, "You de bes' shot wif a rock I ever see, Bruce."

Den attter school wuz out, I'd meet her to tote de little books home. I'd hide behingst some bresh an jump out at her. It were so funny we would laff til' it hurt. She were allers glad to see me, an I wuz mighty proud to carry her books.

I'll never fergit that Sattiday I asked her iffen she wanted to go wif me to git some candy. It were the fust time I ever axed to git her anything store boughten. Her eyes lit up lake a Possum's, then got real soft like a calf's. I told her I didn't hab no money, but I didn't reckon her maw would miss a few ole hens. At fust she didn't agree to, but de temptin' ob red, stick candy swung her over. We got de hens alright; put em in a croaker sack an took em to de store. I weighed em up and tole' de storekeeper how much dey cum to. Den I got to figgerin' iffen I wuz big enuff to steal hens, I wuz big enuff to smoke, so I ordered tobaccer wif de candy. De store keeper gept eyin' Jessie, but she nebber blinked nor let on dat anything might be wrong. Everything went fine till de man poured de hens outten de bag an on de floor. Me ner Jessie never budged; we stood real still; them hens were daid—they had smothered to death in dat sack.

Fer de nex two years things went on pretty much de direction dey wuz goin'. I didn't git to see Jessie too much 'cause paw put me to doin' chores aroun' de place. Den Jessie's pa boughten her a hoss—a little pony hoss. De job ob

feedin' an currin' it fell to me. Lots ob times I would climb aboard him bareback, and den he'd run hog wild—faster'n a freight train aroun' de pasture. I got to watchin' him run longside a mule, Pete. Dey would gallop and kick dey heels in de air, one tryin' to outdo de utter. I tole Jessie about it, and she say right away, "Bruce, my pony kin outrun er outwalk airy mule in de pasture." So den I dared her to a race de followin' Sunday afternoon in de back pasture: me on de gray mule, her on de pany.

It were mighty purty dat day. De mixed poplar, oak and walnut trees run a straight line fer near a half-meile on de top side ob de field. De leaves wuz wavin' sideways jus' enuff to show thir light undersides. De breeze pushed on frum dem down to de little meadow to sheke de little yaller flowers poppin' out all ever de place. De grass cum' jus' over de hosses' feets, an de groun' wuz still soft frum winter snows. Jessie sot up straight in her side saddle, her black eyes shootin' tricks at me an de world. "When you is ready, start out." I answered by kickin' de ole mule's ribs and yellin' in his ears. He jumped lake a jackass ought to jump—real scared like, and de race wuz on.

We run body to body. De soft airth flew fast and in big chunks, frum de beatin' ob de sharp hoofs. De pony stretched out and Jessie were a'layin' on his neck wif' her black hair straight ahind her. She were a'pattin her pony, an I were a'beatin' my mule. I kept a'watchin' and admirin' her as the lil' hoss flew over de groun'. Dere were a little ditch ahead—I had seen it last fall but de pony could jump it easy. Agin' I looked down jest as Jessie look up; I could see de lil' crinkels runnin' aroun' de corners ob her eyes. She smiled jus' enough to show a curved cheek and happy heart. Den de pony were to de ditch; it wern't no little ditch—it were a gulley—de winter rains had warshed it out. De pony couldn't make it; he didn't try. He stopped stiff-legged and Jessie flew ober his haid into de gulley as mah mule landed safely on de otter side. She laid there, real still.

I got to her as quick as I could. She were as limp as a flour sack. I turned her face an seen de cruelest cut ob all mah life. Her cheek were raw, just a splotch of blood and dirt. De cut run acrost her nose. I put mah arms around her an held her bleedin' haid on mah shoulder. Her body were still, but she were breathin', thank de Lord. I rocked her wantin' to do somethin'—God, how I hurt inside. I heerd

a step and looked up jus' as her pa jumped in de ditch and snatched her away frum me. First a scream ob rage, den a sob come frum his throat. He scrambled outten de gulley and away wif' her. Mah heart ached.

De next day my pa beat me til' I wus bloody. I didn't unnerstand, and mah heart ached all de more.

When I didn't see Jessie for a long, long time, Pa seen I wuz hurtin'; so he gib me plenty ob work to do in de days, and a houn' to hunt wif at nights. Lots ob times I seen de Doctor's buggy come and go from de house, but I nebber went near it. I had a deep feelin' somethin' awful wuz wrong, but there were no way ob findin' out.

All dat winter I hunted and sold possum an' coon hides. I recollect how deep it snowed—and de big icicles hangin' frum de bare limbs. And de lil' briar patches seemd so bent over and cold, dat life nebber could come back agin'. Lawd, how I wanted to see Jessie.

Then Jessie's maw died. Pa said it were from pore Jessie's sufferin'. There wern't nothin' could be done. What were over were over. I had hurt fer so long I couldn't feel no worser. I jest spent more time in de woods. It were here I finally met Jessie agin. It bein a good while atter de funeral. "Hella Bruce," she said.

The fust thing I seen were the smile, and a lil' twinkle ob one eye—den de scar; broad, deep, and red. She tole me how she miss seein' me once in a while—fust off I didn't believe her, then I knowed it were true.

Den she tole me how de udder jents and young peoples treated her on account o' her looks. She were somewhat sorry for them, but hit didn't change her liken fer me, none atall. And den she say her pa were gettin' mean—had tooken to tiltin' de jug and beatin' de stock—den, dat her pa and mine had been good frends till this happen, now dev didn't talk much no more. But she say dat it wern't goin' to affect our friendship none.

Hit seemed short, them next two years; me an Jessie talkin now and den; her havin' troubles till she quitten school; my pa and her strugglin' to git along; de farm goin' frum bad to worser; de cows givin' lesser milk and de mules gittin' older; plows wearin' out, and de hills gettin' warshed; de hens gettin' droopier, and de eggs gettin' smaller. Den me and Jessie planned to go swimmin', and we went.

She changed her closes ahinst one willer and me behinst annudder. De warter were real cool and sweet to mah body as I waded in aside her. We had a time kickin' and a'splashin' in de eddy. Den we stopped and watched de waspes workin' amongst de willers dat swung so low over de green warter. An it ere fun, layin' on ou' backs, lookin' at de sky. Dere were a few birds flyin' over, and a squirrel wuz barkin' frum a sycamore tree dat stood aside de ribber. Jessie looked at me an' I looked at her. Den dere wern't no airth ner sky—Dere were just ussn's.

We stayed till de fire ball almos' sunk ahinst de trees, den we started toward home. We wuz nearly there when her pa stepped afore us in de path. De woods wuz deep and no sound were makin' exceptin' our fast breathin', and de beatin' ob a woodpecker. His breath were smellin' somethin' awful. And den I knowed it were comin' when he tole Jessie to go ahead, but she nebber moved. When he slapped her I jumped an grabbed for him, but he were quicker and landed a kick in mah stomach. When I come to it were dark, and mah head hurt somethin' awful. I got to mah feets, but mah laigs couldn't hole me so I went to de groun and drapped off to sleep agin.

Come mornin' I limped to de house where pa saw de blood and welts on mah face and chest. He nebber ask nothin' fer he already figgered what were wrong. He took his shotgun and went to de big house; I heerd it go off twice—he had shot Jessie's pa in de stomach—jest where he had kicked me.

Pa nebber run ner even try to leave de farm. He hitched his plow and followed it till dey come fer him. Dey wuz a big mob ob men that run yellin' and cussin' acrost de field. He stopped and looked at dem without seein'—he were askin' God to fergive his sins. De hangin' were awful—right in his own yard. But dat wern't de worst part—dey de-manned mah pore paw right up to he belly. Den, "git Bruce, git Bruce."

Den dey come fer me, them bein' mad and in a killin' temper, but Miss Jessie, white and tremblin', stood aside me and kept a'sayin', "He ain't done no wrong; he ain't done no wrong." Den dey left us wif our dead, and wif no one but each utter.

We buried our pa's side by side. There wern't no crowd, there wern't no one but us'ns. Den we knowed what life wuz. We just knowed we'd haff to give more dan we'd eber get. An' dat is what we done.

Miss Jessie lef' me and de farm a few months later and wuz gone a long time. I knowed where she were and sent her de farm's earnin's best I knowed how. It were hard gettin' by but I knowed what had to be done, so de neighbors missed a chicken here and a chicken there, from time to time.

When she come back she only stay long enuff to sell de farm real cheap, and den move to town where she got that newspaper job.

"Now, oh Lawd, I knows you done fergive Uncle Bruce fer his pilferin' ways. He nebber mean no harm, nor do nothin' real bad. Folks jest got tired o' his stealin', and he ought to hab kept on stealin' little things 'stead ob takin' dat hoss. He ought a'knowed nothin' that big could be sold. But he didn't. Dey oughten a'hung him fer that—but dey did. He were a good man and good to me.

"I am powerful thankful fer Miss Jessie, Lawd, and the way she stood up to that crowd fer Uncle Bruce. Her standin' there facin' de whole town tryin' to explain no big wrongs wuz done. Her tellin' dem dey wuz d ones dat wuz wrong. Of course she knowed it were the sins ob them that teached de crowd, but there wern't no rightin' ob nothin'. Dey still hung Bruce, her fren. Dey wuz probably still mad cause dey didn't hang him when dey hung his pa.

"Now, Lawd, atter dese years ob grievin', I hopes you won't keep their souls hid away too long. Let dem walk thru one ob de gates, and tread de glass streets together. Where dey can look down and see us earth souls movin' around doin' our chores—milkin' de cows, mowin' de hay, eatin' ham and gravy. Let dem see us laff together so dey will feel no hurtin' atall. An' please don' let dem miss me none atall, 'cause I'se nineteen year ol'. Of cose, I nebber really knowed who mah folks were, but I felt mighty close to dem two. Noffin were nebber said to make me really know, but somehow, now I feels real sartin atter talkin' to You. Thank you Lawd, fer listenin'."

THE BEAR FESTIVAL

JUDY MUNSKE

THE TRAIN wound upward and upward, deep into the mountains of Hokkaido, the northernmost island of Japan. On either side of the narrow railway, vegetables and flowers were buried deep beneath the winter snows. It was time for the Bear Festival. The natives of this island worship the god of bears, and every year they sacrifice one bear to this god.

As the train pulled into the station we could see the fur-clad men prodding a huge, furry bear down the street to a cleared space in the town. There were chains around each leg and one around his neck. It is always a great treat for the little boys to be allowed to help the men hold these chains, and this day was no exception. Scores of brown-faced urchins scrambled to assist, while the women and little girls screeched on the sidelines. We were not long in getting out of the train and following the procession.

By the time we reached the clearing, we could see that the chains holding the beast had been attached to a stout pole in the center of the area, and the people were ready to begin the ceremony.

Each man grabbed a spear, took a firm hold on it, and proceeded to dance in a circle around the bear, Indian war-like fashion. The women formed a still larger circle around the men, and started to chant and jump up and down. I felt like jumping around a little myself, as I was beginning to feel chilled despite the warmth of my sweaters, coat, heavy trousers, boots, and fur-lined mittens. However, these actions on the part of the natives were a part of the ceremony, and not meant for warming-up purposes. As the women continued to jump up and down, they would slap their hands against their knees and emit strange noises that sounded something like "*wah wah wah wah, wah wah wah wah,*" with the accent on the first syllable of each phrase.

As the chanting continued, the men who were dancing grew more and more excited, until they had worked themselves nearly into a frenzy. Presently they began to throw their spears at the bear. They threw not to hit, but to see how close they could come without striking the beast. After each had a try, they did it again and again, coming closer each time, until finally one spear found a mark. The bear roared. The women chanted louder and clapped faster. At this point, I was ready to leave, but felt rooted to the spot. Round and round they went, stabbing the bear constantly.

At last, much to my relief, they gave a final yell and stabbed him to death. The snow was trampled, and the blood froze quickly on the ground. Leaping upon the lifeless animal, one man cut off the bear's head. A bowl was filled with the still warm blood, and passed among the jubilant natives for them to drink. I could no longer stand it, and rushed to hide. Later I learned that the bear's head was to be mounted, and would remain at the shrine until the next celebration. However, I was concerned only with my stomach at that time, and soon followed my father to our quarters for a cold drink of water. Thinking it over at the house, I became convinced that although the torture of the bear was sickening to watch, I was glad I had come; for few white people have seen such a spectacle as the Bear Festival.

The sun is dancing
Mute mad in the trees.
While through a filigree of leaves
Split, ice-sharp silver
Kisses on smooth earth
The pattern for a saraband.

Cynthia Crawford.

THE LITTE RED SHOES

There's a hole in the toe
And they're battered and worn,
A button is missing
The red is most gone,
Yet I know of few things
That I hold half as dear
As the Little Red Shoes
On my high chandelier.
The hole in the toe
Was the special delight
Of the wee one who wore them,
So bonny and bright,
So I treasure them now
And hang them above
For the sake of that wee one,
My dear little love
They talk to me often,
Those Little Red Shoes,
And tell of high revels,
Gay laughter, soft coos,
And many a frolic
Joined in by us all
For the sake of the wee one
Who held us in thrall.
They 'mind me of walks
Through nursery and hall
To search for the moon
Or to play hide and call;
Of long, tender twilights
When sleepy dark eyes
Watched for the Sandman
To low lullabys.
There's a hole in the toe
And they're battered and worn,
A button is missing
The red is most gone,
Yet I know of few things
That I hold half as dear
As the Little Red Shoes
On my high chandelier.

Lee Gibson



CHOCOLATE SUNDAE

BOB PECK

OKAY, one chocolate sundae comin' up. Here's a glass of water for ya while ya waitin', compliments of Sharby's Drug Store. By the way, my name's Joe Plumber; I live over on Cherry Street. John Plumber's son. I'm only 16, but most folks take me for 18, or even 19. Guess I'm kinda big for my age, an' bein' a workin' man too. Seein' as Sharby's here is the only drug store in Moles Corners, there wouldn't be many sodas drunk if it wasn't fer me.

The girl ya met as ya came in, that's Sally Whipple, she's my girl. We're going to the show tonight at the Bijou. It's gonna be good—Betty Grable. We go about twice a week, sometimes even three times. Every Sunday, we go to church together, to the Congregational, the white one down on the corner past Pop Benson's Dry Goods Store. Our preacher's Mr. Shakett. He's a swell guy—isn't like most preachers. He's always comin' in the store to jaw with Mr. Sharby, my boss. On the way out, he always tells me to behave myself—as if a fella could do anything else here in Moles Corners. Nothin' ever happens around here. Oh, there was a fight in the saloon Saturday night, and Johnson's barn almost burned down last week. Nothin' excitin'. 'Bout the biggest thing happened to me that's happened around here in quite a spell. Happened right here in this drug store. Ya didn't hear about it? Well, let me tell ya!

Musta been two weeks ago. Some of the high school gang had just left the soda fountain, and I was wipin' off the counter, when two men walked in. They didn't sit at the counter, like most folks, but in one of those booths down there in the back. But the way they dressed and acted, I knew that they were'nt from around these parts. They were city fellers, alright—you can spot 'em right off. I took my time about goin' back to get their order, and was real casual when I did. These city birds didn't impress me. "What's yours?" I asks 'em. One wanted a chocolate soda with vaniller cream.

"You mean a black an' white," I told him. The other one just wanted a dish of strawberry. All the time I was dishin' up the order, I couldn't help thinkin' how familiar the first guy looked. I'd seen 'im before. I put the order on a tray, and two glasses of water like always, and takes it back, this one guy staring at me all the time. I looked back after a while and the guy was still starin', real intense. So I pretends to be real busy and washes the same batch of glasses about three times, an' that guy kept starin' at me. It was gettin' on my nerves. I kinda looked around for Mr. Sharby, an' then remembered he'd just stepped out.

That's when I remembered where I'd seen that guy. His pitcher was in the Post Office, I was pretty sure. Same nose, same eyes, but looked like he might've got a haircut. He was wanted for sumpin' big, like bank-robbin' or murder, you could bet on that. An' the other guy was probably his accomplice. Sure! Why hadn't I thought of that right away? No tellin' when Mr. Sharby'd be back, and here I was with a couple of crooks on my hands, maybe planning to rob the bank in town.

I took another look at 'em, outa the corner of my eye. Still starin', but now the one guy was motionin' to me to come to the booth. It wasn't for the check either, 'cuz he hasn't even started his soda. They were criminals all right, but I knew what they were after. The cash box! If I grabbed it and made for the door, they'd be sure to plug me before I'd gotten half way. They were motionin' again now, real insistent.

Right then I made up my mind. I'd just hafta out-smart 'em. "Be right there," I says, and my voice was real shaky, 'cuz this was enough to scare any guy. But I grabbed the whipcream gun, this thing here, what ya put it on the sundaes with, an' squirted the rest of the cream into the sink. Then I filled the gun with ammonia. We always keep a bottle handy. Mr. Sharby makes me do the silverware in it about twice a week.

So I put the gun under my apron, took a deep breath, and headed toward the two characters. Went right up to the booth, holdin' that ammonia handy under my apron. They looked at me kinda strange, but they knew I meant business. I ain't got this red hair for nothin'. So they forgot all their ideas about shootin' an' killin' in Moles Corners. One of the

gents kinda smiles an' says, "Ya forgot to bring us some spoons."

Well, I went back for the spoons, keepin' an eye on 'em all the while. Ya don't find Joe Plumber gettin' over-confident jus' cuz he's outsmarted two criminals. They got their spoons an' ate their sundaes. Then paid for 'em an' beat it out the door. Never been back either. Bet from now on they gives Moles Corners a wide berth, 'cuz I told Jim Maloney, the cop, an' he said he'd keep a real sharp lookout for 'em.

Jim must've told quite a few people about it—an' maybe I told a few myself—so that by night just about everybody knew what I'd done to save the town. When I told Mr. Sharby, he laughed like ta kill, an' said he'd hafta gimme a raise for that. But, wouldja believe it, some people jus' wouldn't gimme any credit at all. Not fer nothin'. They said that they weren't no crooks or criminals—an' that I'd imagined the whole thing. This ole world sure has some funny people in it. Ya know, they get some awful funny ideas.

By they way, did you want nuts on that sundae?

ESCAPADE ON THE GREEN BENCHES

Are you leaving the past? the cold and frozen home?
seeking the sun and life's sunrise?
finding the new land is like a new bride?
But the whisper echoes still in the loneliness,
and happiness is in the loneliness?

The past is dead
Til death reclaims.

Friends entrain the lost soul and commit it
to its place in snow, sleet and rain.

And though no single promise has been made,
snow turns to rain and clouds to fair.

And gentle-handed spring
arises to give its flowers on the grave,
to touch and wonder at the wandering soul.

To show in death what life could not
Find in this self-same land of ice and snow.

Lary Fitzpatrick

DIONYSUS UNBOUND

The wine of Dionysus,
Life giving, healing every ill;
Merry-maker, lightening every heart,
Bringing careless ease and gaiety,
Dispels the weary cares of men.
We travel to a land that never was.
The poor grow rich, the rich grow great of heart.
All conquering are the shafts made from the vine.

Oh, sweet upon the mountain
The dancing and the singing,
The maddening, rushing flight.
Oh, sweet to sink to earth out-worn
When man himself becomes divine.

He whose locks are bound with gold,
Ruddy Bacchus, joy-god;
Comrade of the Maenads, whose
Blithe torch blazes.

He who with a mocking laugh
Hunts his prey; savage, brutal.
Snares and drags him to his death
With his Bacchanals.

Oh Bacchanals come; sing to the timbrel.
Joyfully praise him, him who brings joy.
Music is calling, to the hills, to the hills.
Fly, Bacchanals, swift of foot;
On, be fleet.

In strange ways hard to know gods come to man.
Many a thing past hope they have fulfilled,
And what was looked for went another way.
A path we never thought to tread God found for us.
So has this come to pass;
When man's first fierce maddening rage
Passes slowly and he learns to know
The god whom he has mocked.

Bill Colley

A LESSON IN SPEECHMAKING

DICK COLABELLA

THE MAIN purpose of a speech class is to try to improve the methods of delivering our speeches. I was considering this problem the other night, and it occurred to me that it might be helpful to study the problems with which other orators have been confronted, and to examine the ways in which they overcame them.

We are all familiar with Demosthenes, who is known in history as the greatest of Greek orators. We recall the early failures of this man and how he overcame his difficulties by going down to the seashore, filling his mouth with pebbles, and speaking above the roar of the waves.

In our own times, Mr. Winston Churchill ranks as one of the world's best orators. Mr. Churchill does three things before he delivers a speech.

1. He writes out exactly what he wants to say.
2. He practices and re practices the delivery of that speech.
3. He drinks a bottle of champagne just before he makes the delivery.

The last item on the list may sound strange to you, but I have it straight from a friend of Mr. Churchill's agent that it's a fact. On his lecture tours, a bottle of champagne has to be furnished to him or the contract is invalid.

Taking the above evidence into deep consideration, I feel that our campus speech studio has stepped off onto the wrong track. In a world filled with synthetics and substitutes, we could quite easily find a way to imitate our illustrious predecessors.

Probably the crux of the matter lies in finding a more favorable location for our studio. Harpers or Robbies immediately come to mind. Here, instead of pebbles, we can fill our mouths with potato chips or pretzels. Instead of the roar of the waves, we compete with the din of the juke box. Instead of the bottle of champagne, we may substitute a like quantity of ——— beer.

The possibilities of such a plan are limitless. Let us solve our speech problems by following the lead of our greatest orators. I can think of only one thing necessary to success:

1. Find instructors who will see eye to eye and beer to beer.

motionless, his hands still deep in his pockets, until the train had vanished out of sight. And then he knew she had gone. It was all over.

John wandered listlessly over to a hard, curved bench, that stood firmly bolted to the paved platform. He was out of the rain, under the tin shelter. He sat down and he stared vacantly out at the gleaming, wet tracks, and he thought of that girl, and himself. He thought of those three months that he had been with her, and of how it had all started, and had gone on and on.

The rain on the tin shelter and on the platform reminded him of an ocean, and surf, churning and boiling and rolling up on a white beach, on a hot summer day early in June. He remembered a deep blue sky and a hot sun, and a bright beach of white sand. He could hear wind rushing through palmetto scrub on the dunes. This was the beginning.

It had been early in the morning, around nine o'clock, that he had decided to go and lie on the beach and read, while the sun got hotter and hotter. He remembered lying there on a sand dune, while the wind whipped the pages of the book. And all of a sudden a large rubber ball had flown over the dune and hit him square in the head. He had raised himself up and then a face had peered over the dune. It was not exactly a beautiful face, but the eyes twinkled and a lot of white teeth showed, and her brown hair was full of sand and blowing. She had looked worried for a moment, and her mouth quivered as though unsure of an appropriate expression. John looked at her, still propped up on one elbow, not smiling, just observing. Then she spoke.

"I'm sorry." And she smiled, and he smiled.

"Playing by yourself?" John asked.

"Oh, no," she said, almost insulted. "I'm playing with Ralph."

"Where's he?" John asked.

"Oh, he's right here," she said, and then looking around she called him. And then he appeared.

"This is Ralph," she announced, and Ralph spoke.

"How do you do." And then he apologized. "I'm sorry about the ball. We didn't know you were up here."

"That's okay," John said. He still looked at the girl. She looked at him and smiled shyly, and then she hooked her arm in Ralph's.

"I guess we'd better go," she said. And John answered.

"I guess you'd better."

"Hope we see you again soon," she said. Ralph smiled quickly.

"Let's go," he said. With that he pulled her away playfully, and they disappeared. John leaned back again with his book still in his hand, and he thought about the girl. She was not beautiful, but she was pretty. She had nice eyes, brown, and twinkly at the corners. John wondered when he would see her again. He'd probably find her on the beach. He'd come back tomorrow and wait.

And he did. Right in the same spot. John wanted to meet this girl again. He liked her, very much. Quite suddenly he became anxious and nervous. He waited. And waited. It was getting on toward eleven o'clock. She must come, he thought. She must.

And she did. By herself this time. She was barefoot, and wore a dry bathing suit, with a white jacket over it. Her brown hair flew behind her in the wind, and her feet kicked up the white sand and made it swirl around her legs. John waved to her, and he could see her smiling in the distance. She waved back, a long-armed wave above her head. She came closer and closer. John lay there on his stomach watching her. Finally she was there, right in front of him, beneath the dune.

"Hi," she said.

"Hi," John answered. "Where's Ralph?"

"I'll tell you about it, later." She tried to raise her voice above the rushing wind.

"Let's walk down on the beach," John shouted, and he stood up. The girl wrinkled up her nose and smiled, and shouted back.

"Okay."

And they did. Down near the edge, where the water meets the beach. They walked about two feet apart at first, looking down at the shells, and at the way the water sinks into the sands, and at the imprints their feet left. And the girl told John about Ralph.

"He wants to marry me," she said.

"Do you?"

"No."

"You're not in love with him," John said.

"No, I guess I'm not."

"How long have you gone around with him?" John asked.

"About six months," she said.

"Did you tell him you were through with him?" John asked.

"Yes, I did. Well, not exactly."

"Then how?"

"I said I liked him, but just not to think about marriage."

"He probably didn't like that," John said.

"No, he didn't," the girl answered. She was staring down at the beach as she walked, but suddenly she threw her head up.

"Everything's fine. Don't worry."

"Okay," he said, looking at her squarely. "I won't."

And then John grabbed her hand, and started running. They ran through the water, splashing, shouting, laughing. They were alone, and the day was clear, and the sun was hot. And the day went fast. Soon it began to get dark, the sun went down, the air became cooler. John and the girl found themselves on the dune, keeping each other warm.

They found themselves on the beach almost every day. They sat and ate things she had made and had wrapped neatly in wax paper. They would have a few cans of beer around. And they would lie in the sun together amidst the daily debris of magazines, books, and the cans of beer, and the wax paper. And John would put his arms around her and every time it was a new experience. Her presence was real, and vivid, and she would never pull away from him. Sometimes she would scream with laughter, and he would try to put his hand over her mouth and make her quiet. And then he would quickly bend over and kiss her. He would always feel very close to her then.

And at night they went to the movies, and often they danced, or drove in John's car out to some highway bar. Sometimes he took her home early in the morning. He was always happy with her. June slipped by, and July, and then August, and then there was only a month left, before they knew they must part, for a while. John thought often of asking her to marry him.

And then two twinkling, laughing eyes, looked up at him one night at the end of August, and she spoke.

"Yes, John, soon." And John looked down at her and spoke.

"Money is the problem," he said.

"I know, but we don't need much."

"When can we set a date?" he asked.

"Oh, I don't know. Just soon."

"I've been thinking about it a lot," he said.

"Yes, so have I. But let's not talk about it."

"Okay," he said. "We won't."

And he kissed her forehead, and she took his hand and held it. And John sat there thinking not just about her now, but them, together. He thought of how they would be later on, with children, and a house.

But the days were growing shorter, and the beach was getting colder, and it was almost too late to swim. It was on one of the last days, when John and the girl were sitting on the dune looking at the ocean, that he noticed a figure coming down the beach in their direction. Neither of them could see who it was, but they both suspected. The clothed figure came nearer and nearer. It was a man, with hands in his pockets, walking slowly, pensively. It was Ralph.

"Hi," John shouted.

"Hello," Ralph said. He eyed the girl fondly.

"Kind of cold, isn't it?" John said.

"Yes. I thought I'd take a last walk down before winter sets in," Ralph said. And he continued to look at the girl. She was sitting close to John on the sand dune, and she turned her head away and wound a blade of grass around her finger.

"We've been down here just about every day," John said, looking at the girl.

"So I've noticed," Ralph said laughingly. And the girl swung around.

"Please, Ralph," she said quietly.

"Just don't make any promises to him," Ralph said, quietly and coolly.

"I don't know what you're talking about," John said, looking at the girl. She then turned and faced John and smiled, and slipped her arm through his.

"Well, I guess I'm just sour grapes," Ralph said, and he walked away, staring vacantly at the beach in front of him. The girl spoke.

"Poor Ralph," she said, and took hold of John's hand.

"He'll get over it," John said, not unkindly, but firmly.

"I hope so. I really do," the girl said.

"What did he mean by promises, exactly?" John asked.

"I don't know. He's just a bit confused. I guess I was

too," she said. And then John took her hand and together they jumped off the dune and started walking back up the beach. She was smiling again, and John looked at her while they strolled and swung their joined hands. Then quite suddenly John felt worried. He suddenly felt the end of summer closing in on him. He wanted to be definite with the girl, sure of the future.

"When will I see you again?" he asked, and his voice was quiet and there was a vague tremor in it.

"Oh John," she laughed. "You might think everything is all over."

"Please. How about Christmas? We can see each other then."

"Sure. Of course we can. Stop worrying about it," she said.

"But I do," he answered. But there was no reply. As John walked and the girl half skipped along the beach, a sunset was forming on the horizon. The deep gray waves, rolled slowly in on a flat, broad beach. The girl looked straight ahead, and John thought of Christmas and snow and a fire, and being with her.

And then the days were numbered. It was not long before John found himself behind the controls of his car, driving through the night, to the train station in town. Rain beat against the windshield, and the girl sat there, looking at him every so often. She wore a black suit and a little black hat pressed close to her head. But her mouth was tight, and her eyes were turned down at the corners. John reached over and took her small, gloved hand.

"We'll write. All the time. Every day," he said, awkwardly.

"Yes. I'll write you every day. Don't worry. You know I will."

"It won't be long until Christmas," he said. "Not very long."

"I've been happy, John. Very happy. You know that, but I wanted to say it anyway."

"But this is just the beginning," John said.

"Yes, just the beginning," the girl replied.

The small coupe splashed along the dark, narrow highway, and the wipers ticked away the last remaining minutes. Only a few more miles, and then the train. John still held the

black gloved hand firmly. Soon there appeared city lights and people, and the headlights of the car suddenly illuminated shining rails, and the large, stone station. They had ten minutes. John pulled the car up near the station building, and turned the engine off, and the lights. And he pulled her over toward him, and kissed her firmly on the mouth. And after he had finished and let go, she took his head and pressed it close to her face. And then John saw her smile, sadly, and knowingly.

Then they got out of the car, and into the rain. John carried her suitcase and held her hand, and they went through the main door and shuffled through crowds of waiting people. A loud-speaker barked out the arrival of her train, and they walked up some long, stone steps, to the platform. The rain poured down, and John and the girl stood facing each other outside, speechless.

"I better get on," she said.

"Yes, you'd better," he answered. And he helped her up the train steps and into her car. And he said good-bye again, in the vestibule. Then he stepped off the train, and she walked to her seat. He could see where she was sitting, and he stood looking at her from outside, in the rain, through the grimy, sooty window.

And then a hand suddenly tapped John on the shoulder.

"Hey you. You're going to catch pneumonia sitting out here like that. You've been here a half-hour."

John quickly sat up and realized he had seen the train go, and had been there sometime.

"Okay," he said slowly, and he rose from the bench, still not taking his mind off his previous thoughts. The station was quiet, except for the sound of the rain on the tin roof. He wandered back, in the direction of his car, down those stone steps to the waiting room. And something intuitional, some momentary flash of thought, some inside knowledge dawned on him, and he awakened to it. There she was, sitting up in the train, trying to hold back tears, her mouth tight and strained, her eyes red and turned down on both sides. And she didn't know. She didn't know what John knew now. She didn't know how easily she had slipped away from Ralph and had become his. She didn't know that within days she would have someone else. There would be someone to help her out of a snowbank with her skis, or someone to tie on her skates.

She wasn't insincere, or unloving, but she just wasn't going to be his anymore. He would never laugh with her again, never swim with her again, never walk with her again. She had come easily, and she would go easily. As John walked down those cold, damp steps to the waiting room, he somehow knew that this was the end, that they would never see each other again.

TO THE LIVE OAK

Silent, you've stood a million afternoons
Like this; and through your limbs a thousand times
Has shone the chastening white of summer moons.
Unmoved you stand, though up your heights there climbs
The squirrel; and through your leaves the sun
May freely reach to search your treasure hold.
You dare not be too stiff or proud, when one
Bold gust can shake your stately mold;
No wall denies the growing neighbor-tree,
And under feet of men your roots must lie.
Only—your highest branch, aloft and free,
Etches a clear strong line against the sky:
That skyward branch your aching message flings—
One line like nothing else that breathes or sings.

—Dallas Williams.

