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LITERARY QUARTERLY

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EDITORIAL

If the Atlantic Monthly were to confess to its reading public that one of its most compelling problems lay in obtaining literary contributions, we would indeed be surprised and shocked. For would not this reflect an extremely precarious state in the field of writing? It would, and while we do not have the effrontery to suggest a relationship of sister to the Atlantic Monthly, nor do we pay for contributions, we nevertheless draw a parallel on the assumption that we are at least a distant cousin. We can readily see that if such a situation existed in the editorial offices of that magazine, it would soon be on its knees, not for an inability to pay for contributions, but for lack of writers. And writers are born of a desire to write, not to make money.

The value of any publication is co-extensive with the value and number of its contributors. While this is perhaps unfortunate for readers, it remains a fact. The Editor of the Flamingo trusts that all thinking people will judge this publication on that basis. The relationship of Editor to contributors, has yet, for the most part, to be reversed at Rollins College. We would like to say that the Flamingo has had to deal with virtually the same relationship for over twenty-five years. In closing, we would like to thank those few who have ambitiously and regularly produced this year.

"Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifulest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee; out with it, then . . . Work while it is called Today; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."*

Gerard S. Walker

*Thomas Carlyle, "The Everlasting No."



JIMMY

JON DUNN-RANKIN

"If you don't have the dishes washed, the beds made, and the house cleaned by the time I get home tonight, I'll have your Uncle Jud whip you," Aunt Ethel had warned. "He'll whip you good, you hear me?"

Aunt Ethel's peaked face had screwed itself into a fiery ball of admonition, her right index finger wagging vigorously. Upon finishing her warning she had snatched up her purse and dashed out the door to run for the only bus that came through Sandy Beach to carry passengers into New Smyrna.

Uncle Jud had gone out much earlier to catch the tide in search of the kingfish which were running in the Stream, so he said. He wouldn't be back until past dinner and he'd come in with liquor on his breath, sure. Aunt Ethel would scold him a piece, too. She always did.

Aunt Ethel worked in the Woolworth in New Smyrna. She always came home crabby and could always find something to complain about in the way the house looked: the dust in the two-by-four frame house where Jimmy had come to live with his mother's sister and her husband, the sandwich crumbs and the dirty knife coated with peanut butter or mayonnaise, remnants from Jimmy's lunch, in the kitchen.

With Aunt Ethel gone Jimmy looked dolefully around the small living room, at his unmade couch, at the strewn magazines on the table and floor, at Uncle Jud's sleeping clothes thrown over the back of a chair, at the breakfast litter that cluttered the dining table. Jimmy flopped down on his sofa bed placing his head against the arm rest that served as a pillow. It was a short sofa; Jimmy could just stretch out on it with his head butted against one arm and his feet flattened against the other. If he was going to stay with Uncle Jud and Aunt Ethel more than a few months, he would quite overgrow the sofa. He was pushing five three now.

Jimmy let his thoughts dwell on his developing body for a few moments, in his mind imaginary hands moving over his bony chest, along his skinny arms and legs, caressing the chill, white flesh. He had been with Aunt Ethel and Uncle Jud at Sandy Beach for four weeks now. He'd tried to get some sun-tan, but the blistering rays had just burned him. He would redden quickly, then peel, and turn sharp white again. Mother had said when she told him he was going to stay with Aunt Ethel and her husband for a while that he would like it there because he could get lots of fresh air and sun. She had started to say that she wanted him to have a real tan when next she saw him, but she had broken off in the middle of it. The doctor had hurried him from the room telling him he could talk to her again later. But he had been put on the train that afternoon. He had even cried because he had wanted her to kiss him goodbye.

Jimmy's thoughts carried him back to the present where he found himself actually caressing his body with his hands. He raised his head with a start, then immediately sat up, and looked around the dingy room and out through its three small dirt-streaked windows. Seeing nothing, he leaned back again, but his mind could not return to its train of thought. He lay there a few more minutes before he languidly arose from the couch, stretched, and sauntered over to the front screen door. Leaning against the door jamb, he could look out over the dry uncut grass lawn, infested with prickly sand-spurs, to the sea bluff beyond topped by nodding sea grass. The dull roar of the rolling surf reached his ears from the other side of the bluff. Behind him on the other side of the house, the same lawn stretched several hundred yards to the road, the only one in Sandy Beach. There were no houses near at hand either across the road or on either side of the

cottage. Aunt Ethel and Uncle Jud's frame house stood a solitary oasis in a vast sea of tall grass, palmetto, sand, and sky.

"I remember once," said Jimmy almost aloud, and then, as if frightened by the sound of his own voice, silently to himself; I remember once when Mother and I were coming back from Aunt Martha's in New Jersey, and we passed a long stretch of flat land covered by brown grass that glimmered under the heat of the sun. And there was a little tiny house stuck out in the middle of it. And I thought it was funny, that little house out in the middle of all the brown grass. And I laughed, but Mother looked at me sort of strange so I stopped laughing, and even though she asked me to laugh again, I couldn't.

Jimmy pressed himself closer to the door jamb making a crease in his face while he cried a few lonely tears. His stomach knotted itself into a tight ball and sent sharp sensations up to his brain. Aunt Ethel's parting words came back to him, and Jimmy turned his attention back to the dingy living room. He kicked a magazine aside from its place in front of Uncle Jud's chair, then leaned over, picked it up, and put it on the table next to the chair. He took the sheets off his makeshift bed, stuffed them in the bureau in the corner, folded the bed back into a couch. He began to straighten the papers, dump the ashtrays, dust the tables with the palm of his hand. Suddenly he could stand it no longer. He wanted air, fresh air. He leapt up and raced toward the door. Without a thought of the messy kitchen and the littered bedroom waiting for his attention, he dashed out of the house and ran toward the beach.

As he stumbled up the sandy bluff, he threw his chin back with his head high and breathed deeply, deeply several times. Reaching the top he flopped down on his side, and leaning on one arm, gazed out over the blue ocean. He gazed for some time, his eyes drinking in the rich blue of the Gulf Stream that lightened to a clear shimmering aquamarine as the waves rolled in toward the shore, until just over the sand bar the water became a light green and in some patches almost tan. The water broke in cascades of white foam as it crossed the bar and raced for the beach where it finally spent itself and withdrew again. Little sandpipers skipped up and down along the beach and several gulls circled out over the water skimming the surface for their dinner.

By squinting his eyes, Jimmy could pick out near the horizon some of the boats from the fishing fleet that put out from New Smyrna. Uncle Jud was on one of those boats probably, swearing to the captain and to the crew, Jimmy fancied, and telling them stories. Jimmy liked to hear Uncle Jud's stories, though Aunt Ethel disapproved, said they were too disgraceful, especially to be telling to a young growing boy. They were lively, interesting stories, and always Uncle Jud was the hero.

Jimmy lay that way for a long time, studying the sea and sand and the grass and birds and sky about him. Hunger finally roused him. As he jogged back to the house to fix himself something to eat, his aunt's warning came back to him, and he slowed his pace to a lethargic walk. "If you don't have the place cleaned by the time I get home tonight, I'll have your Uncle Jud whip you." Would Uncle Jud really whip him? He was kind, and told good stories, but he had a roughness about him, too, and he always spoke of stern discipline being the best thing for a man, especially a young man.

I'll fix myself something to eat, Jimmy said to himself, and wrap it up so I can eat down at the beach, and then I'll come back and clean the house up later.

It was a good lunch. There was rye bread in the box, and ham slices, tomato, mustard and mayonnaise. Jimmy fixed himself two sandwiches of ham and tomato, wrapped them in waxed paper, and put them into a brown paper bag. He wanted something to drink but couldn't think of anything to put it into, so he had several large glasses of water before he left the house.

The sun, high in the sky, cast a thin blanket of warmth over the sand and sea. The ocean was more peopled now with fishing smacks and pleasure-seeking sails. An oiler could be seen steaming by now and then. New gulls replaced the old as the seabirds flew on. The sandfleas that burrowed at the brink of the water's fanning waves had withdrawn from without the sun's glare and were deeply entrenched in the cool, wet sand. Jimmy, to avoid the direct rays of the flaming sun, curled himself up under a protruding bluff, and there ate out his lunch in silence.

After building a castle or two in the sand, only to kick them over, Jimmy got up to take a walk down the beach. He shucked his shoes since there were no sandspurs in the sand,

and sauntered up the beach toward the less inhabited end. His eye scanned the ground for interesting shells or bits of wood. He dug for sandfleas at the water's edge, and chased sandpipers. He found at one place several blue bulbous man-o-wars and took a stick and punctured them. The sun had worn well past its zenith when Jimmy, tired from his hiking in the soft sand, again curled up in a warm white hollow under the ever-present bluff, and fell asleep. His dreams were filled with a childhood scene.

His first picture was of his mother in the hospital bed where he had last seen her, her face thin and haggard, her beautiful hair now stringy and unmanageable, her bony shoulders and knees making sharp points in the cool sheet's uncreased white surface. The image soon dissolved into an earlier one of his mother. She was in a bright blue and white print dress, and they were sitting together on the lawn back of their weathered green house in New Jersey. In his dream, Jimmy was reaching for a yellow flower but he couldn't quite touch it and he kept falling over. His father's face appeared and began to grow larger and larger. A black mustache leaped up and down in gigantic motion. "No," said the mustache, "mustn't pick, or father will whip you." Suddenly a voice shrieked out in his dream: "If you don't have this place cleaned up, I'll see that your Uncle Jud whips you, whips you, whips you."

Jimmy woke with a start. He felt cold. No longer the bright sun clothed the world in yellow light. The sky was dark, the earth was enveloped in a blanket of night. Jimmy felt the chill evening wind come whispering across the water to caress his hair with its cold hand and set the sea grasses rustling above him. His first reaction was one of fright, then wonder at where he was. As the realization of where he was and what time it must be, came over him, the chill of the evening air seemed to penetrate to his heart, and the sense of fright returned. Aunt Ethel, the dishes, the unmade beds, the house he was to have cleaned by nightfall. Tears began to fill his eyes as the sense of fear and guilt deepened within him. His footsteps made their way unaided in the direction he had come earlier that afternoon, while his mind raced on ahead.

There was Aunt Ethel waiting for him, her wrath-darkened face horribly twisted as she screamed out the words: "I'll whip you myself." Her raised hand held a short riding

crop, his mother's, and she looked poised ready to bring it down on his face and arms and chest. He could only stand in front of her, mute. Suddenly, she became his father, taller and darker and more brutish looking, with his mother's riding crop raised and shouting: "I'll whip you, I'll whip you." Jimmy stood there and received the imaginary blows on his bent body with despairing shrieks of pain of body and of soul. His audible screams brought Jimmy's thoughts into focus on the present again.

He was not far from the cottage now, just a few yards from the bluff where he had lain that morning and looked at the sun and sky, the sea and sand. He crept up to the rise and peered over in the direction of the brightly-lit frame house a hundred and fifty yards away. Jimmy wanted to jump up and run, but the moving about of several people caught his attention. He tensely crouched behind the bluff to watch. The excited figure that kept passing in front of the window would be his Aunt Ethel. The form slumped in the chair in the corner would be Uncle Jud. But the third person; Jimmy squinted his eyes to make out who the third person was. He was wearing a blue uniform. It must be one of the Sandy Beach policemen. Jimmy shifted his gaze to the outside of the house where he perceived parked on the lawn just beyond the cottage and to the left a car with a bright, blinking red light. That would be the police car.

The uniformed policeman was emerging from the house now. Jimmy could not hear all the words being exchanged at the door by the patrolman and his Aunt Ethel. A sudden shifting of the wind brought him only a fragment. "We'll find him," he heard the policeman say. The uniform turned abruptly, and proceeded towards the patrol car, climbed in, and drove away, a search light piercing the dark in an encompassing sweep.

Jimmy ducked behind his protective bluff and began to run down the beach. He ran for a short distance, but as his breath shortened, slowed to a walk. He didn't see his aunt's weeping figure silhouetted in the doorway before it withdrew into the house where it was met by the comforting arms of his Uncle Jud. He didn't hear his aunt's self-recriminations for having been so harsh with her sister's boy and her avowal

to try to be more kind and understanding in the future. He did not hear his uncle's self-admonition for perhaps having been a too-stern disciplinarian with the young boy. He heard none of it.

He walked down the beach slowly, picking out the night's first stars, and crying softly to himself.

IMPRESSIONS

MARY ANN HOBART

Dissonance from orange birds enveloped by shrouds of
gray leaved trees,
Uneven beat of many bullfrogs in concert in the yellow
rushes along a chartreuse stream,
Rustling from light breezes which whirl milkweed seeds
with delicate white streamers all around,
Little round people with no legs rolling in a dance on
soft pine needles watched by a thousand
yellow eyes penetrating the wood's clearing,
Small peculiar individuals trying to express their
inadequate, imperfect thoughts while they
change from blue to red . . .
What part of this am I? . . . Or is it a part of me?

—Mary Ann Hobart



THE TRAGEDY OF AVERAGE ME

GEORGE H. LYMBURN

A ONE ACT MUSICAL PLAY

(Spotlight comes up on actor standing in the middle of a bare stage. He looks at the audience and starts his song.)

ACTOR: An actor's life is fine for me
 With or without some scenery
 I'll stand here on the empty stage
 'Till I am old and bent with age.

But no! I cannot eat the light
Nor from the stage floor take a bite
Nor fry the props or drink stage rum
Or bake this large proscenium.

Oh, you will hear some men attest
A hungry actor is the best
But look at them and you will see
They suffer from obesity.

I eat to live
And live to act
And act to eat
And that's a fact.

Then how stand I
Who hear men say
I'm not the type
They want today.

ACTOR: Oh, not the type, What type is that?
 What type am I? Not thin or fat
 What type am I? Not short or tall
 But average biological.

I know that great soliloquy
 That starts "to be or not to be"
 I read aloud with force and zeal
 From Shaw or Ibsen or O'Neill.

I'll play a king or lunatic
 A hermit with a walking stick
 A rich old man; a gutter-snipe
 And still they say, I'm not the type.

To show there's truth
 In what I say
 I'll try to find
 A job today.

Now come with me
 And I'll show you
 My type is just
 My Waterloo.

(As the actor approaches the first producer, a light comes up on the actor and producer. As the actor leaves the first producer, the light fades and comes up on the second producer, and so forth as the scene progresses.)

ACTOR: I hear you're casting your new play
 today

This I'll tell you true
 I'm the man for you.

1ST PROD: You're not the type
 You're not the type
 The man we need — is high
 in the sky
 Good-by

ACTOR: I hear you're casting your new play
 today

This I'll tell you true
 I'm the man for you

- 2ND PROD: You're not the type
The man we need — is low
like so
Now go.
- ACTOR: I hear you're casting your new play
today
This I'll tell you true
I'm the man for you.
- 3RD PROD: You're not the type
The man we need — is lean
as a bean
you're not keen.
- ACTOR: I hear you're casting your new play
today
This I'll tell you true
I'm the man for you.
- 4TH PROD: You're not the type
The man we need — is fat
like that
so scat.

(Actor returns to center of stage)

- ACTOR: Oh, not the type, what type is that?
What type am I? Not thin or fat.
What type am I? Not short or tall,
But average biological.
- That's the story of my life
But I didn't mind the casting strife
If only I could make them see
My acting versatility.
- Oh wait a bit, I think I feel
A plan that will my work reveal
Oh wonderful! A play I'll write
To show to them this very night.
- A message now
I'll quickly send
To my best girl
And acting friend.

Hello sweetheart
 I have, methinks
 A way to break
 This casting jinx.

Now write
 write
 write
 write
 (the lights fade and come up again)
 and write
 write
 write
 write.

GIRL: I came to see your casting plan
 ACTOR: Oh you can help as no one can
 GIRL: What shall I do?
 ACTOR: This memorize.

Let's go and act before their eyes.

(lights come up on four casting men.)

GIRL: You gentlemen, attention please.
 Here is a man who acts with ease
 Now watch this scene and you shall see
 His acting versatility.
 (ACTOR enters from behind screen with
 cloak, top hat and mustache)

VILLIAN: I have the mortgage on this place
 GIRL: this little place

VILLIAN: THIS CRUMMY PLACE

VILLIAN: So now unless you marry me

GIRL: Oh tragedy

VILLIAN: YES, MARRY ME

VILLIAN: Out in the snow

Shall both you and your father go.

GIRL: my father no

VILLIAN: yes, in the snow

GIRL: my father no

VILLIAN: yes yes yes yes—

VILLIAN: out in the snow, you go!

(exits)

GIRL: Oh woe is me, alas alack!
 This news will break my father's back.

He was born here, his father too
Oh woe is me! What should I do?

(ACTOR enters dressed in old coat and hat
and grey beard)

GIRL: The villian will foreclose this place

FATHER: this little place

GIRL: this charming place

GIRL: Unless I say I'll marry him

FATHER: you marry him

GIRL: yes marry him.

GIRL: Out in the snow

Will you and I be forced to go.

FATHER: be forced to go

GIRL: yes in the snow

FATHER: my daughter no

GIRL: yes yes yes yes,

Out in the snow we go.

FATHER: Sweet daughter, dear do not despair

GIRL: but I do care

FATHER: do not despair

FATHER: I shall this night go for a loan

GIRL: you all alone

FATHER: yet for a loan

FATHER: Then save this farm

And free you from that villian's arm

GIRL: that villian's arm

FATHER: yes and the farm

GIRL: that villian's arm

FATHER: yes yes yes yes

that villian's arm and the farm.

(exits)

GIRL: Oh give him strength, Good Lord above
And fill our neighbor's hearts with love
That we may save the farm and all.
And now my hero I must call.

(ACTOR enters wearing bright red shirt,
stands erect in noble attitude)

HERO: You need not call for I am here

GIRL: my hero dear

HERO: yes I am here

HERO: But not for long for I must leave

GIRL: oh no not leave

HERO: yes I must leave

HERO: I cannot stay
But to the city go today

GIRL: you cannot stay

HERO: I go today

GIRL: Oh please delay

HERO: No no no no

I cannot stay and so away.

(exits)

GIRL: Oh sorrow break my heart in two
To lose the farm and now you too
But hark! My father's footsteps come
Now we shall see if all's undone.

FATHER: I might have known it was no use
They gave me nothing but abuse
Before we go out in the cold
I'll pack some things from days of old.

GIRL: Was ever such a good man wronged
For here he always has belonged
Oh looking at such misery
I think to be or not to be.

(Enter Villian)

VILLIAN: The time is up, It's Christmas Eve
No tricks are coming from your sleeve
So marry me and save your farm
Or out to snow and cold and harm.
(As he points, his hand comes back on his
throat like the hero's hand, and grabs his neck.
He seems to be yanked out.)

GIRL: Oh hero strong, oh hero brave
Yes hit again that scurvy knave
Yes on the head, a left, a right.
Hoo-ray! My hero's won the fight.
(Enter hero, slightly messed up, but still
noble.)

GIRL: You saved me from the villian's arm

HERO: the villian's arm

GIRL: his evil arm

GIRL: And also saved this charming farm

HERO: this charming farm

GIRL: this charming farm

HERO: I went away
For I inherited today

GIRL: a thousand, say?
HERO: a million say
now don't delay
no no no no
let's wed today

BOTH: Oh wedding day
on Christmas Day
oh happy happy Christmas Day.

(They bow, the men applaud.)

1ST MAN: Sensational
2ND MAN: Magnificent
3RD MAN: You surely are
4TH MAN: From heaven sent.

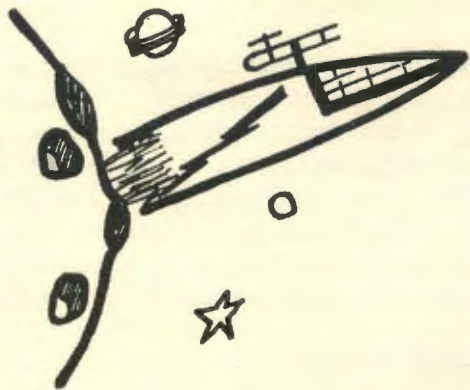
(They stand on their tables)

1ST MAN: Your type is so
2ND MAN: Darn popular
3RD MAN: Tomorrow night
4TH MAN: You'll be a star.

(They rush around the girl)

1ST MAN: Yes, this is it.
2ND MAN: Just what we need
3RD MAN: Our ticket sales
4TH MAN: Will rise indeed.
ACTOR: Oh gentlemen, this is too weird
I played a father with a beard
A villian full of cowardice
A hero his antithesis.

ACTOR: Oh please, kind sirs, do not delay
But cast me in your Broadway play.
MEN: We do not hesitate to say
You're not the type we want today.



TEN FEET TALL

PETER ROBINSON

MIKE has red hair.

We'd name him Micheal even before we knew that we wouldn't have to search the 'phone book for a girl's name, his mother and I. Carol's hair is blond, and mine verges on black, so when I first saw that without the faintest shadow of a doubt Mike's hair was going to be a sunburst of red, I had a few very bad moments. Then I remembered that Carol's maternal grandfather's name had been O'Shaugnessy, and I felt a little silly.

Mike's my eight-year old son.

Watching him in front of the television set across the room, his fire-topped head cocked to one side in concentration, I recalled the yawning instant before I'd remembered the name O'Shaugnessy, and suddenly I wanted to say something to my son . . . ask him a question . . . just to hear his voice.

Mike." He did not turn around, and so complete was his absorption in the program that he neglected to answer me that time.

"Micheal."

"Hmm?" Like a scholar jarred away from an ancient volume, Mike turned to me.

"Uh . . . how's the program, Mike?" The need to hear him had dissipated, leaving behind it a feeling of embarrassment under Mike's frankly uncomprehending gaze.

"Why, pretty good, Dad." Mike turned back to the screen, swept again into his shadow-world. The desire exhausted I tried again to battle my way through the intricacies of H. V. Kaltenborn on the White House cleanup. I read one paragraph three times.

Mike watches that same program every night, without fail. Words might collide, and the eternal struggle between good and evil could hang in a balance, but Micheal would tune in on that show. Through experience, I knew that it usually lasted half an hour, from seven-thirty until eight. I half expected the fanfare of music and the announcer's voice.

"So goodbye for now, until tomorrow night, same time, same channel, when WTEL will again present "The Void," sponsored by . . ."

"Click!" Mike turned off the TV set, and I put down my paper.

"Mike." He turned around.

"Yes, Dad?"

"Come over here and say goodnight to your poor old father." Mike grinned and ran across the room, leaping into my lap with the exuberance that only small boys seem to be able to summon up.

"Ah! Now, that's better." I ruffled his hair so that it hung in a red screen over the innocent sea-blue eyes. "At the risk of sounding repetitious, how was school today?"

"Oh, Dad! You ask that same old question every night! Same old stuff, only Miss Jenkins was funny today." He grinned, remembering, I suppose.

"Funny? How?"

"Oh, I was a little late for school this morning, and she got mad. Only I wasn't very late, and when she asked me what my excuse was, I told her. Then she got so mad that she wrote 'assembly' on the blackboard with only one 's'."

Mike threw back his head and laughed, showing the round, white teeth.

"Now, look, Mike," I said, "You're not to go around getting your teachers mad at you. You'll never get to Harvard that way." Mike shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, I don't think I'll" I interrupted him. Perhaps I was forcing the idea of going to Harvard on him.

"What *did* happen to make you late this morning?" I asked. Mike grinned and looked around the room in mock caution. With an air of utmost secrecy, he looked up at me.

"I met a *Martian*!" He always enjoyed this ritual of kidding one another, calling them 'Dad's Bull Sessions.' We went through it every night. The Martian idea was a new one, though.

"You *what*?"

"I met a Martian," he replied, his eyes twinkling. "Ten feet tall."

"Sleeps in the kitchen with his feet in the hall. I know that old one. No. tell me seriously . . . did you really meet a Martian?"

"No fooling, Dad! Ten feet tall, he was." From the kitchen, the sound of running water abruptly stopped, signifying that Carol was through with the dishes. I'd probably have to dry them.

"You don't say! Ten feet tall. The last Martian I met was only three inches tall. What'd he have to say for himself?"

"Said he was going to blow up the whole world. Too bad, he said, but human people might get over to Mars and start trouble there too. He says it's nice on Mars."

"Going to blow up the whole, wide world, huh?"

"Yup."

"You mean all the people? Everybody? Everything?"

"Uh huh."

"Some friends you have, Mike. You'll get blown up too, you know."

"Oh, no," Mike assured me, seriousness a sheen over his young face, "he said that he'd make sure I was safely out of the way before everything goes bang. I'm going to Mars with him. Says they need me there."

"Oh, they need you, huh?" Carol had come into the room, and stood watching us, smiling. I winked at her over Mike's head. "Do be sure to drop me a letter sometime."

"Can't," said Mike, climbing down off my lap.

"Can't what?" Carol knelt down to hug her small son.

"Can't send Dad a letter. He won't be around anymore."

"Goodness!" Carol picked the boy up and looked at him. "I must say you two have been having a pleasant conversation. Now off to bed with you, Micheal, me lad." Mike detached himself from his mother and started to the door.

"So long, Mike," I called out to him, waving an arm in casual bravado. "We who are about to die, say goodnight."

"G'night, Dad, 'night, Mom. Love you both." Mike went out of the room.

Later, Carol turned out the lights from the wall-switch. I listened to her walking across our bedroom in the dark-

ness. She slid into the bed beside me and threw a soft arm across my chest. I felt very secure and happy, at peace with the world and safe in my own castle. Carol pushed her nose against my cheek.

"Goodnight, you old walrus. You need a shave." I kissed her soundly and for a while, lay staring into the darkness, listening to the sounds of night. Before very long, I must have fallen asleep.

"Dad."

"Hmm?"

"Daddy, wake up." It was Mike, standing at the side of the bed and shaking me by the shoulder. He'd turned on the light.

"Mike, why aren't you in bed." I rose to one elbow and looked at him through the fog of awakening.

"I wanted some water."

"Well, did you get some?"

"Yes, and I wanted to say goodbye."

"Goodbye? Mike, for gosh sakes, go back to bed before . . ." My small son pointed across the room.

Even leaning against the door-jamb like that, it must have ben ten feet tall.

MEMORY'S FIRE

NANCY TINDER

The trees shudder in the night wind;
The waves lap softly on the shore.
Embers glow upon the beach:
A fire that flames no more.
Quietness reigns supreme over
Land, rolling sea and sky,
Yet in the fading fire unrest prevails,
For the embers refuse to die.
Only dull coals remain where once
The flames were living and bright.
They struggle on, unwanted, alone,
But reluctant to forego their light.
So like the fire are memories.
The ember of you in my soul.
The flames that fade and grow dim,
But still refuse to go.



PAX VOBISCUM

KAREN KEELY

ONCE upon a time many years ago there lived a little shoe. Now this little shoe was red, and because he was red he did not like to stay at home. All the time he kept on wishing to go out into the big wide world, to see all the strange and wonderful things of which he had heard so much. It so happened that there were no other little red shoes to keep him company — the rest of the shoes in the closet were so big and grand, and they would not even condescend to let the poor lonesome shoe into their conversation. Lo and behold, one day in the late afternoon, while the small red shoe was idly dreaming his usual dreams of freedom and adventure, a tiny mouse suddenly appeared. Such a hubbub arose! All the big, haughty shoes, the proud slippers of suede and satin were so terrified of that small, insignificant rodent that they shrieked in their shrill, high-pitched voices, "Help! help! a mouse!!" But no-one came to their rescue; and in truth, the mouse meant no harm. He regarded them with a curious eye for a moment; then, losing interest, he turned to leave. In so doing he stumbled against the lonely red shoe and knocked him off the shelf somewhat violently. He landed right side up — red shoes always do — unhurt, and realized with an intense stab of joy that the closet door had previously been left ajar. In a moment he was outside; his days of forced seclusion were over.

Rejoicing in his new-found freedom, the little red shoe was proceeding on his way, although he know not whither,

when he perceived an odd creature with lustrous black fur and enormous green eyes. The same spoke to him, saying, "Little red shoe, what do you here alone?" His voice was soft and gentle, inspiring great confidence in the uneasy heart of our friend.

"I am come to see what there is to see, and to learn what there is to learn, O green-eyed one," spoke the shoe rather timidly.

"Truly that is a noble aim, little one," purred the furry creature. "As for me, I am always interested in the mental elevation of the individual; it does my heart good to see one so zealous in his desire for self-government. If you will come along with me, my little cabbage, I shall do my utmost to teach you the ways of civilization, and everywhere you shall be acclaimed a master of all that is good and wise."

Now the little red shoe thought that this proposition sounded quite advantageous, so he agreed to it without further ado. "What must I do to be wise?" questioned he.

"You must first of all learn the proper way to approach your superiors, small one; you must make a deep bow upon nearing them, and not have the boldness to arise until they have so designated."

"But who are my superiors, O teacher? for I know not who is what, unless it be a shoe."

"Your superiors are all those who are like unto me, and them shall you call master until such time as you may have attained their perfect stature. But enough of this questioning; let us be on our way."

The red shoe was young and inexperienced, and the gentle insinuating voice won him over completely. "Be it as you will, master," quoth he.

Together they made their way through the gathering dusk; they walked and walked and walked until the cloak of darkness had draped its clinging folds about them. Suddenly, as if by magic, an enormous building loomed before them, whose windows glowed with a yellow, glaring, unreal light. "This is the destination, my little cream puff," murmured the master. "Tread softly, that you may not be heard; for the footsteps of the meek offend the ears of the mighty and powerful." Quietly they ascended a magnificent staircase and entered into a small chamber; its occupants were almost exact replicas of the green-eyed creature, and they were sitting still, listening with bated breath to one who

read from an ancient illuminated scroll. Thought the small red shoe, "This must be of great importance." Therefore listened he also.

"And in the days of applesauce none shall condone the existence of copper mustache cups, and none shall be gladdened by the joyous oratorios of little ants. Green rugs shall take the place of the telephone, and vitamins everlasting shall be bitterly beaten. Paper shall be as an alarm clock to those who sleep not, and iron keys shall unlock the longbow of the English archer with their teeth of crystal and rose."

Mystified, the red shoe looked up at his master; his lack of comprehension was only too evident. "Is *this* what I am to learn, O wise teacher?"

"Yes, ignorant child. Since you have not had the necessary background and upbringing, you are not expected to understand right away. In our families one reads these words of wisdom to the children after dinner every evening, thereby teaching them not only the characteristic wisdom of our nature, but also respect and reverence for their elders. These priceless attitudes will be yours too; but since you are not one of us yet, it is necessary that you give something in exchange for what you are to receive. That red stone you are carrying will be sufficient."

Signs of dismay appeared in the demeanor of our friend; "I have had this since I began my existence, nor have I let it away from me for a single moment." He paused, sighed, and delivered it over. "I have nothing else to give."

The green eyes glowed with nightmarish brilliance as the furry sage contemplated the exquisite ruby cradled delicately in his lustrous black paw "Sacrifice is good, for it teaches endurance, O small one," quoth he. "But let us not waste time; here is an elementary treatise to begin with. Memorize the contents. I must leave you for a moment, but I shall be with you anon." He departed, and the novice began to read.

Read, read, read — and one class after the other. The little red shoe rapidly became indoctrinated. He spent every waking moment concentrating on the memorization of the infallible and omnipotent knowledge that his sublime master presented to him, and every dream was filled with the perfect doctrine. He became more and more absentminded — he would forget where he was going and often had to be directed at least ten times to his original destination, but he could reel off a string of sublime information at a moment's notice.

Six weeks passed by; he knew almost as much of the august laws and poetry which comprised the glorious knowledge, as did his master. Then his strength began to wane, and he could not understand it. He sought out the most austere sage and asked him if he knew the reasons of it. "Certainly; 'tis from lack of concentration on your studies, and too much time wasted in sleeping like a sloth. I would suggest that you work harder and sleep less." The advice was followed, but he became even more weak. The lassitude that ate away his strength like a malignant cancer demoralized him, but something else began to frighten him — the changing appearance of all the furry sages; their huge green eyes glowed brighter with a weird radiance, the black fur had a sleekness surpassing that of satin. They were exulting over something; what, he could not guess. Then, late one evening, as he was about to retire, he heard a knock on the door. "Come in," he called.

They came in — every one of the sublime instructors. "We have decided that you are ready for the last and most high mystery," one said in exquisite tones. "When you know this, you will have attained the end of all knowledge." So began the mysterious revelation.

"Purple are the sands that flow through the hourglass, and black are the claws that gather the ashes from the golden tea cups — but nothing shall await the one who burns the cursed books of hell, for he shall not be allowed to devour the death that gives him life. Woe unto the fool who sings the songs of sleep, for he shall be ever waking and never rest —" The little red shoe shuddered from his overwhelming and rapidly increasing weakness, and from terror. He had suddenly become aware that each of the knowers of the knowledge wore on his forehead a chain of red stones very similar to the one he had given in exchange for instruction, and they glowed with a strong, evil radiance. His master held a chain of the stones in his hand, almost prayerfully.

"He who has willingly renounced his right to life and the source thereof shall know nothing but the pangs of fierce rending death; we are the teachers of devolution and disintegration, and whosoever believes in us shall perish!" they shrilled at him, their voices rising in a crescendo of hellish joyful harmony. As the last bit of life ebbed from him, the little red shoe saw his master slowly and delicately place upon his forehead the brilliant chain of blood-red rubies.

A BALLAD TO MY TIRED WIFE

Remember our old sporting ways
When we were in our courting days?
We sang and drank and just raised hell,
Until you heard that wedding bell.
'Twas then, sweet wife, you seemed to change,
And all your actions were so strange;
Because I loved you once, my dear,
The reason why, I'd like to hear.

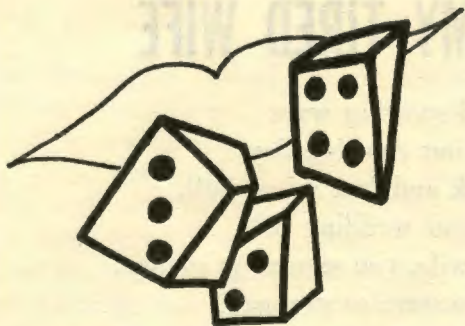
Was it the little things you missed;
A simple deed like being kissed,
Or just because I'd not adore
Those chic new gowns you often wore?
Or coming from the beauty chair
I asked, "What happened to your hair?"
It couldn't be that I'd recite
That same cute poem each party night?

So if it still be none of these
Then would you kindly tell me please;
If you would rather have me shave
The day your bridge club comes to rave?
Or when you play the game with me
Talk not of your stupidity?
No . . . all these things are much too small
To change, distress, a wife at all.

REFRAIN

So let's forget the whole affair
And call in Tom and Sue and Claire,
Those kids know it's time to dine
So where is Ed and the other nine?

George Lymburn



THE BET

ETHEL DEIKMAN

"ALL right," Lee said, "you say I can't and I say I can. Five dollars says I can make Elizabeth Dean fall in love with me in two months." He looked expectantly at his room-mate.

Charles said, "I know how irresistible you are, Lee, but the whole campus hasn't stopped talking yet about the go round you and Ann Gale had. You can't expect Liz not to be suspicious if you make a big play for her. After all, she and Ann are close friends."

"Whatever Ann may say isn't going to have the slightest effect on Liz. Have you ever noticed how she hangs around wherever I am just to listen to me talk? Hasn't she been my willing slave on the *Golden Spur*? I don't know many people who'd work as hard as she has for me; and the reason is, she's got a bad case of hero worship. I make such a good hero, don't you think?" He cocked an eyebrow sardonically.

Charles nodded. "Great. I'll bet you think you're every woman's dream."

"Aren't I?" Lee coolly surveyed his well-built, tastefully clothed body. He liked what he saw and his satisfied smile left no doubt in the beholder's mind that Lee Drake thought blue eyes and blond hair the epitome of masculine good looks.

"Well," Charles said, "I'll never know how you do it. Every female on campus is dying to date you, in spite of the stories she may have heard, and even when the stories turn out to be truths, she only admires you more for being so different and daring. But I say that Elizabeth Dean has a good head on her shoulders, however lonely she may be, and she won't be taken in by such a nihilist as you are."

"Why Charles. One would think you didn't approve of me."

"I don't, entirely, but I like you in spite of myself. You and I are so different. I'd give anything to have your charm and your brains."

Lee bowed. "Compliments are welcome at any time, but you are deliberately evading the issue. Will you take the bet? Five dollars says Elizabeth Dean is in love with me in two months."

"Very well," Charles said. "Just to prove to you how wrong you can be."

"Fine," Lee said enthusiastically. "Then I can get started right away. The best time to meet Liz casually is at dinner in the cafeteria. If Ann should be with her, you tackle Ann and leave Liz to me. You won't mind entertaining the lioness for a bit while I steal the cub will you?"

"No," Charles said shortly.

The cafeteria was crowded. Almost every table was filled to capacity with laughing boys and girls, some of whom were sitting in relaxed positions, smoking cigarettes and blowing out philosophical puffs of smoke. As Lee and Charles collected their meals, Lee grumbled, "Beats me why some people like to linger over a pile of dirty dishes in a joint like this. Do you see Ann and Liz?"

Charles nodded toward a table against the wall. "There they are, alone." The boys picked up their trays and walked toward the table where Liz Dean and Ann Gale sat eating and talking.

"Hi," Lee said. "May we sit here?"

The gray-eyed girl flashed him a brilliant smile of assent; the brunette nodded sullenly. Lee ignored Ann's cold welcome and began conversing with Liz. As he talked he could see that Charles was gathering steam for an attack of his own. Good old Charles. One could always depend on him.

Suddenly Lee said, "Liz, if you're not doing anything tonight, would you like to go to a show with me? We could see 'Dancing Panthers' and then go for a walk, perhaps. It's a very nice night for walking, don't you think?"

Liz's eyes were wide with suppressed excitement. "Why, Lee! I — I think that would be wonderful."

"Good. I'll see you at seven."

After the movie as they sat laughing over a coke, Lee noticed how a little smile dimpled in Liz's eyes as she talked.

Then they walked in the velvety darkness in silence, and Lee said softly, close to her ear, "You know, you act like a different girl tonight."

Liz moved away slightly. "I always do when I'm with people I like. I have trouble making friends. That's what comes of being Dr. Dean's daughter. Everyone expects me to be a Priscilla Prim just because my father's a great scientist. Dad wants me to follow in his footsteps, but I'd sooner be a radio commentator." She stopped. "But here I am talking about myself when —"

"When you'd like to know about me? There's not much to tell. My father is a prosperous business man in a small town. He wants me to be a lawyer, and that's what I'll be. I've a sister your age. We're not at all alike, which is a blessing to my parents."

"Poor Lee," Liz's voice was sympathetic, "all that talent for drawing and acting and writing and you still feel that no one loves you." Her voice faded away on the last words and then she began again, irrelevantly, "Do you like poetry?"

Relieved, Lee allowed himself to be drawn into a spirited discussion of poetry.

As he walked Liz to her door, he debated with himself about kissing her good night. She would not have been offended, he knew, but he decided against it. Instead he took her hand while she thanked him and when she had finished, he said, "May I date you again, Liz?" He caught the sharp intake of breath.

"Yes, of course Lee. Good night."

From then on Lee Drake and Liz Dean were a steady couple. Lee deliberately kept it casual rather than serious. He wanted to give no one a chance to spoil his game by pointing out similarities between this and a dozen other romances. He sought Liz naturally and the walks and rides they took together were times when he told her of everything he hoped and feared. After she had listened to him for a month, she asked, as he had anticipated, "But why do the students tell such wild stories about you, Lee? They say that you lie because you don't care to tell the truth; that you steal for the kick of seeing whether you can get away with it, and that you play on the emotions of others so that you can use them without yourself being used."

"The truth is a dull thing," Lee replied. "If my lies will make others happy and keep me out of trouble, why not? If

people are so stupid as to leave things around to tempt me, they deserve a lesson. I've never stolen anything that mattered; a few groceries, cigarettes. What does it amount to? As for using others, am I not myself used? No one in this world cares for you unless you're on top of the heap. I have to look out for myself." Seeing the shadow on her face he continued, "Oh, look, Liz. I can't be so bad. Isn't what I do done every day? Some day I'll prove to you and my parents that what I wanted was worth anything to get. You don't hate me for that, do you?"

"No," Liz said slowly, "I'll never hate you."

Lee laughed, "Then I suppose you'll go to the Winter Sunshine with me?"

"Not only that," Liz promised, "but I'll buy a new dress and get all spruced up."

When Lee saw her all dressed up, he said, surprised to find that he meant it, "You look right pretty, Liz. That blue bit of fluff you call a dress does things for you. But is it true that when a pretty girl puts on a strapless evening dress she wraps it around herself, pats it and says, 'Be good'?"

He was rewarded by a radiant smile.

All the way to the dance he looked at her surreptitiously. She was darn pretty. Why had he never noticed it before? When she saw the dance floor flooded by a golden spotlight and bordered by snow banks, she looked like a little girl at Christmas time. They danced and it seemed to Lee that of all the lovely girls in the room, she was the most vibrantly alive. "Would you like some fresh air?" he said. He led her to the little patio. "How about a drink?"

"Lemonade, please."

"All right, little one, lemonade it shall be." He brought her a lemonade and a dry martini for himself.

She looked at his drink. "What do they taste like?"

"Taste for yourself," he invited.

She sniffed the glass tentatively; her nose wrinkled. "Smells like rubbing alcohol. No thanks."

He chuckled, "Just like a little girl. Will you come for a walk with me, little girl?"

The garden was all silver and black patches. Liz said, "This is nice. It was too warm and noisy and smoky in there, don't you think?" They stopped walking. "Look at the moon, Lee."

Lee put both hands on her shoulders and turned her to

him. One hand cupped her chin as he bent his head toward her lips. Her mouth was warm and soft; it trembled and then pressed his shyly. He stepped back and caught his breath. Her face, in the half light, was dreaming and her eyes were as gray and deep as thunderclouds. "Then you do like me?" Her voice was husky with her dream.

He touched her cheek lightly with his fingertips. "Yes." Then in a normal voice he said, "Let's go inside now."

For the next two weeks it was as if nothing had happened. Lee saw as much of Liz as before, but he was nothing but a charming companion, and Liz was only a good listener. Then one Saturday they went for a ride out in the country. In a field they saw an orchid tree, and, childlike, they ran toward it. Lee flung himself on the ground and Liz sat down beside him panting, "Do let's rest here. I'm getting to old to run." She lay passively against the tree trunk.

Lee shifted nearer. "You know, your eyes are beautiful." He kissed them.

Liz began to smile. "They are?"

Lee leaned over her. "And your mouth is soft and warm." He kissed her briefly. "And your throat has a little round hollow at its base." His lips brushed her throat.

"Lee," Liz's voice contained a moan as old as the world. Her hands, deft with tenderness, touched his cheeks and lips. Her kiss was that of a woman born to love. Her breath was warm against his ear. "I love you, Lee."

Lee's eyes sparkled like the ocean under a winter sun and his blond face was animated. "Do you, Liz? I'm really glad. I think if I were sure of your love I could — " He rose and pulled Liz to her feet. "I feel like celebrating. Will you eat dinner with me and Charles at Verona's tonight?"

"I'll meet you there at seven," Liz said. "I have an appointment until then."

Lee sat in Verona's with Charles and waited. The room was dimly lit and they were alone except for a pair of lovers giggling in a corner. Lee smoked a great many cigarettes. Finally he said, "I might as well tell you. I've won the bet." He told the story and he told it so that he himself could not keep from laughing. "How'd I do it? Simple. I just took her out under a tree and made love to her. She's as hot as a fur coat in August, that girl. It came out as smooth as wax, 'I love you, Lee.'" His voice was a cruel mockery of Liz's.

"You can't doubt my word. It's all too obvious. Give me the five dollars. I've won two weeks ahead of schedule. I said she'd love me and she does."

Charles' voice was scornful. "I don't have it now. You'll have to wait for your blood money."

"If Charles hasn't the money allow me to pay," said a voice that froze Lee's courage. It was Liz, a haughty Liz, composed except for her dilated pupils and extreme pallor. She put a bill on the table in front of Lee. Somewhere in the background Ann's face hovered malevolently. Liz was still speaking. "Five dollars for six weeks is a bargain. And the crowd will have something new to talk about. Lee Drake jilted instead of jilting. You'll excuse me if I don't celebrate. I've lost my appetite." She turned and walked away, still composed.

Lee watched her until she was out of sight. His soul felt as empty as if it had been drained of all happiness. He could conjure up no feeling besides an unbearable loneliness. He took the bill she had left, crumpled it and dropped it in the ash tray. The act gave him new strength. He got quickly to his feet. "If you'll forgive me," he said. "I can catch her if I hurry."

