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# EDITORIAL

Among those pieces submitted to the Flamingo for publication this term, but which do not appear, are pieces which seem to be heavily endowed with the following characteristics:

1. written in the first person, for the first person.
2. dealing with situations remote from the author's experience, or intelligent imagination.
3. abnormality, not universality.
4. obscurity, not subtlety.
5. from the pulpit.
6. grammatically careless.

The best pieces taken seem to be those which have attempted to give a true picture, of whole people, in a natural environment, where words become recognizable pictures, where action springs from pre-established, well-defined character traits, not plot, and where every sentence is designed and directed to further a single, and worthwhile, story purpose.

These pieces are usually the result of considerable labor, carefully typed, and handed in well in advance of the deadline.

Thank you, and good-night.

G. S. W.

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## LITERARY QUARTERLY

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## LOVE:---CONCEPTION AND DENIAL

GORDON B. CLARK

(In three keys)

### I

He saw her, through an amber afternoon  
Of elm-strained sunlight, pass the picket fence  
Where the rusted lilacs had bloomed too soon,  
Into the old house whose incontinence  
Had been packed away in an attic room  
With the deep sea-chests and the spiced brocade;  
And only the slow weather-cocks of noon  
Could remember what other tunes were played  
When the ships returned through a jade monsoon.

She thought: "I should turn, yet my love for him  
Is a song on an unstrung mandolin—  
And he's like quick frost on the lilac's sin,"  
So she closed the door for the interim.

Beneath the elms where green sunlight faded  
He whistled loud though his heart was shaded.



II

(For two voices)

"My love!" I cried, "why should we hide  
Beneath a cold New England pride  
A passion that's meant to be as free  
As indigo wind in a bamboo tree?  
My love, come with me!"

"But they say in the bamboo's shadowed halls  
Things cry out and the silence crawls."

"My dear, our bright intoxication  
Will not do in a prudish nation.  
We'll seek a land where the conversation  
Contains a dash of approbation  
For what our Puritan friends foregoe  
And Sunday's sounds are sounds of woe."

"Yet they tell how the mourning women weep  
Where Valentino lies asleep:  
To what land were they sometime taken  
And on what day were they forsaken?"

"Listen—beyond the Helicon lies  
A loveliness that never dies,  
Where forever we'll be gay and nimble  
And dance to the lute and a brazen cymbal."

"But brass corrodes and strings decay  
And the dark night follows every day."

"My love, there's a new moon with each eve  
And there are none who mourn or grieve—  
Now come, love, away with me  
Beyond the cold Atlantic sea."

"Yet I have heard of an eastern mart  
Where men may buy or sell a heart;  
So promise we'll return again  
If love complain."

"My love—come with me!"  
Where Kubla Khan, on pleasure bent,  
Unfurled the pennons of his intent  
We wandered free;  
And the mansion of Oliver Wendell Holmes  
Filled with the sound of dusky combs;  
His stately cupola became  
The ivory dome of Tamerlane—  
And we were free!

We visited the lovely ladies  
Who hold soirees in the halls of Hades  
Where Circe taps her dulcimer  
While Sappho and Helen weave and purr.

(I sang to my love in a jasper key  
Beneath a mauve jacaranda tree;  
She was an alabaster queen  
Secretly stirring beneath sateen.)

Time was like a spring unending,  
Only a cloud in a mirror bending  
And gone . . .

"Oh love!" I cried, "should we confine  
Our happiness to a single passion  
When there is much to be learned of fashion  
By tasting a more ancient wine?  
I remember a song that Circe played  
While she looked at me—and her body swayed."

I heard love cry, but the sky was bright  
And time was like a mirror bending  
A brief cloud to a turquoise ending.

(The dulcimer is an acolyte  
That carries the sun through lucid night  
And the only shadows are in ones heart  
Like dark birds circling a distant mart.)

I've heard the sound, like a crystal chime,  
Of ice that can make the silence jar,  
And through apertures in endless time  
Seen love lost as a fallen star;  
Yet returning I should find no more  
Than one could find on a lunar shore  
Above whose time-washed flats the sun  
Goes implacably as it begun.

My love, I'll not complain . . .

(The dulcimer is a lovely thing  
With which to cry or even sing)

. . . I shall remain,

Choosing the small or the very tall  
And shouting it so the echoes crack,  
Like a child alone in a moonlit hall  
Where a ghost makes his scream come back.





## III

One of the first things Mara did on arriving was to buy a map of the city. She pinned it on the wall of the apartment room that overlooked the courtyard with its potted plants and the heavy iron gate that she always kept locked. It was only after she had been there a week that she discovered the map was wrong, though it was only a small mistake and not worth worrying about too much. The small, circular park that lay just beyond the iron gate had been left out.

The morning she discovered the error (having returned from sitting on a stone bench in the park until the sun grew too bright) she considered asking Quetza, her maid, to return the map. But then she remembered that was impossible because Quetza could not understand her, speaking only the language of the country, not Spanish, which Mara knew slightly, but an Indian tongue that was like the sound of hidden swift water. After the silent, dark girl had left she took the map down and drew in the park, shading it heavily so that a large area of streets and blocks was obscured.

After lunch she went out again, making sure the gate was locked behind her before hurrying across the street to the park, deserted now (the nurses and baby carriages and small children gone) and the time of siesta lying warm and quiet among the palms slanting over a pool where an unseen bird sang sweetly.

From her stone bench she could see that the surrounding buildings were further away than they had been that morning. Now, she could see the wide highway, divided along its center by a cactus-dotted island of raised earth, that came out from the heart of the city. For some time she watched the buses, sleek sedans, and impatient taxis, passing as if they really had some place to go. It was then she saw the man.

He came running across the highway, swerving and bounding nimbly between two taxis, reaching and crossing the island into the opposite traffic, swinging a black cape before the cars and crying out exultantly as he reached the side nearest her. He came running on, his feet firm on the gravel path as he entered the park, slowing as he approached her.

She looked away as he came abreast of her, but not before she had seen he was young and slender, the dark eyes in the olive face already intent on her. When she looked again he was standing before her smiling, the black cape swinging against his thigh.

"Buenos dias, senorita," he said. But when she turned her head away he shrugged and started on so that she knew she must speak quickly.

"Buenos dias, senior. Donde va?"

"A La Plaza, senorita."

"Oh, the bulls!" For a moment she felt cold. "Today?"

"No, manana. Only today I must see them. You will be there tomorrow?"

"Yes."

"To see me?"

"Yes."

"Then I was not wrong. You came to the city to find me. No?"

She nodded and let him look at her, let his dark eyes examine her face and body, feeling her blood warm as he became motionless, his cape making a thin sharp shadow on the ground.

"Here," he said, reaching in his pocket and holding out a piece of cardboard. "It is for the barrier, in the sun. I will look for you."

She took it, careful that her fingers did not touch his.

"Muchas gracias, senior." She rose. "I have not been there before. I must go to look at my—"

"But see, senorita!"

He pivoted gracefully, raising one arm and pointing to where, beyond the park at the end of a broad avenue she had not noticed before, the circular rim of the Plaza stood high in the afternoon.

"Yes," she said, "but I have a map."

He turned and looked at her strangely.

"But you do not need a map. I had no map and I

found you." He moved away from her, calling over his shoulder as he broke into a run: "So until tomorrow, *senorita*. Adios!"

She waited until he disappeared through the park, then hurried along the path, so eager to examine the map she did not recall until she was in the apartment that the iron gate had been unlocked. But she forgot about it as soon as she saw the map.

Why had she not seen all the mistakes before? On the map the divided highway ran in the opposite direction from the way she had seen it. The avenue leading out to the Plaza was not even indicated and the Plaza itself had been placed on the wrong side of the city.

She spent the afternoon and evening redrawing the map, cutting boldly through the narrow inked lines with a heavy pencil, reshaping the streets, putting the Plaza where it belonged, blocking in dark patches of buildings. And when she had finished there was something about the map that reminded her of the young man, the bull fighter, some movement of line and shadow that made her see him as he had stood before her that afternoon, his dark eyes smiling at her.

It took her a long time to go to sleep that night. When she did it was to half dream, half imagine, the young man somewhere in the room, coming closer to her, his hands playing lightly, coolly, over her body, until finally she awoke and went down through the shadowed courtyard and locked the gate.

Quetza awakened her, pounding on the iron gate until she rose and went down, letting her in, then returning to her bed where she lay still in half sleep while the girl drew aside the drapes, letting in the mid-morning sunlight. Quetza's sudden cry brought her upright. Mara saw the girl bending over the table, staring down at the map.

"Quetza, what's the matter?"

The girl mumbled unintelligibly and backed away from the table. Mara slid from her bed and picked up the map.

"Quetza, it's only a map of the city!"

The girl stared at her uncomprehendingly, moving her head slowly to and fro. She clasped her arms about her small body, bending forward so that her coarse black hair came about her shoulders like a mantle. The girl left the room and Mara heard her voice from the kitchen singing mournfully in a minor key.

Mara was pleased when the girl left early. Now she could think only of the afternoon. She spent a long time brushing her hair until it lay glistening about her face, her hair lighter, but her face, she noticed with surprise, shaped much like his. At noon she dressed, choosing the bright colors she knew he would like.

She left the apartment early so she would have time to sit for a while on the stone bench in the park. As she crossed the courtyard to the gate she paused to pick up the black cape that lay on the worn stones. He must have dropped it, she thought—but no, for she had locked the gate. Or had that been afterwards? She grew confused and stood twisting the cape about in her hands, not knowing quite what to do until she remembered the map. Of course, the map! One couldn't get lost or confused if one had a map. She returned to the apartment, but remembered, on leaving, to take the black cape with her. He would need it.

When she reached the stone bench and sat down she unfolded the map, looking from it down the long avenue to where the Plaza, pennons flying from its rim, stood high and solid under the sun. Already cars and buses were beginning to move toward it and the sidewalks were crowded with people hurrying along. She sat for an hour in the sun.

Finally she rose, making a mantilla of the cape so that her face was in shadow, tucking the folded map and ticket down inside her dress. She waited where the avenue began until a bus stopped for her. It was empty and the driver did not stop again, going swiftly on through the crowds and traffic until the Plaza stood high above them.

As she left the bus the driver smiled up at her, somehow reminding her of the young bull fighter. Maybe his brother, she thought, as she joined and followed the crowd into the Plaza, into the inverted cone of sunlight where the people were like bright tiers of mosaic above the clean circle of earth. She went down to the barrier and held out her ticket to the old man who came up to her.

"But *senorita*," he said, frowning at the ticket, "there is no seat here with that number."

"Oh yes," she replied, "there must be for he gave me—." She broke off, pointing to where the double gates had opened and the grave gleaming troupe marched to music from shadow to sunlight. "See!" she cried, indicating the young man, "He



gave it to me," watching how he walked in the center of the front rank surely and beautifully. The old man went along the barrier and returned.

"I am sorry, a mistake," he said. "Your seat is there."

Before sitting down she spread the black cape along the rail. Across the ring she saw the young man move behind the barrier. Bugle notes lanced through the air, making a silence into which the first bull came, a dark shape of anger with its hooves a tympani on sand as the horns went seeking behind the bright cloth.

He did not take the first bull, nor the second. The third was his but he played it easily and quickly on the far side of the ring so that she grew afraid he had forgotten her until, standing above the slain bull, his eyes found her. He smiled. She knew his second bull would be for her.

The creeping shadow of the Plaza rim almost covered the torn, stained earth when the sixth bull, his bull, her bull, careened into the ring. He took the animal like love, holding it from him yet leading it on, his bright cape flirting over and around the bull in one prolonged yet unconsummate embrace that left her body burning but without fear. While the horsemen entered and performed their brief, impotent tourney he stood motionless below her beyond the barrier, then turning to smile up at her as he took the banderillas, his slim body beautiful as he met with swift insolence the charging bull, planting the sharp sticks like quick kisses three times on the thick neck.

Now love begins, she thought, hearing the heavy swelling voice of the crowd press down on her. She leaned forward, feeling the warm wood of the barrier beneath her hands as he came toward her, stood looking up at her until she lifted the black cape and tossed it to him.

"Oh love," she cried, "be careful!"

For a moment his eyes seemed to mock her. He raised his sword, saluting into the last shaft of sunlight falling around him, then bending to her. As he went out to the bull it seemed part of her went with him and she leaned forward, pressing her hands tightly against her breasts.

He played at love no longer. Now the quick eager close embrace, he and the animal one, parting to come together again, meeting and lost in the swirl and flash of cape and sword. She could feel her body grow tense, the rush of blood

to her face. And then the animal stood motionless before him, his shining, unclothed sword upraised.

"Now!" she cried. "Now! Now."

He met the bull, going in between the horns, the steel plunging, invisible in its final and scarlet joining with the heart. He stood motionless above the bull. The cool shadow of the Plaza rim crept over her.

She found the empty bus beyond the Plaza gates. The driver must have been waiting for her for as soon as she entered he pulled out into the crowds and traffic, driving again so swiftly that they reached the park before the sun vanished behind the distant mountains, leaving a high, impersonal light in the sky. She stepped from the bus.

"Adios, senorita," the driver called.

She looked up, seeing again how much he resembled her love and meaning to ask him who he was, but too late. The bus moved on into the evening.

The park was silent. She sat on the stone bench, not impatient, knowing he would come to her across the wide street where the lights made a brassy arcade in the deepening dusk.

He came running. He was a swift dark dart crossing the wide street, dodging nimbly through the traffic to the island and coming on without pause. And then she screamed. Two cars bore down on him and she saw his cape fly up against them, heard the harsh shrill of tires, the solid mangling sound of metal against metal, and he was gone beneath the crushed black shapes. She screamed again and covered her face with her hands.

How long she remained this way she did not know. She heard no sound. But when she raised her head he was standing before her, tall and slender, the black cape against his thigh.

"My love," she said, "I thought you were dead."

"No, not I," he answered, smiling, turning his head and staring for moments at where the traffic had jammed and halted in the arcade of yellow light.

She saw his face clearly, the shape and apertures of his skull seemingly without flesh. Her breath caught in her throat. When he bent toward her she stood up quickly and stepped back, reaching for the map inside her dress, feeling her hands shake as she unfolded the paper and held it up to the light.



"Something about your face just then," she said. "It reminded me of the map."

He came close to her, raising his cape against the light but not before she saw the face, his face, fixed on her from the dark shadows and hollows of the map. Now she understood Quetza's sudden cry. Terror closed around her like ice.

"No!" she cried. "I was wrong. I do not love you. I did not know your face would be like that!"

"It is too late, Mara," he said. "You see, now I love you. I must have you."

He swung the black cape about here and guided her to the edge of the park. When he paused she looked up, seeing him glancing once more to where from the arcade of yellow light came the thin and desolate wail of a siren.

"It is better with the bulls, Mara. They know how to accept me."

"But I was wrong," she cried softly. "I did not think you would be like this."

"No one ever does, Mara."

She went with him unresistingly. The map fell from her hand but it did not matter. There was no need of a map now. She pressed closer to him under the black cape, feeling the blade of his unsheathed sword burn against her body as they went out of the city into the trackless and consummate night.

---

### PASTORAL

Angry he sits upon a rock  
In a field, while a flock  
Of pale grey sheep wander by;  
Smoldering he feels intrepid  
Watching the placid, silent shepherd  
Move slowly under a peaceful sky.

"Go on! Go on!" he wants to shout,  
To scatter the flock all about  
And show the world his angry side.  
He sees no beauty  
In the shepherd's duty,  
His heart is empty . . . and his soul has died.

—Gerard S. Walker



## BLOODY BUCKET

RUBY AMBURGY

BURLY carried the coal-oil lamp through the dog-trot and into the upper room. Dusk had brought the sound of bullfrogs and flapping wings as the chickens flew into the trees to roost. Setting the lamp on the bureau, he walked back to the door and leaned against the frame while he rolled a cigarette. He listened to Ma out back feeding Ring. He knew she was patting his head and talking to him as he ate his food from the flat rock underneath the kitchen door. The porch railing was lined with potted plants and he flipped his cigarette into one before he turned into the room and started dressing.

His overalls smelled of lye and the stiff white shirt scratched his bare shoulders. He pulled the lamp closer to the mirror so that he could see to part his hair. After wiping the dust from his heavy shoes with Ma's embroidered dresser scarf, he blew out the lamp and went toward the barn.

Chickens cackled and flew among the low branches when he galloped down the lane. Ring barked and chased after him but was left behind as Burly dug his heels into the horse's sides and raced through the creek. Water splashed up onto his body so that his clothes were wet by the time he got to Cindy's.

He left the horse to graze in the yard and walked across the porch. He laughed out loud when he looked through the window and saw Lyle and Lonzo sitting on the floor with a fruit jar between them. He threw the door open and ran into the room. Near the hearth, his foot caught a pan of peas Cindy had been shelling and they spewed in all directions. They watched the peas fall to the floor and roll crazily until they found a resting place in the rough boards. Lyle held up the jar.

"Have some peas and moonshine," he said.

Burly pushed the peas back into the jar with his tongue as he drank. Cindy came into the room and watched. Her wrinkled face was red and her chin quivered when she opened her mouth.

"You young devils," she spat. "I try to be accommodating and sell you whiskey but ye just destruct. Now I ain't having your cutting up here. Go somewheres where folks don't care for your meanness."

The boys turned their heads and snickered. They passed the jar around in silence until it was empty and then Lyle handed it to Cindy and followed the others outside.

The three horses raced down the creek and the boys' shouts echoed through the hills. Soon they came up onto the highway and their laughing with the metallic clicking of hoofs on the blacktop broke the still night. Once in a while a rattle-trap car would pass and they would pull over to the side of the road so that the bright lights wouldn't frenzy the horses.

Music could be heard from the Bloody Bucket long before the three came around the curve and saw the red neon light in the window. They galloped the rest of the way. Taking the horses to the back of the building, they tied them to trees before going inside.

Burly stopped at the counter and bought a pint of moonshine while Lyle and Lonzo found a table in the back of the big room. The bottle was set in the middle of the table and they drew their chairs up around it. Music was so loud that they could hardly hear each other talk yet each knew when it was his turn to drink.

Four miners, still in work clothes, sat at the table next to them. Occasionally they yelled at the waitress for more beer and each time she brought it, Burly had to look away. She wore a blouse of shiny orange satin—a color so bright that it made protective tears come into his eyes. Lyle and Lonzo whistled and called to her; Burly slipped in an extra drink. Pretty soon she came over to their table. Burly saw her and lowered his eyes to the bottle.

"What's wrong, Burly? You drunk so soon?"

Burly looked up. She was standing above him, hands on hips and smiling. The orange color was blinding. He blinked his eyes fast and again looked down. The two boys laughed and she seemed pleased.

"My eyes ain't so good to-night," he said.

"Surely they can stand the sight of me."

Lyle and Lonzo were punching each other under the table while they held back their laughter. The girl sat down beside Burly and the boys watched attentively.

"Well, my eyes can stand anything, I guess."

Lyle and Lonzo slapped each other's backs and leaned over the table laughing. Burly looked down again but he could feel the girl leaning closer to him.

"Am I playing second fiddle to a bottle of moonshine to-night, Burly?"

Burly's eyes were smarting something awful and the whole room seemed to be getting the same shiny orange color as the blouse. He took a drink that caused Lyle and Lonzo to push back their chairs and grab the bottle from him.

"We get two a-piece for that one," Lyle said crossly.

She leaned back in the chair and laughed. Burly watched her orange shoulders shake. She ended in a hiccough and then began focusing her smile on Burly again. He watched. The orange blouse, the orange laugh, the orange smile—everything was shiny orange and he felt sick from it.

"Why don't you take that damned blouse off?"

She smiled; the two boys stamped their feet on the floor and roared with laughter. The miners turned to watch.

"Maybe I'm getting somewhere after all!" she said.

Crossing her legs, she began tapping her foot against the calf of Burly's leg. He moved but she followed and the tapping continued. He lifted his eyes but not being able to see beyond the orange blouse, he decided to roll a cigarette. Tobacco sprinkled onto the floor and the cigarette paper floated from his hand. She took the tobacco but he jerked it from her and stuffed it back into his shirt pocket.

"But I was just trying to help you, honey," she whined.

Thinking the fun over, Lyle and Lonzo had tilted their chairs back against the wall and were singing. Burly half-closed his eyes and smiled at her.

"Let's go outside," he said.

She found his hand and led him through the tables out to the porch. She hung onto his arm and laughed.

"Am I going to have to lead you around all night, honey?"

Burly grinned and looked down at her. He took her



hands and placed them on her hips. Catching on, she began her long slow smile. He staggered from lack of support but he fixed his eyes on the blouse and watched until his eyelids burned. The shiny orange color was everywhere. He was getting dizzy now so he slapped hard. Her neck popped and her head lolled over to the side. Grabbing her shoulder with his left hand, he held her upright and slapped and slapped at her face. After a while he let go and she fell to the porch floor. She made funny noises—almost like her orange laugh, but they were broken and weak now.

He felt his way among the tables and sat down. The bottle was all ready dry but he drained it and set it back in its place. Lyle and Lonzo were still leaning back against the wall. They were singing and didn't notice Burly. He smiled, thinking how good and clear their voices sounded . . . .

"Korea, Korea, where'd you stay last night?\*

Korea, Korea, where'd you stay last night?

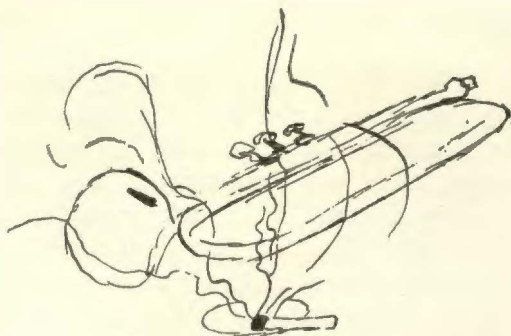
Got up this morning, sun was shining bright."

---

The funeral train moves silent down the street  
In dignified procession, as the bell  
Tolls o'er the church where many came to greet,  
With final, ceremonious rites . . . a shell.  
Do they not know that she who gave it breath  
Resides no longer in that piece of clay,  
To which they feigned respect soon after death  
By vain attempts to seal out sure decay!  
You idiots, now pressing 'round the tomb,  
I curse your empty acts and each cheap tear.  
You lack a constant feeling, you but fume  
And 'cause commotion 'bout each new-made bier.  
They do betray themselves, how they behave!  
Unnoticing they tread on older graves.

—Harry T Gaines

\*From a Kentucky ballad. "Korea" was originally 'Korena.'—Ed.



## THE CRIMSON SMUDGE

**BILL McGAW**

**MUSIC:** DANCE BAND THEME, UP AND UNDER

**HARRY:** I'm called Harry Harcourt. That isn't my real name, only the one I use for professional purposes. I'm in the music business, I peddle the stuff in dance halls, using as a medium, a rather good twelve piece outfit. Most of the guys in my business don't use their real names; they're horrible. The only cats that do are those long haired schmoes, and it usually runs, the worse name they got, the better they are. Not with us. I play the horn. A horn, that is a horn. In case you don't know, that means a trumpet. Harcourt's Mello-cats, that's us, maybe you've heard us. We get around. No really big bookings, but . . . . we get around. Lot of lake resorts, and that sort of stuff. Not too much security in the business, kinda hand to mouth . . . . but for us, that's its charm. You never know what's gonna happen next. Take for instance the little incident of last week . . . .

**MUSIC:** UP AND UNDER, BRING IN SOUND OF DANCE HALL, CHATTER, ETC.

**HARRY:** We were doing a week-ender at Cherry Cove. It was one of those usual Saturday night mobs, and since the boys and I had been playing these resort jobs, we'd seen plenty of young happy



kids like the ones we were playing for that night. There they were, not caring about a thing . . . whether the music was good or not, just so they were together, having a good time. Kids like these don't like the music too fast. They want it slow and low, you know, so's they can get in a little legalized necking on the floor. All that mattered to them was that they were at a not unusual lake resort, with a better than average romantic setting. The moon was just right, hanging low over the water, there was even the smell of flowers, it was perfect for them, to us . . . just a slightly bigger gate receipt, that's all. That's my cue, excuse me . . .

MUSIC: TRUMPET SOLO, WHEN FINISHED, BRING BACK UNDER

HARRY: I put down by horn, and looked out at the crowd . . .

A KID: Say, Harry, how about playing "Flickin' on the Raw?"

HARRY: Sure, kid, glad to. Next set, huh? My drummer, and the band's woman killer, Eddie, leaned over, tapped me with one of his sticks, and whispered something into my ear. I couldn't hear, how could I, the saxes were on a ride, but . . . when he pointed out to the center of the crowd, I saw what had aroused his interest . . . there, in the center of the floor, was, without doubt, the most beautiful gal in the world. There she was, whirling around, in and out, with a big dumb looking, football-player-type ape who undoubtedly didn't appreciate her. 'Bout that time, she looked up at me and smiled. Guess she sensed that I was watching her or something. Man, could that gal smile! . . . she was smiling right at me, it was meant for me, and nobody else, me alone. I was standing on clouds, Jack, eight layers up. It wasn't time for my solo, but I picked up the horn and nodded. Joe, the clarinet player, looked a little hurt, but . . . he sat down. I had to talk to her and the only way to

do it from the stand was with my horn . . . . I felt the cool mouth piece on my lips, and started blowing . . . .

MUSIC: REAL GONE TRUMPET SOLO, UP & UNDER

HARRY: Each note was mellow. They came out round and clear and mellow and sweet. I hit everyone right on the nose, and squeezed every bit of juice out of it . . . . Never before had I played this way. Never. You know why? She hadn't been there to inspire me . . . . that's right. Man, I was playing my heart out for her, trying to impress her . . . . and she knew it. She danced her way up to in front of the stand and just stood there with the ape, just swaying back and forth. Swaying back and forth and smiling that sad sweet smile. I said 'I love you with' my horn. She heard me, and then started smiling a little differently . . . .

MUSIC: MUSIC UP TO COMPLETION OF NUMBER, AND OUT

HARRY: Take ten, boys.

JOHN: Hey, nice job, Harry.

PETE: Where'd you learn to play like that, "hot stuff?"

WHITY: What 'uv ya been waiting for?

JOE: You can take over my solo anytime if you keep on playing like that.

HARRY: Thanks fellas, thanks . . . . see you in a couple of minutes.

JOE: Where ya going?

HARRY: Out along the beach.

JOE: I'll come along.

HARRY: Uh . . . . no, Joe, I uh, sorta want to be alone . . . . for a minute.

JOE: Have it your way.

HARRY: I stepped down from the stand and started across the floor in her direction . . . .

A KID: Hey, Mr. Harcourt, you were wonderful. Can I have your autograph?

HARRY: Yeah, uh . . . . sure, sure . . . .

SOUND: WRITING ON PAPER

HARRY: Here you are, kid. Thanks . . . .

KID: Thank you, Mr. Harcourt.

HARRY: I walked right past her, looked her straight in the eye, and gave her my number four look. Number four was the one that said, "Shake him, and meet me outside, baby." I'd practiced these things before in the mirror, and I was fairly certain that she got the message, as I saw her nod her head . . . . just a little . . . . but she must have noticed . . . . Out on the pavillion beside the dance hall, I pulled out one of my special cigarettes . . . . you know, the kind that us musicians smoke when we need extra kicks.

SOUND: MATCH

HARRY: The smoke burned as I inhaled, burned going down my throat.

SOUND: INHALING AND THEN EXHALING

HARRY: I held it down for a while then pushed the smoke upwards and outwards through my nostrils. Took a few more puffs and held these down longer. And then that good feeling came.

MUSIC: SNEAK IN SLOW WEIRD WHIRLING  
MUSIC

HARRY: The world started to revolve around me, slowly, and lazily. Kind of tilting as it went around, and I felt like I was up there among the clouds again. About half way 'round on the third rotation, I had a feeling that there was someone standing beside me. I reached out to grab a pillar to slow myself down, looked over to my right . . . .

MUSIC: WHIRLING MUSIC OUT \* \* SNEAK IN  
SLOW MUSIC

HARRY: And there she was . . . . looking like a ghostly dream, too beautiful to be real. She just stood there smiling that beautiful smile of her's, smiling like she could read my soul, like she understood my every thought, like nothing I'd ever seen before, much less dreamed could ever exist. Maybe all this chick could do was smile . . . . I wasn't in a smiles mood. I grabbed her . . . I kissed her.

SOUND: KISSING NOISE, EXCITED SIGHING

HARRY: It was good, doggone good. I kissed her a second time, and she put everything she had into it, and brother she had plenty to put into it . . . .

MUSIC: SLOW MUSIC SHARPLY OUT

HARRY: Then, I don't know what happened exactly, but when I opened my eyes, she was gone. Completely disappeared. I looked up the beach, no trace of her. I looked down the beach . . . . same answer. The only place she could have gone was back into the dance hall . . . . There was a trace of lipstick on my mouth, think it was Red Lightning . . . I wiped it away, and raced back into the hall. Looked around, but she'd vanished. Maybe that ape had wised up and taken her home. Maybe he'd taken her away I was worried, and worse . . . I was in love . . . first time since Cynthia, but that was a long time ago. I checked everywhere for her, but there wasn't a trace. When I got back to the stand, the boys were waiting for me, and that was odd. Usually I was the first back. How long had I been gone? Ten minutes, half an hour? I don't know.

SOME

CATS: (Ad lib greetings)

HARRY: Number twenty eight, and we started to play, "Meteor Dust." I kept searching the crowd, but but I couldn't find her.

MUSIC: DANCE BAND AND HALL NOISES IN LIGHTLY

HARRY: Once, I thought I saw her, but it was only a girl in a dress that looked like her's. I kept on looking . . . . nothing!  
For the rest of the dance I was rotten, missed cues, was off key, off beat.

MUSIC: DANCE BAND MUSIC OUT SNEAK IN  
NEUROTIC MUSIC INCREASING THE TEMPO

HARRY: I stunk. Couldn't find her . . . . everything was going to the dogs . . . . wouldn't I ever see her again.



MUSIC: SHARPLY OUT

HARRY: The dance was over, and none too soon. I walked up to Eddie, the drummer, who was starting to disassemble his drums, and asked him, in as calm a manner as I could . . . . 'Say, what happened to that gal in the red dress you pointed out to me?'

EDDIE: What gal, Harry.

HARRY: I didn't like his sympathetic tone, or the expression on his face . . . . The gal in the red dress, the one with the big ape . . . . you remember.

EDDIE: No, I didn't point any gal out to you.

HARRY: You lie! I screamed, and several stragglers from the crowd turned around and stared at me. That blonde in the red dress, what happened to her? . . . . Eddie started inching away from me. I was furious. . . .

EDDIE: Take it easy, Harry, you've been working too hard lately.

HARRY: And then I realized that I had my hand on his throat. I let go . . . . what was wrong with me? . . . . Maybe he was right, I had been working too hard lately. Staying up all night, arranging, transposing . . . . maybe he was right. Maybe he *was* right . . . . arranging, transposing . . . . rehearsals . . . . tough schedules . . . . not enough sleep, too much drinking, that rotten gin, and the reefers, yeah, the reefers . . . . they'd knock anyone down in practicaly no time. They were slowly rotting my mind . . . . I could feel the sweat oozing out of my forehead . . . . I pulled out my handkerchief . . . . mopped my face . . . . and then!! I saw it . . . .

MUSIC: STAB \* \* \* THEN SOFT WEIRD STUFF OUT FOR CONCLUSION

HARRY: There on the corner of my handkechief, was a smudge of dark . . . . red . . . . lipstick . . .

MUSIC: UP FULL HARSHLY WITH ANOTHER STAB, AND OUT

# THE ETERNAL QUEST

PETER STURTEVANT

i

I could hear Faint Feminine Foot-falls  
Daintily crumbling the surface pine-needles, some ways off.  
I was walking through a dark forest—looking under rocks—  
Looking for a woman's Face.

Many times I had seen part of it,  
Lying on the damp earth—but there were grubs and crawling  
things.

And Prothallian moss and fern beginnings—  
To puncture the white softness my aching heart wanted.

Yet always there was that tantalizing Foot-fall, delicately  
disturbing my search.

ii

I left turned-up stones where they had fallen,  
Ripped from the earth—  
Under some would grow another culture;  
Some soon, but some never.

I seldom realized it was destruction.  
The razing of nature; a pinpoint of Life disturbed—  
Or was it that I thought in my youth that the rain and the sun  
Would cleanse the open wounds on the forest floor.

And always her walking . . .

iii

Sometimes I would find dark rocks turned over where I had  
never been.

I tried to put them back.  
Sometimes I could and sometimes not—  
I knew now that I would see the one who was doing it.

It began to be a pleasing obsession;  
She and I would reach for a stone, and nestled in greeness,  
where none should be would rest a mirror—  
A little pool . . . deep and reflective . . . a together crystal.

She!



## iv

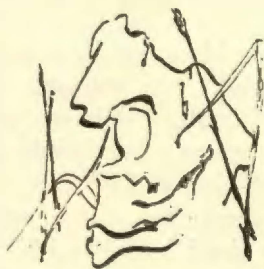
I was running toward her—she started to me—  
A wheeling clot of blood hung in my throat—I cried to God in  
thankfulness

I thought of tenderly holding her and of our never carelessly  
extricating stones,

Looking for . . .

When a star crashed with screaming brilliance on the ground  
between us and burned forever there.

I knew now that I must turn my back to the heat  
But I stood and watched until the searing air  
Had dried out my eyes  
And I could never again see rocks in the forest.



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## BROTHERLY LOVE IN MY OWN HOME TOWN

Hampton, Virginia, is a small town on the swampy shores of Chesapeake Bay. It contains the oldest continuous Episcopal Parish in the United States. It contains, as I will testify, one of the oldest brotherly feuds in the United States.

One of the brothers is a success, the other a failure. Paul, the younger, is seventy-seven years of age. He is a practicing physician and enjoys a busy day in a clean, well-kept office, in the best section of the town. Paul is the county coroner, a position he has held for forty years. A joiner and an effective speaker, he has been the key man of many a civic betterment drive. His keen sense of humor, however, proved the undoing of happy relations with Brother Bob.

Bob, now aged seventy-nine, has accomplished little in his life. Sticking to the farm when Paul left for school he was content to let his fortunes ride with the production of the land which was poor. Probably the biggest event of his career was the change from farming to selling mules and horses. He did not prosper, but he made a living. Bob was reasonably happy; that is, until Paul returned to Hampton College, and commenced his medical practice. Bob's immediate family made the customary notation of his brother's success as it progressed, and Bob made the customary responses. He cursed when Paul's name was mentioned, and scowled darkly at his brother on the street. Soon he was inveigling against him in public.

Paul bore up under the strain in an embarrassed silence. His restraint under the circumstances helped win him the county coronership.

This was a killing blow for Bob, and he racked his brain for a chance to discredit his younger brother. At last an opportunity presented itself. Bob was summoned to move a dead horse from the vacant lot beside the ice house. The wheels of his brain whirled and clicked. Calling a Negro boy from the ice house steps, he sent a message to the county coroner, "There is a dead body beside the ice house." Bob then stopped in every shop on the main street and passed the same word.

Soon Paul arrived on the scene and was regaled with laughter as the town folk sensed the humor of the situation and made light sport of him.

Laughing, but burning inside, and disgusted with the years of tongue lashing of Bob Parker, Paul retired to his office. He soon returned carrying a white placard. This he secured to the horse's bloated carcass and left.

The crowd drew near to read the inscription. This is what they read:

**"HERE LIES ONE OF BOB PARKER'S BETTER QUALITY, GUARANTEED HORSES."**

On occasion, there are still reports of close brushes between a mule hauling van and a black sedan with an MD tag on its bumper.

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# THE HAND OF GOD

ALBERT CHUBB

Turning back the hands of time, we see the men of old  
As the pure and spotless pages of the Holy Book unfolds.  
From fleecy clouds steps Abraham—whose unfaltering  
faith was sincere.

“I will make of thee a great nation,” the voice of God  
we hear.

Once more a fleeting cloud departs; the melting moon  
seeps through.

An aged man with silver beard and robe of falling dew  
Walks slowly forth with arm outstretched, and in his  
hand a rod.

And faithful Moses was always led by the mighty hand of  
God.

And yet here comes a host of clouds, drawing nearer and  
nearer still.

These twelve-like wonders pause and gaze far across the  
distant hills.

And on the horizon, a dim, dim, star waxes large into a  
great prodigy.

From the blinding radiance, Jesus speaks, “Ye fishers of  
men, follow me.”

The clouds float on and follow the star far out in the  
spacious skies.

As the vision dissolved, I knew that God’s hand had  
touched and opened my eyes.

The hand of God is leading us on, each minute, each  
hour, each day.

If we but open our eyes and give Him our hearts, He will  
lead us down the way.

Through fear and trouble and heartache, the Lord has a  
comforting hand.

He will ever direct and protect us, if we hearken to His  
worthy commands.

Security, Love and Peace are ours, if we follow the way  
that He trod.

So with Faith, Hope and Trust, let us follow the hand  
of God.



# ALONE

MILLCENT FORD

She stood there all alone, hesitantly staring ahead. Only angry skies and long stretches of creamy sand lay before here. A weird, silent wind ran its tingling fingers over her face and gently disturbed her taffy-tinted hair. She was frightened, it was all so lonely. She began to run and as she did, she felt the smooth sand glide beneath her. She stopped and stood there, exhausted, but strangely, the sand kept gliding from under her. Run, run, she thought there must be someone to reach, some place to go. Stumbling, she fell and vainly tried to grasp the golden sand, to hold it, to stop it from escaping through her fingers. There were none to help or guide the way, and she wept.

Then there rose a tower before her and its walls were dark and rough and from within these walls there came a dreamy perfume, seeping out of all the tiny crevices and coming in a rose colored swirl towards her until it took her in its velvety folds and forced her eyes to close, her heart to cease its frightened pounding, and her whole body to relax and let itself be molded by this strange, unearthly vapor.

Gradually, the rosy color that enveloped her began to darken. First to a dusky red, then a bluish red that deepened to a purple and in turn this purple swirled into an even darker color, leaving in its wake a cold and evil black.

Little balls of gold run through the black and take the shape of merry notes; horizontal streaks of gold become a shimmering musical staff, while others—branching, weaving—are suddenly fantastic metallic symbols.

And there before her eyes the notes all quivered as if in anguish or in pain, and the music symbols shook with fear. It was as though an unseen hand had touched these notes—but in misery they found they had no melody to yield. So in its place each one sent forth a shimmering, wavery letter.

Six, so touched, reluctantly responded to form a single, glowing word—insane. It faded as quickly as it had come and left her weeping in the darkness, all alone.



# A BIG WORLD

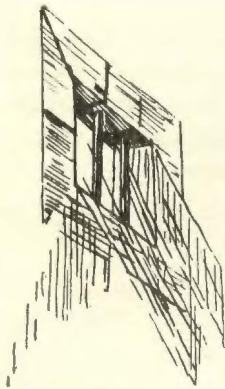
LOU GLASER

The nauseating smell of engine fumes hit my nostrils. The cold, damp air pressed against my face and swirled up my back where the shirt-tail of my uniform was hanging out. I felt lonely and homesick. The sea was choppy, and the gigantic mountains of blue-green slashed fiercely against the strang hull of the big transport; thrusting it head-on to meet another heavy wall of water. I was one of the youngest of the entire mass of scouts heading for Europe. I had been waiting for what seemed years to embark from New York, and begin this exciting, two month trip. Our destination was the Boy Scout World Jamboree in Moisson, France. It was just after the end of the war, and we, as American youths, were being sent to Europe to represent brotherhood and friendship from our "great" country. I was very fortunate to be on this ship with these other boys, and I wanted to be "one of the group."

I sat alone — on the C deck, high above the agitated waters. Why was I sitting alone? Did age mean everything to these new "friends" of mine? Or was it my face, covered with adolescent pimples? I was alone with the darkening skies and the bitter wind. I wished that I was home again. The never-ending pound of the ocean against the sturdy iron ship made loud slapping sounds . . . louder, louder, and louder. I was never so terrifically uncomfortable. Suddenly my ears were filled with the shrill, piercing, sound of the ship's whistle. It seemed to be trying to find a mate in this vast ocean shore to its loneliness and hardships. There was no answer. I felt much the same way. I began to think of this ship as a friend of mine. I thought that soon it would lose its way proudly into a busy dock, and find others the same as she. New people would greet her, and others would bid her good-bye. I then thought of myself in the same light. I will soon find new acquaintances, but I must seek them first. I silently thanked the ship for its help in offering a solution to my difficulty.

It was getting darker now, but I was feeling better so I didn't bother to descend to the lower decks. The nasty fumes of the ship still lingered in the cold air, but the smell seemed to subside a bit. I shoved my hands deeper into my warm pockets, and layed my head against the hard, cold, steel partition between the long, thin rails. I relaxed and closed my heavy eye-lids. Sleep found its way to my confused mind.

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## MAKE MAD THE GUILTY

GEORGE LYMBURN

When Barry Cahill opened his eyes, he saw a gray square divided into thirds by two vertical black stripes. Automatically, he touch his bruised cheek with two fingers while frowning at the patch of gray. It seemed the size of a policeman's face. A policeman with two billyclubs in front of him. Barry's fingers scraped against a cut on his cheek and the fingers curled into a fist. The first went to the edge of the cot, stretched open and curled again. Veins rose on the back of his hand as he pushed himself to a standing position. After he swayed back once, almost falling, he squinted his eyes and walked toward the gray square. He reached up for the black stripes, but when his hands clasped the damp iron bars his eyes opened wide, staring. He pulled on one of the bars, then the other. Clamping his jaw, he shook the bars. His jaw slid forward, he shook the bars more violently. They remained disdainfully aloof, refusing to shudder either by force or fear.



By pressing his face against the iron bars, his inquiring eyes could see into the gloomy corridor. Gray walls. Gray concrete walls built with geometric precision. One course of block, then, on top of the joint of the bottom blocks, the center of another. Up and up went the design. And outward, as far as the searching eyes could see.

Turning suddenly around, Barry Cahill leaned his shoulders against the door. He swayed forward, then pressed his back against the door. After pausing a moment, he swayed forward, crouched slightly, then drove his body against the iron frame. Again and again, like a sail that refuses to catch the wind fully, he swayed forward, paused, then snapped his body back against the unyielding barrier.

Finally, he did not fall back. Instead, he paced slowly forward. When he reached the other side of the room, he turned, lowered his head, and looked at the gray square. After taking a deep breath and holding it, Barry ran at the imposing rectangle. His shoulder and arm, then his head, and finally his whole body seemed to flatten against the door. His form remained suspended for a moment, then slid to the floor like some giant amoeba. Rising to his hands and knees, Barry Cahill started crawling, shaking his head, stopping once to wipe away the blood that was trickling to his eye, until his head struck his cot. He glanced up, braced his hands on the edge of the cot and managed to raise his body until he was standing. He turned around and looked at the gray square again, at the bars.

He leaped and flung himself at the door, furiously, arms waving, head lowered, legs driving. This charging force met the solid barrier again. The barrier absorbed the fury of the wild mass unflinchingly, scornfully. The fury died, the figure fell, and just before Barry Cahill passed out, he doubled up his first and drove it at the stubborn door.

When the guard slipped the prisoner's dinner through a slot in the cell door, he ignored the prone figure, but when he returned at noon the next day with a bowl of stew and an end of bread and realized the body had not moved, he spit on the floor and went out to call the prison hospital. Soon two guards arrived, rolled Barry Cahill on their stretcher and walked through the open doorway to the hospital.

When Mr. Thomas Cahill brought his son Barry back to the first grade for the third time on the opening day of school, he warned him of the consequence of trying to leave again. Ten minutes after Barry had watched his father depart, he rose from his seat and observed the neat rows of chairs and tables. Lined up this way, lined up that way. Inkwells all in the upper right hand corner. He glanced over at the windows. Neatly lined—up and down, back and forth. Same size, regular, even. He bit his tongue.

"You," someone said. Barry looked to the head of the room where in front of three equally sized blackboards, there sat a dark shape. "You," the shape repeated. "What are you doing now?"

"I'm going," Barry replied.

"Going? Going? What do you mean, going? Going where?"

"Out," said Barry.

The Cahills decided maybe they should wait until their son was older before he attended public schools, but when Barry was older, he left home. By doing a series of small jobs, stealing milk from doorsteps, sleeping in open buildings, in cellars, he managed to survive. He grew and moved. He travelled with an older group for awhile—moving where the seasons were the warmest. He was treated as a mascot but never behaved like one. Barry kept on the go, getting more resourceful in ways to travel and survive.

He loaded food produce on trailer trucks, then hitched a ride on the same truck to the market center, unloaded, then caught another truck out. He worked in a factory for three hours. Reporting for work in the morning, he quit at ten o'clock when the monstrous clanging of the stamping machine refused to change tempo. He drove a taxi but left at the end of a good day with a pocket full of fares. The money was sufficient to make a tour of four states. He received a job as a stock clerk in a department store and took thirty silk shirts, gave three to a truck driver for a lift, and sold the rest when he reached his destination. After getting a job as a short order cook, he treated four of his friends to a big dinner, took all the money from the cash register and departed.

When he tried to sell a rented car, the law finally intervened. Despite his clean record, the rental company pressed

charges, and Barry Cahill went to a small prison in the southern part of the States.

After they slammed the prison gate shut, Barry turned back towards the only exit in the enclosed camp. He bit his lower lip as the large latch was slammed into place.

"Keep movin'!"

Barry's eyes steadily surveyed the camp. Neatly rectangular, a double thickness of barbed wire fences formed the perimeter. In each corner and exactly in the middle of each enclosing strip of fence were the guards' towers. Ugly huts on four skinny legs. Within the compound were buildings lined up in orderly fashion, uniform even to the amount of rot that had eaten into the weary boards. In another part of the compound were several other buildings, larger, but equally similar. In front of these were a few trucks, three slowly moving men in gray uniforms, and a gaunt, staring guard with a shotgun slung under his arm. Looking again to the fence, Barry noticed the two definite barriers. They stretched around the camp in parallel lines, the inside fence three feet away from the other. Coils of wire filled the empty space. The entire fence looked as if a hideous spider had spun a metal web of unending patterns. Unconsciously moving his hand to clean the sweat from his face, Barry's arm came to a premature stop. He looked at his wrists. Two circles of steel linked with chain held his hands together.

A moist hand hit his shoulder. "Come on, move. No, no, over here. This building over here. Hey! Slow down . . . Halt . . . HALT!"

The three men in the gray uniforms paused in their work to watch a handcuffed figure running for the trucks. He reached the vehicle and leaped into the cab. His hands went forward to turn on the ignition switch. The starter engaged, sounding like an angry giant gnashing his uneven teeth. The giant coughed once and went back to gnashing his teeth.

"O. K. Buddy . . . out." The guard's upreaching hands clasped the seated figure. The figure fell out of the cab like a bag of clothing. The guard leaped on top of him, raised a clenched fist, then drove it downward. The fist went up again, then down again. Again and again the motion repeated itself until the fist turned red, then bloody.

The fist stopped on a battered face. Rising suddenly, the guard wiped his hand on his pant leg while grinning at the face of the prisoner. Other guards arrived.



"This guy's a nut. Toss him in solitary. I gotta wash up. Damn near broke my hand."

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When Barry Cahill opened his eyes, he saw a gray square divided into thirds by two vertical black stripes.

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The guard with the bandaged hand stood with a doctor beside the form of Barry Cahill.

"... and then he starts runnin' to the truck, tryin' to get away. A real nut, you know." The doctor peered at Barry Cahill through the upper part of his rimless bifocals. With a dirty fingernail he scratched his tobacco stained eye-tooth.

"How'd he bust his collarbone and forearm?"

"Tryin' to knock the dam cell wall down. Imagine a guy doin' anything like that—tryin' to run through a stone wall. A real nut."

"Yeah," the doctor agreed, "a real nut. Well, I gotta call in town now. Maybe you better keep this bird strapped in bed and give them bones a chance to set. See you next week."

"Yeah. So long, Doc."

The doctor picked up his imitation leather bag with his right hand and walked to the exit. The shoulder on the side of the bag was lower than the other, forcing a wrinkle down the back of his searsucker suit. As he went out the door, he bit off a chew of tobacco. The guard left, locking the door with a worn key.

At the sound of the click, Barry Cahill sat up. After a brief look at the bars on the windows, his eyes followed the edge of the door up, over, down. He smiled. He stood up, frowning a moment at his cradled arm, then, walking toward the ward exit, he pulled a small table along with him until he was standing next to the door. After lifting the table a foot from the floor, he released it and grabbed his shoulder. His hand rubbed the shoulder awhile, then went to the table again. The table started its slow rise upward. Barry clenched his lip between his teeth as his forehead started to shine with sweat. The table went up another foot as a bit of blood started down Barry's chin from his pierced lip. Squinting his eyes so the sweat would not blind him, Barry raised the table overhead, then slammed it at the door. Something broke, and the door swung open. After dropping the table quickly

and clearing the sweat from his eyes, the prisoner slowly looked around the prison yard. The eyes of the guard moved back and forth with pendulum regularity. Another hut, another, then Barry held his body still, like an action frozen by a camera shot. The guard in the northern corner was sitting, resting. Barry opened and closed his hands several times, wiped the sweat from his face and neck and from around his bandaged shoulder, exhaled in one burst and ran to the fence.

The wire strands groaned an off tune as the weight of the man pressed them down. The pant's cuff caught on a tiny barb, ripped off and dangled on a steel point. Just as the man's hand touched the top strand of wire, a shot slammed the silence into space. A second shot was the cue for shouts of "halt" and oaths of warning and protest. By hooking his cast arm over the top strand, Barry managed to pull himself up to a standing position before another shot sounded and the accompanying bullet ripped its way through Barry's leg, knocking him over the wires. By reaching the top wire of the outside fence, Barry managed to pull himself closer to the outside of the prison, but his clothes and flesh ripped on the barbs. A guard in the south tower fired a rifle shot at the figure, hitting the shoulder cast and tearing it off. A guard on the ground fired two revolver shots, succeeding in hitting the prisoner's ankle and placing the other bullet in his chest. Waiting for any further movement from the escaping man, the guards paused and watched. This blood-stained, torn figure started sagging, his hand slipped from the wire and caught on a barb on the second strand. Opening his left eye, Barry saw his hand suspended on the barbed fence. A further look revealed the ground outside the camp. After opening his other eye, he slowly lifted his pierced hand from the barb, reached for the top strand and started pulling himself to the outside. The body responded slowly. Steadily, like a caterpillar, it moved across the barbed wire, until the man's chest was over the outside fence.

The amazed guards fired a series of shots at the newly activated figure, tearing away clothing, cast and flesh. Barry Cahill held a scream in his throat, snapped his body downward, slid off the barbed wire and fell to the unfenced earth. After trying several times, he rose, finally, to his hands and knees, his head dangling downward, then started crawling away. His left hand went out hesitantly, slipped, his elbow



snapped outward and the body followed a downward movement until it came to rest in a shapeless pile.

After a moment, a guard rolled the figure over. A second guard looked at the face of the man lying outside the prison fence.

"He's dead. Good and dead." The second guard nodded slightly. "He sure as hell should be."

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The next morning, after obeying the burial laws of the state, three guards loaded a splintery wooden box containing a body into an old prison truck. The road to the cemetery was a long and rough one. As the slow moving truck bounced along the rutted and uneven road, the body of Barry Cahill shifted restlessly back and forth in his coffin.

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## **"AND WORST QF ALL"**

### **MILLICENT FORD**

She was as mad as a four year old can be. No one was going to get an "I'm sorry" out of her. She tramped out of the room to the stairs, and went up banging her foot down as loudly as she could at each step. Just because her baby brother was only two, and the youngest, didn't mean he had to have every little bit of attention. When she came to the top step, she went directly to her little brother's room and was already to slam the door open, stomped to her own room and slammed that door instead. Then she waited and tip-toed back to the baby's bedroom, her pigtails bobbing up and down behind her like the impish thoughts sputtering in her brain. In she went, tense and determined. Maybe she would be spanked, but it would be too late then. She sort of gulped in air and drew back convulsively with momentary pangs of fear and guilt. Her fingers worked at the material of her polka-dot dress. She glanced quickly about the room. It wasn't hard to find.

The toy was always put in a special place. Her baby brother loved that panda with all his heart. She'd seen him: the way he stretched his arms out and clutched it to him, the way he talked to it, not even smart enough to know it didn't understand or hear a word he said, and especially the way he put his face against it and let the tears roll off his cheeks into the soft fuzzy fur when he was sad. It was a nuisance and so was he, carting it everywhere! Goodness sakes, it was too big for him and he dragged it and got it all dirty. And still he kissed it good-night and made it say its prayers, and held it in his arms when he slept. Well maybe he had—; but he wouldn't any more. She picked it up and tore at it. She pulled the button eyes out and ripped the fur and kept on pulling till the sawdust scattered everywhere. And then she left her baby brother's panda on the floor, right in the middle of the room where he could see it.

Quickly, quickly she ran out; little scuttering steps back to her room. He was coming up the stairs with Mommy. Oh, she was frightened! No, she was glad! She didn't know which she was. Maybe it was wrong — she knew it was! But he deserved it. Mommy didn't understand — she wouldn't. She'd go out now and say she was sorry before he saw it. And maybe Mommy could get another panda just like that one. She ran out again yelling for her mother; but she wasn't nearly in time. Her little brother sat on the floor of his room holding the broken panda, and worst of all, he wasn't crying as he usually did; no wails or sobs or yells—the tears just kept rolling down his cheeks.



## RALPH ESTES

Shafts of golden dust accentuated the shadows in the dusky cubicle; an amber pattern on the wall signalled late afternoon. He groped along the top of the bed-table for a cigarette. Finding none, he sank back and softly swore. The clock on the dresser said five-thirty; it was later than he thought. Through a paper-thin wall stole *The First Noel*: a tune of Merry Christmas; he hummed along. He could see snow falling beyond the pigmy window; farther, nothing.

He got up. Cigarettes were on the desk; three left, he lit one. Bing Crosby was now crooning *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*; Christmas stuffed the air. He was home. That was it. It was Christmas, and he was home.

A knock on the door. "Shake the stardust, Frank. Soup's on in ten. Better hit the deck." Brother Dick.

He waited.

"FRANK?"

"Yes."

"Welcome home, Big Boy. Soup's on in ten minutes."

"Thanks."

The tangy froth of toothpaste stung his lips; an icy shower shook his drowsiness. He dressed, quickly, but not hurriedly. He lit a cigarette.

His entrance to the dining room interrupted the blessing, but his father droned on, "... and bless this food, we pray Thee, in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen."

"Hello, Dad,"

"Evening, son. Sit down."

"Duck?"

"It's Christmas Eve."

"That's right. I'd forgotten."

His mother was curious. "How've you been, Frank . . . You look rather pale." She searched his face.

"All right."

"Bet'cha have a girl." Judy.

"No."

"Bet'cha do too." Judy was a brat.

"Frank?"

"Yes, Mom?"

"Well, do you have a girl?" Mother.

"No, I don't." Pause. "This dinner is sure my style. If you knew how many times I've dreamed of your cooking . . ." He let the sentence hang.

"Why, thank you, Frank."

The meal terminated on a quiet note. He lit his cigarette.

"Going out, son?"

"Guess so."

"See the gang?"

"Maybe."

He found his ancient Mackinaw in the hall closet; he remembered muffler and gloves. He closed the front door quietly behind him, and a keen wind ripped through his jacket. He recalled the cold, and the wannish glow of lights through falling snow. He strolled to the corner, and crossed the street at right angles. He entered Dave's drugstore.

"Hello, Frank. Merry Christmas. Just get back?"

"Merry Christmas, Mr. Davies. This morning. Got a pack of Chesterfields?"

"Sure thing. Twenty-four cents. Matches? How've you been?"

"All right. What's the movie in town?"

"*Red Badge of Courage*. Good one, as I understand. Haven't seen it yet."

"Thanks. Merry Christmas."

"Merry Christmas, Frank."

Outside, he gazed back down the street. He could not distinguish the lights of his own home from the many on the block. He turned to face up the street; a progression of yellow bulbs vertically spelled P-A-L-A-C-E, and horizontally, THEATRE. He lit a cigarette, and plodded on.

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