



"Have your fun, little ones," the General said to himself with a mirthless smile. "Soon you will learn that airplanes are not child's play"

Little Children

By Edward Stevenson

WHEN the foreign correspondents had left, the General got up from his desk and began pacing the floor and muttering angrily to himself. For nearly two years he had been in the spotlight but he still hadn't become accustomed to his press conferences.

He was ill at ease with the correspondents. They buzzed about him like flies; they asked hundreds of stupid, annoying, embarrassing questions. That little redheaded American, for instance, who disdained the offices of the interpreter and put his own questions in wretched Spanish. "What about the bombing of the school in Charcos, General?" he said with that polite, scornful smile of his. "It is said that over two hundred children were killed."

The General had exploded. A lie. Propaganda of his enemies! He was furious; he pounded his desk. But he knew that the reporters were unconvinced. Already they were on their way to file their dispatches. And between the lines, he knew, they would call him a liar.

The General halted his pacing and stared out of a window of his office. In the court in front of the building two small boys, sons of one of the headquarters attachés, were playing with a toy airplane, wheeling it back and forth and making droning sounds with their lips. "Have your fun, little ones," the General said to himself with a mirthless smile. "Soon you will learn that airplanes are not child's play."

The war had been going on for almost two years, but there were times—and this was one of them—when the General felt as though it had been going on forever. God in heaven, who would have

guessed that the foolish, stubborn, untrained rabble could hold out so long?

Sometimes the General almost felt that it had ceased to be *his* war. His allies, voracious for the plums he had promised them, were now in the saddle. They were arrogant and sure of themselves; they hardly bothered to hide the contempt in which they held him and his people. All they were interested in were the rich mines that were to be their reward for their assistance. They pillaged and devastated the country—what did it matter to them? It was not *their* country.

The bombing of Charcos now. Why had they done that? Charcos had no importance; it was undefended and out of the line of conflict. And now they had killed two hundred children! God in Heaven, they must be mad!

A car stopped at the curb and a tall man in an aviator's uniform emerged. The guards snapped to attention and presented arms. Becker! The commander of the allied air force!

THE General returned to his desk and pretended to read some papers. Becker appeared almost at once. He did not bother to knock.

"Excellency!" he said, clicking his heels together and saluting briskly.

"Sit down, Captain," the General said. *Excellency!* He didn't like the way Becker said the word. There was a vague sneer in his guttural voice.

Becker sat down.

He had a sharp, pock-marked face, icy green eyes, thick lips; his hair was a grayish stubble. He tossed some papers carelessly on the desk. "A report of yesterday's attack," he said.

The General did not look at the papers. "I have heard about Charcos," he said mildly. "I thought it was agreed that open towns that had no military importance, no soldiery, were not to be attacked."

"Ah, yes. But—"

"Two hundred children were killed."

The Captain shrugged. "A psychological attack. It is the newest thing in military tactics."

"I do not understand, Captain Becker."

"It is simple. Look: it is true, is it not, that soldiers who are not mercenaries, like your dark legions, for example, must have some reason to fight? Of course! Home and family and country—is it not so? When we want men to fight we must convince them that all they hold most precious is endangered. Am I not right?"

"Naturally!" the General said, a little impatiently.

"So! A man is prepared to die for his family and country. He does not want to die—no! But he is *prepared* to die, and to see his comrades die all around him. It is war, he says. And he thinks of family and country, and fights on. But what will happen if he realizes that for all his sacrifices and heroism his loved ones are still killed, his land laid waste? Then his spirit is crushed; he is demoralized. Is that not true?"

"But killing children!" the General muttered.

"Ah, but that is the point! A soldier is used to seeing his comrades die, but only the most hardened soldier becomes accustomed to the sight of women and children blown to pieces. The appeal of a little twisted body, Excellency, is very

powerful. It softens the strongest man. It impresses him with what the pacifists call the futility of war. Two hundred little children. . . ." He shrugged eloquently. "I do not like it too much for my own part; but we must demoralize the enemy and force their surrender."

The General opened his mouth, but Becker, as if in anticipation of his objection, said pointedly: "You would not like my country to withdraw its support, eh, Excellency?"

THE General stared at his desk. Captain Becker arose and saluted. "Tomorrow . . . another raid, Excellency."

He was gone before the General had absently returned his salute. Little children! the General thought. Little children! His head sank forward wearily.

He was aroused by a sudden scream. Becker! God in Heaven, what had happened? He rushed to the window. Becker was lying at the foot of the steps, his head grotesquely twisted on his neck.

The General hurried downstairs and into the street. The guards had gathered around Becker, excited and alarmed. One of them, a corporal, had the attaché's two little boys by the arm and was shaking them.

The soldiers stepped aside for the General. He bent over Becker, but he saw at once that the Captain was beyond aid . . . a broken neck.

"How did this happen?" he demanded.

"These sons of the devil!" the corporal stammered, pushing the frightened boys toward the General. "They left their toy on the steps and—the Captain stepped on it and fell down the stairs!"

Sunset Voyage

Continued from page 20



Are we getting saner?



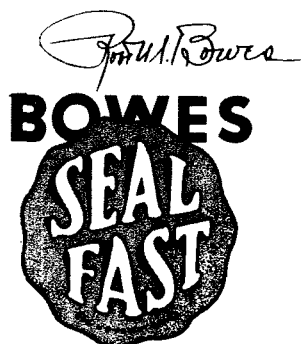
Some day people are going to look back on roads 18 feet wide with a white stripe in the middle and cars going 50 miles an hour or more in both directions as one of the most insane things the human race has ever done.

In the meantime greater safety lies not only in more careful driving but in the condition of brakes, headlamps, windshield wiper and tires.

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BOWES "SEAL-FAST" CORPORATION
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kerchief from the lower part of his face, gulped fresh air into his smarting lungs. She was not there. For the past hour he had been searching the ship for Dorothy Bonner. The Hindu from second cabin said he had seen her going toward Frayle's stateroom. Larkin had gone to look. She wasn't there. There was broken glass on the floor, glass from the frame of the lifeboat notice, which had been yanked from the wall. But there was no sign of the girl. There was no one and nothing in second class now, except billowing, choking clouds of smoke and the scattered personal effects abandoned by the panicky, long-departed passengers.

The passengers were on deck now, huddled into tense, silent groups—waiting. The whole universe was waiting. The lifeboats were still swung out in their davits, waiting. The sea was waiting—oily and darkly uneasy beneath a lowering, overcast sky. Only the fire was not waiting. It was an articulate fire, now murmuring sullenly, now belching expectantly as it inched forward from the stern.

Larkin went to his cabin. It was dark. The ship's power plant had gone out ten minutes ago. He stepped in, groping for his brief case and typewriter. At least he could salvage those. But they were not there. Someone had taken them.

When he came out again, the blazing stern illuminated the whole ship with a sudden new burst of awful pyrotechnics.

A white-coated figure flashed past him, stopped. It was Satō, with two buckets dangling from a pole across his shoulders. He put down his buckets.

"I have put youah brief case ando typewritah in rifeboat Numbah One, Mistah Rahkin," he said. "Remember—Numbah One. Have put everything inside."

"Thanks, Satō. Are the pumps still working?"

"Not foh long time," said Satō. He held out his hand. "Godu-by, Mistah Rahkin," he said. A grim smile crossed his face as he added: "Japanese say, *Sayonara!*"

As he picked up his buckets, something splashed to the deck. Larkin caught the unmistakable whiff of gasoline.

Captain Fujiwara was shouting something through his megaphone. Lifeboat stations. . .

THE lifeboats astern had all been burned away, but five boats had been lowered successfully amidships. At Lifeboat No. 1 the purser was fighting back the yelling crowd with a revolver. The third officer was already sitting in the stern sheets, shouting, "*Hayaku! Hayaku!*" Mrs. Greeve and her protégées were in the forward thwarts. Behind them were General Rodriguez, the Hindu and the Slavic gentleman from second cabin, and two Japanese women. "Two more," shouted the captain through his megaphone.

The crowd surged forward again. The purser was shouting. A fat Japanese gentleman was howling in Larkin's ear, bumping against him with the insistence of an All-America guard. Larkin braced himself, turned his back on the lifeboat, faced the frantic fat man. Then, with a sudden movement he pushed the Oriental aside, bowled over three others in his movement to the rear. He had heard a small voice calling, "Glen!"

Dorothy Bonner was struggling with Frayle. She was fighting with her hands,

her feet, her whole body. Her small fists were alternately beating and clawing at Frayle's face. For an instant she squirmed free. Frayle caught her by one arm, jerked her back, flung her to the deck.

Larkin reached her at the same time Frayle did. Larkin's right arm lashed out and up in a long, looping swing that terminated in a sudden crunching impact on Frayle's jaw. Frayle slewed sideways. He sat down abruptly.

Larkin scooped up the girl in his arms, charged toward the ship's side, toward the lifeboat. He swung her over the gunwales of the lifeboat, just as the afterfall gave way three feet, spilling the occupants toward the stern.

Someone grabbed Larkin from the rear.

The lifeboat leveled off. The third officer cried: "*Yoroshii. Iko-ya!*"

Blocks squealed as the falls ran out rapidly. The lifeboat dropped with the speed of an express elevator, struck the water with a jarring, hollow smack. Mrs. Greeve's scream came up shrilly from below.

LARKIN turned as Frayle's strong hands clamped themselves about his throat. He drummed against Frayle's midriff with quick, short jabs. Frayle gasped: "Shima! Help me."

Larkin saw a boat hook swinging down on him. He ducked, caught the stinging blow across his back.

He bent double, tackled Frayle about the hips, raised him off his feet, wheeled half about just as the boat hook descended again. He could hear it crack against Frayle's skull, felt Frayle go limp.

Frayle slumped from his grasp, rolled across the deck toward the empty davits, vanished over the side.

Larkin reached the side in time to see the splash.

He jumped. The black surface of the water rushed up to meet him, dizzily, interminably. He hit with a loud, painful flop. The sea closed over him. He continued to go down, down. . .

He came up gasping, spitting water. His ears rang. The mad, dancing re-

flections of the glare from the burning ship blinded him. He saw a shadow in front of him, struck out with long overhand strokes.

Half a dozen hands pulled him into the lifeboat. He sat for a long moment, breathless and dripping, before he realized that Dorothy Bonner was holding both his hands.

"Frayle . . . ?" he began.

"He couldn't swim," the girl said. "He didn't even come up once."

GLEN LARKIN, drenched and soot-begrimed, sat in the captain's cabin aboard the Empress, sipping the skipper's Scotch.

"That makes eight more boats we've picked up," the captain was saying. "Fifteen more members of the crew, and 83 passengers, mostly third-class. There were two white men in the last boatload."

"Was one of them a man named Frayle?" Larkin asked.

"No, one was a Mr. Cuttle, and the other's name was Willowby, I believe," the captain said.

"No more boats adrift?"

"The Jishin-maru is taking the rest," the captain said. "We're proceeding to Honolulu."

A florid-faced, white-haired officer came in.

"This is Dr. Smith, Mr. Larkin," the captain said. "You said you wanted to see the ship's surgeon."

"I do," Larkin said. "Is the girl all right, Doctor?"

"Yes, she seems comfortable."

"Tell me, Doctor. I have an impression that morphine contracts the pupils of the human eye when taken in any form; is that right?"

"Correct, sir," said the doctor.

"And aconitine?"

"Aconitine has the opposite effect. It dilates the pupils."

"What would happen if I injected a syringe of aconitine into my arm, Doctor?"

"Good Lord, man! It would kill you!"

"That's what I suspected," said Larkin. "Captain, I wonder if I could have Mr. William Cuttle brought up here."



"Walking's a fine form of exercise but it bores me unless I'm doing something"

LAURENCE REYNOLDS

"Certainly," was the captain's reply. "Hello, Gumshoe," was Larkin's greeting as the insurance detective made a bedraggled entrance.

"You again!" said Cuttle mournfully. "Ain't you caused me enough grief?"

"I promised you a break, Gumshoe. I promised I'd crack the deep-sea murders for you and give you the credit. Well, here it is. You can ask Captain Wyatt in your own name to radio ahead to Honolulu to have the U. S. marshal meet us with a warrant charging murder on the high seas."

"Yeah?" said Cuttle. "And what's the name? John Doe?"

"No," said Larkin. "The name is George Willowby. And that reminds me, Captain Wyatt. You'd better have Willowby locked up until we land."

"Hey, wait a minute," Cuttle protested. "Why would Willowby kill all those birds?"

"WELL, let's start with Arthur Bonner," Larkin said. "I'm sorry I can't tell you exactly why he killed Bonner, because I haven't got an answer to my radio yet. But I'll lay you ten to one that we'll know why the minute Willowby is fingerprinted tomorrow morning. My guess is that he was a classmate of Bonner's at Sing Sing. At any rate, he was certainly a fugitive from American justice. He claimed his passport had been stolen before the Kumo reached San Francisco. Actually it wasn't stolen. I have it in my pocket now. Willowby hid it under a mattress, and it was going to stay hidden until after Honolulu—so he'd have an excuse for not going ashore in American ports where he might be recognized and arrested."

"After all, Willowby's past was behind him, he'd built a new life for himself, and he had a long and lucrative future in store for himself in the Far East. And he didn't propose to have it wrecked by anyone. That's why he killed Bonner, when Bonner recognized him, and no doubt threatened to expose his past."

"Bonner, if you remember, had been doing considerable prowling around the Kumo, looking in portholes, lining up victims to blackmail. It was petty blackmail at first. All he wanted was morphine. I happen to know he looked in Willowby's porthole, because I was there at the time. I know, too, that he asked Frayle and Hood for morphine, and I assume he did the same to Willowby. Willowby obliged—only instead of filling Bonner's syringe with morphine, he filled it with aconitine. Willowby had told me previously that he was taking aconitine for his neuralgia. . . . Is that a common remedy, Dr. Smith?"

"Quite common," said the surgeon of the Empress. "If administered in very small doses."

"A few drops in a glass of water, was the way Willowby described it," Larkin went on. "Only he gave Bonner a syringe. That explains why Bonner's body was found on deck, instead of being dropped overboard—as an expert would do it, Gumshoe. It was a long-distance murder."

"I noticed that the pupils of Bonner's eyes were dilated, but it didn't mean anything at the time. It wasn't until after the funeral that I remembered that morphine contracts the pupils. Dr. Bioki should have noticed it—and his negligence cost him his life. But he wasn't particularly interested in the death of a man who was apparently a common stowaway."

"You remember when I first intimated to you that I thought Bonner might have been poisoned? We were down looking at the coffin Bonner came aboard in, and the absence of the hypodermic struck me as a possible clue. I suggested we go up and talk to Doc

Bioki about it. Well, Willowby must have been worrying about that missing hypo, too, and he followed us below decks. When he heard me suggest calling on Bioki he locked us in while he went up and stabbed the doc. He knew the doc might remember about prescribing aconitine for Willowby's neuralgia, and he knew that the doc could explain that aconitine dilates the pupils—something I didn't know till now. Anyhow, that murder was convenient, because Willowby's cabin was just across from Bioki's."

"After that, he still had to locate the hypodermic—since he knew I was looking for it, and that a laboratory test could determine what it actually contained. It must have been common knowledge aboard that Hood was the man who went through Bonner's pockets. At least Millie Greeve saw Hood doing it, and Millie isn't exactly tongue-tied."

"Millie could have told him," Cuttle volunteered. "She knows Willowby. She— Say, I wonder if that's where Willowby got my nosegay? I could've dropped it while I was talking to Millie that morning, and he could've . . . I'm a such-and-so! What was he doing in my cabin talking to Millie, anyway? I'll hang that bird!"

"The flower, of course, was a dead giveaway," Larkin said. "I knew you didn't kill Hood, because the azalea was in Hood's left hand. Your buttonhole being in your left lapel, as it is in most men's coats, it should naturally have been in Hood's right hand if he had grabbed it while being strangled by someone facing him. It was obvious, therefore, that the flower was a frame—but I didn't suspect it was Willowby who framed you. Not at first, anyway. Not even though I'd seen him in the vicinity of the steering-engine room when the murder occurred . . ."

"And why the hell *did* he frame me, anyhow?" Cuttle demanded.

"Obviously he was trying to make the crime too perfect," Larkin said. "By the time Hood was killed, Captain Fujiwara was determined to lock up somebody for the rest of the voyage, and Willowby thought he would guarantee his own freedom by furnishing a culprit. You were an easy goat, because of your anthomania."

"My what?"

"YOUR fondness for flowers. Willowby thought the captain would be quick to accept the azalea clue as proof of your guilt. When you removed the flower before the captain saw it, however, and when the captain decided I was the murderer on the basis of Frayle's story, Willowby decided he'd have to talk fast. He knew I must have seen the flower in Hood's hand, because he saw me go down the corridor to meet Hood—who was already dead. He knew damned well I wasn't going to sit by quietly without saying something, so he got in his story first, thinking that I'd testify to the truth of your removing the flower from the dead man's hand, and that the weight of our combined testimony would be enough to hang the murder on you—and thus leave him scot-free."

"The only thing wrong with Willowby's picture was this: When he came into the steering-engine room with you, the flower was not in Hood's hand. It was in mine. I'd removed it and didn't have time to put it back until after you sent Willowby to get Captain Fujiwara. Unfortunately for Willowby, he didn't notice that the flower wasn't there. You may remember, Hood's body was lying behind the binnacle and was partly hidden by it. Willowby took only a step or two beyond the threshold and apparently didn't see the hand. At any rate, he couldn't have seen a flower in it, because it wasn't there."



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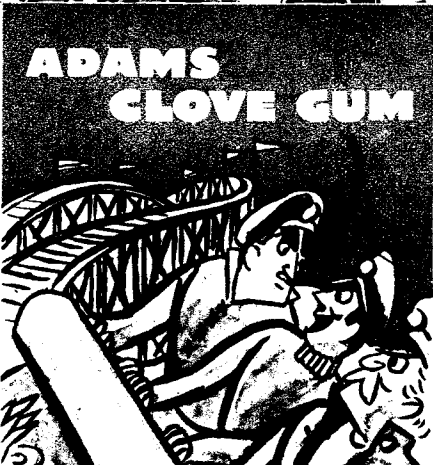


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A FLAVOR FROM THE ISLES OF SPICE

"And if he knew the flower was there, as he said, he must have put it there himself!

"I didn't spring this on him then, because I was waiting for the answer to my radio query on Willowby's passport number. I wanted to have a complete case, motive and all, before I clamped down. So I meekly let Captain Fujiwara lock me up, figuring I could get a little sleep while waiting for my radiogram. The fire, of course, caused a slight hitch in the program . . ."

"For a newspaperman," said William Cuttle grudgingly, "you ain't such a bad detective."

LARKIN was working in the sitting room of his suite at the Alexander Young. The window was open and the flower-scented air of the Honolulu morning was sweet in his nostrils. He had just sent off the last installment of the personal history of Dorothy Bonner and he was glancing through the carbon copies. The telephone rang in the adjoining bedroom.

"I have San Francisco for you," said the operator. "Go ahead, West 8656."

A second later Larkin's voice was hurdling two thousand miles of ocean to vibrate shrilly in the receiver pressed to the ear of the San Francisco bureau manager of the Seven Seas Newspaper Alliance.

"Listen, you so-and-so," Larkin said, "what's the idea of ignoring my last three wireless queries?"

"I didn't ignore anything," said Beasley. "Is it my fault if the ether is jammed up with S O S calls? Anyhow, you must have got the message by mental telepathy or extrasensory perception. I told you to phone me from Honolulu."

"And so I'm doing it," Larkin said, "with a grass skirt in one hand and a bottle of O-kulihau in the other. Can't you smell my breath?"

"Cut the comedy," said Beasley. "This phone call costs plenty dollars per minute."

"All right. Listen. When I hang up, get our Baltimore office on the wire and have them pick up a man named Hans Schatzman. He's a photprinter and photographer. Have him put on a transcontinental plane so he can get the Hawaiian Clipper out of Alameda tomorrow. Who's paying his fare? Why, you are, Beasley. Is Dorothy Bonner still our story or isn't she? All right, then. This bird Schatzman is the surprise witness, produced by Seven Seas, who's going to clear up the mystery of the Navy's blueprints. He'll testify that he made photostats of the missing plans, not for Bonner or his daughter but for a charming scoundrel named Frayle who at this moment is no doubt communing with his selachian brethren. Sharks to you, Beasley. . . ."

"Sure, he'll testify. Have Baltimore tell Schatzman that unless he plays ball with us, we'll have him juggled for conspiracy in stealing military secrets. . . ."

"The photostats? I've got 'em. Never mind how. I've got them. . . . No, I don't think they'll shoot me, Beasley. I'm going over to Pearl Harbor and put the naval commandant's mind at rest as soon as I can get the federal court to impound the photostats as evidence."

"And listen, Beasley. Did you check on British passport No. 98765432 for me?"

"I did," Beasley said. "And there's no such passport. Hasn't been for five years, since the man who had that number was killed near Ossining, New York. Fellow named George W. Allowby. He caught two mugs trying to steal his car on the Albany Post Road, back in 1932, and had the bad luck to protest. They turned out to be a couple of cons who'd just gone over the Sing Sing wall, and one of them shot him."

"Who were the mugs?" Larkin asked. "One of them was a Brooklyn chemist named Henry Binks, who was doing a long stretch for embezzling money from his firm—"

"That's the guy," Larkin interrupted. "That's our murderer—George Willowby, the Englishman from Brooklyn, N. Y. He doctored up the dead man's passport to give himself a new name. And there's your motive all cleared up, Beasley. He was in the jug at the same time as Arthur Bonner."

"Where is he now?"

"He's in the jug here. They're waiting till they get a report from the F.B.I. in Washington on the fingerprint classification they cabled over. Then they'll arraign him."

"And the Bonner gal?"

"She's in the jug too, I guess. I'm going right down and see what they've done with her. But first I'd like to dictate the real story of the fire, Beasley. It's a pip. It's about a steward—"

"Say!" Beasley's voice broke in like a blast of August static. "I don't know how many shares of A. T. & T. you own,



"Would you be interested in some two-pants suits—by any chance?"

C. W. ANDERSON

but just don't try to string out this little oceanic phone call and then stick me double for it on your expense account."

"This is a great yarn, Beasley. It has everything. And besides I owe it to the poor guy. He did me plenty favors."

"All right. Cable a hundred words."

"A thousand, Beasley—if I have to send it by carrier pigeon."

"Goodbye."

"Bye-bye, Beasley. It's been just lovely hearing your voice."

LARKIN hung up and walked back into the other room. He was halfway in when he stopped and blinked. Dorothy Bonner was sitting in front of his typewriter, her legs crossed, a cigarette in one hand, and the carbon pages of Dorothy Bonner's Own Story in the other.

"Hello, darling," she said. "I'm out."

"So I see. Habeas corpus?"

"No. Bond. Mr. Pendenning's lawyer arranged bail. I told him he had to—so I could come up and kiss you."

"That all you came for?"

"That—and to make sure you'd be willing to appear as star witness for the defense."

"Lot of good I'd do on the stand," said Larkin, "without those photostats you tore up day before yesterday."

"There's the other set," the girl said. "I heard you telling someone called Beasley that you had them. Where are they?"

"In my brief case."

"How'd you get them?"

"Satō, the steward, must have put them there. He intimated as much. Heaven knows where he got them—except that it must have been from Frayle. Your vanadium papers were in the brief case with them."

"Good Lord!" the girl exclaimed. "Poor General Rodriguez."

"What's happened to the general now?"

"He's in jail," said Dorothy. "Not having the papers I'd given Charlie Frayle to take care of, I was afraid the general might have another change of heart, now that he's on dry land again, and run out without signing with the Eagle people. So I had him locked up as a material witness in my case."

"Bright girl," said Larkin.

"So I've been reading," said Dorothy, with a wave of Larkin's manuscript. "I'm quite fascinated with myself—in the Larkin version. Glamorous, and all that. You've made me a cross between Greta Garbo, Joan of Arc, Mata Hari, and the Duchess of Windsor. I'm a little sorry it isn't all true. Maybe I've missed my profession."

"SAY, I'm sorry about that tripe," Larkin apologized. "Tear it up, sweetheart. I'll resign my job and go straight."

"What would you do—start a detective agency?"

"I could write my autobiography," Larkin said.

"You're too old for that," the girl retorted. "You're past thirty. These days nobody past thirty writes his autobiography. Oh, this story about Dorothy Bonner isn't really bad, darling. You'd better send it in, I guess. I'll make just one addition."

She inserted the last page in the typewriter and pecked away laboriously with two fingers: "When or if she is cleared of charges now pending against her, Dorothy expects to continue her journey to Japan to join . . ." She paused, looked up at Larkin. ". . . her fiancé, Mr. Glen Larkin, Tokyo correspondent of the Seven Seas Newspaper Alliance. Mr. Larkin once expressed an opinion that Dorothy would marry him when he asked her, and while he has not yet asked her—"

"Gimme that!" said Larkin. He yanked the sheet out of the typewriter, inserted a fresh sheet, sat down in Dorothy's lap, and began pounding the keys:

"Sevseanews sanfrancisco add girl spy—"

"Hey, what's the idea?" Dorothy demanded.

"This has got to go separately," Larkin explained.

"Meaning that you've already sent the other—the part you offered to tear up?"

"Well, yes," Larkin admitted.

"You cad!" said Dorothy. "You shameless, perfidious, unmitigated cad! I love you."

Larkin couldn't write any more because Dorothy had a firm grip on his hair and was pulling one ear—until he turned around and kissed her.



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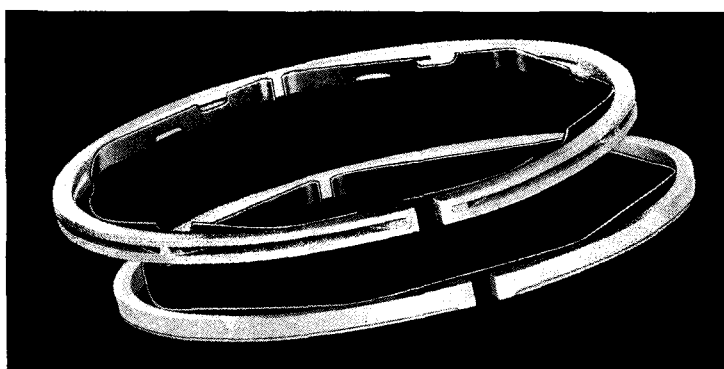
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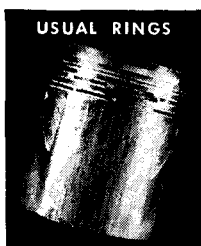
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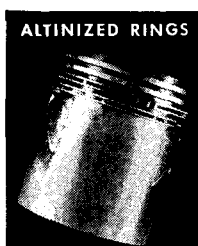
HERE'S POSITIVE PROOF! Below are reproduced the unretouched photographs of two pistons that were part of a set in a motor and run under identical conditions. They tell an important story.



USUAL RINGS

• This piston with usual rings shows that rings and piston both are scuffed and badly worn. Therefore, effective seal-

ing action is impossible. The rings have never seated. The damaged ring condition extends into the piston making it impossible for the motor to operate properly.



ALTINIZED RINGS

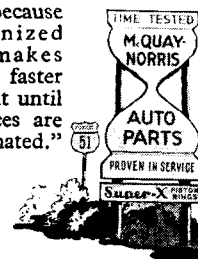
• Now look at the piston with Altinized Super-X Rings. The rings and piston show virtually no wear or scuffing.

The rings are properly seated. The sealing action is positive. Ring operation is successful. *Undamaged rings and piston enable the motor to operate efficiently.*

HOW ALTINIZED *Super-X* OUTPERFORMS

McQuay-Norris Altinized Super-X Piston Rings are made of Electalloy and are electrically coated with a special tin-base bearing alloy to give the rings a wear-resisting surface. These rings outperform because they:

- 1 **REDUCE SCUFFING** during the break-in period because of the fine bearing surface of the Altinized Finish.
- 2 **INCREASE NATURAL WEAR LIFE** 33 1/3% by actual tests over piston rings with usual finish.
- 3 **COMBAT ACID CORROSION** thereby giving longer life because the Altinized Finish is not attacked by the acids of motor operation.
- 4 **RESIST FRICTION** because the Altinized Finish allows freer ring action and gives the spring expander maximum flexibility.
- 5 **PROVIDE QUICK SEALING** because the Altinized Finish makes possible a faster adjustment until the surfaces are finally "mated."



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Golden Waters

Continued from page 30

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lakes that lick away at the glaciers and in the icy streams that tumble from far above the timber line.

Golden-trout fishing is not sport for highway fishermen. It's a treat reserved for those anglers who will endure the effort to pack into the Mount Whitney high country. And it's an effort worth while, too. From Giant Forest you ride beneath the venerable and ageless Sequoias, then over a ridge and down into the stupendous blue amphitheater of the Middle Fork of the Kaweah, skirting the rims of canyons two miles deep and many more across, to the slopes rising up to the Great Western Divide. In one of these canyons tumble the chilly waters of Granite Creek, and only Mr. Onus Brown knows how you're going to get there by nightfall.

The Anglers' Goal

Matter of fact, you're not. Night overtakes you as you're scrambling up a mountainside so steep that the horses halt to pant every twenty steps. You follow the wandering guide through chaparral, across splashing streams, over fallen logs, and lunge down slopes so steep you push the pommel almost out of the saddle. A mule goes down. "There goes the supper," yells the cook. But under Mr. Brown's viriolic tongue-lashing, the mule takes heart and scrambles up the rocky bank to trail the party across an alpine meadow, slip stiff-legged down a sandy hillside into a stand of pines, crisscrossed with fallen monarchs of the forest. Off in the inky darkness, you hear the roar of a cascading stream.

"There's where you'll get your goldens," says Onus Brown. "Everybody off and make camp. How about those steaks, cook?"

"Ya, ya, in a minute," calls Bill-the-Baker, who is already piling sticks for a campfire.

Next morning, you are up with the day to bring in a string of trout for breakfast. Steaks are always the menu for the first night out on a camp trip, but next day's always Friday, fish day.

Goldens are great early-morning biters. They dart for your gnat like starving chickens. Man, this is going to be easy! The heck it is! That's a cute trick they have, taking your fly for a ride, then making it walk back. Why don't they strike, like rainbows or cutthroats? Wise guys, eh? This is going to be interesting.

Which it is, for goldens have some neat habits all their own. They like to push upstream until they are almost rubbing noses with the melting ice that feeds the streams in which they live. They thrive in mountain lakes too high and cold for most other trout. They've lived a precarious existence for ages, and are cagey, wary fish.

Originally, Salmo Roosevelti lived only in a sixteen-mile stretch of alpine waters, Volcano Creek, now renamed Golden Trout Creek, which rises in Cirque Peak ten miles south of Mount Whitney and flows from a 13,000-foot elevation down to a point two miles above the sea, where the stream plunges over a series of waterfalls into the Kern River. No fish can ascend these steep waterfalls and it is doubtful if they could survive the crash over them going down. Stewart Falls is seventy feet high and Aqua Bonita sixty.

Since all trout, being members of the salmon family, came originally from the sea, the mystery that baffled anglers for years was how the goldens ever got up there above the waterfalls in the first place. The most likely guess was that

of the geologists who claimed that at some time an ancient volcano let loose in the creek just above the point where it empties into the Kern, isolating a few rainbows at the headwaters where they had gone to spawn. In the thousands of years that they were stranded in this haven, this select little school of fish inbred themselves into a distinct species with golden yellow bellies, smaller mouths than their cousins, and a hereditary hankering for the coldest, highest waters they could reach.

It was back quite a spell, half a century or so ago, says Onus Brown, when the Stevens Brothers and George Thomas of Visalia first stumbled onto Volcano Creek meandering down from Cirque Peak through the lofty alpine meadows. The three pathfinders knew, of course, there couldn't be any fish above the falls, but just for fun, one of them did get out his line to wet a leader, after the hopeful manner of anglers everywhere.

Wham! No sooner had it hit the water than the rod was almost jerked from his hand. Their astonishment was even greater when the trout was landed. When they saw his golden hue, the trio caught another and another. They were all golden!

"Let's take some alive over to Cottonwood Creek," proposed George Thomas.

They crowded thirteen of the smaller goldens into the coffeepot and carried them on horseback over the crest of the Sierra Nevada via a 12,000-foot pass, to Cottonwood Creek on the more accessible eastern slope. Every time they came to a spring or stream, they gave the trout fresh water. It was a long, hard trip, but at the end of it, twelve of the baker's dozen were able to swim off under their own fin power.

From that tiny nucleus have sprung the millions of goldens found today in lakes and streams of the Sierra Nevada as far north as Yosemite. That gives you an idea of the vitality of the goldens. A few years after this original planting, another party found Cottonwood Creek alive with them. They not only caught all they could eat, but transplanted some into the chain of lakes above the falls. In the Cottonwood Lakes the goldens not only increased prodigiously but they grew to thirty inches in length, three times their size in Volcano Creek. It was here that the early rangers used to come for stock to plant the streams cascading across their summer ranges. Later, the forest and parks rangers carried them to other high-country waters.

Godfather to the Goldens

We talked with Clarence Frye, one of these old-timers of the forest service who later joined the national parks force. He said he had stocked no less than forty separate waters himself. He became a sort of godfather of the goldens in their new haunts. Each summer he roamed the high country, testing all the waters he had stocked to check upon his trout. In dry years when they were stranded in shallow pools, he used to seine the big fish out alive and plop them into milk cans, which he transported over the ridges to deeper waters. Granite Creek, which roared past our camp, was one of these.

"Sure you'll find goldens there," declared Clarence when we saw him at Giant Forest. "I stocked the stream myself four years ago."

Once in the years gone by, goldens became something of a national issue. Enthusiasts who contended they were a distinct species thought certain waters

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should be set aside for them exclusively instead of mixing them up with the rainbows and losing their identity. It was a day when everybody was trying his hand at fish planting and sportsmen were introducing exotic trout such as Loch Leven, Dolly Vardens, Eastern Brook, German browns and others into Western rainbow waters, and the conservation contingent among the anglers was up in arms. They wanted the Sierra Nevada streams and lakes saved for native trout.

Tracing the Migration

Finally, some of them called Theodore Roosevelt's attention to the golden trout and his possibilities. With characteristic vigor, the President dispatched the government's leading fish expert, Dr. Barton W. Evermann, to the Sierra high country to ascertain the facts. Dr. Evermann visited not only Volcano Creek, but the considerable number of waters into which goldens had been transplanted. He checked the story of their discovery and traced their enforced migration from Volcano to Cottonwood Creek and Lakes and thence to scores of others. He even divided them into three groups, the Volcano Creek goldens, the Soda Creek goldens of the upper Kern tributaries, and the South Fork goldens, found in the Kern South Fork.

The Soda Creek and South Fork goldens were speckled the full length of their bodies on the upper half, whereas the Volcano goldens had spots only on their tails. Most trout devotees refuse to accept them as separate strains, because, it seems, back in the eighties a group of ranchers dug a tunnel from Volcano Creek to the South Fork of the Kern, and some adventurous spirits among the goldens explored this new waterway. They tried the life in the river, didn't like it, and tried to swim

home. Unfortunately for them, the tunnel had caved in. So the runaways worked up other tributaries of the Kern. Having crossed with the rainbows, their offspring are not pure goldens like the progeny of the unadulterated Volcano Creek clan, found in the Cottonwood Lakes and other strictly golden waters.

"Cottonwood Lakes!" exclaimed Onus Brown. "That's where we used to get the big ones."

"How big?" inquired Buck Plumb, "and how far is it?"

Mr. Brown measured off his right arm from the finger tips to just below his shoulders.

"I was fishin' over there one time and hooked a golden that long," he replied. "This goldarn' trout fought and thrashed around for an hour and got me so wore down, s'help me, I had to hitch a mule to my line to pull him out. When I opened him up, what do you reckon I found? Well, sir, he'd swallowed a can of baked beans someone had dropped in the lake. I opened the can and had beans with my trout for supper."

Not to question Mr. Brown's veracity, but just to be on the safe side, we decided after that one to check his fish lore with Dr. John C. Snyder, whose opinions on trout are just about the last word in the book. We found the lean, spry doctor down on the campus of Stanford University where he has retired for the second time, once as a member of the faculty and again as chief of the bureau of fish culture for the California Fish and Game Commission. Dr. Snyder, an ex-down-Easterner, has probably fished as many trout waters as any other angler in the country. He is no swivel-chair student of trout culture either, but an ardent midstream angler.

Dr. Snyder was full of facts, not only about *Salmo Roosevelti* from the southern Sierra but was also much excited



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over a brand-new strain of golden trout recently discovered in Silver King Creek, an isolated tributary of the Carson River, which rises in the Sierra Nevada near Lake Tahoe, flows eastward into Nevada and just fades away into the desert.

The newly found goldens, known as Piute trout, are of lighter hue than the originals from Volcano Creek. They are spun gold, as it were, almost silvery in certain lights, as beautiful fish as you ever laid eyes on. The Piute goldens, too, trace their origin to isolation in the mountain fastnesses by a waterfall that they could not traverse, Lewellyn Falls, at the lower end of Silver King Creek.

Dr. Snyder says it is something of a habit with old Mother Earth to play tricks like this on the finny tribe. In the San Pedro Martir Mountains of Lower California is another offshoot of the rainbow clan, isolated by dried-up stream beds. On lofty San Geronio in the San Bernardino Mountains is a strain of rainbows not so long isolated but that they still closely resemble their cousins. Neither of these turned golden, but they did take on an arrangement of speckles all their own.

According to the doctor, the newly found Piute goldens and the original Volcano Creek strain are not even cousins beneath the skin. He was so all-fired certain of this that we began angling for his reasons.

"Look at their scales," he replied. "The Volcano Creek goldens have large scales, like the rainbow that came from the Pacific Ocean. The Piute goldens have fine scales, like the cutthroats that migrated from the Atlantic by way of the Mississippi and its tributaries."

The Trek from the Gulf

We said we'd like to have seen the cutthroats cutting across the five-hundred-mile Nevada Desert in covered wagons, but Dr. Snyder was ready for that one. In ancient times, he said, Nevada was mostly Bonneville Lake, which has long since dried up. All the native cutthroats found in Lake Tahoe, the Truckee River, the Carson and other streams flowing eastward into the Nevada lakes and sinks are offspring of those that made the long swim from the Gulf of Mexico many long years ago.

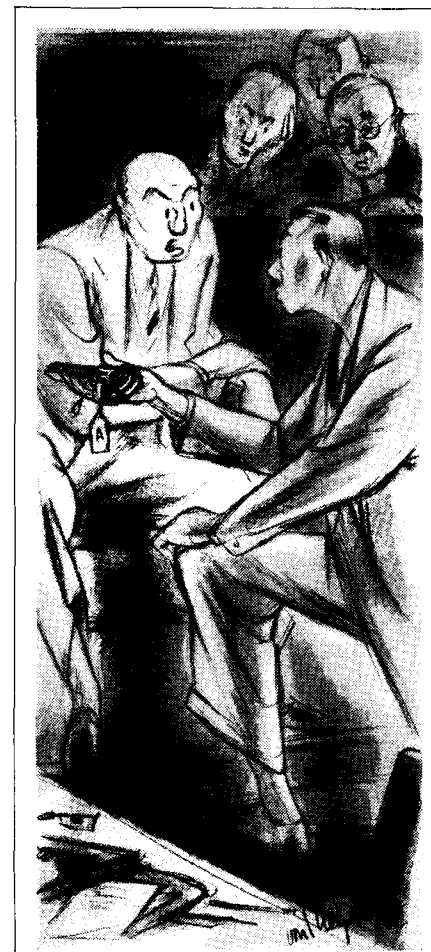
There are a few places, only half a dozen or so, along the Continental Divide in the Rockies where trout could travel from the Atlantic to the Pacific watershed, or vice versa. We had seen one, Two Ocean Pass, in Yellowstone Park, where one end of the lake drained into a tributary of the Pacific-bound Snake River and the other into Atlantic Creek, bound for the Mississippi. A smart rainbow from the Columbia could hitchhike up the Snake, across this lake, then down to New Orleans, if he knew the way.

But the Piute goldens, once stranded by Lewellyn Falls, formed by some ancient cataclysm, had to stay in Silver King Creek, which Dr. Snyder was instrumental in having closed to fishing until other waters could be stocked with offspring of this rare trout. This year, members of the Mount Ralston Fish Planting Club, a group of public-spirited Sacramento sportsmen, stocked the Leland Lakes, lofty waters above Lake Tahoe, with Piutes. Each year, co-operating with the California Fish and Game Commission, they plan to extend the range of the species.

Goldens are something of a problem for the fish culturists who are trying to keep the topmost waters of the Sierra Nevada stocked with these prized trout. They thrive at such high altitudes that there is barely time to hatch the eggs before the winter closes in again. At Cottonwood Lakes, the egg take starts on July fifteenth. That leaves but three months to fertilize a million eggs, rear

the fry to an inch in length and plant them, transporting most of them by pack train over skyscraping mountain passes, before the snow falls. Goldens have been shipped to Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, Vermont, Canada, and have even been transplanted successfully in England, in an experimental way.

How the baby goldens survive the first rigorous winter in the snowbound frozen Sierras is a mystery to the fish planters. Most of the streams and lakes freeze over shortly after the plantings. But the fish manage to eke out on minute crustacea and aquatic insect larvae in the frigid water and often double their size the first month in the water. The glaciers that feed these lofty streams are perpetual iceboxes for them to raid. Frozen in the ice are countless insects held in cold storage for years until the time comes for them to float downstream into the waiting jaws of the ravenous golden clan. In three to four years, the fry are husky trout, seven to



"De weather wuz miserable and somebody sez, 'Cheez, what a day for a moider.' Dat got me thinkin'"

WILLIAM VON RIEGEN

ten inches long, just right for the camp frying pan. One of the strange habits of this trout is that neither the males nor females take on their brilliant colors until they are old enough to spawn, which may throw some light on the why and wherefore of their golden hue, in case you are biology-minded.

Both types of goldens, according to Dr. Snyder, are veritable chameleons when they choose to be. They can turn their color on or off at will. Drop a live, squirming golden into a dark bucket and he will change his coat of many colors before your eyes from brilliant strong hues to dark inconspicuous shades. Dr. Snyder once employed an artist to paint accurate color pictures of the goldens for reproduction in a scientific report. Before long the artist was frantic. Every time he caught the right hues in the portrait, Mr. Golden switched colors on him. It was like painting a constantly changing sunset.

Some Like It Simple

Continued from page 13

places. She says she might even end up being a lady director."

"God forbid!" Mr. Bartel said fervently. "Why, this is even more serious than I realized, George."

Someone down the counter called for more coffee and George saw that the trade had piled up on him while he had been talking to the writer. Hurriedly he waited on a song-and-dance team, an actor who was gradually recovering from an option celebration and a morose song writer who borrowed his pencil long enough to scribble some lyrics on a paper napkin.

Once he glanced over at the cashier's desk and halted dead in his tracks when he saw that Mr. Bill Moberly was there, talking fast and low to Jessie. Jessie gave George a sweet, triumphant look that so upset him that he drew a strong black one and drank it right there in front of the customers.

He was suddenly surprised to learn that Mr. Bartel had not yet left the store. A rasping voice said: "George! Come up here a minute."

"I thought you'd gone, Mr. Bartel."

"Gone?" Mr. Bartel laughed hollowly. "Gone? After your upsetting me with talk of lady directors?" He shook his head. "Instead I have been sitting here worrying about you for the past fifteen minutes, George. For fifteen minutes when I should already be at the studio and asleep on my divan."

"Well, thanks," George said awkwardly. "Thanks for worrying about me."

Mr. Bartel ignored that. "George," he said, "this is distinctly a situation. This is where you need a twist."

"That wouldn't do any good," said George. "I don't go for anybody but Jessie."

"I mean a twist on the situation," his counselor said patiently. "A dramatic surprise. You need a punch scene—where the woman realizes what she has almost lost forever. Something fine and dear and precious."

"You mean—" George's voice was eager—"I should date somebody else?"

"Immediately. Employ that old Beatrice Fairfax technique where you let your girl chase you until you catch her."

SANDRA WILLIAMS didn't come into Schott's until late that afternoon. George had decided that she would make Jessie madder than anybody else. Sandra was very gorgeous in a strictly professional way and she had a stock contract that paid her sixty-five dollars every Wednesday noon. She had always been very cordial to George, something that Jessie had frequently commented upon.

She gave George a flashing smile when he hurried up to wait on her. He saw that she was made up to look like Claudette Colbert this week. Last week she had been a lovely duplicate of Joan Crawford but Miss Colbert had had a good preview since then.

He busied himself rearranging the salt and pepper shakers that were grouped before Sandra.

"Miss Williams," he began and then the words faltered and died away.

"Yes?" she asked archly, giving him one of her nicer smiles.

"Are you busy tonight?" he asked abruptly, forcing his courage. "If you're not dated up I'd like to take you to the Casino."

"The Casino?" she repeated. Her voice was faintly dubious but her smile was still warm and encouraging.

"Yeah. You know, over on Western Avenue."

Miss Williams immediately registered ladylike disdain. "The idea!" she said loudly, icicles dangling on every syllable. "Asking me to a dime-a-dance joint! Now I've heard everything!"

Several customers turned to stare at them and Jack Schott came hurrying up from the prescription counter. He was a nice, brisk little man, well versed in the gentle art of handling tantrums.

"What is it?" he asked anxiously. "Something wrong, Miss Williams?"

"Something wrong?" she repeated, very dramatically. "Oh, nothing at all! Simply nothing. I've merely been insulted!"

GEORGE could see that Jessie was leaning over the cigar counter, straining to catch every word. He started to slink away.

"Look at him!" Miss Williams said loudly. "Taking a powder. He should!"

The owner gave her a bewildered look. "You're not talking about George?"

"Who else would I be talking about? It's a fine thing when a girl can't come in here without the help's trying to date her. As if life wasn't hard enough for a girl with just a stock contract!"

"I'm sorry," George said miserably.

Miss Williams swept up her compact and purse.

"You should be," she said, very regally. She glanced coldly at Mr. Schott. "You can mail me my bill. I shawn't be coming in here again."

Mr. Schott failed to display any alarm. Miss Williams never paid her bill anyway. As she made a sweeping exit George fumbled nervously with his apron.

"I'm sorry, Jack."

His employer sighed. "It's all right," he said finally. "I just hope that you're not going Hollywood on us, George."

"Not me!" George said fervently. "Not if it makes you act like that dame."

Mr. Schott gave him a pained look. "Please, George. Customers are never dames."

"Yes, sir," said George.

All during the dinner trade he thought bitterly that he had certainly had to learn his lesson the hard way. It all went back to one thing: a guy should never let himself get involved with any girl whose first name began with Jessie.

She had proved that herself. She was certainly very unsympathetic about his narrow escape from joining the unemployed. When George served her dinner she had sniffed: "Making passes at the customers! Very neat, George."

"Nerts," George said, low and very distinctly. "I can make passes at whoever I want to."

"Of course you can," she said sweetly. "But you mustn't mind if I don't stay around to watch. I'm going to a preview with Bill."

He didn't really believe that until, a little before eight, he saw her slip some of the twelve-dollar perfume out of the cosmetic case and quickly put a drop behind each ear.

GEORGE was properly astonished to find himself entering the Castle Club with Mr. Sid Bartel at the witching hour of midnight. Mr. Bartel had made his customary good-night appearance at Schott's and was horrified to hear of what had happened. It had upset him so that he had immediately announced that he knew he could never go home to a quiet night's rest.

"It's like this," he had said. "I have story troubles to begin with. Then I find that you, George Carter, were almost



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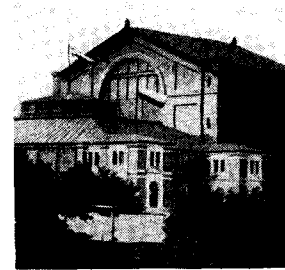
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separated from your bread and board by following my well-meant advice. It's just too much."

"Skip it," George said moodily. "We all lay an egg now and then, Mr. Bartel."

"Thank you, George," he said; "it is nice of you to take it that way. Nonetheless, I feel that I was still an accessory before the fact. A night like this was meant for drowning sorrows; for merriment and wassail. Come along and watch the Castle Club claim another victim."

For George's chips, the Castle Club was overrated. They had a peephole, just like any Wichita Falls speak-easy, and once you were inside you found yourself in the midst of all those people you had seen at Schott's all day. There was a futuristic bar and a great many people clamoring around it. There was also a dining room with a six-by-eight dance floor and a small swing band.

Mr. Bartel deposited George at the bar. "Just sign my name," he instructed him. "I am going in and concentrate over the roulette tables."

George, sighing, hoo'd his elbows on the bar. He knew it would be hours before he saw Mr. Bartel again.

AFTER a while, his drink cold in his hand, George wandered over to the doorway that separated the bar from the dining room and stood there, watching the dancers. One quick look and he shuddered and took his drink in one long gulp.

The dancers were doing a very polite Big Apple. And few things are more horrible than a polite Big Apple. George watched them morosely.

When Mr. Samuel Zerbst, the well-known producer, had his turn to come down and shine and proceeded to give out with a rumba, George could stand it no longer.

"Hey, you!" he said belligerently. "You're all wet. You ought to shine with a Susie Q or a Charleston Swing. You're not supposed to rumba!"

The Big Applers glanced uncertainly at one another. For a moment the dancing ceased entirely. George came down the steps to the group.

"It's like this," he said tolerantly. "You gotta give. Big and hot!"

Mr. Zerbst's partner, a well-known actress in a very low-cut evening gown, registered well-bred amusement. "All right, honey," she said. "Let's see you give."

"Gladly," said George, hoping his garters wouldn't come down. When George really gave out he usually found himself involved with his garters. But not tonight. Tonight was his night to shine. He did.

He brought out his entire Rainbow Ballroom routine, starting very modestly by simply truckin' it out. Then he went into the Charleston Swing. As Molly Martin said in her column the next day, it was something really fearful and wonderful to behold.

George ended with an intricate design that combined all the more daring elements of the Organ Grinder Swing. When he hit his last break, gasping, he flung his hands in the air and panted: "Now! Everybody Praise Allah!"

"Quick!" said Mr. Zerbst, always willing and eager to play follow the leader, "Everybody Praise Allah!"

Everybody did. They rushed forward, arms upraised and hands quivering. When they came together they all bent low and chanted: "Praise Allah!"

Unfortunately Mr. Zerbst's head collided with that of his lady and they fell heavily to the floor. George helped them to their feet. Gamely, they insisted on carrying on.

Under George's expert instruction, the group was soon the envy of all eyes. Couples began to straggle in from the bar and the gambling rooms to watch

the dancers. Mr. Sid Bartel was among them.

He had been losing heavily and his legs no longer had that hollow feeling. As a matter of record, Mr. Bartel was as full as a capacity house. Fascinated, he watched George from the side lines. Mr. Bartel knew a hit when he saw one. And George had definitely developed into a four-star attraction.

When the dance was over, a number of pretty little things attached themselves to George's lapel and demanded private lessons in Appling. Even Zorita Zuvor sent over an invitation to join her at her table for a drink. George, wiping his brow, declined all invitations and tried to elbow his way from the crowded floor.

Samuel Zerbst grabbed his arm. "Wait a minute," he said. "You ain't under contract, are you? How would you like to make a test, eh? We can always use young fellas."

Mr. Bartel shoved his portly figure through the Big Applers.

"Not so fast, Sam," he said thickly. "You think I have no loyalty to my employers? I saw him first. I even brought him here."

"That's right," said George. "Don't you think we'd better be going home. Mr. Bartel?"

Mr. Bartel gave him a sorrowful glance. "To think you've been hiding your appeal, George," he said reproachfully. "Wasting your life on a lot of cherry-coke consumers!"

"Who has?" asked George.

"You have. You've got what it takes, my boy, and your career is in Superbo's hands. The wardrobe will give you the costume."

"What costume?" George demanded, worried that the situation was getting a little out of hand.

"For Robin Hood," answered Mr. Bartel. "The boss has tested everybody but Shirley Temple already. By noon your test will be in the can. By six o'clock you'll be under contract. By midnight—"

But George wasn't listening. Why not become an actor? he thought bitterly. This time Jessie had pushed him too far. From now on he wouldn't care how low he might sink.

JESSIE let out a shriek when George, dressed as Robin Hood and accompanied by three barking dogs, attempted to make an inconspicuous entrance during the noon-hour rush.

Halfheartedly, George tried to kick the dogs away from his heels. After vainly waiting all morning for Mr. Bartel to appear at the studio and arrange the details of his test George had headed for Schott's, hoping to pick up the writer's trail. The three dogs had discovered him alighting in the adjacent parking lot and promptly decided he needed investigation.

As she stared at him, Jessie felt the same way. George was a study in violent green hues. His jerkin was of apple green, his breeches were forest green, and the long hose and turned-up toes of his deerskin shoes were dyed an autumnal green. The ensemble was completed by a dark green velvet cap with a great feather.

"George Carter!" she gasped. "Coming in here drunk and dressed up like that!"

"I am not drunk!" he said bitterly, kicking away the largest mongrel, who promptly set up a steady baying. "I am not drunk. The studio dressed me this way."

Jessie's eyes widened and her cupid's bow mouth thinned into an ominous straight line.

"Going to studios when you're needed on the fountain! If Jack Schott hears about this—"

"Shut up," George said abruptly. "This is no time for an argument!" Twin

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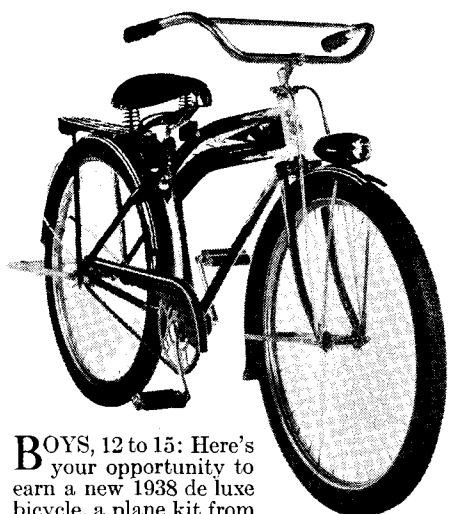
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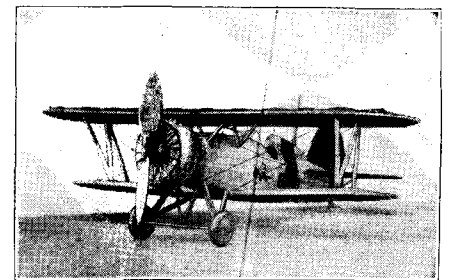
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spots of color flared in her cheeks as he looked desperately about the crowded pharmacy. "I have to find Mr. Bartel."

He saw everyone but Mr. Bartel. And, still worse, everyone saw George. Two actors dressed as Indians turned from the fountain to get a better view of him. Several of his steady customers came rushing toward him, demanding an explanation. Had he lost a bet?

One of the dogs bit one of the customers while the other two mongrels kept up their canine dirge. A passing police dog heard them and trotted into the drugstore to join forces.

Jack Schott forced his way through the crowd surrounding George. "You're fired!" he said. "For keeps. Doing this to me on a lunch hour!"

George was too preoccupied to plead his cause. Simultaneously, the largest dog had nipped his exposed calf and George had sighted Mr. Bartel. He shook off the dog and charged down on the writer. Jessie hurried after him.

"I been waiting all morning," George said bitterly. "How much longer do I have to wear this getup?"

MR. BARTEL whirled at his voice. George could have hung his hat on his eyeballs as he stared at him.

"Why, George," he said. "What are you doing dressed up this way?"

George let out a moan. "Listen," he said desperately, "you know darned well you sent me over to the studio for a test!"

Mr. Bartel shook his head. "I'm afraid you've been drinking, George," he said wistfully. "I don't remember anything about a test."

Jessie could see that George's face was getting red clear through all that make-up. He seized Mr. Bartel's lapels and shook him thoroughly. "You have to remember!" he shouted. "After I did the Big Apple last night—"

"Go home and sleep it off, my boy," Mr. Bartel said paternally. "We all throw a whinging now and then."

"You're darned right we do," said

George, bringing one up from the floor.

"Catch this one!"

Mr. Bartel caught it with the end of his nose. His knees buckled slowly and then he collapsed in sections, just like a folding drinking cup. Jessie grabbed George's arm.

"This way, lug!" she said fiercely, shoving him toward the back room. She had him clear out the back door and into the parking lot before George could attempt to free his hand from her clutch.

"What're we running for?" he demanded. "I can go to jail if I want to."

"You sure can," she said, "but I'm not going to let you. Get in there!"

She opened the car door and slid behind the wheel. George was still staring at her, dumfounded, as they turned out onto Sunset. "What's the big idea?" he asked weakly.

She glared at him. "Wanting to be an actor! Big Appl'ing with a lot of producers! Haven't you any pride?"

"No," he said. Then, "Where we going?" he added cautiously.

"What do you care?" she demanded fiercely. "Anyone who goes Hollywood like you did needs a guardian!"

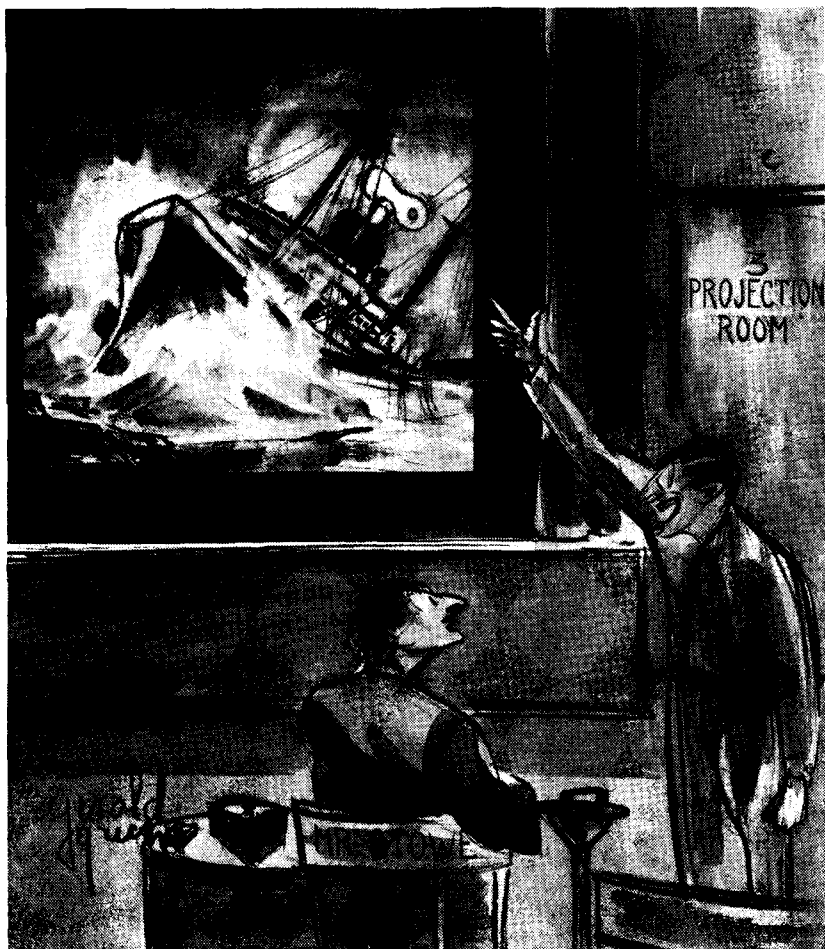
"Swell!" George said brightly. Then, his face clouding, he added: "That is, if you mean—"

Her little chin was suddenly no longer so stiff and so stubborn. It even quivered a little.

"That's what I mean," she said simply. "You're a goon and a woman can only have one career. Mine's going to be keeping an eye on you. Any couple running a fountain has to have dignity."

Maybe it was just because he was dressed up like an actor but George felt that that was his cue line. He moved right over beside her. She turned to smile at him then and he thought that her eyes had never been so clear and sweet.

"I love you, too," he said. "Take off your hat," said Jessie. "No man wearing a Robin Hood hat is going to kiss me in broad daylight."

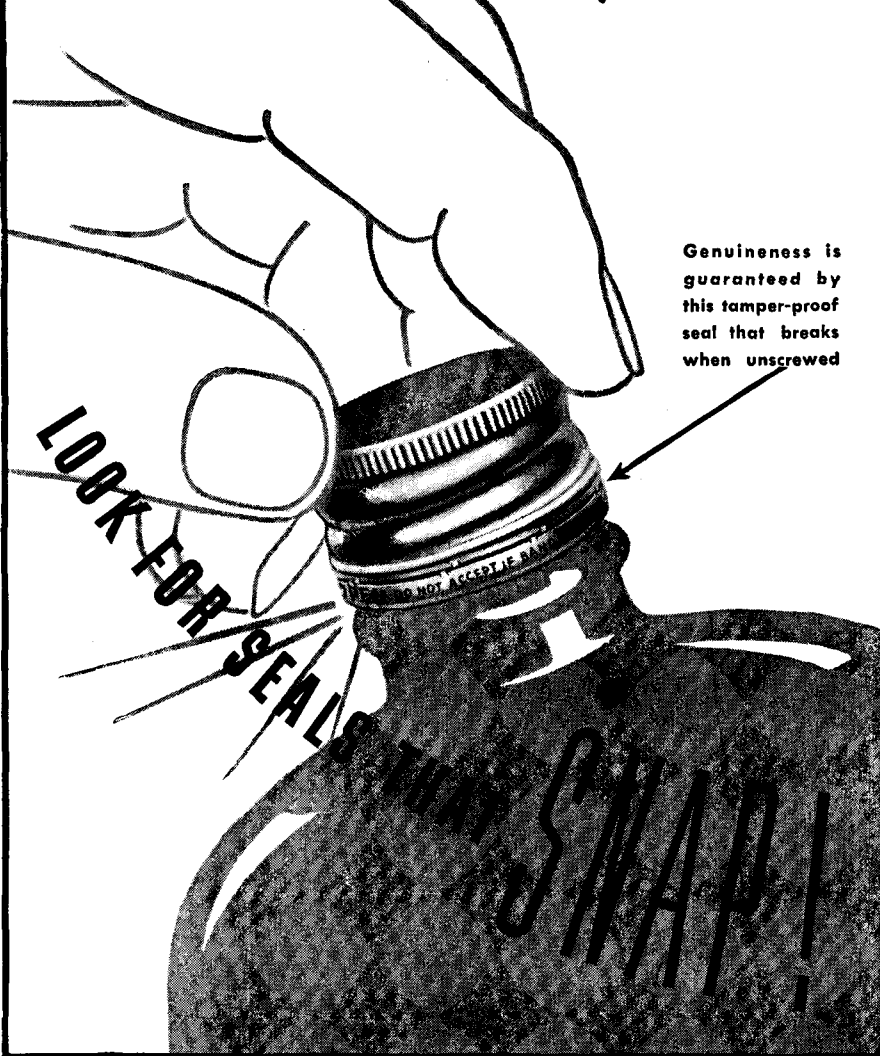


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Man in the Saddle

Continued from page 19

patrolling up from the Wolf Creek cabin. Slipping back from his position, Merritt led his horse quietly down the trail a distance, got in the saddle and drifted away. When he was quite beyond earshot he put the pony to a quick run. The trail here dropped gently, winding with the land's contours, and so presently brought him to the place where he had picketed his extra horses. Catching them up, he slanted across the trail, aiming for the high ground on the southern prow of the hills. He had not quite cleared the trail when a dry voice said:

"Wait a minute, Owen."

Merritt's nerves this morning were quick-strung. The sound came out of the timber at his right elbow, and his reaction was to throw himself flat against the saddle and wheel the horse around, at once drawing. He saw a shape duck back behind a pine. Afterward Pay Lankershim called in the same dry, amused way: "Now you were a mite careless, Owen."

He waited until Merritt said, "All right," and then stepped from shelter and came on to Merritt's stirrup. Pay was a long, wire-tough old man with hatchet features and a set of ink-black eyes that kept sliding quick glances all about the trees. He had a week's whiskers, and a big chew of tobacco prominently nested in his cheek, and it was plain that he had slept in his clothes a long while. He seemed to be enjoying himself. "What," he wanted to know, "was all that larrupin' up yonder?"

MERRITT told him, observing the thin smile it brought out. Old Pay had always been an Indian for drifting, even in his prosperous days. He was the kind to light a campfire deep in the hills and sleep well away from it; he was the kind to rise without sound from some covert spot where least expected, as now. And he had a hump in his back from leaning down in the saddle to study the signs on the earth. This was Pay.

He said: "What you goin' to do for a ranch? Hell, you can't go back there and make a target."

"Nothing on the ranch," said Merritt, and told him the rest of it, about Vird and Cultus Charley. Pay listened solemnly, never ceasing to place his bright black glance here and there into the timber, like a fisherman casting a constant fly. "Well," he said, "I never thought you'd come to it, Owen. It sure puts you on the dodge and I dunno how you figure to come out. I think I better go tell Bourke Prine. Where you goin' to be?"

"Up on that knob somewhere."

"See you later," murmured Pay and faded into the timber. Presently he reappeared on an old brown horse and trotted down the trail with his bony shape jiggling at all its joints. The first flash of sunlight from the eastern rim flushed the high sky a light pink. Merritt turned south again and traveled into a rising, rougher country. An hour or so later he threw off in a brushy bowl on the heights of the hills, put the horses on picket and cooked himself breakfast over a quick fire. Later, he crawled well back from the bowl and stretched out for a short sleep.

WHEN Hugh Clagg left Nan Melotte's cabin he started again for Coral Flat, this time by the roundabout route through Stage Coach Pass. This eventually put him out on the margin of East Desert, at the southern base of the Bunchgrass Hills. Here he turned into the hills, cutting across the high corner

of Owen Merritt's range. Merritt's beef grazed through the thin scatter of pines and after an hour or more of riding the district, he knew where the bulk of that beef lay. And later, riding northward, he began to see Skull's cattle in the timber. During that time he heard three quick shots break the immense stillness of the night, higher up and quite distant. Around midnight he reached Corral Flat and paused at the edge of timber, knowing too much about Skull's crew to ride into the meadow without due warning. There was a light in the line cabin and the drowsy sound of voices. Hugh Clagg put a hand to his mouth and whistled through his knuckles.

The voices quit and the light went out. A man's feet scraped the cabin floor. Somebody in the yard called: "Who's that?"

"Dutcher there?"

The Skull man repeated his question in a suspecting tone: "Who's that?"

anything that wasn't Skull, his own surly brand of vengeance.

Clagg was a tough man himself and recognized toughness in others. So he said, "I'll ride to the Wolf Creek cabin. Maybe he's there," and drifted on, and was relieved when Corral Flat was well behind him. These men remembered that he had once rustled beef from Skull and wouldn't forget it, regardless of what his present politics might be. He had to be careful when he met them in the hills.

THE trail ran through the mealy blackness of the timber for another six miles and arrived at the small spring marking the headwaters of Wolf Creek. Another cabin lay here, formless under the night. He caught the faint scent of wood smoke and paused at the edge of the pines, calling Dutcher's name.

Dutcher answered immediately, not from the cabin but from the trees near by: "Clagg?"



"Take it back, Bessie—three years is fair enough time to give any toaster to work"

REAMER KELLER

Hugh Clagg spoke his own name and drifted his horse over to the cabin. He saw the shape of the Skull man before him.

The Skull man came up and seized the bridle of Clagg's horse, his tilted face appearing as a narrow white blur in the dark. The light in the cabin came on again. Other men stepped out.

"He ain't here," said the fellow holding the bridle.

"Been here tonight?"

"No."

They stood in front of him, carefully placed beyond the beam of light shining from the cabin—all five. They were motionless and close-mouthed and he felt their dislike rise as solidly as a stone wall. They were a tough lot, most of them having records of violence in other districts. But these were the kind of men Dutcher deliberately hired, knowing they would be loyal to the outfit that fed them. Dutcher had pounded into them his own hatred of

"Sure. What you nighthawkin' for?" "I heard your horse comin'," said Dutcher, and moved forward. Clagg stepped down and the two came together at the edge of the meadow. "You be careful how you ride around this country," added Dutcher.

Clagg grinned in the darkness, ironically amused. He had his agreement with Skull but Dutcher, like the others, couldn't forget he had once lived on Skull beef. It clung to the foreman's mind. It was an injury he would never be quite able to forget. As well as any man, Hugh Clagg knew nothing but an easy and patched-up truce existed between them and that one day when the need for this was ended Dutcher would go after him without mercy. The truth of it amused Hugh Clagg. It was a joke he enjoyed. He said: "I got something to make you feel good, Fay. Sally Isberg came up to visit Merritt tonight. I saw her leave."

He was laughing, softly and audibly.

Fay Dutcher's talk lunged at him. "What's so damned funny?"

"You don't like that, Fay," said Clagg. "I knew you wouldn't."

"The little flossy!" ground out Dutcher. "She comes up the line from nothin', onto Skull. A kid out of a no-count, nigger-poor family. And she starts cheatin'. By God, I'll fix her."

"Tell Isberg? No, I guess you won't."

"Why not?" said Dutcher in his growling tone. "Why not?"

"A man don't like to have his wife talked about. He'd throw you off Skull in a hurry."

"Me?" said Dutcher. "Throw me off? What would he do without me? He can do the thinkin', but I'm the man that does the work, which he knows." He quit speaking. Clagg knew the foreman was grasping at his thoughts and having a heavy time. It made Clagg repeat: "You won't tell Isberg."

Dutcher grumbled, "No, I guess not. There's other ways." He shot his next phrase at Clagg hard and fast. "Listen, you keep your mouth shut. I won't have it known around that a woman can fool Skull. Keep your mouth shut."

"Sure," said Clagg. "Listen, Fay. Hold the boys at Corral Flat out of the timber tomorrow night. I'm going in to pick up some of Merritt's beef. It ain't so far from the Flat and I don't want to have any accidents with your boys. Keep 'em at the cabin."

"All right."

"What are you going to do about Merritt?"

"Never mind," said Dutcher, at once suspicious. "How did you know I was here?"

"Just a guess."

Dutcher said, "Your guess is too good." He stepped nearer. "Hughie, you know too damned much."

"A man," answered Clagg, a repressed laughter in him, "likes to keep track of his friends."

"No," contradicted Dutcher at once, "you're no friend of mine, and I'm none of yours. You're a little slippery for me. I gave you a piece of business once—and you didn't do it."

"About Merritt," murmured Clagg. "About Merritt in the saloon. No, it didn't work. I tried again, out on the Piute. Repp, the blamed fool, got in the road."

Dutcher said: "Go on, ride. And quit comin' around this side of the range. You might get hurt. I'm through with you."

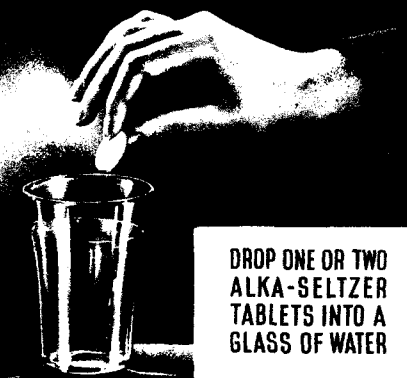
"All right," Clagg said. "But I can still do you a good turn. Keep your men at the cabin tomorrow night."

He cantered away, repressing his amusement. Beef was beef. With Skull out of sight that outfit's cattle was just as good as Merritt's. It was a joke.

AT NINE o'clock in the morning Tuck Ring raced through the pines with the news of Merritt's raid and found Fay Dutcher on the way to the home ranch. Dutcher's immediate reaction was to turn and start back. "We'll pay that gentleman a visit," he swore. But after the first shock wore off he drew in again. "No, I got to tell Isberg first. Never know what he'll want to do. You keep the boys out of trouble, Tuck. If Merritt's on the warpath he may go to pot-shootin' again. So drag back from the Flat. I'll be there later." At eleven o'clock he stood in Skull's big living room, giving the story to Isberg.


Isberg said: "He didn't hit anybody?"

"No," answered Dutcher. And he showed his open contempt for that. "He just wasted a lot of lead. Was I out to



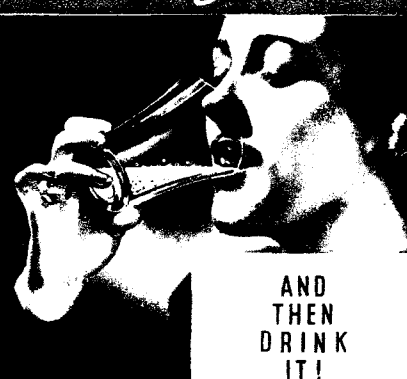
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make trouble I'd save powder till I saw somethin' to hit. I don't think Merritt's got the sand."

Isberg showed his foreman an irritated impatience. "He's smarter than you are. If he'd killed one of the boys we'd have something to hang on him. I'd have Medary pick him up. But he does it the other way. Now he's telling us to clear out of the Flat."

"He can't tell us nothin'," grunted Dutcher. "We'll go down and pay that fellow a visit."

"You don't seem to understand the kind of a man you're up against," retorted Isberg. "He won't be there."

"Neither will his house, when we get through with it."

"Wait—wait," Isberg interposed. "That won't do—yet. The Piute won't like it."

"What's that got to do with it? Is this your ranch or does it belong to the folks on the desert?"

"We've got to have a better reason," insisted Isberg.

"He came on our land," pointed out Dutcher. "Reason enough."

Isberg looked at his foreman, cool and calm. "We've been on his also. Ever occur to you that the people in this country can get damned good and mad?" He went past Dutcher to the doorway, and called up a rider. He said: "Go down the valley and ask Swanee Vail to meet me in town. Circle over to Tague's—and to Spaugh's."

DUTCHER'S contempt for public opinion was always pretty close to the surface. "What of it? What can they do? This is your land. Let 'em shout. If they tried to come in here, a whole damned army, they wouldn't get beyond the front gate." He stared down at Isberg's slight, pointed shape. "What you afraid of?"

Isberg flushed and Dutcher closed his heavy lips, knowing he had made a mistake. Yet it was a sly mistake, working both ways. It offended Isberg, but it roused his pride as well. "That's enough of that, Dutcher." Then he got to thinking and said: "What started this?"

Dutcher moved his vast shoulders. When he spoke he didn't quite meet Isberg's eyes. "A little trouble, I guess. One of the boys ran into George Vird on the trail last night. There was some smoke. Vird's dead."

Isberg's face showed actual shock. He looked at Dutcher with an expression wild and unsteady; and this anger brought him up against Dutcher. He reached out and seized Dutcher's shirt front, twisting the cloth until Dutcher bent from the pressure. "Dutcher," he said in a voice half breathless, "if you go against me again I'll kill you."

Dutcher brought both his arms down against Isberg's hands, knocking them clear. He stepped backward into the center of the room. "By God," he said, "that's far enough for you to go, Mr. Isberg."

"Answer me!" yelled Isberg.

"No," said Dutcher, "I had no part in that. I told you once that I couldn't hold those boys back. They had Vird marked and they got him. And that's the way it is with Owen Merritt. What kind of men you think work for Skull, Mr. Isberg? You ought to know. You told me to hire that kind."

Isberg turned away from Dutcher and walked to the corner of the room. He swung, pressing the palm of his hand across his forehead, scrubbing away the fine sweat formed there. His voice had flattened out; he had himself checked. "All right, Dutcher. Now listen to me. You find Clagg and tell him to work on Merritt's beef."

"He's doin' that tonight," said Dutcher, observing his boss with a quite close glance. Hard a man as he was, he had been set back, he had been actually

astonished. Isberg had shown him something he hadn't seen before, which was a temper that could kill. Dutcher had seen the yellow-white flame of that emotion in the Skull owner's eyes; it was something a man couldn't mistake.

"All right," said Isberg. "And leave Merritt alone until I tell you what to do next. Better stay away from the Flat for a while."

"Suppose," said Dutcher, and afterward closed his mouth as though caught in mortal confession. Sally Isberg came down the stairs. She had heard a good deal of this, as both Dutcher and Isberg immediately realized. Both men watched her with a reserved attention. She faced them at the bottom of the stairs, cool with her eyes and throwing their interest back at them.

She said to Isberg, "Should I go, or



"... and that was supposed to be a movie of my wife, but I hadn't learned to focus the camera yet"

GREGORY D'ALESSIO

should I stay to hear the rest of this?"

"I think there's very little left to hear," observed Isberg, dry as dust.

She pulled up her chin, meeting his glance with the same cool gravity. "If I am not to hear your conversations, Will, then you had better warn me beforehand. Both of you have been talking pretty loud."

Isberg said to Dutcher: "What did you say?"

BUT Dutcher shook his head. "Nothing," he grumbled, and kept his eyes on Sally Isberg. He had turned sullen. There was this little silence, with its very evident feeling. Isberg stared at his foreman and then, quite quickly, turned to see what was on his wife's face to cause Dutcher to close up so quickly. He had sharp intuitions and he knew something was wrong though he had no information from her contained expression. It made Isberg call, in a half-irritation: "What is it, Dutcher?"

Dutcher repeated, "Nothing," and left the room.

"The man hates me," remarked Sally. Isberg at once said: "Been discourteous to you in any way?"

"No. If he were I'd take care of it. I can't blame him, for he knows very well I despise him."

Isberg's glance kept searching her. "Why?"

"Will," she said, "I don't think he's a good man for Skull."

"For Skull," replied Isberg, at once, "he's the best man in the world." He said it smoothly, yet it had its challenge for her, its faint ring of insistence, as though he put his will against her will and wanted her to submit.

She stood her ground, clearly realizing how perilous this moment was for her and how swift his latent suspicions would rise at anything she might say. Yet she had a will that was, in its own quiet fashion, equal to Isberg's. It compelled her to speak. Paused before him, she looked across the little distance at his set, self-disciplined expression. Her eyes were level with his eyes—and then he stepped away from her, a touched pride showing at the angle of his mouth because of that equality in height. She knew that irritated him, but she could not help it. Her shoulders squared a little and her lips, long and fresh-colored and pleasant, lay in a firm line. She had a resoluteness that heightened her and steadied the supple grace of her body.

"Will," she said finally, "do you have to break Owen Merritt to get what you want? Is there no other way?"

"Our bargain," answered Isberg, dry and distant, "didn't specify I should protect Merritt, did it?" He was watching her with a narrowing interest; he was weighing her expression and each word she spoke.

"No. But is it fair?"

"Sally," he said, "maybe you'd better quit dreaming. When I want a thing I get it. Skull is too big for sentiment, and I'm in too much of a hurry to stop to grieve about any one man. Didn't you know my disposition when you married me?"

SHE had her long, calm glance. "I did, Will. But I never saw in you any desire to destroy, or kill."

"Have I killed?"

"Your men have. You hire them and you support them."

His voice withdrew from her; it denied her. He pulled himself straight. He was indomitable, he was quietly relentless. "Merritt's got himself to blame. He was in the party that killed three of my men in Winnemucca. He riddled my line cabin this morning. You think that's all right for him, Sally?"

"If you had been in his place, Will, what would you have done?"

"I'm not in his place. It seems you are."

"Oh, Will, do we have to quarrel?"

"It is interesting," he said, "to get the truth out of you. Maybe you figure you have made a mistake."

Her pride was as strong as his pride. Her cheeks flushed, her chin lifted at him; and her temper, then, could not remain humble. "Lately," she said, "you have turned to sarcasm."

"What is a man to believe?"

She drew a long breath, steadying her temper, and then was calmer than Isberg. "We shouldn't fight, Will. I'm your wife—and I'll never do anything to hurt you. But if I'm to help you I've got to say something. Don't let Dutcher push you into too much trouble. There isn't any reason why you should try to break Owen. He's fighting you now because Dutcher started trouble. Buy him out if you can. Or if you can't, let him alone. Skull is big enough without Christmas Creek. And I can tell you something, though you won't like it. Merritt is popular with people on the

desert. If you ruin him or if you kill him you'll make those people hate you."

He had never ceased to watch her. An inner malice laid its faint impression on his lips. His reserve remained unbroken, impenetrable. He said, as courteously insistent as ever, "I have wondered about something. Suppose you had known, before we were married, that I meant to go after Merritt. Would you have married me?"

"What a brutal question," she said in a breathing tone. "Do you want me to answer it?"

"I want the truth out of you, Sally. It seems I have not had it before. Either that, or you have changed."

She said directly: "I wouldn't marry a man who told me he intended to commit murder, Will. Or who hired others to commit it for him."

HIS eyes widened a little and a degree of paleness came back to his small cheeks—betraying the disturbance inside. And yet he showed her a small, thin smile and bowed his head, saying, "Thanks for the compliment," and left the room. Never moving, she heard him later pound across the bridge. It meant he would be going into The Wells.

She thought: "He wants no advice from me. I shall have to keep still. This will have to be patched up somehow. We've got to go on." Still-placed in the quiet room and thinking it over with a long, long care, she knew she could have said nothing else. She was seeing Owen Merritt now and at once a greater thought went through her like a shock. Her marriage had been a mistake, a tragic error that could never be remedied. It hit her all at once, knocking down her courage and her resolution. She was caught and could not escape. She could do nothing and say nothing. Living in this house, she had to watch Isberg pursue Merritt. For he would not change now. If anything, her words had hardened his will only so much the more. She had gone to Owen once. She could not go again. She was Isberg's wife.

Dutcher's voice said: "I want to speak to you, Mrs. Isberg."

It whirled her around. Dutcher came into the room, walking with an aggressive swing of his shoulders.

"Mrs. Isberg," he said, "you don't like me and I don't like you. I don't understand how you tricked Isberg but I guess a smart man's got to be a fool once. Anyhow you got a nice livin' out of the deal and Skull will have to pay the way for them deadhead people of yours."

"Why don't you tell that to Mr. Isberg?" retorted Sally.

"Maybe you'll tell him."

"I can take care of myself, Dutcher. It's time you knew that."

His talk came out of the bottom of his throat. Everything about this huge man was black and heavy and guttural. He had his head down and looked at her with a slanting contempt. That too, she understood, was another characteristic of him—a contempt for most things and most people. He had a savage, brutelike belief in himself. From her observation she had noticed that only Isberg could turn this foreman of Skull into respect. He said:

"Sure you can take care of yourself. But some things you better not do any more, like goin' up to see Owen Merritt. You do that again and I'll find a way of breakin' you apart. Nobody's going to cheat this ranch while I'm around. From now on you ride close to this house or else take one of the crew along. Remember that, Mrs. Isberg."

He blocked the light of the doorway as he left. She went immediately up the stairs, her legs weak from a real fear.

Isberg, going a roundabout way, reached town rather late in the morn-

ing. Vail and Tague and Spaugh were in Medary's office; and Isberg went there at once. He said: "This morning pretty early Owen Merritt shot hell out of my line cabin on Corral Flat and ran for the timber."

"Why now," murmured Mike Tague, "he shouldn't ought to have done that."

None of these men bothered to ask Isberg why it had happened. They were old hands and they knew why. Tague looked a little uncomfortable, for he liked Merritt. The others said nothing.

Medary spoke up mildly: "Maybe you ought to add, Mr. Isberg, that George Vird's dead. Merritt brought him to town at midnight."

"Vird," said Isberg at once, his voice quick and arbitrary, "was in on that Winnemucca shootin'. He's been lookin' for trouble and finally he found it."

"Hate to see it break like this," the sheriff murmured. "Maybe—"

"Never mind about that, Medary. Skull's been bothered too much by men nighthawkin' its range. Merritt had no right to come on it and start shooting. It's a bad thing to set up before the Piute. You start that in one place and it spreads to another. I'm telling all you men that it might happen to you. So I'm going after Merritt. What I say is, don't give him any help."

"He shouldn't 've done that," said Tague regretfully.

"Well, I guess you got to stop it," said Clay Spaugh, and no more. Swanee Vail, being nearer Skull and therefore more under its shadow, only nodded.

"Mark, you go out and bring Merritt in," said Isberg.

Medary looked at him. "What for? A trial? No, that won't work, Mr. Isberg. You won't get a jury to help you. He'd be turned loose."

"You do it," insisted Isberg.

But Medary had his own stubborn streak. "I ain't going on a wild-goose chase. If Merritt's on the jump I'd have a hell of a time catchin' up with him. If I brought him in it wouldn't stick. Maybe you don't know something, Mr. Isberg. There ain't twelve men on the Piute who like Skull well enough to stick Merritt in the jug for you."

"What's the matter with you, Medary?" asked Isberg, very sharp.

MIKE TAGUE, always a peacemaker, came into the argument. "I guess maybe that's right, Will. You better go after him yourself." He got up, waving the smoke of his cigar away with his hand, and this move brought Spaugh and Vail likewise out of their chairs. Isberg gave them a close, displeased glance.

"You fellows run cattle, don't you? You want to see this business get out of hand? If they can shoot at Skull they can shoot at you."

"Sure," agreed Tague. "But when they shoot at me, Will, I'll do my own huntin'. I'll never ask another man to do it for me."

"All right. But I'm telling you what it will be like. Don't give Merritt any help."

The three filed out, leaving Isberg with the sheriff. Medary said: "Well, what you want?"

Isberg got up. "Nothing," he answered. "I've changed my mind. I'll take care of it personally."

"May be best," murmured the sheriff.

Isberg gave him a critical glance. "Mark," he said, "you're crawfishin'. Maybe next election you ought to take a rest."

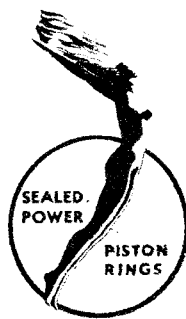
Isberg rode directly to Skull, arriving there about two o'clock and meeting Dutcher. He said: "Saddle me a fresh horse. We're going up to Corral Flat." He went into the kitchen and had a quick meal. Dutcher was outside waiting for him but Isberg walked to the living room and stood there a moment, hearing Sally's steps somewhere in the



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upper part of the house. Presently she came down and, as always, his glance went to her face and searched it for expression. But it was smooth and cool and, as before, he felt that odd barrier between them. It brought back his temper to hear her speak as she did.

She said, driving at once to the trouble between them: "Will, do you want me to leave?"

He answered that with a small malice in his words: "What would you go back to?"

He had his moment's pleasure from knowing his question hit her hard; it broke through her composure. She looked at him so oddly, repeating, "Do you want me to leave?"

"No," he said, "that's the last thing I want. You will stay here." He showed her the edge of the smile she knew so well and had begun to fear.

"Then we've got to talk this out. I can't have you looking at me like that, as though it was all a terrible joke. I can't have you go on believing the worst about me. We've got too many years ahead of us."

He said, smooth and distant and unstirred, "We'll talk about it. When I come back we'll do all the talking you want."

"Will—"

But he had turned through the doorway with a dismissing motion of his arm. He stepped into the saddle and rode over the yard, Dutcher beside him. He said, "We're going up to Corral Flat. I have decided to visit Mister Merritt."

"He won't be there," Dutcher said.

Isberg threw a quick, amused glance at his foreman. "Don't worry about that," he answered. Dutcher said nothing more, and so they rode into the hills, Isberg entirely silent.

AFTER Isberg had gone Medary sat before the desk with a wry and troubled look on his face. Politics was a game of survival, of guessing where the power lay. In this county the power belonged to Skull and to the four other big outfits controlling three quarters of the country's range. The little people, the two-bit ranchers and the folks in the Broken Buttes and the homesteaders didn't count very much, and never would. The division was quite clear and he had, in the course of his own career, played with the big owners, his reward being an undisturbed tenure in office. His course now was pretty simple, as it had always been. Yet the more he thought of it the worse it got and presently he rose and crossed to Tom Croker's saloon. Tom was another foxy one.

"Tom," he said, over his glass of whisky, "what do you think?"

"Merritt? No chance, Mark, no chance."

"Sure, sure," murmured the sheriff and downed his drink. He dawdled over the bar, tracing a pattern on the wood with his finger. His face was screwed tight, his expression showed a distant irritation.

"Ain't a thing you can do to help him," said Croker by way of consolation. "Like the boy, don't you? So do I. But he'll cash in his chips. I know Isberg. He's an Injun for rememberin'. You know what he remembers?"

"Yeah; Sally." Then Medary added with a quick discontent: "What'd she marry him for?"

"He's an Injun," repeated Tom Croker, "and he makes my hair stand when he's around. It takes a pretty tough fellow to do that, Medary. What you goin' to do?"

Medary had his second drink, which for him was unusual. He said, "I'm going to do the first damn' fool thing in a long time, Tom," and went to the door. "I'm goin' down to the Fremont to hunt antelope and I won't be back for two weeks."

He went to the stable, presently reappearing in the saddle, leading a pack horse behind; and struck straight into the Piute, aiming for the blue blur of hills in the distant southwest. He could not help Merritt, whose troubles were past repairing, but in leaving town he knew he'd anger Isberg. It was, as he had said, a foolish thing for a man to do who had cut his milk teeth in the obscure politics of a cattle country. He said to himself with a philosophic resignation, "Well, the huntin' ought to be good anyhow," and faded from The Wells.

FROM his hide-out in the hills late that afternoon Merritt saw two riders appear on a little meadow below. He walked down the slope to intercept them.

"Just a beginning. Isberg will follow you to hell now. You can't go back to your ranch." Bourke moved his heavy shoulders to express his dissatisfaction. "Well, we better think of something," he said.

"You think of something," drawled Merritt. "You're the man that wanted to make a fight."

Bourke said, "You got an idea in your bonnet when you talk like that. Let's have it."

"I'm going up to Corral Flat again to-night."

Pay Lankershim chuckled. "That's the way. We'll all go."

The three of them sat around, considering it, until Bourke got up and moved to his horse. "All right. I'm going home. Then I'll cut into the high

effective than at sunrise. Lying here, he felt thoroughly outside of everything and out of touch with the Piute. To raise a little hell and run for shelter was, when a man looked at it in cold blood, a defensive gesture but it wasn't fighting. Meanwhile Skull had the country to itself. His ranch house was exposed and probably by tomorrow morning would be burned to the ground. His cattle would undoubtedly be run off. This was what happened to a man on the dodge.

Flat on his back, he rolled up a cigarette, dragging in the smoke. One small white cloud drifted over the treetops and disappeared. There was a little wind coming over this high point and somewhere a jay made a great racket in the timber. It wasn't Bourke's affair and it wasn't Pay Lankershim's affair, but here they were doing the work while he remained idle. Nor did it seem any better when he thought of the risk Sally Isberg had taken in coming to see him at his ranch.

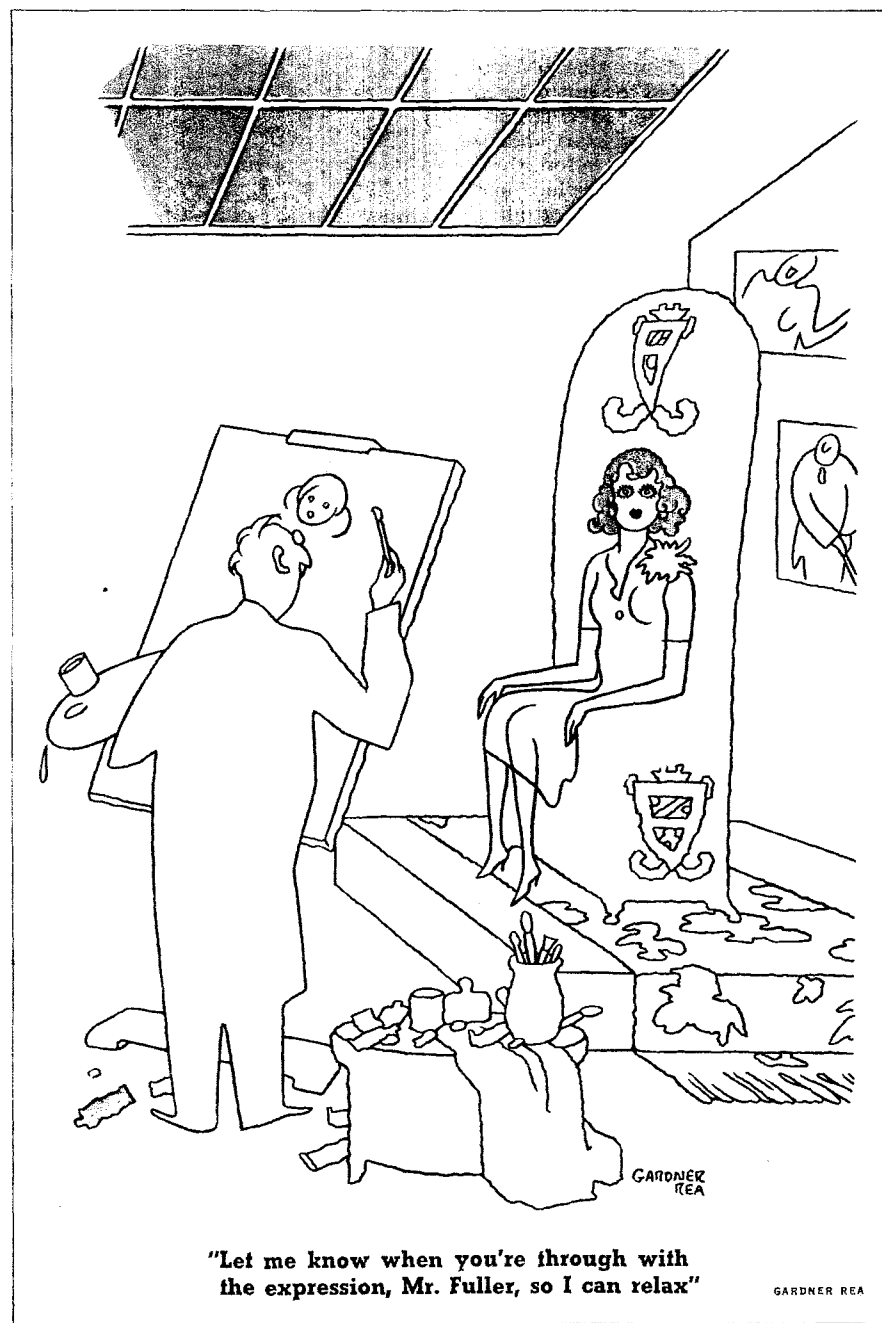
He rose and scanned the lower pines, and circled the bowl. He moved his saddle around and sat on it and watched the sky deepen in color while time dragged and the shadows in the timber began to creep upslope toward him. It was a long day with nothing to do but think; and after a while it occurred to him that a man's thoughts could only go so far until they turned and followed the same trail back. He remembered the way Sally Isberg had held to him the night before, he remembered the intensity of her voice and the fragrance rising from her hair; then presently, by one of those strange skips of the mind, he found that the image of Nan Melotte was before him, vivid and very real.

AT SUNDOWN he rose and saddled the gelding, caught up the two extra horses, and rode downgrade toward his ranch. Not until he was well away from the high point did he realize how quietly the change had come. Running wasn't any good. A man had to stand fast and do his fighting. This was what it amounted to. So he rode on through twilight, deliberately avoiding Bourke and Pay because he didn't want them mixed up in what seemed certain to come, and arrived at the edge of his ranch yard just as full night rolled out of the sky.

The darkness and the emptiness of the house hit him hard; it was as though he saw his own ruin in advance, and this was the reaction that roused his anger, quick and personal and hot. He had come off the left fork of the hill trail, avoiding the creek. It brought him in behind the barn and here he left the horses and went on to the back of the house. The door stood open and he spent a moment on its edge, listening for trouble, before going in. A little later he lighted a lamp, left it on the table, and walked through the front room, stopping on the porch. The light from Nan Melotte's cabin cut its diamond sparkle through the lower blackness of the desert.

He had been here only a few minutes—and was turning to go into the house again—when he heard the scuff of horses above the steady rustle of the waterfall. Wheeling back against the wall, he made out Isberg's voice. Very cool and very plain, it rose from the slope directly across the creek. "Go straight on. Merritt, is that you? I want to talk to you," Dutcher shouted, and horses splashed through the shallows of the creek and a gun broke the night, its slug going through the wood of the house wall with a small, rustling echo. The shape of Skull's men appeared and little yellow and purple rosettes of muzzle light began to flash from all their guns.

(To be continued next week)



"Let me know when you're through with the expression, Mr. Fuller, so I can relax"

Pay Lankershim grinned as though all this was a good joke. But Bourke Prine turned his temper loose on Merritt.

"Why in thunder didn't you come over to my place and let me in on this? I rode to your house this morning. No fire in the stove and nobody around. I went down to Nan Melotte's but she hadn't seen nothin' of you. I pick up your trail in town—and I get worried. Then Pay comes along."

They squatted in the heavy shadows of the pines, Pay Lankershim still smiling. Bourke Prine rolled himself a cigarette, now and then shooting his sharp glance at Merritt, who lay idle and un-talkative. "Well," challenged Bourke, "what you going to do?"

Merritt said: "You been asking that question for a month. I did something, didn't I?"

trail and see if I can spot anything. I'll be here when it gets dark."

Pay had a new thought, and went likewise to his pony. "Think I'll drift up toward the Flat and keep an eye open. Be back same time as Bourke. Meet us here."

BOURKE studied Merritt a little longer. He said, "You got something in your coco." Then the two moved out on their separate trails and Merritt returned to the high bowi from which, when the spirit moved him, he could scan the long vistas leading down through the open timber.

Bourke, he thought, was a pretty hard man to fool. And Bourke was right in believing he had something on his mind. Waiting was hard work and as this day went on, his original idea seemed less



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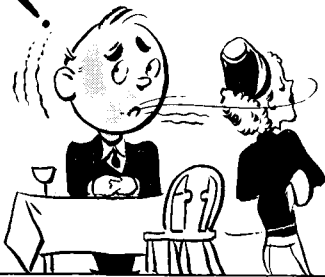
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Nothing Happens in Brooklyn

Continued from page 10

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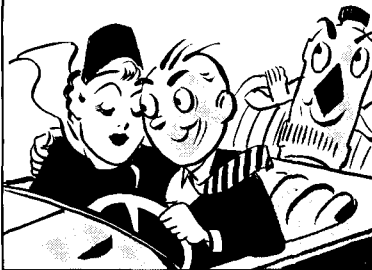
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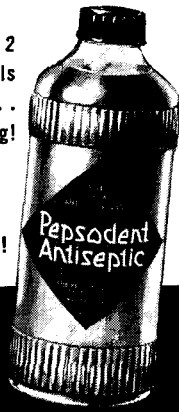


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Clem laughed and ses Joe you are a good skate and so is Ethel but I am not built like you are. I have got to have my excitement. I could never settle down and live by the clock like you do especially in a neighborhood like this. It is too dead for me.

Ethel ses that is exactly what I told Joe last night Clem. Nothing ever happens around here. Look at Joe now. It is hardly ten o'clock and he is ready to go to bed and start snoring and that is the way everybody else is in this neighborhood. It is disgusting.

I ses see here Ethel I do not want to bring out any family secrets in front of an outsider but when it comes to snoring I know some other people that do a pretty good job of it. I ses I get sleepy early because I work hard all day to earn a living for you.

I ses I do not need excitement like Clem here but what does it get him? I ses he comes around afraid to let the cops see him and hungry enough to eat half a ham and four eggs and I bet on top of that he needs a couple of bucks for his pocket.

Clem laughed again and ses Joe now I know you really are a mind reader so I gave him a couple of bucks and he went out our back door again without trying to go upstairs next door to see his Moms because Petey Angelo was still setting there with Myrt McGuire and he had his arm around her tighter than ever.

I ses Ethel why don't those two people get married and have it over with and set inside out of the night air? I ses are they still trying to make up their minds after six years or what?

Ethel ses Joe it took you five years to marry me and my Moms and my Pops was getting ready to ask you to call it off and give somebody else a chance so you let Myrtle and Petey alone. They will get married when they are good and ready. I ses all right Ethel and now I am going to bed and if I snore a little I hope you will not tell it all over town.

Wednesday night my wife Ethel ses look Joe old Missus Chambers is sick. She was taken down with the flu this morning. Doc Curtcher ses he thinks she is going to pass on. All she talks about is Clem and she wants to see him. Where do you suppose that no account Clem is?

WHY Ethel I ses how in the world would I know where Clem Chambers is? I don't keep track of people like him. I ses wherever he is he will not come to any good end. I ses I read in the paper this morning where they have got him tied in with that big mail-truck robbery. I ses I never thought a fellow from this neighborhood would turn out to be a tough guy like Clem.

O Ethel ses Clem is not a tough guy. He is just full of pep. I remember how he used to like to tie my pig tails to his desk when we was little kids and he sat behind me in school. I ses look Ethel robbing a mail truck is a little different from tying your pig tails to a desk and it is something more than just pep too.

I ses that Clem is plenty tough now and Ethel ses well anyway I wish I knew where he is because Doc Curtcher ses old Missus Chambers cries for him all the time. She is the nicest old thing in this neighborhood and I am going to take her some soup in a little while. If you hear anything of Clem you be sure and tell me.

Thursday morning my wife Ethel woke me up and ses hey Joe it just ses on the radio that the cops have got Clem Chambers penned up in a building on Clinton Street and that two hundred cops and the fire department are around

the place trying to get him out. They are shooting and throwing tear-gas bombs into the building but Clem just will not come out and he is shooting back at them too.

I ses they ought to try the fire hose on him Ethel. I ses when Clem was here the other night he did not smell to me like he had taken a bath since the time he pulled Petey Angelo out of the river. I ses I guess that two bucks I gave him is a goner all right although I did not expect anything else and Ethel ses well I am going to run over there and tell Clem his Moms is sick before something happens to him.

I ses from what you tell me the radio ses Ethel old Clem may not be seeing callers but Ethel ses Joe you come on now and stop arguing. Missus Cham-



"Now don't expect me to make a
hole in one right at first, Jack"

GARRETT PRICE

bers was pretty bad when I saw her last night and Doc Curtcher ses he will bet anybody she does not last two days longer and I promised I would bring Clem to her as soon as I could find him.

So my wife Ethel put on her new hat and I got out the old bucket and we drove down to Clinton Street. We found the street all roped off and just like the radio ses there was a lot of cops banging away with pistols and rifles at a building. It was a little flat one-story building that had been a store of some kind but was empty with the windows boarded up in front and sometimes some of the cops hit the building too but that was only the best shots.

My wife Ethel started to duck under a rope half a block away from the building and a cop pushed her back and ses you cannot go through that street. She ses why not? The cop ses because that is my orders. Ethel ses who gave you those orders? The cop ses my captain gave them to me and who wants to know anyway?

Ethel ses look cop I must go and speak to the fellow you have got penned up in that building. I must tell him about his Moms. She is sick and wants to see him. Doc Curtcher ses it will be for the last time so I have to hurry.

THE cop ses lady you must be crazy. Ethel ses well it is a good thing you are a cop or my husband here would slap you down for calling me crazy. The cop looked at me and ses don't let me being a cop bother you Mack. If you feel like slapping somebody down just start slapping now.

I ses look cop I am not after any trouble with anybody and my name is not Mack. It is Joe. I ses I am just here with my wife on an errand. O the cop ses then you are not going to slap me down like your wife says hey Mack? I ses cop I make my own matches not my wife and he laughed and ses well you are lucky Mack. It is sometimes the other way around with me. Anyway the best thing you two can do is to take a nice walk because this is a bad spot right now.

Ethel ses cop I tell you I must talk to the fellow in that building and tell him about his Moms. If your Moms was so sick she could not get well and she wanted to see you what would you think if a cop tried to keep somebody from telling you? The cop ses lady please go away because here comes my captain and he will be sore if he finds me talking to you.

The captain was a fat fellow and had a sour-looking face and Ethel ses to him Captain you are just the man I want to see. This cop here ses I cannot go through this rope to see the fellow you have got penned up in that building and tell him his Moms is sick.

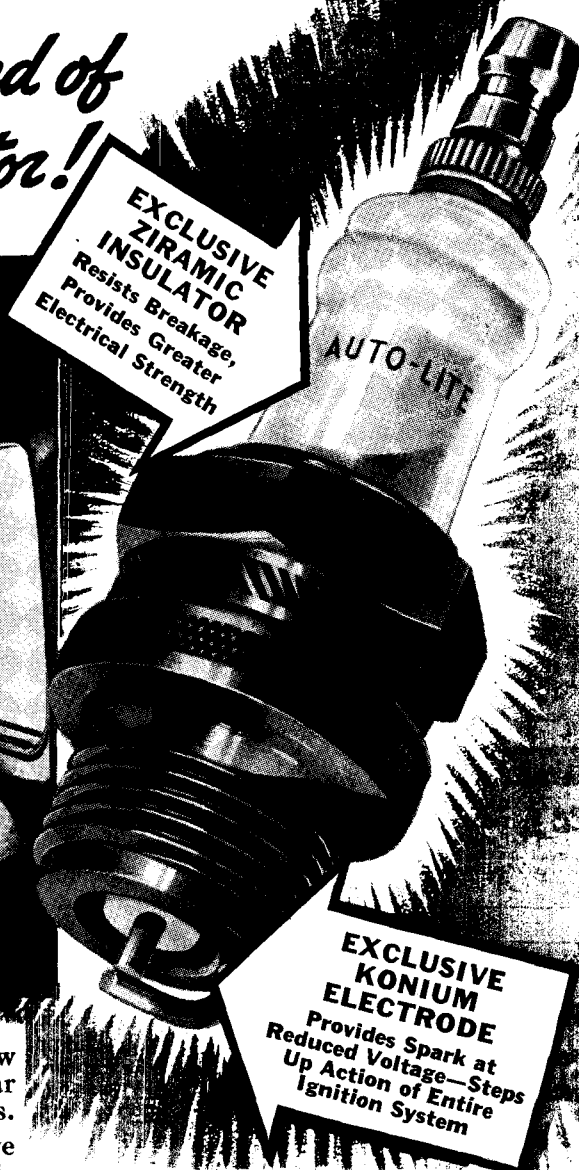
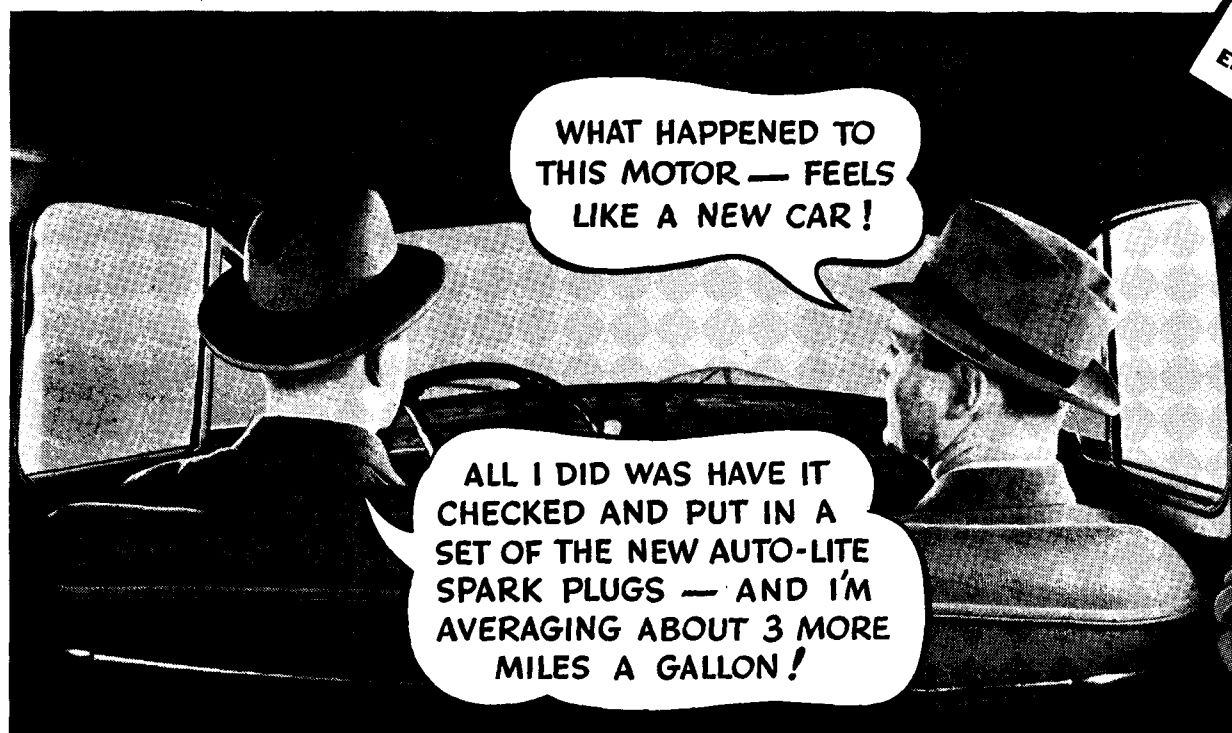
The captain looked sourer than ever and ses you must be crazy and Ethel ses listen Captain do all the cops in Brooklyn go around telling people they are crazy? The captain ses yes when they talk like you. You look like a nice respectable lady but you talk awful crazy. Madam that fellow in that building is one of the most desperate men in the world.

Ethel ses O he is not. He is only Clem Chambers. I know him well. The captain ses O you do hey? Ethel ses yes I do and so does my husband Joe here. We was raised up with him. The captain looked at me and ses maybe I ought to lock you up and I ses what for? He ses I do not know yet but I may think of something later.

I ses look Captain you are big people

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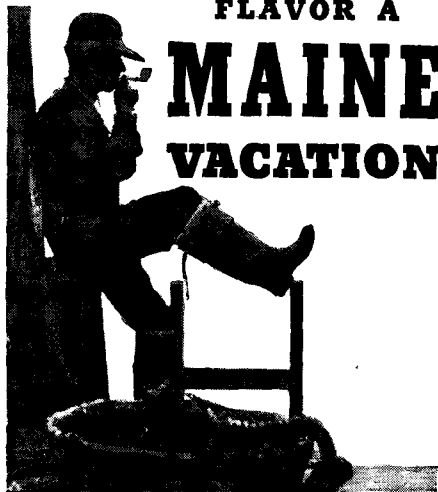
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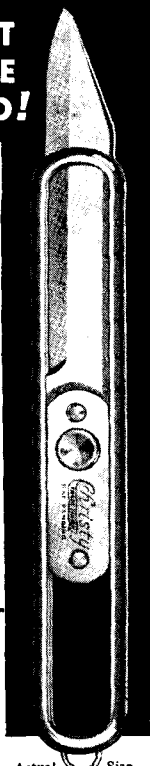
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C-6

Actual Size

and we are only little people but do not be talking about locking somebody up unless they have done something and what have we done? I ses Captain I am a citizen of the United States of America and I know my rights. He ses O you do hey? I ses yes I do and he ses what else do you know?

I ses I know Sweeney the district leader and he will not stand for you locking me up unless I have done something. The captain ses you know Sweeney do you? I ses yes I do. I ses he ses hello to me any time I see him. Well the captain ses all right then you go on about your business and take your wife with you.

Ethel ses yes but I tell you I have got to see Clem Chambers and give him a message about his Moms and the captain ses Madam that fellow in there would shoot you down like a pigeon if you went near him. He has already winged three of my men and a bystander name of Coolidge and Coolidge is bad off.

○ ETHEL ses you talk foolish. Clem would not shoot me down. If he shot your cops it was just in fun. He did not mean it. I do not know anything about that fellow Coolidge but what was he doing around here anyway? The captain ses O he did not mean it hey? It was just in fun hey? Well do you know he has also got a cop captured in there with him? He has got Officer Angelo and has probably shot him too by now.

Ethel ses that is funny and the captain ses what's funny? Ethel ses why that must be Petey Angelo. The captain ses his name is Pete all right. Do you know him too? Do you know everybody in Brooklyn? Ethel ses Clem Chambers and Petey Angelo are not everybody in Brooklyn but I know them all right and they are both nice fellows only Clem does not like Petey for going on the cops.

All this time there was shooting at the building going on from cops in doorways along the street inside the ropes and from the tops of other buildings and once in a while a shot came from the building and everybody ducked and the captain ses you see how dangerous it is around here? I ses yes I see only we were on the same side of the street as the building and at an angle where Clem Chambers shots were not liable to hit us unless he could throw curves like Mungo the Dodgers pitcher.

While I was talking to the captain my wife Ethel ducked under the rope and past the cop inside and ran down the sidewalk toward the building where Clem was and everybody yelled hey at her but she paid no attention.

The captain ses that woman is a dee fool. I ses Captain you are speaking about my wife and he ses so what? She is still a dee fool and what do you want to make of it? I ses nothing Captain. I ses you have got that uniform on and you are big people and I guess you can talk to little people like me any way you want but I will have to tell Sweeney you called my wife a dee fool. The captain ses all women are dee fools. I am a married man myself.

By this time Ethel was in front of the building pounding with her fist on one of the boarded-up windows and the cops had stopped shouting and were watching her. Ethel told me afterwards that when she had pounded her fist black and blue Clem Chambers ses who is it? Who is out there making all that racket?

Ethel ses it is me Clem. It is Ethel Turp and don't you go shooting off those pistols at me because I have got my new hat on. Clem says O hello Ethel. You better go away from here. This is no place for a lady. I will not shoot you but those cops might. They don't shoot very good and might hit you accidental. How is Joe?

Joe is all right Ethel ses. He is up the

street now arguing with the cops. But I come to tell you about your Moms Clem. She is awful sick and she wants to see you. Clem I think you better go see her because she is sick in bed. Clem ses she is? Ethel ses yes she is. Another thing Clem what are you doing in there with Petey Angelo?

Clem ses why Ethel I am not doing a thing in this world with him. He climbed on the roof of this joint and was looking around for some way to get in and arrest me and he fell through the skylight right on top of me. He cut a big gash in his side on the glass coming through and if I was not here to bandage him up he would have bled to death.

Ethel ses what is he doing now? Clem ses he is laying here quiet. I have got him tied up with his shirt so he will not go near a window and get shot by those cops. I don't want Myrt blaming me for him getting shot. He does not feel good. Ethel ses tell him hello Clem. Tell him Joe and me are out here. Clem ses all right Ethel but I have got his mouth stuffed up so he cannot say hello back to you.

Ethel ses look Clem don't you let Petey Angelo come to no harm like choking to death and Clem ses hey Ethel if I had wanted him to come to harm I would not have bandaged him up or I would have shot him coming through the skylight. I don't want anything to happen to Myrt's only fellow any more than you do.

Ethel ses well I think it is a mean trick to stuff a fellow's mouth up so he cannot say hello to people. You ought to be ashamed of yourself Clem Chambers for doing a trick like that to an old friend. Clem ses he is no friend of mine. He was trying to cop a sneak on me but don't you worry about him and tell Myrt if you see her not to worry either.

Well all right Ethel ses but you come on out of there and go with me and Joe to see your Moms right away. Clem ses why Ethel those cops would pick me off the minute I stepped out of this place. I guess they will get me in the long run anyway but I will get some of them first.

Ethel ses look here Clem Chambers you stop this foolishness. Your Moms is not going to get well and she wants to see you before she goes away. So you come on out of there and bring Petey Angelo with you and take that stuffing out of his mouth.

CLEM ses Ethel you mean my Moms is going to die? Ethel said yes Clem that is what I mean and I am awfully sorry. Clem ses well that is different. If she is going to die I guess I ought to see her. I would hate for her to go without me seeing her. She was always a wonderful Moms to me Ethel but how am I going to get out of here without those cops picking me off?

Ethel ses why Clem I will ask the cops not to shoot you when you come out if you promise to give yourself up to them and then they can take you to your house and let you see your Moms. Clem ses I do not want any cops going with me when I see her. I do not want my Moms to know I am in trouble like that. Ethel you tell those cops if they will not shoot at me when I come out I will go home with you and see my Moms and then give myself up to them or else I will stay here and get plenty of them before they get me because I am a better shot.

Ethel ses all right Clem but you send Petey Angelo out here at once so I can take that stuffing out of his mouth or Myrt will be good and mad at you and Clem says okay Ethel but you be sure and tell Myrt that no matter how bad Petey looks I had nothing to do with it. He had no business falling through the skylight.

Then pretty soon the front door of the building opened a little ways and Petey



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came out and he must have been pushed from behind by Clem because he almost fell over on Ethel. Petey was pretty white and weak as he leaned up against Ethel when they walked back to where I was still standing with the captain.

Ethel ses hello Captain I see you are still here. Well I talked with Clem and he ses if you cops will let him go with me to see his Moms he will give himself up to them afterwards. The captain ses O he does hey? That is very very nice of him. Madam do you know I may put you under arrest for communicating with a criminal? Ethel ses what is that? The captain ses what is what? Ethel ses what is communicating with a criminal?

The captain ses look Madam you ses yourself you talked to that fellow in that building yonder and that is communicating with a criminal. Ethel ses O you mean Clem Chambers. Why all I did was to take a message to him about his Moms and I got Petey Angelo here out of that place when he was laying there with his mouth stuffed up and I have brought a message back to you and I do not think it is very nice of you to talk of putting me under arrest.

The captain ses O is that so? Ethel ses yes that is so. If you want to arrest Clem Chambers without no more trouble you let him see his Moms first and then he will give himself up but if you want to try to arrest him anyway and get some more of your cops shot up why you just go ahead.

The captain ses O you are trying to dictate to somebody hey? Ethel ses no I am not but I see a lot of fellows up the street with cards in their hats and I bet they are newspaper reporters and if you get any more of your cops shot up by Clem Chambers when it is unnecessary I will tell them why it happened that way.

Look lady the captain ses will you please stop talking a while and let me think? How do you know this fellow will keep his word about giving himself up after he sees his Moms if we let him go there without any cops? Ethel ses well you let Petey Angelo here follow us if Petey is not too sick only he must not come too close because Clem does not like him since he went on the cops.

Petey ses I am all right except I am a little weak. He ses Captain if Clem Chambers told Missus Turp here he would give himself up he will do it. I will vouch for it myself.

The captain ses O you will huh? Well who will vouch for you? I ses I will Cap-

tain. I ses you ask Sweeney the district leader about me and he will tell you Joe Turp's word is as good as wheat in the bin. I ses Sweeney will tell you that I always vote the right way.

The captain thought a while and then he ses well maybe it is a good idea not to get any more cops shot up than is necessary. We need all the men we got in Brooklyn just now. Lady you go ahead and tell that fellow okay but keep away from those reporters. I will do all the talking to them that is to be done.

So my wife Ethel went back to the building and pounded on the boarded up window again and ses come on out Clem everything is all right and Clem came out and got in the old bucket with us and I drove him home and Petey Angelo followed on a motorcycle.

Thursday night Clem walked out of the front door of his house and Petey Angelo was setting on the door steps waiting for him and Clem ses well cop it is all over. Moms just died. Myrt is up there with her. Say cop I guess you can keep setting on my front door steps from now on.

MONDAY night six months later my wife Ethel ses to me Joe this is certainly the dearest neighborhood in Brooklyn. I do wish something would happen here once in a while and I ses Ethel they pushed Clem Chambers off at Sing Sing today for shooting that fellow that died the day after he gave himself up. I ses what was that fellow's name?

Ethel says his name was Coolidge. That's too bad about Clem. He was the only fellow in this neighborhood that ever had much pep but I am glad his Moms did not live to see how he ended up. Well maybe if he had not been unlucky in love he would have turned out different.

I ses Ethel I heard you crack something once before about Clem being in love with somebody. I ses I knew Clem Chambers pretty well all his life and I never knew him to be in love with anybody except himself and Ethel ses no Joe you did not know. In some ways Clem was a gentleman. He never told anybody but me.

I ses O then he loved you did he? I ses it is a fine thing for a man's wife to have a dirty crook like Clem Chambers in love with her and Ethel ses O Joe now I know you love me because you are jealous but Clem was not in love with me. If you must know Joe it was Petey Angelo's wife Myrt.



Miss Violet's got rhythm...

Miss Violet Parsons, she gives piano lessons, so I'm tryin' to talk her language.

"Miss Parsons," I says, "drivin' a car nowadays is like doin' that 'Big Apple' dance. It's all stop and go. I bet you stop and start a dozen times a day, goin' around givin' kids lessons.

"Well, when you do stop your car, your oil all drains off the movin' parts in your engine. Then you start up. Right there a lot of wear happens.

"That is, unless you use an oil that 'snaps into it'—flows fast, you know.

"Now, we got that kind of oil here," I says. "Golden Shell—and it's only a quarter.

"Gosh, Miss Violet, it just makes music in your motor!..."

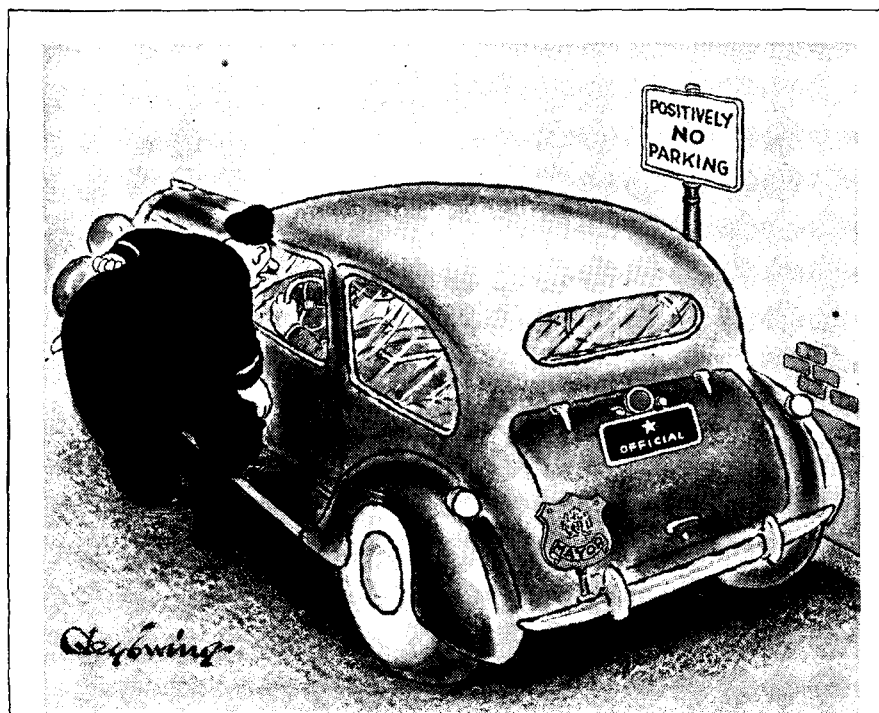
"All oil just looks gooey to me," she comes back.

* * *

Miss Parsons ain't mechanical, you see. But I ain't musical, so that makes us even, I guess. Anyway, Miss Violet's got rhythm in her motor since she took my advice and bought Golden Shell.

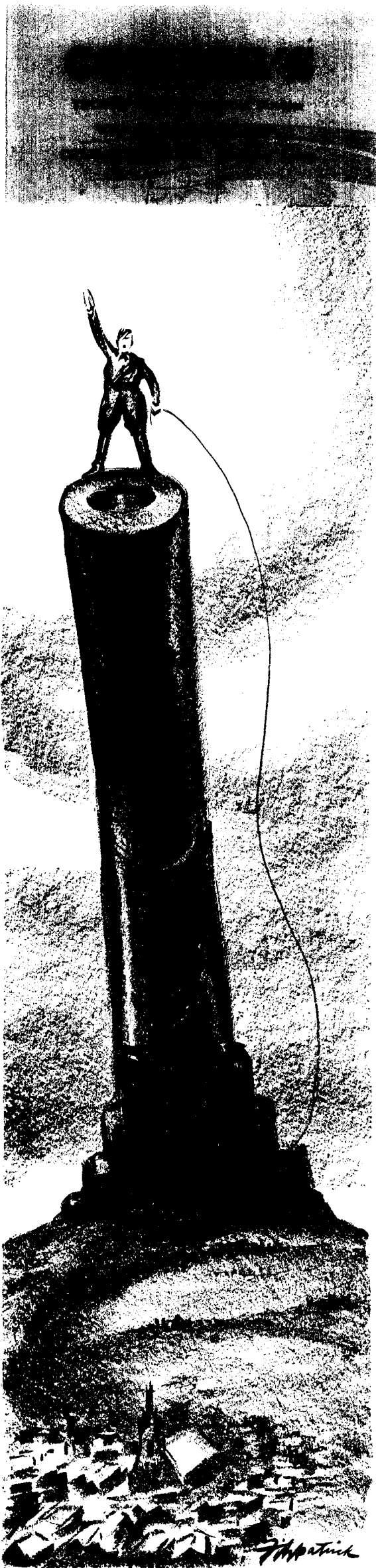
Sincerely,

Your Shell Dealer



"All right, big shot! I suppose yuh gonna tell me, you and th' mayor is pals!"

JAY IRVING



Blueprint of a Dictator

KURT VON SCHUSCHNIGG, the last Austrian chancellor, will be fortunate if he is not murdered by Nazis. His predecessor, Dollfuss, was shot down by Nazi bands just as Al Capone's gangsters pitilessly murdered their Chicago business rivals while prohibition was still the law of our land. Schuschnigg is said to have made himself unpopular with the new masters of Austria by expressing the opinion that Hitler is crazy.

Judged by democratic and American standards, much of the government of the dictator-ruled countries is intolerant and oppressive to the point of insanity. The Russian trials and executions seem utterly lunatic to normal Americans. Hitler's earlier blood purge, in which his former intimate friends and a recent chancellor of Germany were shot down in hot blood, seemed beyond the bounds of reason. We had our civil war and the British had theirs in the days of Cromwell, but even during those struggles murders of political opponents were never done. Once the wars were over, reconciliation began.

Fourteen years ago, while he was a prisoner, after the failure of his first revolution, Adolf Hitler wrote a remarkable book that explains some of this insanity. Hitler was thirty-five years old then and not a man of conventional education. He put down on paper the thoughts and feelings that surged through him. That book, "My Battle," forecast all too accurately the abrupt courses he followed when he had seized authority.

It is an incredible book. Hitler wrote out policies in the same spirit in which Mohammed must have composed the Koran. His assertions, however amazing, were true to him and to his followers because he uttered them.

Even in this book he began his pretension of acting as a god. For example, he says that as a young man in Vienna "I became a fanatical anti-Semite. . . . Thus did I now believe I must act in the sense of the Almighty Creator! By defending myself against the Jews I am fighting for the Lord's work."

Ordinarily when a man gets the delusion that he is God, or even Napoleon or Caesar, he is sent to a hospital for observation and treatment. Hitler, in contrast, was given supreme power to enforce his ideas.

The ideas he wrote down for the guidance of his followers amaze Americans. Here are some of his sayings, which actually determine the policies of his government:

"Democracy in the West today is the forerunner of Marxism which would be inconceivable without Democracy. . . . In its outward form of expression—the parliamentary system—it appeared as a monstrosity of filth and fire.

"One thing we must and may never forget: a majority can never be a substitute for a *Man*. It is always the advocate not only of the stupid but also of cowardly policies: and just as a hundred fools do not make one wise man, a heroic decision is not likely to come from a hundred cowards."

Believing these things, it is easy to see why

Hitler made Schuschnigg's plebiscite the occasion for invading and capturing Austria. A vote of the people is the highest crime in the eyes of a dictator who, by his own words, "must act in the sense of the Almighty Creator."

The important matter for those outside of Germany is what Hitler intends to do to them. The world knows what he has done and is doing to Austria. What about the other countries of Europe?

Hitler apparently would like to get on with Great Britain. For example, he said: "Cool and cautious consideration shows that it is these two states, England and Italy, whose own most natural interests are least in opposition to the conditions essential to the existence of the German nation, and are, in fact, to a certain extent, identical with them."

On the other hand, in his words: "France is by far the most terrible enemy of Germany." There are, also, those comments concerning the South Tirol, now in Italian hands: "It must be thoroughly understood that the lost lands will never be won back by solemn appeal to the good God, nor by pious hopes in the League of Nations, but only by the force of arms." Memory of this may explain the mixed emotions of the Italians over the capture of Austria. No wonder they needed reassurance from Mussolini.

Hitler was plain enough in his talk of expansion when he said:

"When we talk of new lands in Europe we are bound to think first of Russia and her border states. Fate itself seems to wish to give us our direction. When fate abandoned Russia to bolshevism, it robbed the Russian people of the educated class which once created and guaranteed their existence as a state. . . . The immense empire is ripe for collapse." Czechoslovakia is practically a border state to Russia and is therefore envied. So too is Poland.

The justification for invasion, he says, is power. Here are his words:

"No nation on earth holds a square yard of territory by any right derived from Heaven. Frontiers are made and altered by human agency alone. The fact that a nation succeeds in acquiring an unfair share of territory is no superior reason for its being respected forever. It merely proves the strength of the conqueror and the weakness of those who lose by it. This strength alone constitutes the right to possess."

Bitter and crude principles these. Yet for the time the man who preaches them is, by his very recklessness, the most powerful individual in Europe. Not in long generations has one man had such power over so many people.

That the German people who, historically, contributed so much idealism to the world through the great musicians, scientists, philosophers, poets and teachers of religion, should in this present day have fallen under the domination of a Hitler is one of the great ironies of history. Ultimately, of course, the doctrine of pitiless power will be rejected by the German people for principles better adapted to civilized living. Meantime, Hitler is the number-one problem of the European world.