

Thou Shalt Not Kill

By John T. Flynn

The United States could cut its annual death rate if we had Spain send us her war planes and we shipped our automobiles to her. But Mr. Flynn has found a better plan to reduce our highway tragedies, a plan that has worked successfully in such typical American cities as Nashville, Evanston and Milwaukee. It can work in yours

FOR many years we had a delightful way of celebrating the Fourth of July. We used to kill off little boys by the hundreds and burn 'em up by the thousands. Fireworks used to singe and scorch the little patriots, put out their eyes and blow off their fingers. The day after the Fourth of July this year I read in a New York newspaper this headline: 249 Die in Double Holiday in Nation.

At first glance it looks a bit discouraging. But the subhead cleared it up. It read: "Autos kill 247, fireworks 2." So it was really very encouraging after all. We used to burn up with fireworks the young Americans in carload lots on Independence Day. This year we killed only two. Why? Something must have happened. Something did happen. The nation made a deliberate, planned drive to quit killing kids. This headline says it succeeded in an amazing way.

Now then, if we could, by resolute and persistent effort, practically do away with Fourth of July fireworks fatalities, may we not do the same thing for the motorcar fatalities? If we can stop burning them up, perhaps we can stop mowing 'em down and bumping 'em off. Why not?

On this question of automobile accidents the bloody, messy, horrific story of the human agony has been told and retold and we need not retail it here. The gory, costly tale can be summed up in a thimbleful of statistics. Here they are for last year:

Killed	37,800
Injured	967,840
Property damage	\$820,000,000

We need not embroider that gruesome table. The

only question left is: What are we going to do about it? And this other one: Can we do anything about it? Are you interested? You had better be.

Have you any children? Then think this over—out of every three children alive today, two will be in automobile accidents before they die.

Have you a sixteen-year-old son or daughter? At the present rate he or she is practically assured of being in an automobile accident at some time in his or her life.

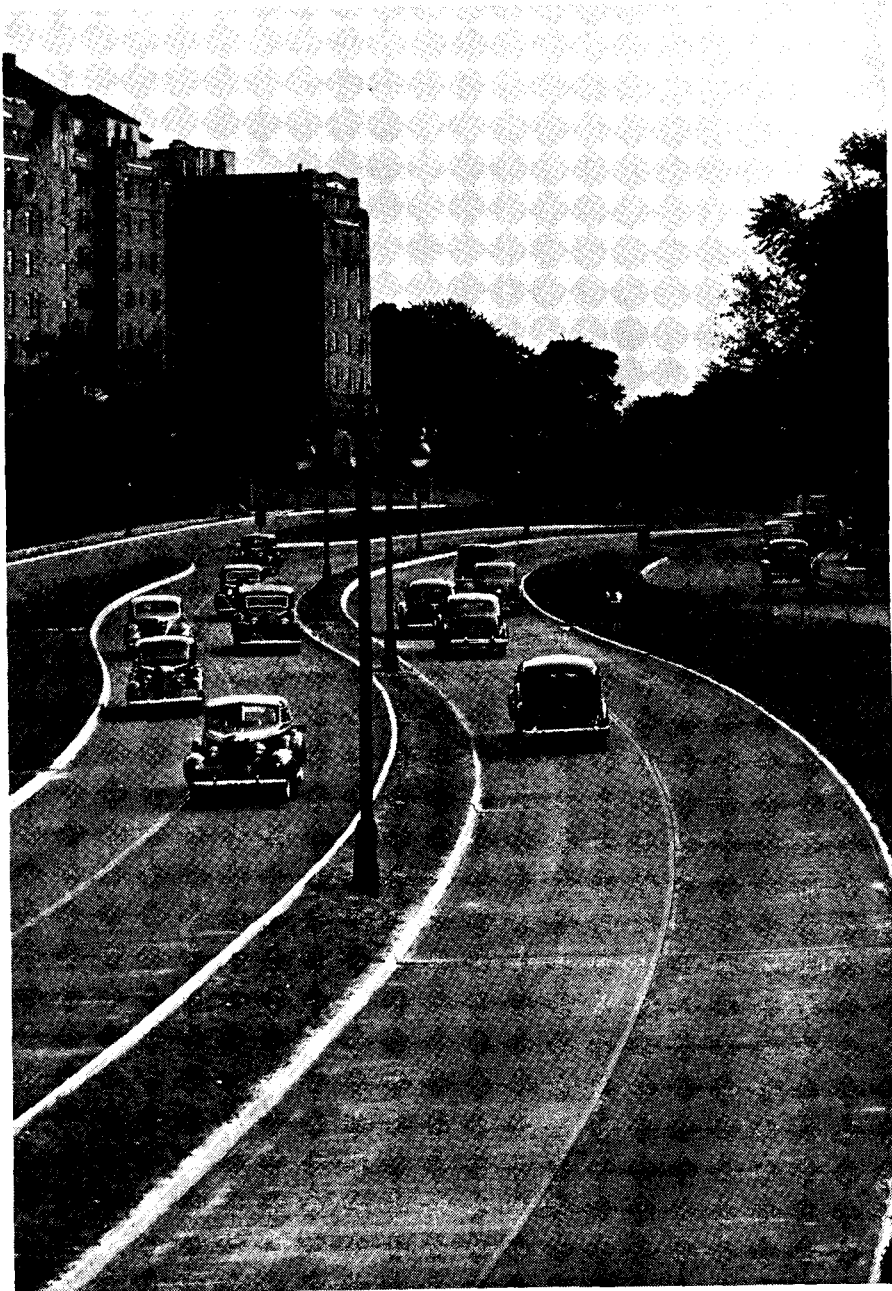
And you—you have one chance in twenty of being nicked in a motorcar accident in the next five years. Maybe you think that's a slim chance. You pay \$2.50 for a ticket in the Irish Sweepstakes where you have one chance in a million of winning a first prize. If you had one chance in twenty you would have to pay about \$10,000 for a ticket. But you hold a ticket for the loss of a leg or an arm or maybe a neck with the chances only one to twenty of drawing a prize in the great annual automobile human mincemeat derby. Are you interested in getting rid of that ticket or, at least, lengthening the odds against accident?

Well, if after these simple little figures you are interested in doing something about it, here is what I can promise you. This is not a guess. It's not a kindly hope. It's a proved fact. You can cut the death rate in half. That is, you can save 19,000 lives a year. You can cut the injured list in half. That is, you can keep half a million people a year out of hospitals. And while you are doing this, at a very moderate cost, you can actually save four hundred million dollars.

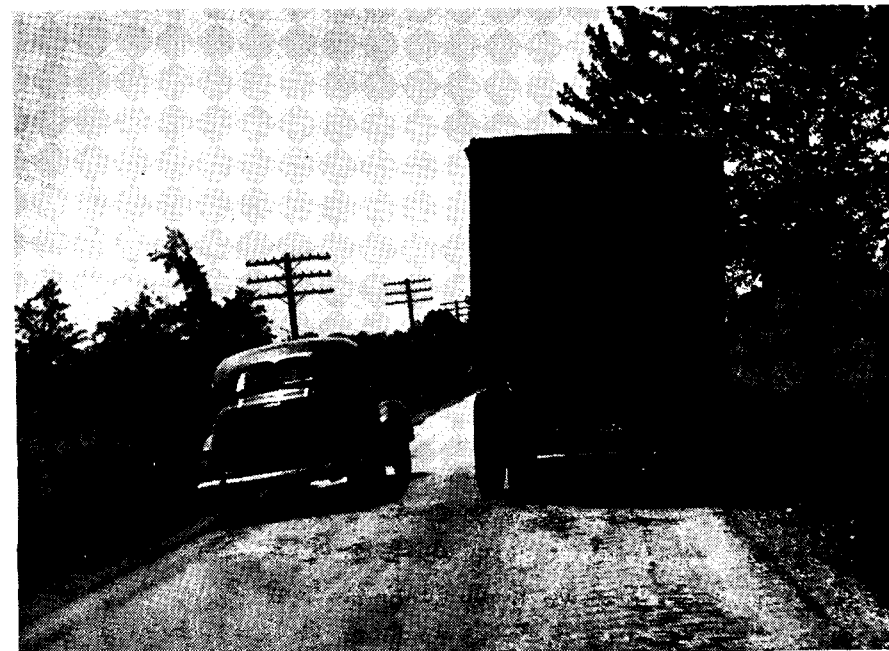
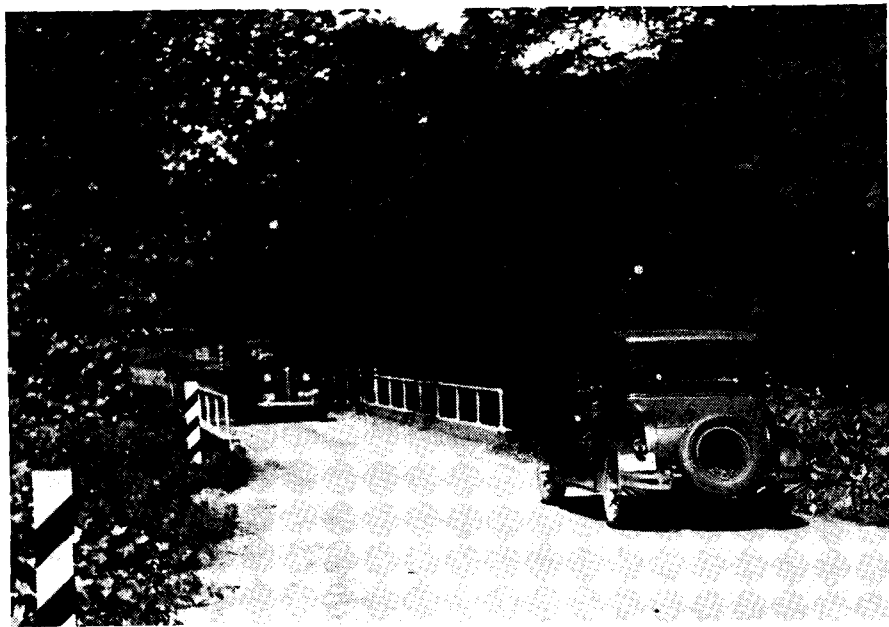
I say this is no guess. It's been done. I mean by that some American cities have tried it—and succeeded.

For instance, the automobile death rate for the country as a whole in 1936 was 29.4 out of every 100,000 people. In Milwaukee it was 11.7. In Providence, Rhode Island, it was 11.7 per 100,000. In Syracuse it was 10.3. In Evanston, Illinois, it was 7.4.

Now I submit a simple question. Back in 1933,



Traffic friction on this curve has been ironed out by a simple safety device that works: the divided highway



Better roads are obviously the answer to the prevention of accidents occurring in spots like those shown here



A long step forward in highway safety is this link of New York's great Triborough Bridge, designed by traffic-conscious engineers to keep things moving in the heart of the world's most congested motorways

Milwaukee had an automobile accident death rate of 15.1 per 100,000. That was half the alarming national rate of 1936. If Milwaukee, with a death rate already only half that of the nation, could cut it another 23 per cent, why need anyone doubt that any other city or state can do half as well?

Why do they kill them at the rate of 31.8 per 100,000 in Montana and only 19.9 in North Dakota, next door? Why do they knock 'em off 39 per 100,000 in Indiana and only 16.9 in Rhode Island? Why do they mow 'em down at the rate of 51.7 in California, 60.1 in Arizona and 66 in Nevada and only 21.7 in Iowa?

We Need Common Sense, Not Gadgets

There must be a reason. And the reason is well known. They do something about it in those low-score states. An answer is found in the domain of industrial accidents. The railroads set out to reduce their accident rate 35 per cent. In seven years they reduced it 55 per cent. They had a program and they carried it out. Industry did much the same. Industrial accidents in 1935 were 61 per cent less in factories than in 1926.

So much for the disease and the all-important fact that it can be conquered. What then can be done about it?

It struck me that it would be a good idea to ask one of those states where the reduction in deaths and accidents had been effectively carried out just what it did about it. So I asked Mr. Lew Wallace, Motor Vehicle Commissioner of Iowa. I asked him because his state has newly taken hold of the problem under his leadership and brought itself down to a low place in the accident list.

What he told me was encouraging and illuminating. But at first glance it seems disappointing. It was disappointing because in America we like dramatic and sensational methods. We like magic. We would prefer to have some wizard invent a gadget like the electric eye which would automatically prevent all motor accidents. It would be just wonderful if someone would just produce a little do-funny which, when an automobile with no brakes and a drunken driver with one arm and cockeyes is just about two feet from a one-legged pedestrian reading his evening newspaper in traffic, will suddenly stop it and present the pedestrian with a little ticket with appropriate

advice on how to read the paper in the middle of the street. Perhaps someone is working on such a machine right now. And that would be one way to prevent accidents. But that's not the way it's going to be done. While all the world is waiting for a gadget, men like Lew Wallace have been patiently, resolutely hammering away on the simple, common-sense stratagems which will save human lives.

"The truth is," Mr. Wallace told me, "there is nothing mysterious about cutting down death and accident rates on the highways. It's the simplest thing in the world. If you stop to think about it there are just four spots to look for the cause of accidents. One is the car, one is the highway, the other is in the driver and the other is the pedestrian. And one of the reasons you will have to solve this problem without the arrival of any epochal invention for creating automatic safety is that the greatest bulk of deaths and accidents are the fault of the driver and the pedestrian. You have to solve this problem in the good old-fashioned way—by driving straight through the skull of these two human beings."

The first thing that confronts the bewildered citizen amidst the din of clashing bumpers and crumpling fenders is this fact—that there is only one authority capable of dealing with the problem and that is the government. It alone has the range and resources and authority. When the government—and chiefly the state government—is on the job the death score slumps; when the government goes off the job or slows down the score rises.

Take, for instance, the city of Nashville. When a full-time safety division was on the job from 1930 to 1933 deaths declined from 40 to 37 to 31 to 21 in successive years. Then economy induced by the depression hit the safety department. The death score started to climb promptly—21 to 26 to 35 to 42—all the gains of the preceding four years wiped out. Commissioner Wallace told me that in Iowa whenever the Motor Vehicle Department uses so simple a device as distributing a small pamphlet advising motorists of traffic regulations it never fails to produce a definite drop in accidents within forty to sixty days.

The next factor, of course, is that the public authority is not likely to take up the job until private interests and organizations and groups set the ball in motion.

For instance, you may be a bit peeved, in moments

of patriotic zeal, at the laxity of the police-court judge in enforcing the law. What you overlook is that the police-court judge cannot be either a good or a bad one without first being a police-court judge and that the little traffic ticket and the court "fix" is one of the most powerful weapons in the hands of politicians.

I can recall a time in New York when that part of the population which lives in poorer districts went to the political district club for a half-ton of coal or to get Willie a job or maybe to get him out of jail. The great mass of well-to-do citizens and those just beneath them never found it necessary to go around to the "boss" for a favor. But with the coming of the automobile and the traffic cop and the traffic court, no one in the district was immune from an occasional summons to the bar of police-court justice. I have, therefore, seen the leader himself, parked in an easy chair at the headquarters after eight o'clock of an evening, while one after another of his troubled constituents came to him with their traffic tickets to be "handled" in police court. The boss was smiling and willing in each case, never asked a man's politics, but merely observed, when the supplicant thanked him profusely for his intercession: "Oh! That's all right. Maybe we'll be asking you for a favor some day."

A Judge Looks at Ticket Fixing

A well-known figure in traffic-court enforcement is Judge Harry H. Porter, chief justice of the court of Evanston, Illinois. He sees the matter with a realistic eye. Judge Porter puts it this way:

"One must remember that the judge is an elective official and that when he begins to bear down on traffic violators he is bound to come in for severe criticism. Many of his friends will turn against him and he is made very uncomfortable. He should be convinced that for every false friend he loses he will gain ten true friends—citizens who will support him because of his handling of traffic cases."

And that goes for every department of the government. The public must make the government understand that it is responsible and that the public expects this appalling killing of human beings and maiming of them and destruction of property to cease. And private groups must take the initiative in mobilizing public sentiment behind that.

Community action is (Continued on page 36)

IV

IT MAKES me feel perfectly horrid," Honor said thoughtfully, as if she spoke to herself.

"It'll all straighten out." Paul was peeling an orange; he flung a bright handful of chips into the thick low pile of scrub.

"Do you really think so?"

"Why, my darling," he said with a surprised glance, "I know so! This sort of thing is going on all the time. Nobody thinks anything of it."

"Just the same, I wish you were a poor man," Honor said. "I wish I didn't love you quite so much; I wish I could get on top of this feeling, instead of having it ride me like an old man of the sea!"

"Time, my darling; that's all we need. I'll have another talk with Marion in a few days, when some opportunity comes up, and she'll very probably agree to go to Reno for six weeks. But I have to handle her with gloves. Have you seen Braintree lately?" he asked, on a sudden change of thought.

"Hugh? No. Not since the night we had our second talk. I told you about that; that was more than a month ago. He'll be going up to the Walburga any time now, and I believe the new work and the change will be the best thing in the world for him. My cousin Diana Borrow is being married very quietly at Grandma Borrow's tonight over in Oakland," she said, "and we're all going over on the five-o'clock boat. I suppose Hugh will be there. But I'd just as soon meet him. I mean I think the sooner the whole family accepts the situation the easier for us all."

"He feels terrible, of course."

"It was a shock to him, Adeline says. She says that he'd never thought of it at all, my liking anyone else. Liking!" Honor interrupted herself, with a brief laugh. "I wish what I feel for you was only *liking*! But Adeline seems to think it was mostly shock."

Heartbroken Melody

By Kathleen Norris

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The Story Thus Far:

ENGAGED to Hugh Braintree, a young engineer whom she has loved for years, Honor Brownell goes to work in a San Francisco law office. There she is constantly with Paul Cartwright, the junior partner.

Cartwright is thirty-seven; he is wealthy; he has a wife and two small sons. Again and again, he tells Honor that he loves her; again and again, Honor (who feels strongly drawn to him) tells him that she is going to marry Hugh Braintree. Nevertheless, she is conscious that she is never happy when she is away from Cartwright.

Alone with her one evening (ostensibly to work together on a case), Cartwright informs her that his wife, Marion, has long been interested in another man: Dana Johnson; that she is anxious to have a divorce. Then: "Honor, we're definitely in for it, my dear."

Completely under his spell, the fascination of a powerful man who is accustomed to getting what he wants, Honor permits him to take her in his arms, kiss her. But when, holding her close, he asks: "Do you love me, Honor?" her reply is weak: "I don't know. I am horribly frightened. But sometimes I think that what we have is the only thing in my life."

Still, Honor does love Paul Cartwright. She loathes the idea of hurting Braintree and of telling the members of her little family: Adeline ("Addy"), her sister; Tom, her brother, and her maiden aunt, Lucie Brownell. It is not until after Cartwright has given her a beautiful sapphire ring that the first hint of trouble appears: Cartwright admits that his wife has decided that she doesn't want a divorce!

Honor listens, appalled. "But don't worry," Cartwright hastens to add. "She'll change her mind. I've just fired the first gun!"

"Too bad!" Paul said, secure enough to pity the loser.

"It is too bad. Hugh's so fine. But it was never, for Hugh, one hundredth part of what I feel for you," Honor said. "It wasn't the same sort of thing at all. I'll always like Hugh; I always have. But this other thing—yes, it may be love, too. But it's fever and excitement and unhappiness and—and being always

afraid, too. It's a feeling all by itself."

"Being afraid of what, Honor?"

"Of the agony of belonging to you, of being happy," she said, her head motionless against his shoulder, her eyes far away.

"I'm afraid the same way, my darling."

"Not in the same way, Paul." Her voice was quiet and dreamy; she was

still staring out to sea. "I give myself to you," she said. "I surrender. You only have to take. You only have to say, 'Here is this woman who cannot live without me, who is mine, every bit of her, soul, mind and body—'"

She stopped; tears rose in her throat and choked her.

"Now you make me afraid," he said. For a long time they were silent, while the warm March sun shone down on them, and the gulls circled and cried, and the fog crept slowly in from the far reaches of the quiet Pacific.

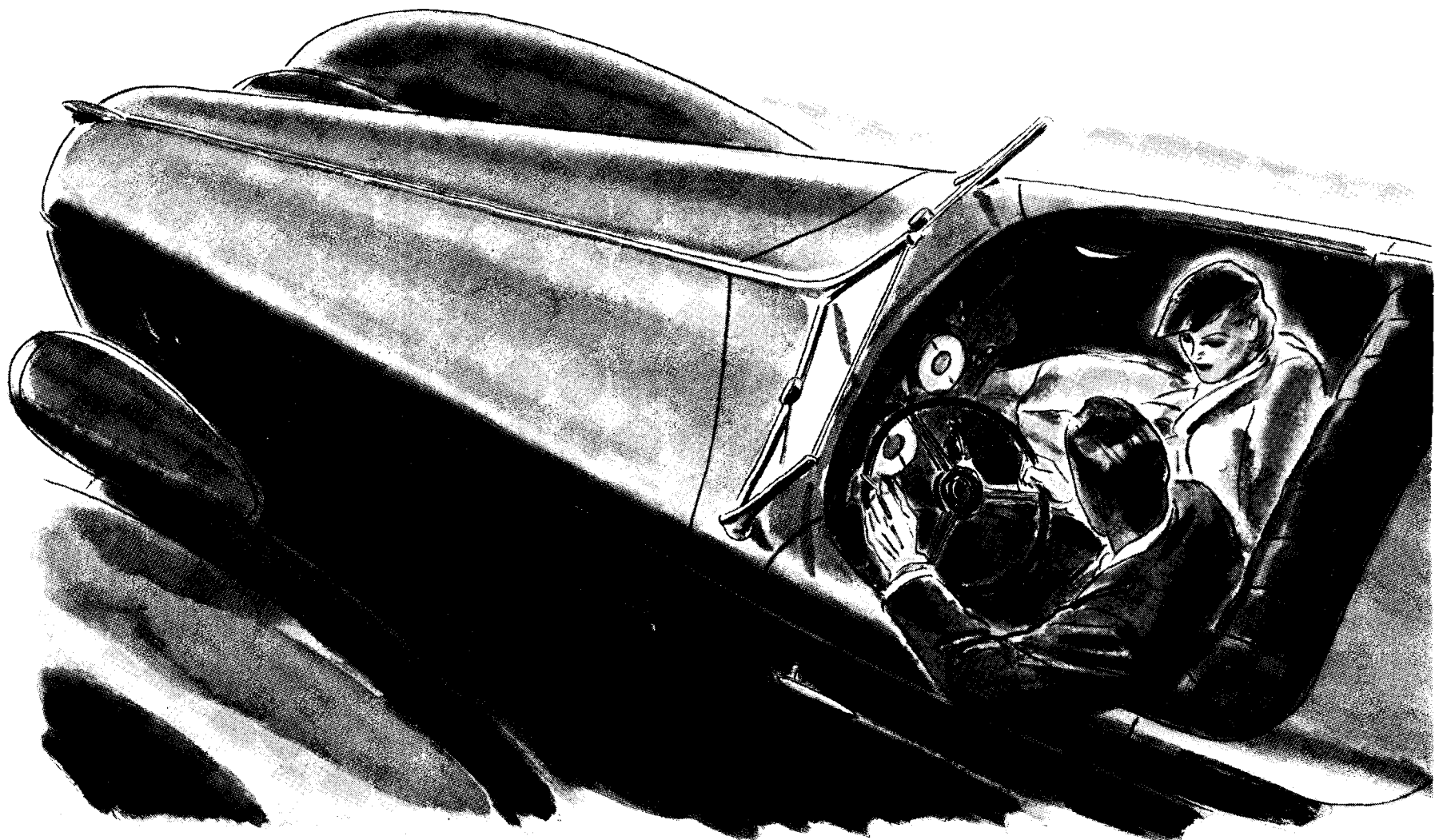
"You're lucky if you can live your life without loving like this, aren't you?" Honor said after a while.

"I don't know, sweetheart. Perhaps you are. But oh, Honor, moments like this are sweet!"

"Too sweet!" she decided with a sudden change of mood. And in another moment they were on their feet, shaking sand from clothes and basket and fringed napkins, gathering themselves regretfully for the half-hour run back into the city and the offices of Cooper and Cartwright.

THEY had forgiven her at home. Forgiven her, she told herself with a little secret irony, for doing nothing, but the atmosphere had not returned to its old happy calm; there was a barrier now between Honor and her sister and brother, and between all the other members of the big clan.

They were humble members enough for the most part; uncles who had been trusted but undistinguished clerks for many years in the wool or linoleum or rubber business; aunts who had once taught school, cousins who were teaching school now or who had jobs in the post office or who were married to fine young men with bright futures and rather low present salaries. Yet it was not entirely comfortable to have them all disapprove silently but forcefully of the course she had chosen, and she began rather to dread family gatherings, and



Presently Honor whirled away with him into that enchanted world of which he was the only tenant