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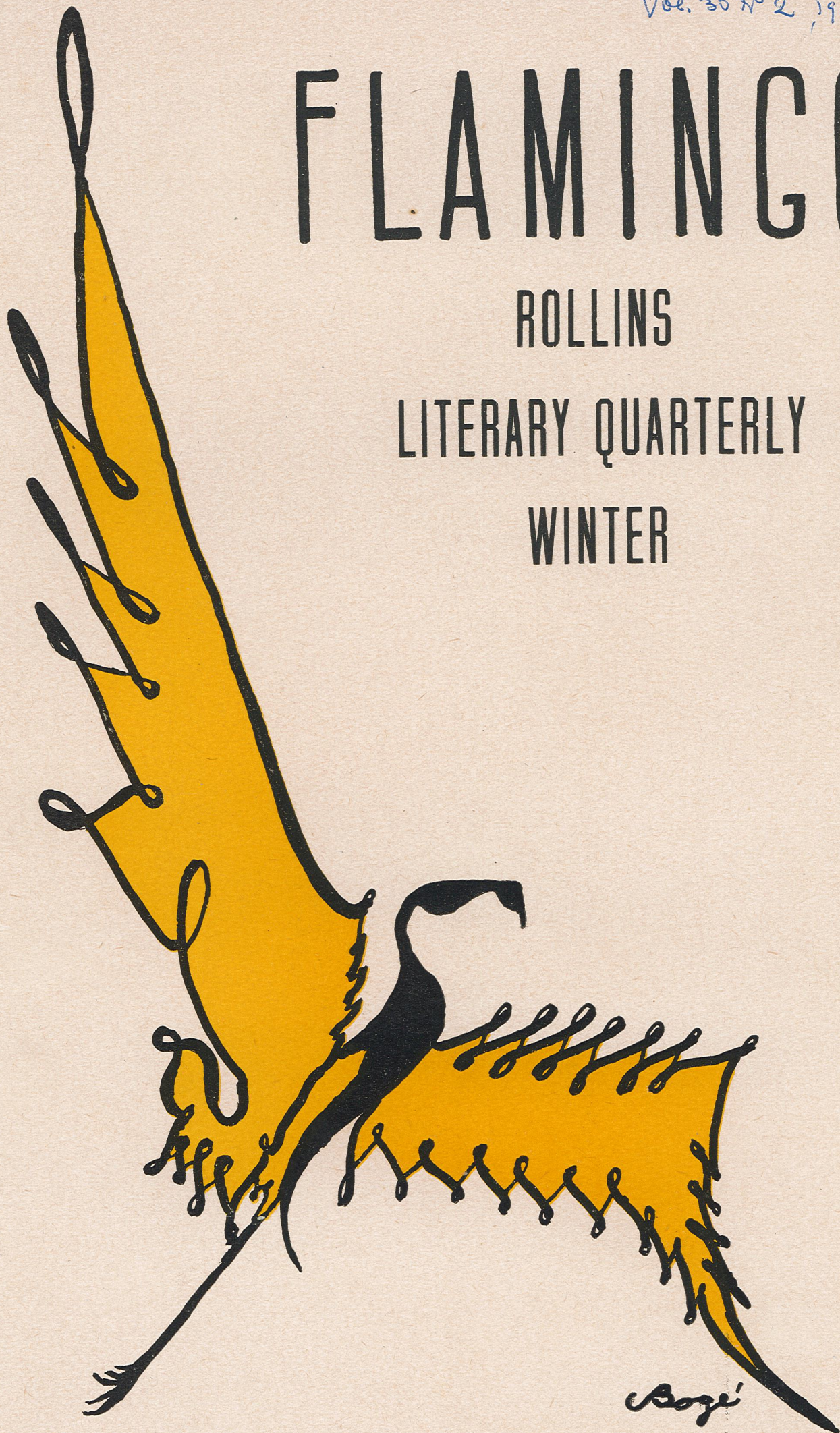
FLAMINGO

ROLLINS

LITERARY QUARTERLY

WINTER

Take a trip to Paradise or meet the Apricot-eyed Fruit Flies — all in this issue.



Vol. 30, NO. 2, 1954

FLAMINGO

ROLLINS
LITERARY QUARTERLY
WINTER

THE FLAMINGO

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THE FLAMINGO

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TAKE A LETTER PLEASE

Dear Readers:

This is an issue for the FLAMINGO'S critics. I grant that we don't satisfy every demand. Some of you wanted the editor changed. But just have a little patience. I'm well on the way out.

Get humor, snarled one critic. Herewith Jim Graaskamp at his best and Myra Brown with a bit of poetical whimsy. Get new names, urged another. So: Jack Wilson, Kathie Siegler, Gene Foster, Dick Richards. Right talented we think they are, too.

My staff and I heartily thank our unprinted contributors for submitting their manuscripts. Nothing is more disheartening than to beg and plead for material and receive only icy disdain. Sometimes it's a seven day wonder that the FLAMINGO even gets off the ground there's so much frost on its wings.

I wonder, critics, do you think this magazine is good for anything but burning? Would you recommend that it not be published next year, or even next term?

Hoping to hear from you, I am,

Apprehensively yours,

Ethel Deikman



THE LETTERS

Katherine Ann Siegler

Somewhere in a barracks of the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, a boy was writing a letter. Having finished, he screwed the cap on his pen, licked a stamp, and affixed it to the envelope. He then unwound his length from a bunk and made his way down the corridor toward a mail slot. He was very young and walked with a self-assured swagger. Other sailors hailed him as he passed, and he responded casually and amiably. He dropped the letter in a box and meandered slowly back to his bunk. His face, unguarded, was very vulnerable.

Somewhere in the hills of Korea, a young man was writing a letter. He crouched under a tree, oblivious to sniper fire, a slight smile on his face, and earnestly scribbled with a small stub of a pencil. The tattered book on which his writing paper rested was a worn paper edition of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. A shell burst near by, so, sighing, he picked up the book and letter and crept down the hill in the direction of headquarters. His eyes were alert, and his smile was replaced by the hard look of reality.

Somewhere on the edge of a meadow near Camp Breckenridge, Kentucky, a boy was writing a letter. He wrote hesitatingly, and every once in a while he stopped and gazed into the misty hills with hungry, searching eyes. In one hand he held a thin gold bracelet which caught a million little sparkling shafts of light from the sun. He watched it with something akin to amazement, and then, with a kind of dumb bewilderment, shook his head, and continued the letter. As the shadows of the afternoon deepened, he put the letter and bracelet into his pocket, rose, and moved slowly, like an old man, up the road towards the camp. His face was expressionless; his eyes saw nothing.

Elizabeth Norton sat at her desk and picked up the first of the three letters she found lying there. She read the post mark, grinned, and tore open the envelope.

Dear Lizzie,

Got your long overdue letter a few days ago and am answering promptly . . . for me . . . to let you know that yours truly is still among the living.

It was certainly swell seeing the old crowd over Christmas. It wasn't until I was on my way back to this place that I suddenly realized how much it had meant to me to see everyone again.

Came back on a troop train, and it sure was one pathetic sight to see all those kids . . . drunk, most of them . . . returning from homes and families to this life (and is this living?).

Have been playing some wild games of chess with one of the guys around here. They took the checkers away from us, so now we play with bottle tops. A far cry from the old days!

We get out every weekend and can go into Chicago if we want, but there's nothing to do when we get there. The U.S.O. is a big joke, so most of the guys end up getting drunk, or picking up some dames, etc. Me, I sit here and feel sorry for myself. (Big joke!)

Couple of weeks ago, I went to church nearby and met the minister and his wife. Gee, they really are swell people. They had a bunch of us out to dinner and then drove us around awhile. He's a smart cookie . . . doesn't pull any punches with you, either. I'm going over to see them tomorrow; don't know what I'd do without those people, Liz. It's damn hard to go being the same person you used to be around here.

Love and kisses,

Jack

Elizabeth leaned back in her chair, stretched, and grinned. Then leaning forward once more, her smile deepened into one of tenderness as, with slightly trembling fingers, she tore open the second envelope. As she read, her eyes often strayed to the large framed photograph on top of the desk.

Beth darling,

This letter may be interrupted momentarily since the snipers have been at us all afternoon. Please forgive me if I have to continue later.

We've been receiving some rather heavy barrages for the past few days, but the casualties have been surprisingly light. The medics do a wonderful job, you know. Practically all the comforts of home! Morale has been pretty high, and I'm rather proud of the way my men have been reacting under fire.

Darling, I can't tell you how much your last letter meant to me. It made me feel very close to you, and even though we knew each other only a short while before I went over seas, it made me know for a certainty that I want to marry you when all this is over.

It won't be long now, Beth, before we can be together again. And in the meantime, we can be strengthened in the knowledge that, because of

what we are enduring now, our children will be born into a better, safer world. This is a job which must be done, and in a way I'm almost proud to be even a very small part of such a worthwhile investment.

Must make the rounds now and see how the boys are bearing up. A couple of them were feeling a bit homesick. Take care of yourself, my darling, and don't worry about me.

I love you, Elizabeth.

Mark

When she laid this letter down, Elizabeth's eyes were large and luminous. She withdrew from a pigeonhole a packet of letters bearing the same handwriting as that of the letter she had just read, and tied with a baby-blue ribbon. She carefully re-read some of these and left them scattered about the desk. Shaking her head suddenly, and moving abruptly in a business-like fashion, she picked up the third envelope. The faint smile which still lingered on her lips and suddenly disappeared as she saw the return address, and she read with dark and troubled eyes.

Dear Elizabeth,

I've owed you a letter for weeks and can't really excuse myself for not writing. However, I haven't felt capable of writing a decent letter lately, and I wouldn't insult you by writing mere words to you.

You asked me to tell you what I thought of army life, and so, my dear, I shall try to give you my general impressions. It has been quite an education.

The countryside around here is perfectly beautiful. You've never seen anything to compare with it. Yet, as I look around at the deep rolling hills, the gently swelling Kentucky blue grass undulating in the breeze . . . as I hear the murmur of the leaves in the trees and the innocent chatter of the birds, a chill strikes my heart. There is something very sinister, something terrifying in the very peace of the scene. For just around the next bend in this little road is death. Just around this maple tree is death. And why, Elizabeth, why?

The most bewildering part of the whole thing is that here in this beautiful scene, where one should automatically be attuned to purity, to goodness, to life, to love, to all things clean and happy . . . it is here that we are methodically, systematically going about the business of learning to be professional warriors. The skill we learn to master is the skill of automatic murder. Do you know what that means. Can you see the picture? You stand under a warm, friendly sun in a rich blue sky, flecked with light woolly clouds: you stand there in a rich green meadow and see beyond you the purple hills in the distance. You bask in the friendliness and tranquility of the scene, and you carefully listen to someone explain the intricacies of the sub-machine gun.

And what happens to us? We die inside, slowly and painfully, but inevitably. And as we die, we ask why. What are we doing here? Where are our lives? Is this what we struggle for? Is this why our mothers bore us, suffered for us, why they

nursed us, worried and rejoiced for us? Is this what we were raised for? And why? Where's the reason? The logic? What was the use of it all, then? What, then, is the use, the purpose of anything? And so we die, for we find no answer.

Oh, there are answers, but sooner or later we realize their inadequacies. And so some go to church. Others gamble. Others spend their weekends drinking themselves into forgetfulness. Others haunt the local prostitutes.

And what do I do, Elizabeth? I sit here and look into the far off hills, clutching a bracelet you gave me once, and turn to you, as always.

David

Elizabeth sat silent and unmoving, and stared with unseeing eyes at an imaginary point on the wall before her. Then she rose abruptly and walked to the other side of the room. From a flowered enamel box she took a cigarette and placed it between her lips. She picked up the tiny silver lighter on the table and, with unsteady fingers, she lighted the cigarette. Drawing deeply, she glared at the letters on the desk and then stalked over to the window. She threw it open and felt a cold, fresh blast of air blow into the room, pushing her hair from her face. She looked out into a sky of countless winking eyes which seemed to hold countless wise answers. They stared blankly back at her.

She turned around slowly and then suddenly walked toward the victrola on the book case. Leafing quickly through the pile of records, she selected one, looked at it for an instant, then set it on the machine. She turned the knob, and the turntable began to revolve. Fascinated, she watched it go 'round, and 'round, and 'round, and as the music began to fill the room, she felt her mind begin to go 'round and 'round and 'round, until, whirling suddenly, she threw herself on the bed and lay there staring at the ceiling.

Hazy, unreal images crowded Elizabeth's mind . . . a tall, straight young man, with piercing, blue eyes . . . a quick, easy smile, and a clear, happy laugh . . . a tender, warm whisper . . . a sure, firm grip, and a brave, pure strength . . . and a set of silver bars . . .

The picture grew dim as the music pounded Elizabeth's senses, and she whimpered softly. A slim vulnerable figure, with dark, haunting eyes . . . an unruly thatch of dark hair . . . a tremulous flute playing "The Afternoon of a Faun" . . . a smile and laugh like sudden sunshine breaking from behind the weeping skies . . . a lost and lonely soul, seeking, asking, groping, with hand outstretched, slow to trust, quick to give . . .

The images moved faster and faster in her mind . . . distorted, grotesque visions which swept along her consciousness and were caught up and whirled about in the frenzy of the music. The curtains at the window were blown about, and waved like living things in the force of the night wind. The record completed, there was sudden and deafening silence, and Elizabeth sat up, her eyes wide and dark, her hands pressed tightly over her ears. Very slowly, she got up and closed the window.

She walked with the movement of the sleep-walker to her desk and sat down before it. With lifeless fingers, she played with the letters scattered about and then slowly began to read them, one by one. She mechanically gathered them into a pile and carefully retied the blue ribbon around them, and then sat with her eyes closed, her head on her arms while the clock on the dresser ticked monotonously tic-toc; tic-toc; tic-toc

Abruptly she raised her head and from a remote corner of the bottom drawer of the desk, from beneath bundles of papers and books representing different kinds of memorabilia, she located a scrap book. She placed it before her and turned the pages, stopping, finally, to look with searching, beseeching eyes at one picture. On the page, beneath the picture, was fastened a thin, gold bracelet, which caught a million little shafts of light from the desk lamp. She gazed a long time, and just the hint of a tender smile curved her lips, although her eyes were luminous with tears.

Finally, Elizaeth closed the book, gently laid it aside, and, picking up paper and pen, prepared to write. She glanced briefly at the first letter she had read, and then bent her head over the task. These words came swiftly and easily, and

she wrote without hesitation, soon filling a page and a half. She scanned her work carelessly, and, quickly sealing the letter, she put it aside.

Again she sat silent and unmoving. Finally she began to write once more. Her pen moved haltingly across the pages, and she paused often. The clock and the scratching of the pen were all that broke the silence, and the minutes stretched into hours. Elizabeth was drawn and pale, her eyes were haunted. And still she wrote. Tears slowly began to squeeze out from beneath her heavy eyelids, and great drops fell on the paper before her, blurring the ink. She brushed her hand across her eyes and continued to write.

She put her pen down at last. She read the remaining two letters once more, and then the letter she had just completed. She slowly and methodically began to tear into a million little pieces of confetti one of the letters she had received. Like and old woman, she arose and slipped into her coat. Her movements were weary, but her eyes were serene. She silently left her room, descended the stairs, opened the front door, and stepped out into a cold, clear night. Her face calm and composed, Elizabeth walked to the corner and dropped two letters into the mail box, while the stars overhead blinked enigmatically down on her.

KATHIE SIEGLER migrated to Florida from Maryland where she and her family live on a modest estate, the "Pink Palace." We are told that more red tape is manufactured there than anywhere else in the world.

Kathie is quite prolific: a prospective teacher, an excellent clavichordist, and a newly initiated member of that well-known professional fraternity, Fie Baita.



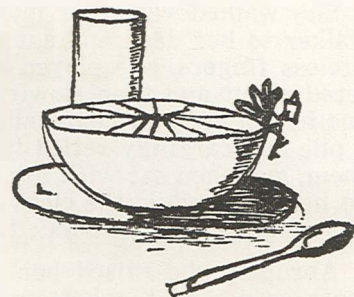
DAWN

by GENE FOSTER

A spark of light —
 Placid vespers —
 Verdant foilage stretching,
 Grasping for comfort and
 Warmth. The azure canopy
 Of heaven supplants the awful
 Stygian darkness. Promising
 Blue. Opalescent clouds.
 Prattling birds. The jasper
 Studded rays of Phoebus wake
 The living.

SCIENCE TRIUMPHS AGAIN

James Graaskamp



JIM GRAASKAMP, otherwise known as the wicked pen, is one of those species of Yankee who complains bitterly of Florida sunshine, blue skies, bending palms, and beautiful women. Somehow we can't persuade him to go back to the frozen north. Rumor has it that Jim's pet peeves are editors—any kind—and cheap al-literations. Jim's piece was plagiarized in 1903, and he is welcome to it.

I fear that Science and I are not pulling together for a better world. To be fair, I must confess that excepting Louis Pasteur's noble work with fresh milk, I have always looked askance at what is laughingly called "scientific progress," and a psychologist, who until recently was a good friend, has said that it is my mental outlook that is really at fault. Therefore, I have kept my mistrust of science to myself, and have tried to adopt a "live and let live" policy where scientists are concerned. Not so, with the scientists. I believe that they are definitely out to get me, and if their talk about hydrogen and allied elements is not just idle boasting while in their cups, they have every chance of succeeding. As it is, they have made my days very uncomfortable.

Fully aware that such a strained relationship could not go on indefinitely, I essayed the first step toward reconciliation by reading a book called *The Theory of the Genes*, by T. H. Morgan, if only to explain my innate weakness for antique stores. As a result I no longer look forward to breakfast. After years of concentrated prying and peeping into the private lives of harmless fruit flies, he has revealed them as the sensual little monsters they are. Now I, for one, always shared my morning grapefruit with a few innocent looking fruit flies, entirely unaware of the high old time they were having in the pantry when my back was turned. Mr. Morgan says that the majority of the little devils are "the wild round-eyed type" and he should know. What's more he lists a great number of misalliances which he calls "sports" with such names as "the bar eyed drosophilia" and the more degenerate "wide bar eyed drosophilia." With their character references the term "sports" seems overly generous. The bar eyed drosophilia apparently originates when a wild round-eyed type spends so much time around the pretzel bowl in a poorly lighted saloon that his children, legal or otherwise, have "a greatly reduced number of eye facets" and thus are marked for life. However, it isn't just the males that are at fault. No sir. If "male flies with purple eyes" (of all things) consort with "females with black body color and both sexes are of the

wild type" the children are "autosomal recessives," and we all know what means. Besides this smouldering type, there are a goodly number of "phenotypically wild females" which means, I take it, they look the part. These girls have a complex - - - Mr. Morgan calls it "the attached-X complex" and that is as good a name as any - - - which gives "rise only to wild type daughters" who often have "vermilion," — yes, that's the word Mr. Morgan uses, "vermilion eyes." The best man can do is some shade of brown or blue or rarely one of each, but marketable adult fruit flies come with garnet, vermilion, apricot, white, brown, purple and sepia eye-color. Here I think that Mr. Morgan infers that if man, who is all too aware of the means of juggling genes, were to realize the benefits that might accrue, mankind by emphasizing the possible noble ends of such endeavor (i.e. apricot eyes) would soon solve its biggest problem relating to the individual. As for myself, I'm wondering if I could ever feel at ease with anyone who had eyes like a fruit fly.

Now, you may ask, and quite fairly too, "Why has all this ruined your breakfast, or worse?" Well for one thing, I don't care for Mr. Morgan's inferred comparison between fruit flies and mankind, among whom I like to count myself. It just isn't the most favorable light for comparison. Secondly, science has been steadily harping on the idea that man is a mass of cells, bacteria, and now chromosomes and genes, who are all merrily living their own lives without a never-you-mind about what you and I want to do. This sort of information undermines one's dignity and saps the spirit. What with one thing or another, we have enough troubles kidding our dignity and spirit along. Then too, what happens on the morning when I come to breakfast and find a giant "wild eyed drosophilia *Melanogaster*" usurping my place at the table and eating my grapefruit? I'm a bit wild eyed in the morning myself, so that it should be quite an encounter. No, on second thought, if such a thing should happen, I would go to my room and sulk until such time as Mr. Morgan apologized personally for his little joke . . . or until I was called to dinner.

POEM

by GENE FOSTER

Mighty Jupiter —
 Reverend monarch of Olympus and overseer
 of men's souls,
 Obliterate this foul vision before my eyes.
 Behold —
 There the ghastly fates with measured tread,
 Approach me for their hideous inexorable task.
 Oh Jupiter omnipotent —
 Why must the fates exist?
 Why must there be an end to our mortality?
 Do not forsake me, Master. Show me your
 merciful hand.
 Let life prevail in my crumbled frame, give back
 my youth.
 Restore to me the pleasures of young manhood,
 but woe —
 I sense the imminent end and must stand witness
 to approaching fate.
 Pale, cruel Clotho sits by her aureate spindle
 Where the gossamer thread flows forth like
 lava from Etna's slopes.
 Spare me, Jupiter —
 Next I see crimson mantled Lachesis measure
 the thread,
 And death draws closer. Is there no mercy,
 no escape?
 Must I die, forsaken, a shrivelled hoary being —
 Unredeemed by any glory? The end is here.
 Purple robed and bloody, Atropos wields her
 argent blades —
 The thread is cut, my life completed.
 The Fatal Trio once again claim their victim.
 And you, Jupiter —
 Are you truly merciless? Or are you, too, as I,
 Helpless against the craft of the Mistress of
 Destiny?

* * * *

Our man of many talents, GENE FOSTER, took up writing poetry on a dare. Since these are his first poems, we feel that the situation is now completely out of control. Other insignificant facts about Gene are his love for animals (he wants desperately to have his own pet lion some day) and his great passion for zombies and nuinuis. (If you don't know what they are, either, you may look it up on page 13 of the Rollins publication, "Booze Who.")

The latest addition to the newly formed committee to play taps for WPRK is "DICK" RICHARDS. Dick has not only written the music for the Independent show the past few years, but also has written the lyrics. It drives the unions simply crazy. When pinned down as to what some of his evil ways were, he admitted to the nasty habit of putting other people to work—collectively, of course.

* * * *

LYRICS

by HOWARD L. RICHARDS JR.

The sun is shining above me;
 The sea is pounding the shore;
 The sand stretches for miles before me —
 They seem to be calling me
 To the one I adore.
 The breezes whisper a tale
 Of winds that could fill up my sails.
 The palms fringing the beach are swaying;
 They seem to be saying
 Here's the shore, here's the shore.
 The sun beats down like a fiery furnace;
 The surf breaks over the reef with a roar;
 The sand is only a pathway between us —
 A path to lead me from here to the shore ...
 the shore.
 But the sun beats down on the sea
 The sea rushes up to the sand
 The sand stretches for miles before me —
 They seem to be calling me
 The sun, the sea, and the sand.
 They seem to be calling me
 The sun, the sea, and the sand.

When the moon is riding high above Man
 hattan,
 And the lights are glowing brightly on Times
 Square,
 There's a song that drifts from Harlem down to
 Staten —
 A song that whispers of the city there.
 You hear a trumpet play a blue note,
 And the symphony of honking cars,
 And then you hear the whistle of a river-boat,
 And the tinkling of a piano in a bar.
 It's a restless yet a haunting kind of harmony
 That a stranger doesn't seem to hear at all.
 It's the breath, the life, the spirit of the city
 It's just Manhattan and Manhattan's call.



HIS EYES

Myra Brown

Mikiel brushed his hair hard. The cowlicks, they would not stay down. He dipped his brush in the bowl of water and tried again. It was important to look nice today. Mother Castille had said so, herself. The people were coming today. The nice ladies and gentlemen with the money and the homes were coming today to see the children.

Mikiel looked into the mirror and decided he would do. He smoothed the collar of his shirt. It was a pretty shirt. Mother Castille liked the shirt. She told him once it made his eyes shine. She had said that to him once. He looked in the mirror and saw his eyes. Did the shirt make them shine?

He did not wear the shirt often, only on special days. Today was a special day. Mother Castille had told them it was special.

Mikiel sighed and took the brush back to his room. All the boys were getting dressed up for today. He looked at Josef but turned away when Josef looked up. He did not want anyone to see him watching. He sighed again. He wished he had eaten more lunch. That was it, he must still be hungry. He did not like to feel this way, this hungry way.

Josef was sitting down now and he was tying his shoes. Mikiel felt the toe of his own left shoe. It was rough and he tried hard to smooth the scuffed leather. He wished he had some new shoes. Sometimes these hurt his feet. Sometimes the people from America sent new shoes at Christmas but it was a long time till Christmas.

He wondered how long before the people would come. He was tired. He would like a nap. Yes, a nap would be nice and today he would not make noise. Mother Castille would be proud of him today if he could take a nap.

Mikiel held his breath until he felt the needles in his cheek. He did that because it made him dizzy. The boys said if you stood up right then, you would faint. He did not want to faint but he liked to make the needles in his cheek. It hurt but he did not care.

He heard Mother Castille come into the hall and his stomach felt funny. He held on to the edge of the bed. Could she hear his heart, he wondered. Hush, heart.

Mother Castille was talking to someone. Mikiel looked at the floor. He saw Josef's shoes before him. Josef was not moving either.

"Children."

Mother Castille was calling them. "Come, children. The nice people are here to see you. We're all going into the Big Room."

The Big Room was in another house. They went

to the Big Room for Christmas and for parties and for fun times. They went when important people came. One time the President from France had come. And one time, oh, one time the Princesses had come. They had come and seen all the children. They were lovely, the Princesses were, they—

"Mikiel. Come on, son."

Mother Castille was by him. She was talking to him. He jumped to his feet.

"Yes, Mother."

He did not talk loud. His words would not come loud. Hush, heart, hush. The other children were going down the hall. Mikiel ran to them.

* * *

Now it was his turn. He was in the room all by himself just waiting. They had talked to lots of the nice people in the Big Room. He stayed by Josef. Josef know how to talk to the people. Mikiel did not know his English so good and all the people were English. Josef smiled nice and the people liked Josef. After awhile they did not talk to Mikiel. He did not care. He did not like to talk to the people.

Now he was alone and he did not feel so good. He did not care about going away with the people. Yes, that was why they were here. They had come to choose some of the children. They would be mamas and papas to the children and take them to their homes away away and feed them good and give them new shoes and nice shirts and be theirs always forever. But he did not care. He loved Mother Castille best. Yes, he did.

Mikiel heard voices and watched the two people come in with Mother Castille. She talked to them and he did not have to talk. He watched them through wide and frightened eyes. He felt sicker and very very tired. The water came on his forehead and he hoped they would not see it.

They were nice people. Yes, they were nice and kind and good. The lady. The lady was like Maman. Yes, he would like to go with the people. He did not want to stay here. He, too, wished to be chosen to go.

Mikiel's dark, lonely eyes pleaded with the lady. His eyes betrayed an awful hunger for the lady. Mikiel hoped she would see the message in his eyes, he prayed that she would understand. Dear Father God, I like the people. I want to go, too . . .

He watched her face. Why did she stare so? Did she see the scars? He could not help the scars. The cowlicks. They had not stayed down. He pulled at his shirt. The shirt was too big. The shirt did **not** make his eyes shine. Mother Castille was wrong — it did not make them shine.

And then Mikiel knew. He saw the lady smile, first at him and then at Mother Castille. He had seen that kind of smile before. There had been other nice ladies and gentlemen who had come to see the children.

Mikiel closed his eyes.

A TICKET TO PARADISE

JACK WILSON

George stood in Grand Central Station looking at the railroad ticket in his hand. He read the words again: "Paradise. One Way. Day Coach."

The printing glowed slightly, and the ticket seemed to be made of some sort of plastic material, green, translucent, and warm to the touch.

It must be a joke, thought George. Someone at the office must have gone in the locker room and put it in his coat pocket in place of his commuter ticket. He gripped the ticket between his hands to tear it apart — only it didn't tear. He tried again; it still didn't tear. They certainly make some wonderful plastics these days, he thought. He looked at the clock over the information desk; his train left in five minutes. He tossed the ticket aside — but it did not toss; it remained floating in the air where it had left his hand. Then it began to move. George leaped after it, grabbed, and missed. The ticket began to pick up speed, and he started to run. He lurched into a man, pushed him aside, and made another lunge. This time he caught it. It tugged at his hand a moment, then subsided.

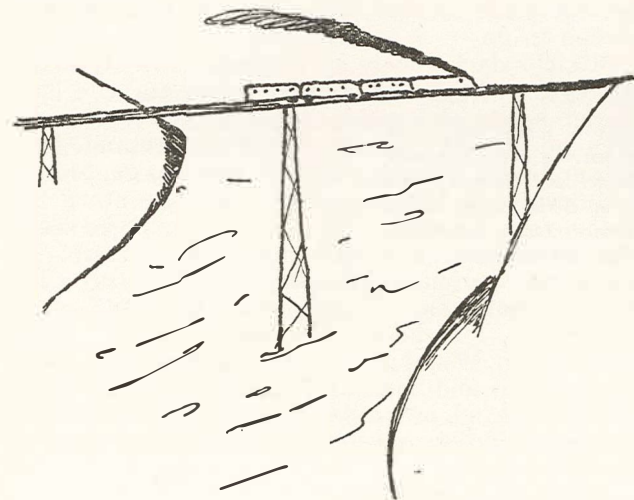
George looked around. No one had noticed him amid the hurrying crowds. He examined the ticket again, and as he held it up to his eyes he thought he heard something. He held it to his ear, and detected faint tinkling sounds. He crossed to a row of telephone booths, found an empty one, entered it, and closed the door.

He held the ticket to his ear again and heard — music. It was like nothing he had ever heard before; harps and horns; fairy music; faint as a far-away waterfall. The notes were like summer rain on a pine-belted lake, or the soft clash of a myriad leaves.

He listened.

There was a rattle at the door of the telephone booth; he scarcely noticed it. There was another rattle, and the door was opened by a woman.

"If you don't mind, I'd like to use the phone," she said.



"Oh, sorry," said George.

He stepped out of the booth.

"If you've got the ear-ache, why don't you see a doctor," said the woman as she jabbed the door closed behind her.

George looked around at the crowds in the station. They were travelling for all sorts of reasons, he thought, and to all kinds of places. Some were going home to their wives and families; some were travelling on routine business trips. But there were others sailing on great adventures; looking into their faces, he saw the eyes of Columbus, Magellan, and Cortez.

And here am I, thought George, with a ticket to paradise in my hand.

He thought of his wife, keeping supper warm for him in Scarsdale. She probably had on an old house dress, and she would be wearing her floppy slippers. He could see her hair, uncombed. She would either be completely silent or she would complain about every little thing. Anything that went wrong around the house was always his fault. The children would be noisy, and one or both would be crying before the evening was over. There would probably be a quarrel with his wife. He didn't have a home, he had an animal hutch.

George walked slowly to the information desk, and showed the ticket, keeping a firm hold on it. The clerk looked at it in a bored manner and said, "Track seven sir. Leaves in three minutes."

The clerk turned to someone else. George stared at him, then looked down the cave-like station. Yes, there it was; track seven. He walked over to the gate and showed the ticket to a checker, who nodded casually. George looked around the station, then went onto the platform and boarded an ordinary looking train which was there. He took a seat in the car, which was empty; and in a few moments the train began to move, quietly, like a snake sliding through the grass.

They traversed a maze of tracks, uniting, multiplying.

A conductor came down the aisle, punched George's ticket, and returned it.

"Not many passengers today," said George.

"You're the only one on the train."

"It looks like I'm going to have a pretty quiet trip then."

"Drinks are served in the club car at the end of the train."

Looking out of the window, George saw they were travelling on a bridge, high over a wide blue river, blue as a baby's blanket.

"Where are we?" he asked.

"At the beginning. Everything has its start."

The conductor left.

George thought of his wife. She had been beautiful once. She still was, she just didn't bother to take care of herself any more. Had it been only six years since they married? He thought of her on that day, on the lawn in front of the church,

her hair gleaming in the sun like a golden waterfall.

Things had gone fine for several years; then came the night when he had met a former girlfriend at a party. He had flirted with her, half drunk, and his wife had slapped his face and gone home. When he got home himself, he found his wife had moved into the children's bedroom.

He hadn't tried to patch things up; why should he, it was as much her fault as it was his. If she hadn't left him alone, drunk, with that girl, nothing would have happened. He had gone on seeing the girl, and his wife had begun to neglect herself and the house and the children.

George glanced out of the window. They were crossing a wide grassy plain scattered with solitary bushes lonely as bachelor lodgings.

He got up and went back to the club-car. The conductor was behind the bar, polishing glasses.

"Drink?" asked the conductor.

"Yes," said George.

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The conductor removed the cap, and the liquid inside gave a quick relieved sigh, as if glad to be free of its glass prison.

George filled his glass, and it suddenly turned into a teeming tropical aquarium. Colored bubbles darted everywhere, red, green, blue, yellow, tiny bursting sky-rockets.

He picked up the glass and cautiously sipped the liquid.

It was warm, it was cool, it was sweet, it was sour, it was autumn woods, a volcano in the snow, it was dawn, it was dusk, it was teen-age love, it was baby rabbits and roaring lions, it was nectar.

George slowly put down the glass, electric diamonds in a miniature vase.

Diamonds . . . diamonds . . . his wife's engagement ring. She had removed her wedding band, but she still wore the engagement ring. Suddenly that was important.

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He remembered the first time he had kissed his wife, a sip of nectar, life's promise. Had it

been only six years since they married? So much time had passed, so much had happened.

But he was still young; he could still conquer pride.

"I want to go back," said George to the conductor.

"I'm sorry, you can't said the conductor.

"I've got to; it's an emergency."

"This trip is an emergency too. We can't stop for anything."

George went back to his seat. Close outside the speeding window was a quarreling, twining jungle. Dusk, scattering stars across the sky, was sowing the harvest of night.

After a time, the train began to slow down. George went to the door at the end of the car and opened it as the train came to a halt. They were in a railroad station, but he could see very little in the darkness.

The conductor was coming along the car calling, "Paradise! Paradise! Paradise Station." He reached the end of the car and said to George, "You're here."

The words hung in the air ripe as pomegranates.

George turned and said, "But I've changed my mind. I don't want to go to paradise."

"Yes you do."

"Where does this train go next?"

"Hades."

George looked out at the station. A sign glowed "Way Out." Beneath it was a neon arrow, pointing like the hand of God.

George stepped off the train.

"Goodbye," said the conductor.

"Goodbye, conductor," said George.

The train began to move, going back the way it had come.

George followed the arrow, and found himself on a street — a familiar street.

He was in front of the railroad station in Scarsdale.

He looked around, then reached in his pocket and pulled out the ticket. It had changed. It was an ordinary cardboard commuter's ticket.

Then he started to run down the road toward his home, his ticket to paradise in his hand.

JACK WILSON'S impression of childhood is rather foggy. Although he remembers that he won first prize in a baby contest, he's not quite sure what for. He saw France and Germany on a G. I. expense account. Life was tough in Berlin where all he had were free meals, beer, and maid service. Jack's nomination for the best fiction award of 1954 is the Rollins Catalogue.

THE BET

G. P. Pont



"Where you from, Gordo?" asked the youth in the barber chair.

The unjacketed boy at the opposite end of the room answered hesitantly, "Port Washington." Then he began to nervously tap his heel and jiggle his leg.

"Freshman?"

"Yeah," then as if to clarify the situation, Gordo added quickly, "I live in Berry Hall."

"Jeez, what a hole," commented a red haired boy from his seat in the corner.

The small basement room in Lane Hall that served as barber shop smelled heavily of intermingled week-old and fresh cigarette smoke. A cob-webbed sign, tacked to a wall once white, proclaimed, "NO SMOKING." Dirty prep school phrases were scrawled on the too-low ceiling. A single chair, one of its arms missing, its upholstery torn, slumped dejectedly beneath the one dazzling electric bulb that hung by a thin strand of wire. In the chair sat a youth. His fuzzy head, pimpled face, long-legged levis and pseudo-cowboy boots were the only parts left uncovered by the dirty linen that shrouded him. A small man with rolled-up shirt sleeves and squinting eyes worked over the boy. The room's other twelve occupants sat along the wall in wooden camp chairs, sucking on cigarettes and reading ancient comic books as they waited their turn. All the boys, with the exception of one individual, who sat smoking and nervously tapping his heel, wore maroon colored warm-up jackets emblazoned with a white crest under which was written, BARTLETT ACADEMY — 1821 —.

Smoke, the sound of shears snipping, and the continual tapping of Gordo's heel filled the cellar room. Snip, snip, puff, tap, tap, tap.

The pimpled-face boy broke the noisy silence, "What the hell's the matter with you, Gordo? Got to go to the john?"

"No," came the nervous reply.

"Then stop jiggling your leg and making that stupid sound with your foot."

The sound stopped.

The maroon-jacketed automatons looked up from their comic books and conversational partners to stare at Gordo. He was fat; he was new, and not a member of their group. They all looked at his baby face and knew his secret without speaking.

Gordo thought prep school was not supposed to be like Bartlett. It was supposed to be friendly. They didn't like him; they knew that he was afraid.

The tall red head got up from his camp chair in the dusty corner of the room and addressed himself to the boy in the barber chair. "When we going to start the freshman hazing, Ripp?"

"Tomorrow, maybe." A number of boys interrupted with shouts of "Now, lets start now." —

Gordo was silent; he wanted to get out, he wanted to be home, he didn't want to stay at Bartlett with the maroon jackets and dirty barber shop. He felt a little sick, but he tried to sound calm when he spoke.

"What happens, Ripp?"

"Oh, nothing much," he said slowly as he innocently looked at the others. They all laughed. "We haven't a very large freshman class this year — it'll be easier on the upper classmen," he added. They all laughed again.

"You aren't scared, are you, Gordo?" asked the red-head. He took a squashed pack of cigarettes from his shirt pocket, put a butt to his mouth and lighted it. The smoke rushed into his lungs, then he blew it slowly in Gordo's direction, and returned to his corner seat.

"The funniest thing happened last year," Red continued. "The upper-classmen had a gang they called The Unholy Six. I remember the night we got Bobo Glennon. We threw him in the pool — when he got out he started to chase me. He was screaming like crazy all the while — that was insubordination, so we took him to the athletic field and beat his ass with coat hangers, then we tied him to the football goal post. He was there all night."

Ripp sat in the barber chair, a sadistic grin molded his face. "Remember how the headmaster played Sherlock Holmes games trying to find out who did it? What a stew! He even asked Glennon. Bobo was queer; he didn't tell — I guess he was chicken."

The room was silent. Gordo knew something was going to happen, he could feel it. He stared at the tips of his shoes; they were brown and scuffed. He wanted to tap his heel, but he didn't. He looked up, twelve serious faces met him. All watching, all thinking, all knowing. He hated them.

Red spoke, "You know Gordo, I don't think you'll ever be a man." There was a pause. Gordo caught his breath, and tried to look calm; he thought of his mother at home. In his next letter he would tell her how much he liked being at Bartlett. He couldn't tell her the truth, his father would laugh. "I bet there is something right in this room you don't dare do," Red propositioned. Gordo didn't speak, he looked quickly about the room trying to figure the torture in store — there were no coat hangers.

"What?" he asked Red apprehensively.

"I bet a dime you don't dare to drink the rest of the hair tonic in that half-pint bottle."

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Gordo looked at the half-filled bottle of gold liquid that sat alone, like an idol, in the center of the small table within the barber's reach.

"All of it?" Gordo asked.

"A-uh," came the guttural reply.

"For how much?"

"A dime."

"I bet nobody else in school, but you, would dare drink it, Gordo, said a thin English looking boy.

The room was at attention. Even the barber had stopped his work.

"You don't dare," probed Red.

"C'mon Gordo," said the youth in the chair, "show us if this year's freshmen are men or babies." He grabbed the bottle from the table, held it in his hand a moment, then extended it toward Gordo.

"Drink it."

The unjacketed boy got up from his camp chair and walked to the bottle. He took it from the youth's hand. "Tephan's dandruff remover hair lotion, one half pint. WITH OIL" proclaimed the red and green label.

"Chug-a-lug it!" Red urged.

Then the automatons shouted in war chant unison. "Chug-a-lug! Chug-a-lug! Chug-a-lug!"

Gordo slowly unscrewed the metal cap. He held the bottle to his nose: "Hemlock," he thought. It

didn't smell of soap or oil, but more like burnt bacon and gin. He examined the printed label closely. There was nothing that hinted poison.

"Let these guys see how brave you are, Gordo," encouraged the English boy from his camp chair. "Show them."

"Chug-a-lug! Chug-a-lug!"

"Go ahead, Gordo," said Red, "let's see you drink it."

The barber stared in disbelief. Gordo looked at the pimple-faced, expectant youth sitting in the padded chair, then he placed the bottle to his lips. Only a gurgling, swallowing sound, could be heard. All eyes watched every move, waiting, waiting, for the boy to get sick. — The liquid burned, and stank of rotten bacon. He washed his mouth with, then gulped it into his stomach. Gordo stopped, burped, continued. Slowly the liquid level drained; the bottle was empty.

Red reached into his pocket and extracted a dime; he handed it to the unjacketed youth, then ran up the cellar stairs to tell his class-mates the story. The maroon jacketed English youth broke from the ranks and followed Red, shouting, "Jesus Christ, he did it! The queer did it!" The pimpled face boy in the barber chair was folded over in laughter. The barber laughed. They all laughed. Gordo stood silent, holding the empty bottle in his right hand; in his left the tiny piece of silver.

GEORGE PONT represents the "new thought" in prose. In fact, his ideas are so novel we're really not quite sure how bad his work is. George's evil habits include a liking for strong pipes, fast cars, whale blubber and yogurt. You will probably remember that he won the prose prize in the fall issue for his "Picture of Peter." However, this time he is trying to make amends for past mistakes.

SONNET I

by LONNIE CARRUTH

In Hellas old, philosophers sophistic,
Of pregnant minds and gilded tongues evistic,
Welled forth an awesome tide of "veritics."
Now some, 'tis said, were great profundities,
But many were inane pomposities,
And some were verbal imbecilities,
Such as "Not being is and yet is not."
"Turtles outwalk Achilles in a trot,"
"The flying lance flies not, not right, nor left."
Empedocles did ruminate on this
And broke his brain; and in that bleary bliss
Leapt into Aetna's pit to god himself.
Though I'd no skill, I tried to write a sonnet,
Because you said my grade depends upon it.

LONNIE CARRUTH, according to one well informed source, divides his time between the science lab, where he's reportedly trying to show up Einstein, and the classroom. Here he meditates on the best way to reduce arguments to tatters and teachers to tears.

SONG FOR A WINDY AFTERNOON

Memories and time go marching by,
With sullen, cadenced beat into forgetfulness.
What once seemed all my life, forgotten now,
Never again to live except at night
In dreams uncertain and discomforting.
All that is lost, those happy hours I knew,
Is memory a mercy or a wound? Is forgetting
Not the balm of life, on such a day as
This, with beauty all around me to enjoy?
I cannot hope to capture what is gone,
Nor can I the wind and waves, white
Flashing against the white, dashing about the
Waves beneath the cliff in sullen monotony.
But now I love what is no more,
And dream of it always, but now even more,
It is a song upon some windy afternoon.

MARY GRACE HOWE

NIGHT BEFORE DAWN

by MARY GRACE HOWE

Alone I wonder in the deep, still night,
And cannot be content with what I am,
Or what I am inspired for. Thinking
Quietly, no other aim than that designed for
Dreams, and for the night around me.
In quiet I listen, hear a voice in stillness,
A voice or two, or three, that seem to be of
Some far off dream, some love, some life
That was my own once long ago.
A quiet velvet night, this time of thought,
Quiet, beautiful regret, and sadness.
Unmarred by moon or stars, but with
Its own dark light called Memory.
The wind comes up, and the cold dagger
Of dawn pierces the night, summoning me
To terror, and the emptiness of day.

* * * *

"MISS HOWE, I'd like to ask you a few questions please."
"Certainly."

Do you believe in the Monroe Doctrine, Gettysburg address,
Pledge of Allegiance, and what you read in the SANDSPARROW?"

"Certainly."

"You realize, of course, that the job you are applying for is
of the utmost secrecy and responsibility?"

"Certainly."

"One more question please. Have you ever published in 'The
Flamingo?'"

"Yes, eight times. This won't effect my getting the job will it?"

"We hear that it is put out by the Rollins Underground. I'm
very sorry, but in this business we certainly don't want people who
have talent."

NOSTALGIA

by PAULA CRANDALL

Was it yesterday I knew them?
All those places and those people
In my past?
How young I was, and, oh, how blessed
With love and joy and peace and
All those things belonging to a man
That cannot be bought,
Or even kept, for very long.
Could I but bring it back,
My life of long ago,
With eyes undimmed
And mind unfettered
By the prejudice of age,
The blind determination of the old,
Without the flexibility of youth
And love.
But my past lovers are no more
Than specters, long since
Severed from my life's strand
And swept away
Into the sea that is eternity
And passes us by, all of us
Daily, and we hardly know
That it is happening
Before it is too late
And we are old.

One of the most conscientious workers on the FLAMINGO is
PAULA CRANDALL who manages to bawl up the schedules com-
pletely by having her work in on time. Besides being a very busy
CHIO, Paula has time for the more serious aspects of Rollins
life: center-sitting, Pelican picnics, and T G I F parties.

ROOM 210 - THE SECOND FLOOR

by MYRA BROWN

Room 210 ---
The second floor,
Bursting at
The seams and door:
One side cluttered,
One side clean,

One small path
Cleared in between.
Two chests of drawers,
Two single beds,
Two sets of shelves,
Two types of spreads.

Two occupants --
Both female!
Each the other
Oft bewails.
They disagree
On everything

That daily living
Seems to bring.
They simply can't
See eye to eye
On basic rules
Which should apply:

One uses Duz,
The other Lux;
One says damn,
When one says shucks;
The first likes beer,
The second coke;

One is frugal,
Never broke —
In contrast to
Her roommate's state —
Constant debt,
Bills always late;

One reads Shakespeare,
And one Spillane;
The first hates study,
The second's a brain.
Sometimes they fuss,
Sometimes they pout.

Sometimes they cry,
Sometimes they shout.
This dissention
Could be bad,
Could lead to things
That drive men mad.

But those outside
Who criticize
Are met with hard
And flaming eyes.
"What's your main pain?"
These roommates ask

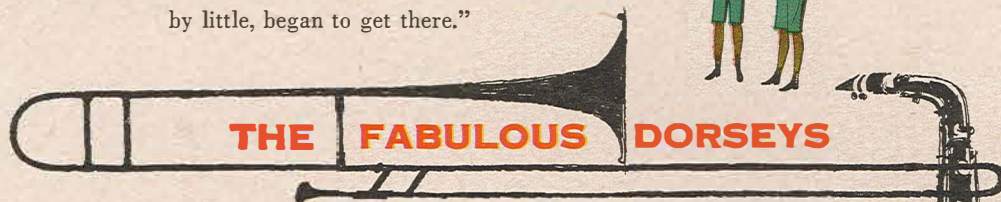
And quickly they
Take you to task —
For both agree
(with smiles small)
This roommate deal's
Not bad at all!!

* * * *

MYRA BROWN is the Rollins Philosopher's Universal Substance.
That's because everywhere he looks he sees her.

HOW THE STARS GOT STARTED...

Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey say: "Our Dad led the brass band in our home town. He started us on our way tooting in the band when we were eight years old. We watched and studied successful musicians as much as we could, worked real hard and, little by little, began to get there."

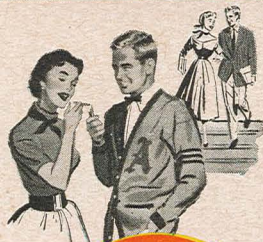


I'VE SMOKED
CAMELS 15-20 YEARS—
SINCE I DISCOVERED
CAMEL'S SWELL
FLAVOR AND
WONDERFUL MILDNESS

Jimmy

I STARTED
SMOKING CAMELS
LONG AGO. I WATCHED, AND
THE GUYS WHO ENJOYED
SMOKING MOST WERE
GUYS WHO SMOKED
CAMELS. THERE'S NOTHING
LIKE CAMEL'S FLAVOR

Tommy



START SMOKING CAMELS YOURSELF!

Smoke only Camels for 30 days and find out why
Camels are America's most popular cigarette.
See how mild and flavorful a cigarette can be!

FOR MILDNESS AND FLAVOR

Camels
agree with more people
THAN ANY OTHER CIGARETTE!

