

Wicked Little Willem

By Frederick Hazlitt Brennan

ILLUSTRATED BY HARDIE GRAMATKY



DEAR children, once upon a time—just last month, to be strictly truthful—there lived in Holland a wicked little boy named Willem Kampfeldt. He lived with his father, Jan, and his grandmother, Mrs. Dencker. They had a clean house on a tidy street in the village of Domhelder, which is twenty miles from Rotterdam.

Willem's mother, his sister and his two older brothers were dead. The Kampfeldts had been living in Rotterdam when Mr. Hitler sent his bombing planes to punish that city for defying him. Mr. Hitler's bombing planes killed Mrs. Kampfeldt, Kathie, Paul and Jan, Jr. Mr. Hitler said he was very sorry that the Dutch government had forced him to do this. Of course, that should have ended the matter. But little Willem hated the Germans. As all good children know, it is wrong to hate anyone.

Little Willem hated the Germans so much that he would not smile and wave his hand when Mr. Hitler sent Colonel von Bock and a regiment of soldiers to Domhelder. The Germans moved into barracks that Dutch soldiers once had occupied. Colonel von Bock issued orders that Willem's father, Jan, and other Dutchmen in Domhelder must work fourteen hours every day at the town's one factory. It had been an automobile factory, but now Mr. Hitler wanted the Dutchmen to make tanks for his army.

Old Jan Kampfeldt cursed about this and set a bad example to little Willem. Children tend to copy their elders. Little Willem did not actually say any swear words, but he hated the Germans harder than ever. He talked to Hans and Jon and Peter and Klass and Dirk, his playmates at school, and they began to hate the Germans also. Was not this a wicked thing to do? Worse than that, little Willem had a dog named Storkie. He was named Storkie because his legs were too long for his body. And do you know what little Willem did? He taught Storkie to hate Germans and growl and bark at Colonel von Bock's soldiers.

Now, it became the custom for Colonel von Bock to parade his troops into the public square of Domhelder every Friday morning at seven o'clock. Colonel von Bock marched his soldiers from their barracks down the street where Willem lived and into the public square. The first morning they did this Willem and Hans and Jon and Peter and Klass and Dirk put paper orange flowers in the buttonholes of their jackets and marched along the sidewalk. They mocked the German goose-step.

COLONEL VON BOCK stopped his soldiers and said, "Reduce the bread ration of every family on this block one half!"

The parents of Hans and Jon and Peter and Klass and Dirk were much upset by having their bread ration cut in half. They forbade little Willem's playmates to mock the Germans any more. But old Jan Kampfeldt did not punish little Willem.

"That must have been funny, little Willem," he said. "I wish I had been there to see it."

How sad it is to see parents encouraging their children to be smarty-pants. The next time Colonel von Bock and his soldiers marched toward the public square, little Willem and his dog Storkie were right out there on the sidewalk. Little Willem carried his small Dutch flag. On Storkie's stub of a tail, he had tied a large campaign button with the picture of Mr. Hitler.

Colonel von Bock stopped his soldiers and said, "Catch that boy and that dog!"

And where do you think she found that wicked little Willem? He was in the street, putting the finishing touches to a snow lady

Willem and Storkie did not run.

A German soldier collared little Willem and another soldier collared Storkie.

"Shoot his dog," Colonel von Bock said.

An officer pulled out his big pistol and shot Storkie down dead.

Little Willem was too far gone in wickedness to cry. He picked Storkie up in his arms, when the Germans had marched on, and carried him home. Little Willem buried Storkie in the back yard and put the Dutch flag at the head of Storkie's grave.

But, even now, Jan Kampfeldt neglected to punish little Willem.

"Hitler tied to your dog's tail, eh?" he said. "Good, good. Storkie died a heroic death, and we should have had to destroy him anyway. Winter is here and we cannot spare food for dogs."

THERE was a heavy snowfall that week. Early the next Friday morning, while it was still dark, Grandma Dencker found little Willem's bed empty. "Little Willem must not taunt Colonel von Bock again!" Grandma Dencker said to herself.

Putting on her shawl, Grandma Dencker hurried into the street. Domhelder was blacked-out because of British air raids. Poor Grandma Dencker could hardly see three feet ahead of her nose. But she floundered along the snow-filled street, knowing that she must find him before daylight and Colonel von Bock came.

And where do you think she found that wicked little Willem? He was in the middle of their street, but down the block near the entrance to the public square. He was putting the finishing touches to a snow lady. In the first gray light of dawn, Grandma Dencker peered dumfounded at the snow lady.

"Our good Queen Wilhelmina!" she gasped. "Oh, no, little Willem. It is a sacrilege!"

Wicked little Willem grabbed his grandmother by the arm and pulled her away. "We must hurry home, Grandma," he said. "Do not ask me why."

They left the snow statue of good Queen Wilhelmina standing squarely in the middle of the street and facing the German line of march.

This time, little Willem did not go out of the house when Colonel von Bock and his men tramped by. The wicked child had worked half the night in snow and he was suffering severely from chilblains.

Poor Grandma Dencker had just put little Willem's feet to soak in balsam water when there was a tremendous explosion. It shook the house. It shook the windmill.

"Dearie me, what has happened?" quavered Grandma Dencker.

Now, indeed, had little Willem reached almost the final depths of depravity.

"I am not sure, Grandma," he said, "but I think Colonel von Bock kicked our dear Queen Wilhelmina."

Of course, dear children, this iniquity could not continue unpunished.

Wicked little Willem's father, Jan, was beside himself with anger when he reached home. He grabbed little Willem by the ear and led him into the woodshed.

"Tell me the truth, son," roared Jan Kampfeldt, "you stole my bomb out of the attic, didn't you?"

Little Willem did not falter. "Yes, Father, I did," he admitted, without shame or remorse, "and I put it in Queen Wilhelmina."

Now the wrath of a stern father, at last aroused to his son's waywardness, descended on little Willem.

"Dunderhead!" he bellowed. "Only a mere colonel and eighty-seven men dead or wounded. I was saving that bomb to blow up the factory. You are a bad little boy!"

He spanked Willem good and hard.

A SHORT STORY
COMPLETE ON THIS PAGE

Double your Holiday Enjoyment with the

"bonus year"

TEN HIGH

Like grapes picked at the
peak of perfection

TEN HIGH is
RIPENED JUST RIGHT
year after year,
after year after year!

THIS Christmas—even you old TEN HIGH drinkers are in for a surprise when you taste the "bonus year" TEN HIGH. It has the goodness you've always enjoyed in this glorious bourbon—plus the flavor-bonus of an added birthday. Yes, there's a tastable *extra* deliciousness that *Doubles Your Enjoyment!*



This whiskey
is 4 years old



Straight Bourbon Whiskey. 86 proof
Copr. 1941, Hiram Walker & Sons Inc., Peoria, Ill.

"THE RIBBERS"

by Glen Fleischmann



Not "TOO LITTLE"

IN four tragic words is written the epitaph of most of the peaceable and freedom-loving countries of Europe.

Because there was "too little too late" there is neither peace nor freedom in Belgium, in Holland, in Norway or in Greece.

Because of "too little too late," the French have neither liberty nor equality; the Serbs are hunted down in their own mountains; the Poles, Czechs and Slovenes are learning that the only alternative to freedom is slavery.

From such bitter lessons America is now seeking to learn.

We propose not to do too little. We are striving not to be too late.

And the first chill fact we must face is that neither can be accomplished in any lax or self-indulgent spirit.

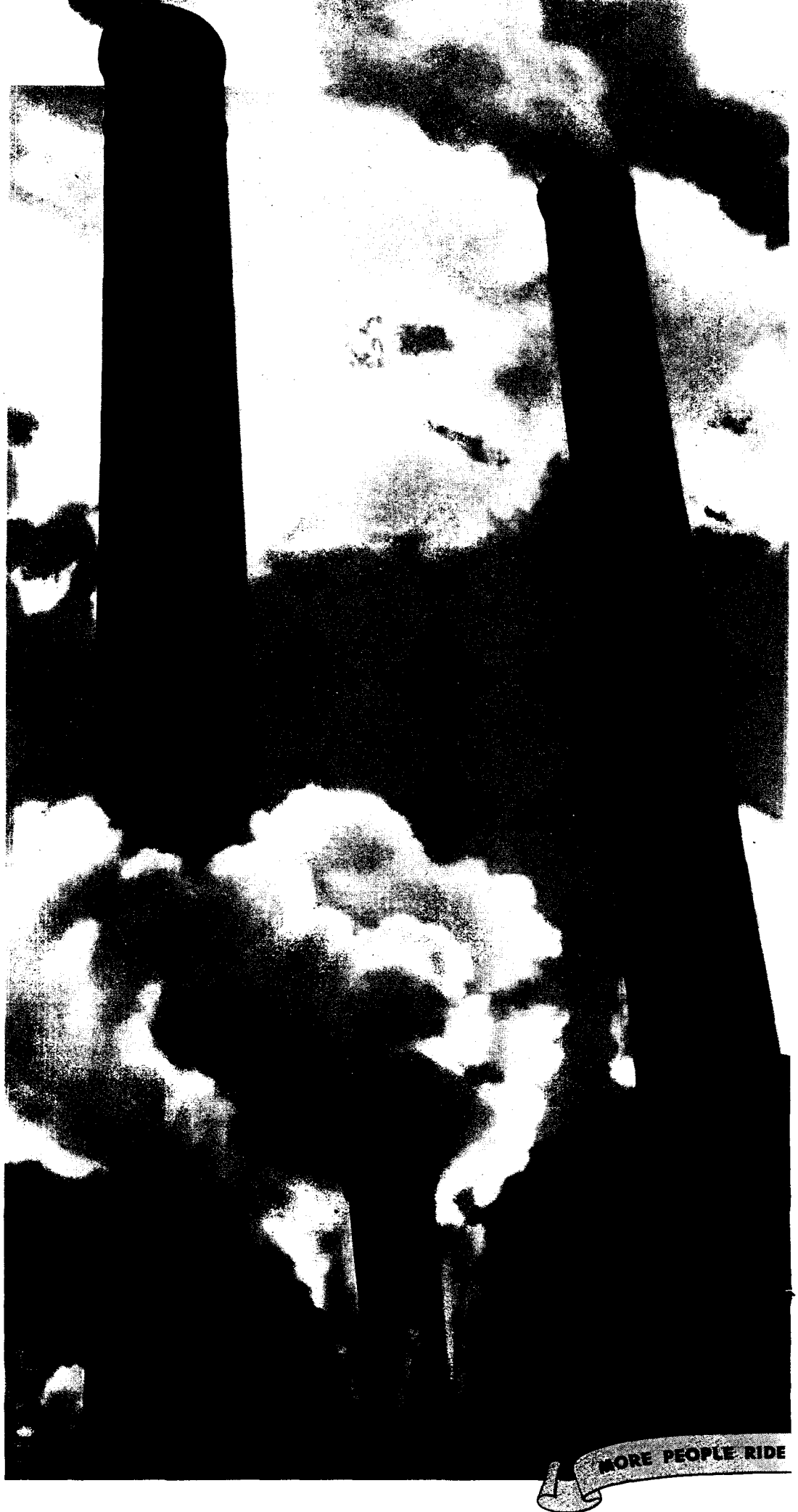
To be specific, we have here at Goodyear adequate facilities for supplying all your normal needs in tires and tubes, and hundreds of other useful rubber products.

It would have been easy, by peaking up our accustomed activities, to add to that peacetime production a considerable volume of military rubber goods.

But Goodyear realized months ago that "considerable" might be too little, and it might come too late.

We recognized that the only sure way to produce enough and to produce in time was to establish the rigid rule, "*Defense First!*" — that both time and materials used in manufacturing peacetime wares must be adjusted to that.

So today Goodyear's first concern is the production of bulletproof tires and bullet-



MORE PEOPLE RIDE

not "TOO LATE"

sealing gasoline tanks, half-track and tank treads, barrage balloons and airships, rubber lifeboats and pontoons, and scores of other Army and Navy needs—in quantities required for America's impregnable defense.

As things appear now, we do not believe this all-out defense program will interfere seriously with your ability to get tires and tubes. There should be enough in all sizes to meet essential civilian needs.

It may happen at times, that your Goodyear dealer will not be able to supply your particular size instantly. But if you'll be patient, he'll be able to get it for you.

If you do need tires now, you'll be wise to get Goodyear's first-line "G-3" All-Weather — because tests prove it averages thousands of miles longer tread wear.

You'll be wise, too, to equip your tires with LifeGuards — Goodyear's

modern safety successor to inner tubes. With LifeGuards you can drive your present tires "as is," or retreaded, many months longer than normally, without danger from blowouts.

Putting LifeGuards in new "G-3" All-Weathers, in your present Goodyears or tires of any other make, is the best way we know of stretching out your tires' useful life safely.

And stretching your tires' life right now helps stretch the rubber supply, which in turn helps make sure that in arming America there will not be too little and it will not come too late.

For your own protection, buy
the world's standard of value

GOODYEAR
"G3"

ALL-WEATHER

—the tire with 19 feet of
grip in every foot of tread



—and put
LIFEGUARDS
in them

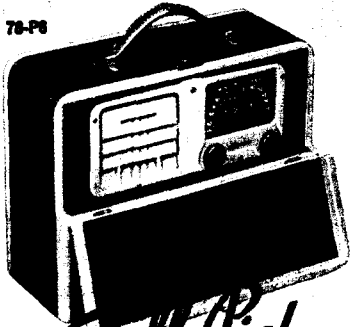
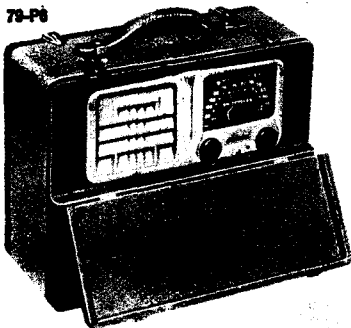
The LifeGuard consists of a reserve safety tire within an extra-sturdy tube. Should casing and tube be injured, the LifeGuard's inner tire carries you to a safe, easy, straight-line stop.



All-Weather, LifeGuard—T. M.'s The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company

Our New Army

Continued from page 17



A Swell Pick-up
FOR CHRISTMAS!

Dazzling beauty! Thrilling tone! Sparkling performance! Actually it's the most powerful portable radio built. Plays everywhere... even in so-called "dead spots." Super sensitive, super selective because of tuned RF stage, 3 section gang condenser. Has deluxe 2-tone simulated leather case with hinged cover and back. Ask your Admiral dealer to show you these sensational values.

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training before their flight lessons begin. Up to this time, embryo Air Force officers hopped into airplanes almost as soon as they had drawn their uniforms at a Primary Flight School; now at replacement centers they undergo an orientation period plus instruction in everything from physical drill to signal communications. Idea is to prepare cadets mentally and physically for their flight training and to instruct them in the duties of a junior officer.

Now half completed, the center will ultimately take care of 4,700 men. First batch of 1,972 moved in a month ago and 2,000 more are due in a couple of weeks. Originally scheduled to be finished by November 30th, a change in plans added thirty buildings to the project and the completion time has been changed to February 15th. Still in the blueprint stage is a 750-bed hospital group of forty-one buildings. Construction isn't the only activity which is at the feverish point. Officers who will command and instruct are snowed under with work, Mess Officer Capt. L. R. Kemp is faced with the problem of trying to outguess the contractors on completion of the kitchens and mess halls, and Commandant Major Sidney D. Grubbs is sitting on top of the whole works harvesting gray hairs by the handful.

Cadets with any prowess in track and field events have something to work for at any of the Gulf Coast Air Corps Training Center schools. An ornate athletic trophy, donated by Hollywood's Brian Donlevy, who spent some weeks at Randolph Field during the filming of *I Wanted Wings*, will be awarded every ten weeks to one of the GCACTC outfits. Competition is for cadets only, officers and enlisted men being taboo. Athletes with reputations won't give any one school a particular advantage because the judges don't give a hang about individual records. At least ninety-five per cent of each field's cadets have to try their hands (and feet) at the football throw, seventy five-yard dash, hop-step-and-jump, spud race and soccer punt. All times and distances will be totaled and averaged and telegraphed to Director of Physical Training Harold L. Berridge at Randolph Field, whose office will compile results and ship the trophy off for a spell at the winning school. The whole project is in line with the Air Corps requirements that cadets take an hour of exercise daily, so there's no danger of its bottlenecking flight training.

UTAH

WENDOVER BOMBING AND GUNNERY RANGE. We will now go into some detail concerning this unusual 1,800,000-acre spot, briefly touched upon in this page for November 29th and constituting the biggest and best general bombing range in the world. By next spring squadrons from all over the country will sit down on the acres and miles of new concrete runways at this field, a subpost of Fort Douglas, for concentrated practice. The vast, sun-baked range of sand dunes, sagebrush and salt is being used now by Salt Lake and Boise air-base units which fly over loaded with bombs made out of ninety-five pounds of sand and five pounds of black powder in a tin cylinder—just enough to make the hit. Eventually, all practice and real bombs will be loaded on the planes at Wendover itself.

Death Valley was never more treacherous than the salt flats. It takes four weeks to six months to train a range man. The truck drivers—who don't hold pilots' licenses but should—are the pick

of the Army, because range crews that have to go seventy-five miles to reach and work on a target in one day can't mosey along. They make their own roads and travel them with the throttles of reconnaissance cars and trucks pushed all the way down. The water level is either a foot under or a few inches over the surface and when a vehicle breaks through the thin salt crust the wheels go out of sight fast unless the gearjammer knows what he's doing and does it in a flash. The ground won't absorb moisture; when water drains off the mountains, brackish lakes miles in area and only a few inches deep form over the flats and the wind moves the lakes around continually.

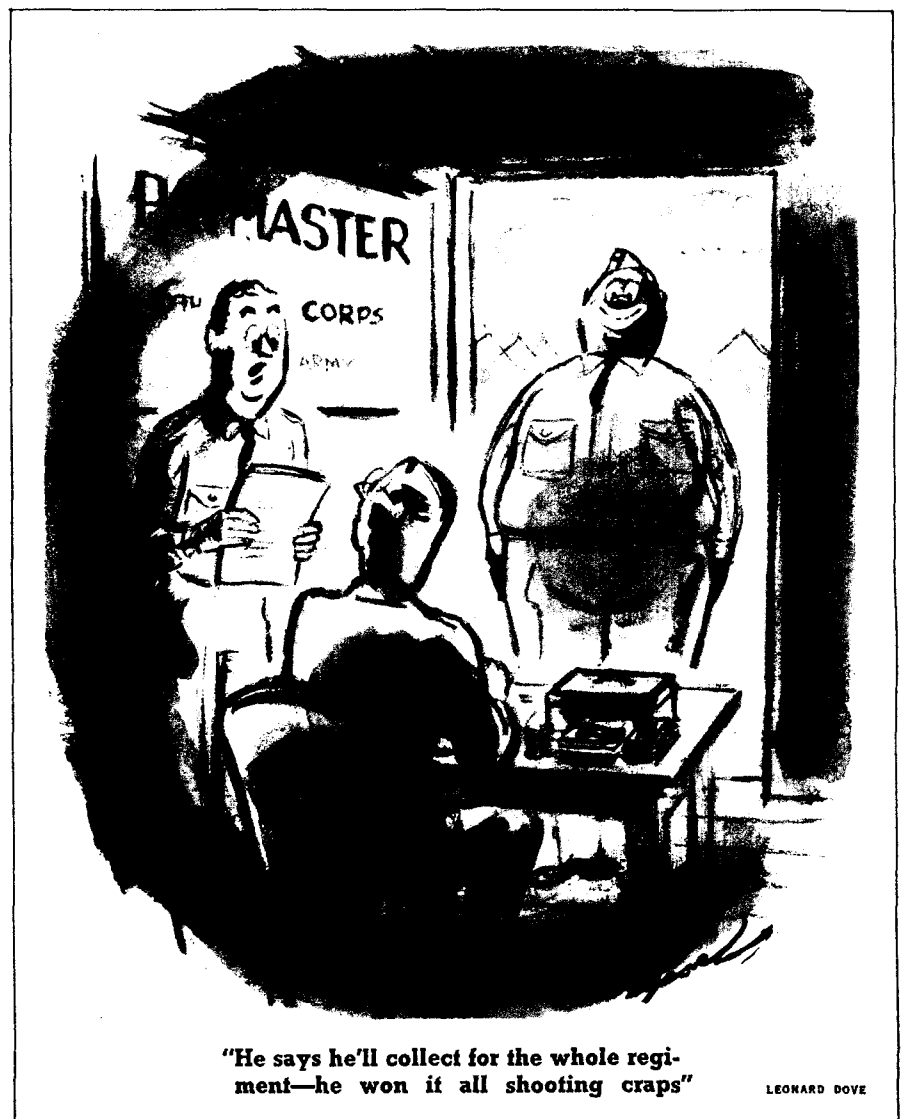
Even the crack drivers frequently get stuck but "A vehicle isn't stuck," says Staff Sgt. E. S. Gregory, "until the windshield wiper won't work. When only the fenders show, that's just slowing down." Prime object is to keep moving, even though that consists of crawling through soft sand at the rate of a few inches per hour. When a range crew goes out a return time is set. If the time passes, a rescue squad girds up its gear and gets going, fast. Sgt. Gregory learned to respect the desert the hard way. With Sgt. Milton C. Bratley he walked nearly twenty-five miles in eight hours from a stuck truck under a broiling sun without water. It was the first time he had ever gone out without filling the fifteen-gallon emergency water tank, and he isn't going to do it again. When the rescue squad picked them up the sergeants had swollen tongues, blistered feet, nearly paralyzed legs and disturbing delusions. It was on just such a trip into new territory that Sgt. Gregory's truck kept bogging down. "I know

we can't go any farther," a private wailed as he labored to debog the vehicle. "The truck knows we can't go any farther. But Sgt. Gregory doesn't know we can't go any farther."

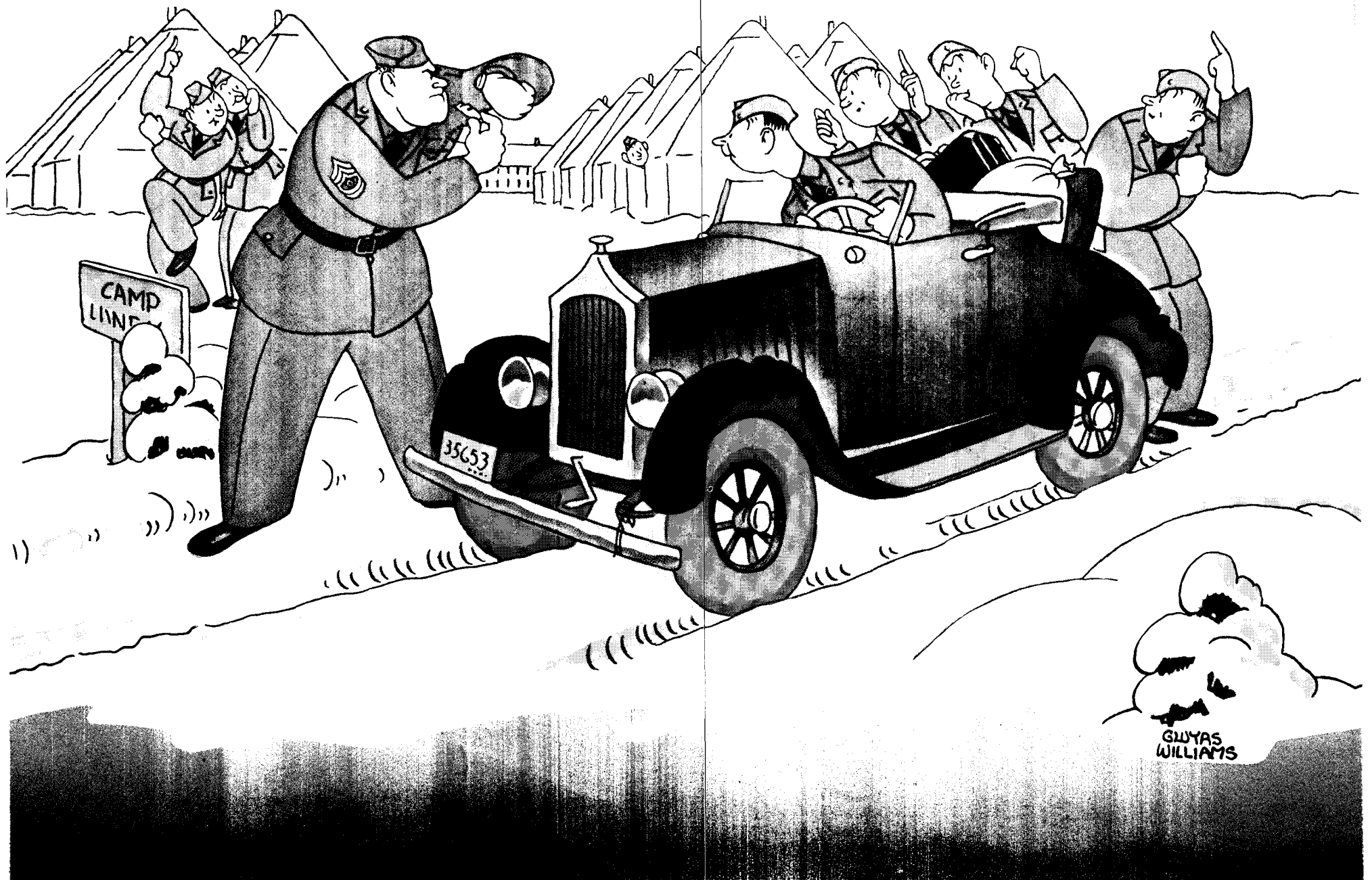
Job of the range crew is to build and maintain the uniform-size targets, the outer ring, of waste oil on cinders, being 500 feet across. In the center of a daylight target (fifty-foot bull's-eye) they put a worn-out tent, which gets torn to shreds. Flares light up the target circles at night. The crews are sold on the accuracy of the bombing outfits and say that even from a height of 18,000 feet the released bombs rarely land outside the targets. Crews know in advance which targets will be bombed but even that doesn't keep new men from getting slight cases of the meemies. For maintenance reasons the targets are grouped in twos and threes, the individual targets being several miles apart. Airplanes at high altitudes release bombs as far as six miles from the target but a man has to work with a range crew for a while to get over the feeling he's going to be blasted by a stray egg.

The Wendover detachment is an individual bunch, self-reliant and doing all right. Nine out of ten are selectees, the officers are Reservists and full strength will be about 200 officers and men. Wendover is a railroad town boasting a 200 population on the Utah-Nevada line, 130 miles from Salt Lake City. On the Nevada side, two blocks from camp, are gambling casinos and bars for the guys with dough; the others scratch around for gold in near-by abandoned mines.

The whole setup is just a gigantic hunk of desert right now but it may prove to be one of the vital defense points of the country some day. G. W.



LEONARD DOVE



... he's using that fast-starting Texaco Sky Chief gasoline

IN these days when Private Mullarkey and all the rest of us are trying to get more from our cars in performance and long life, have you ever realized how a fast-starting gasoline like Texaco SKY CHIEF can help?

SKY CHIEF's fast starting is not just a matter of dependable winter service ... it means the saving of gasoline that slow starting wastes ... it helps to keep batteries lively and long lived ... it also helps prevent the excessive crankcase oil dilution that causes

engine wear. That, in a nutshell, is the reason this luxury gasoline is no longer a luxury. It *protects* your car.

At a time when, as individuals and as a nation, we are conserving our resources, these things are important.

Try SKY CHIEF for its quick winter starting...for its economy. Remember it costs no more than other premium gasolines.

You're Welcome AT

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SKY CHIEF sells for about half the price you paid in 1920 for the then regular gasoline, illustrating the continued success of the petroleum industry in providing the public with better products at lower prices. ** Sky Chief is available in all 48 States and in every Province in the Dominion of Canada.

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FRED ALLEN every Wednesday Night.
See your local newspaper for time and station.

METROPOLITAN OPERA. Complete broadcasts of great operas with famous stars every Saturday afternoon. Consult newspapers for time and stations.

Seagram's... GIFTS OF



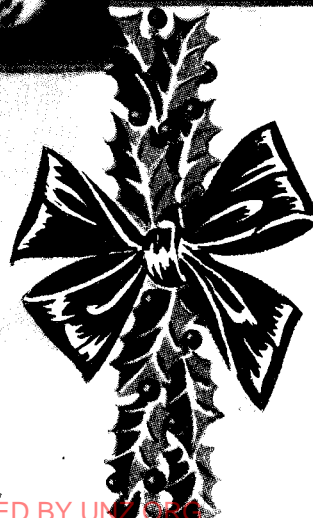
SEAGRAM'S 5 CROWN

A delightfully mild-tasting whiskey... Seagram keeps the toughness out...blends extra pleasure in. Seagram's 5 Crown is ideal for a highball, Manhattan or Old Fashioned. Always a welcome gift, it is packaged in a cheerful Christmas box.

SEAGRAM'S 7 CROWN

Rich and full-flavored—without a trace of heaviness, this exquisite whiskey is delicious in a highball, a Christmas egg nog, punch or a Tom and Jerry. Here is Seagram's finest American whiskey—encased in a stunning Christmas gift box.

SEAGRAM'S 5 CROWN BLENDED WHISKEY. 72½% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS. 86.8 PROOF
SEAGRAM'S 7 CROWN BLENDED WHISKEY. 65% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS. 86.8 PROOF



A Memory of Christmas

I can see him now a-sitting in
the chair he loved so well,
As he opened up his presents, he would
grin, for he could tell
By the gurgling in the package that
our gift was no surprise
And he showed his hearty pleasure
by the twinkle in his eyes.

He would fun
as he pull
And he'd give
a funny lit
"Well, for god
and he'd l
As we gather
for a frien

ONLY THE FINEST IS FIT

GOOD TASTE ♦ ♦ SINCE 1857



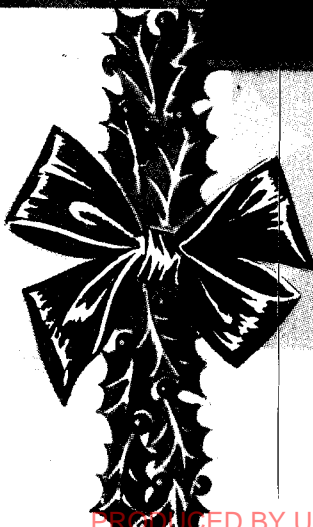
As Long, Long Ago

he wrapper
on off
tuckle and

s, it's Seagram's!"
ottle up
he table
cup.

And even though that Yuletide scene
goes back so long ago,
It seems like only yesterday—and
surely I should know
For it happens *every* Christmas as
the years go rolling by,
We *still* give gifts of Seagram's, yes,
but Grandpa now is I.

ENOUGH FOR CHRISTMAS



SEAGRAM'S V.O. CANADIAN WHISKY
Here is imported whisky at its finest. 7
years old. The perfect highball whisky,
delicate and fragrant. A magnificent
Christmas gift—presented in a luxurious
container which is cleverly designed to
serve as a glove, jewelry, or cigarette box.

SEAGRAM'S ANCIENT BOTTLE GIN
A *Naturally Golden Gin*...only gin of its
kind ever made in America. Smooth in a
"Golden Martini"—or in tall gin drinks.
The distinguished "ancient" bottle is
presented in a glistening, transparent,
specially designed holiday wrapping.

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SEAGRAM'S V.O. CANADIAN WHISKY. A BLEND OF RARE SELECTED WHISKIES. 86.8 PROOF
SEAGRAM'S ANCIENT BOTTLE GIN. DISTILLED FROM GRAIN. 90 PROOF

Alder Gulch

Continued from page 20

three stopped at the shed and leaned against it. "This the place?" asked Marshland.

"Sure," said Ives.

Boots cracked against loose rocks on the other side of the shed and a shape circled the shed's corner, lightly advancing. The shape stood before them, medium and slim—and Henry Plummer's voice said, "All right?"

"No," said Ives. "He had nothing on him but a single eagle."

"He wouldn't leave the country without his dust."

"Maybe he sent it out by express."

"No," said Plummer. "Clubfoot's watched Barney all the time. Barney didn't send it that way." He remained still, doing his own calculating. "But there was a man in here tonight who stopped off at the stage office. He carried a slicker into the stage office. It appeared to be heavy. When I went in, the slicker was open on the counter."

"Tall man?" said Ives.

"Name was Pierce. You know him?"

"Yes," said Ives. "I know him."

"It is probably in the stage office then," said Plummer calmly. "But we can't afford to touch it there. We'll wait and watch. I'll handle that. You boys go back to the Gulch."

"Where's Pierce now?" asked Ives.

"Haven't seen him around," said Plummer. He turned away. A few feet off, he paused to say softly: "About Pierce—"

"I'll take care of him," said Ives.

RISING before daylight, Pierce made the long run into Virginia City by three o'clock. When he reached Wallace Street he saw Steele. The doctor hailed him.

"Where's Barney? I saw him last night and he seemed in trouble."

"Killed on the Bannack road last night."

The doctor showed some amount of shock. "He knew it was coming. Come to my wickiup. I've got something to show you."

Pierce left the horse and returned to Steele's tent. Steele got a huge Bible from a box and opened it, producing a single sheet of paper. "This is what Barney left with me last night," he said.

"I, Barney Morris, sound of mind but uncertain of the future, am about to leave the Gulch and go to my home in Ohio. I ought to be in Bannack tomorrow night. If I am not I can be considered dead. In which event I empower the judge of Fairweather District to make the following disposition of my claim, Number Fourteen above Discovery. This claim is to be given to one Jeff Pierce, he to have it entirely, to work it fitly and in proper season; he to send half of what he pans out to my wife, Mary Morris, Centerville, Ohio."

"BARNEY MORRIS"

THE first shacks and tents in the Gulch began near the junction of Granite and Alder Creek. As soon as Ben Scoggins reached this spot he stood up in the wagon and began to sing out, "Some-thin' fancy to go with beans and bacon! Sardines straight from the coast! Dollar a throw! Come and get it!"

As he had shrewdly judged, there was never enough of anything in a new camp. Men came out of the creek at him; they ran down the hill slopes. Tying down the reins to the brake handle—the horses moving and stopping and moving—Ben disbursed sardines from the tail gate all the way up from Junction settlement. He was sold out by the time he topped Daylight's ridge and

looked down upon Virginia City. In his pockets and in his pouch he had four thousand dollars more or less in gold and coin and dust. This was the middle of the afternoon with sunlight making a pretty sight of Virginia and the upper Gulch. He was a blond young man standing in the wagon with his hatbrim jiggling as the wagon took the grade, smiling a rawboned smile at a good and just world; and even in smiling, not forgetting to cast a competent glance at the possibilities around him. Coming into Wallace—driving his outfit through the congestion of other wagons and lumber piles and loose horses—he paused by the scaffolding of an incomplete structure. There was a man standing by with the attitude of business about him, whereupon Ben Scoggins, always with a mind to business, hailed him:

"Need any haulin' done?"

The man turned as though struck.

"Up the Gulch on a claim."

He noticed she left off smiling when Pierce was mentioned. There was something out of order here; whereupon he covered up the awkwardness by going easily on to other things: "Nice day—nice year. Well, nice. See you again." He cut around Wallace into another street of tents, heading back toward Bannack. Near the edge of town he passed a blacksmith shop and got a call from a man there.

"Want to sell that outfit?"

"Whoa," said Ben Scoggins. "Whoa."

He braked the wagon and settled on the seat. "I'll sell anything, any time. Buyin' and sellin' my trade. What you offerin'?"

"What you want?"

"No," said Scoggins, idle and innocent, "you set a figure."

Fifteen minutes later he had concluded a deal. By this time the open-air

and, as he had expected, found a line of newcomers camped beside the creek. He picked out a wagon and found its owner. "Want to sell?" he asked.

At full dark he had made his deal. Possessed of a new wagon and team he continued down the Gulch, not really remembering he had no supper. The day had been good and profitable. Now he struck out for Bannack, his cheerful whistle making an uneven, bouncing echo on the narrow rock walls of the lower Gulch.

OLLIE ROUNDS returned to Tanner's saloon and stood at the bar to enjoy his before-supper drink. The big tent now began to fill and the poker tables were all operating. Marshland loitered near the door. Ketchum and George Ives sat in a game, and Will Temperton dealt at another; and it was on Temperton that Ollie placed his interest, out of a continuing curiosity. Temperton had an unbearably front; everything struck that grave, steel-smooth face and slid aside without making impression. He was a sad man whose sadness, Ollie thought, came from his own defects of temper. Somewhere in Temperton, as in himself, there was a wire down, so that all his life was out of rhyme, and badness and goodness warred. Men were like this. Only once in a rare while did Rounds find someone in whom the purposes of living were clear and uncomplicated and sweet. Those men he envied because they had something he did not have, never would have.

Ketchum and Ives came to the bar for a drink. Ollie Rounds took his second whisky and shook out dust from his gold pouch to pay for it; and left the saloon.

He went down to the tent restaurant and had supper. Coming out, Ollie saw Diana Castle leaving the back side of the restaurant with Lily Beth. Lily Beth had on an apron and there was a streak of flour in her hair; she looked tired but she looked contented. Ollie Rounds, who had a way with people, drew a smile from her and fell in step beside Diana.

"That was good apple pie I had to-night," he said.

"I made fifty-three today. Forty apple, ten apricot, three prune."

"Get a little tired of wrestling over that stove?"

"Why should I be tired?"

He smiled without his usual irony. "I guess it is the way you look at the world. Whenever I do something I keep asking myself, 'Why should I be doing this? What's the good of it?' And then I quit working." He gave her a quick glance.

"Hear about Jeff?"

THERE was a lessening of the warmth of her eyes, a tightening at the edge of her mouth. She seemed to harden herself to what he might say. "No," she said, "what is it?"

"The road agents didn't find any money on Barney Morris because Jeff carried it through to Bannack. The road agents have got Jeff marked for that."

She said in clipped words, "I'm sorry. He deserves to be let alone. He wants to be let alone."

Ollie Rounds lifted his hat and moved slowly to the lower end of Van Buren Street. A pair of men stepped out of a space between tents, and one of them said, "Hold on, Rounds," and he jerked around and saw Ives and Ketchum before him.

Ives said, "Walk along with us, friend."

"Maybe—maybe not," Ollie Rounds



"I had a big day at the store today. The kids asked me for \$293,541 worth of things"

BEN ROTH

"Yes," he said. "There's a whipsaw outfit working over near Bannack. What'll you charge to freight lumber here?"

"How far's Bannack?"

"Seventy miles."

"Two days each way. Four days a round trip." He was mildly thoughtful and he gave the man a swift size-up. "Hundred and fifty dollars."

"Yes?" said the man, then shrugged his shoulders. "Everybody's so crazy about digging they got no time for day-work. All right."

"All right," said Ben Scoggins, and drove on. To himself he added, "Might as well be workin' while I'm lookin' and listenin'. Never hurts to keep busy."

He had turned into Wallace Street and now saw Diana Castle coming out of the tent restaurant. He lifted a strong whoop into the day. "Well, you're here!"

"Yes," said Diana, smiling because he smiled.

Scoggins reached under the wagon seat and pulled out four cans of sardines. "You got a birthday coming?"

"Next December," she said.

He said, "Happy birthday," and presented her with the sardines. "Where's the tall, hungry-looking fellow?"

transaction had attracted half a dozen idle men, one of which was Ollie Rounds. Going inside the stable—which was a log house with a brush roof—to consummate the sale, young Scoggins gravely winked at Ollie Rounds. In a little while he came out of the stable. Rounds joined him and they walked on alone. "You're here, too," commented Scoggins. "Got a claim?"

"Never liked to shovel," said Ollie Rounds. "Every time I see you, you're dickering. Bound to get rich, ain't you?"

"Wouldn't wonder."

Ollie Rounds gave Ben Scoggins a direct look. "Don't pack your money in your hip pocket, Ben. This is a tough camp."

SCOGGINS searched and weighed Ollie with his candid glance. "You always got an ear out for that sort of thing, Ollie. I thank you for the warnin'. But," and he added this in a careful way, "it would be better for you not to take such an interest in the shady side. Some day it might sort of draw you down."

He went on down the road and up over Daylight Grade. Striking through the sinuous and lusty course of the Gulch he reached Junction at twilight

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answered. He was rooted in his tracks. His eyes turned blacker and his face grew thin; he held his stiff smile against them. "What for?"

"No harm," said Ives, and stepped beside him. Ketchum was already at Ollie Rounds' other elbow; and the pressure of these two men moved him forward along the walk. They passed through the shuttered lights, they moved out of the heavy crowd. At the foot of Van Buren, in the shadows, Ives turned. "You been flashing a poke in Tanner's, friend. You're no miner. I'd like to see that poke."

"No," answered Ollie Rounds, "I guess not."

George Ives said, "Don't be tough. You recall what happened to Barney Morris? Let's see that poke."

Ollie Rounds knew he was in great, immediate danger. He lifted the poke from his pocket and weighed it in his hand. His thoughts then were swift and calculating; he balanced his life in his mind and suddenly made his choice and gave the poke to Ketchum. As he did so he took a slow, easy step backward. It went unnoticed. Ketchum dropped his head to look at the pouch, and George Ives turned half around, also to look.

"That's the pouch, George. The fellow had it in Tanner's the other night."

Ives said, "How'd you come by this—" and turned, and quit speaking. Ollie Rounds had his gun lifted on both men.

SURPRISE and irritation went in ruffled waves across George Ives' face, and afterward it smoothed carefully out. Ketchum's eyes flared wild instantly and he seemed to strain against his caution.

"I saw Rube watching him in the saloon," said Rounds. "When he went out, Rube started after him. I got there first, Rube. Hand the poke back."

Rube stretched his arm, half length, and his body dropped perceptibly, in the attitude of tension. Rounds murmured, "Pull out of that, Rube. Nobody'd be sorry to see you dead. I'd be glad of the chance to drop you. I'm no easy miner. I haven't got a drop of pity in me and when it comes to rough-and-tumble I know as many tricks as you. Maybe"—and his voice held a dry, swinging tune—"I'd better do it now. I think I'm going to have to watch you. You damned cannibal."

"What's that?" said Ives, now interested.

"You don't know about Rube?" said Rounds. "The man got caught in a blizzard up on the Snake and ate his partner."

Ketchum's eyes glowed and grew dark, and glowed again. His rage remained, furious and inhuman and in-burning. But he never spoke. It was Ives who said, "He means what he says, Rube."

Ketchum straightened and extended his arm full length with the poke. Rounds took the poke and put it in his pocket. "All right," he said. "All right."

"Now I'll say my piece," put in Ives, still the calm master of himself. "You've cut in on our game. You're an outsider."

"Always liked it that way," said Ollie Rounds.

"It won't work here," said Ives. "This gulch is for our crowd to work. A man that ain't in our crowd just can't operate."

"So far I'm doing well enough."

Ives held his attitude of amusement. "Listen, friend. There's forty men up and down this gulch I can drop a word to. You don't know who they are and you can't watch 'em. When I drop the word, you're dead before breakfast."

"You're the boss, then?" said Rounds. "I'm the boss in this gulch," answered Ives.

"All right," said Ollie Rounds.

George Ives gave Rounds a prolonged stare. "You're cool, friend. You might do well with us."

"I do well wherever I find myself," said Ollie Rounds.

"Yes, I think you might do well. Keep the poke. It is chicken feed."

"I'll keep it. I'll keep whatever I take."

"That's all right, too," said George Ives. "A man must look out for himself. But when we move as a bunch you'll do as you're told."

"I don't mind," said Ollie Rounds.

"Then it is settled," said George Ives. "There's a little meeting tonight down the Gulch. We'll all ride down."

"My horse is around on that side street," said Rounds, and turned with Ives. For a moment he had his back to Rube Ketchum, and a stark chill raced up his back, and he turned at one jump and saw Ketchum in the act of drawing. He had not yet put away his own gun, and now brought it down on Ketchum's head in a rapid side blow. Ketchum dropped into the dust, and rolled. Rounds took a full jump toward a building wall, and whirled again, laying the muzzle against George Ives. Ives hadn't moved, had made no gesture of offense.

These two exchanged long, steady stares until at last Ives said, showing his first anger, "What the hell are you about?"

"Watching my hole card, George."

"I said it was all right, didn't I?" flashed out Ives. "If I say it, I mean it. You don't have to watch me, or any of us. I will pass the word along. And I'll meet you down Daylight."

Rounds turned through the tents and got his horse from the stable. He moved rapidly to the bottom of Daylight Gulch and he left the road and watched it closely until he saw Ives and Ketchum come along. When he was certain of them he moved out of the dark. Ives laughed softly at the maneuvering. "You're sure ticklish, friend."

The three of them rode to the summit of Daylight, looking down upon the sinuous glitter of Alder's continuous lights. Ives said, "We'll split and ride on, one by one. Pete Daly's roadhouse is the place. Come right on—we're going to be late." Then he looked at

Ketchum, who was a silent lump in the saddle. "Rube," he said patiently, "behave yourself." Then he rode away. Five minutes later Ketchum moved after him. A short time later Ollie Rounds followed.

Past Junction he fell into the narrows of the Gulch. Now and then a fast-moving horse struck up sparks from the stony footing; and now and then some man's voice hailed him through the black. Fourteen miles from Virginia City he came out of the Gulch at Ramshorn Creek and reached Daly's roadhouse, a two-story building built of riven logs and chinked with mud mortar. Twenty or more horses stood in the shadows before the place; the door was closed and three men seemed to guard it. He came up to find Ives and Rube Ketchum waiting for him, and Ives introduced him to the third man: "This is Red Yeager. Everything's all right, Red. This is Ollie Rounds."

THEY stepped into a barroom which took up most of the lower floor and faced a considerable crowd. Some of them he recognized at once. Tanner—the saloonman from Virginia City—was in a corner. Clubfoot Lane was here, and Jack Gallagher who was Henry Plummer's deputy sheriff. He identified Hayes Lyons and Buck Stinson, and he nodded to Steve Marshland. A few others he also knew by name, having had them pointed out to him in Tanner's saloon—Alec Carter and Bob Zachary, and Frank Parrish, and the surly one who was Boone Helm. There wasn't, he thought, in idle amusement, an honest man in the crowd.

They seemed to have no fear of surprise or recognition. They had all the confidence in the world. George Ives moved around the room with Rounds, introducing him here and there. This man, Rounds gathered, was one of the chiefs, for he had his unmistakable way with them. He was a slim man, clean-shaven in a group that went heavily bearded or mustached. He had quick eyes and he had a brain that was fertile, and he had a bold self-confidence.

Daly, the owner of the roadhouse, seemed not to be one of the crowd, for presently Ives told him to leave; and the Irishman went at once, as though

BUTCH

By Larry Reynolds



"Who's there, Butch? Who y' plottin' a jail break with?"

EVERY EXTRA LEAF IN THE TABLE
**AND FAR
 TOO MANY GUESTS**
 FOR CHRISTMAS DINNER!



That's the situation your telephone company faces every Christmas. That's why there may be delays on some Long Distance Christmas calls.

LAST Christmas Eve and Day the wires were jammed. The switchboards were manned by regular and extra operators working all through the holiday. Long Distance telephone calls were three, five and at some places *eight* times normal.

We're glad so many folks want to exchange friendly greetings across the miles at Christmas—but sorry that,

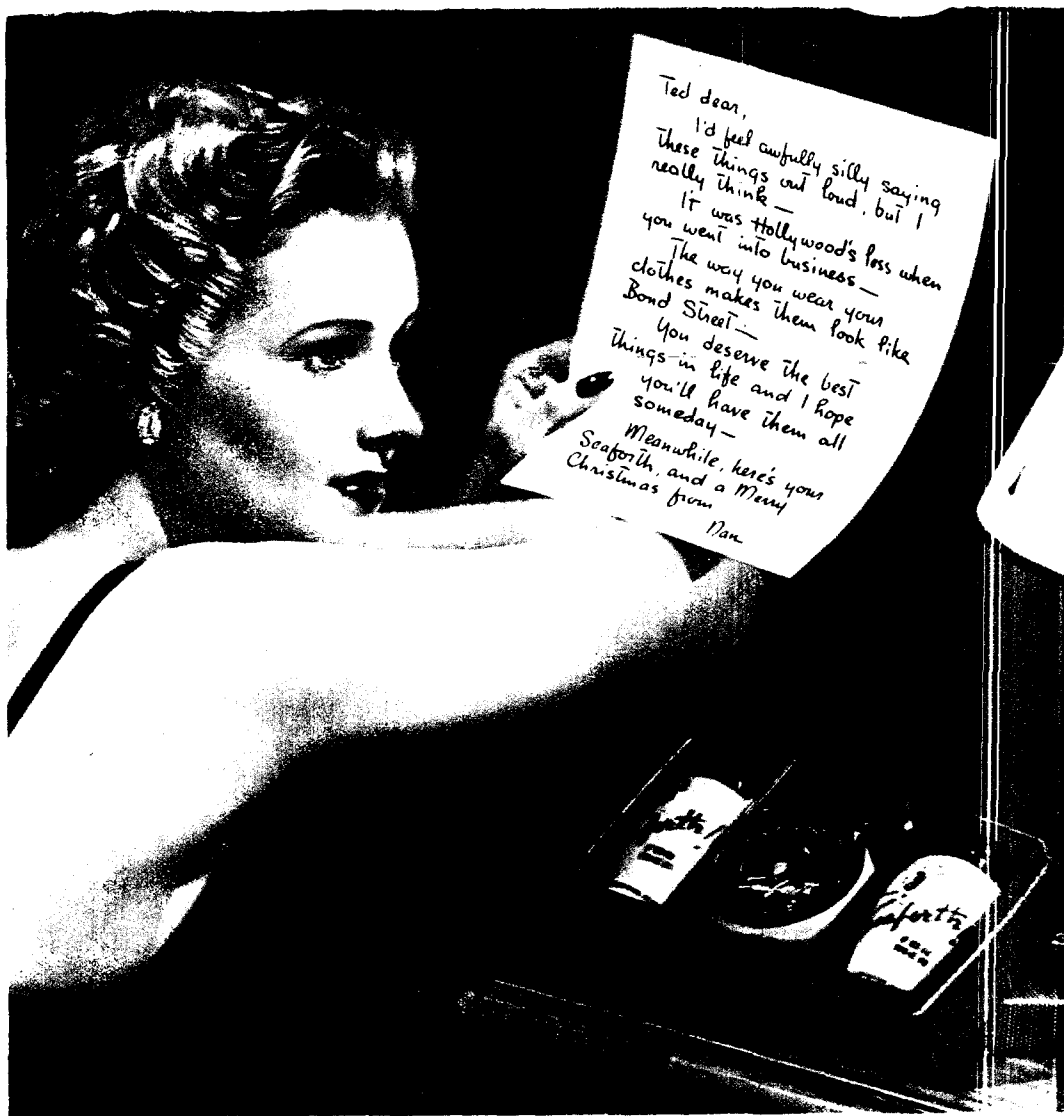
because of it, we can't supply service as good as usual.

We expect the biggest rush of calls we've ever had this coming Christmas. We'll do our human best to prepare for it. But, inevitably, some calls will be slow. Some may not be completed. For these, we ask your patience and understanding.

If you'll call by number wherever possible, and try not to talk too long, you'll be helping us to do a better job for everybody. . . . *Thank you, and Merry Christmas!*

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GRANDSTANDER: three fat jugs in box set...Season's outstanding gift package... Cologne, Lotion, Talc... set **\$3**



A MAN'S EVERY NEED served by deluxe gift package of Seaforth... jugs and mug plus hand soap...sets **\$5 and \$7**

FOR MEN

relieved. Then Ives called, "All right—all right."

A back door had opened, and silence came to the crowd. Swinging about, Rounds discovered the sheriff, Henry Plummer, at that door. The sheriff came in, closed the door, and gave the room a short and thorough glance; and his eyes stopped on Ollie Rounds and stayed there, civil and speculative and very alert. Ives said, "It's all right, Henry. This is Ollie Rounds."

Plummer had apparently ridden over from Bannack in considerable haste. Dust was on his clothes and at the edges of his dark hair. He wore a fine black suit and white shirt; he had the manners of a gentleman and his voice was very soft. He had a small, trimmed mustache and his face was round and soft. Nothing about him bore the mark of a desperado and Rounds, never to be surprised at the turnings of life, found himself mildly surprised at Plummer.

Plummer said, "I can't stay long. I want you to listen to me."

George Ives tapped the bottom of a whisky bottle on the table: "Order here. Bunton—Sam Bunton—shut up."

Sam Bunton was at the bar, both arms clinging to it; he was drunk and he was angry, and he slowly cursed the bare wall behind the room. Ives moved over to him. Ives dug a thumb in Bunton's ribs. "Shut up, Sam."

Bunton reared and swung. He said, "Where's my brother? He'll stand by me. Where's Bill?"

Bill Bunton came out of a corner, lank and sour and close-eyed. "Sam," he said, "cut it out or I'll break your neck."

"All right," said Sam Bunton, and stopped talking at once.

PLUMMER was cool and smooth in the middle of the room. He studied Sam Bunton and then gently said, "You get drunk too much, Sam. I want you out of this country inside of twenty-four hours. You hear me, Sam?"

"I've got a good claim up the Gulch, Henry. Why should I leave it?"

Plummer intended to speak again, but Ives spoke for him. Ives turned on Sam Bunton with a swift flash of violence: "You heard it. Twenty-four hours."

"Yes," said Sam Bunton. "All right."

The other Bunton—Bill—stepped away from his brother. Plummer turned to face all these men. "Dance and Stuart will be starting a store in Virginia City pretty soon. It will be a place where most of the miners come at one time or another. Probably the express office will have space there, too. It will be a fine place to overhear what's going on, who's flush and who's not. Clubfoot, as soon as that store is up you ask Dance for a little corner in it to put up your shoe shop. You can keep your ears open and hear a lot. By the way, I understand you're spending a lot of time in Tanner's saloon. Keep out of it. It pegs you."

"All right," said Clubfoot.

"I don't want you boys to gang up in one spot too much. It makes things too plain to the Gulch. Jack Gallagher will stay in Virginia City, of course. Ned Ray and Stinson will work out of Bannack. Bill Bunton sticks with his ranch on the Rattlesnake. Now we will split our crowd. Ives, Steve Marshland, Johnny Wagner, Alec Carter, Whisky Bill Graves and Rube Ketchum will headquarter in the Gulch." He pointed a finger at Rounds. "You will be there, too. The rest of you men are roadsters, working between the Gulch and Bannack."

He watched these men with his calculating far-off thoughts. "The Gulch is rich. Men will be coming out of it with dust all summer, all year. Keep your

ears open, all of you. No doubt some of these people will try to get their dust through by fooling us. It has been tried already. We have got to know what's going on. Any man that talks against us we must take care of at once. Little things make big things. Destroy the little things and that's the end of the big ones. One more thought: I won't be around the Gulch much. I'll spend my time in Bannack. You boys in the Gulch take your orders from George Ives."

HE WAS obviously in a hurry. Now he came over to Ives and said a short word, and turned to Rounds. He offered his hand—a light and swift grip and a quick withdrawal—and he put the full power of his hazel eyes on Rounds. He said in his courteous way, "I hear you're all right." And then he dropped his light warning: "We all work together. And we don't back out. Glad to see you." He turned over the room and left Daly's, his horse soon drumming on the road. Somebody called for Daly to come back and the bar grew busy and men filled the tables and began to play poker. Red Yeager, doorkeeper, came in. Rounds walked to the door with Ives, and stopped there. Ives pointed to the knot in his own neckpiece. "See that. It is a square knot. All the boys make that tie. It is a sign among us. If you should ever get in trouble you have only to say, 'I am innocent.' That is a sign, too."

Rounds shrugged his shoulders. "Very bold. Suppose I should talk? I'm a stranger to you."

"No," said George Ives, "you won't talk. We'd find it out. Nothing happens in the Gulch we don't find out. Anyhow, you're in this for what you can make, ain't you?" Then he slapped Rounds on the back and gave out a long, ringing laugh. "Suppose you did talk. Who would believe you?"

"You remember I gave Pierce a hand in Lewiston. That makes no difference to you?"

He thought he saw the memory of that affair slice through Ives. But the man had a wonderful front and carried himself well. "I remember it. But I don't mind. You play your game your way. You've got your tricks and your connections. So have I. That is the way it is done. You made a grandstand and it puts you solid. Nobody knows you're in this. That's what you want, isn't it?" He gave Ollie a steady, extremely close inspection. "You're thinking it is funny I trust you. I do not trust you. I trust nobody. But it doesn't matter. The more the merrier and you won't stray. I like smart people. I think you're smart." And now, coming closer to tap Ollie lightly on the chest with a finger, he significantly added, "You might be a friend of this Pierce, but first of all I've got you sized up as a crook. In a pinch you'll turn down Pierce for a profitable deal. It is all right, Ollie."

Somebody kept calling for Ives and he turned away, again laughing. Rounds went out to his horse and moved homeward.

BY NIGHT the revels of Virginia City rolled upgulch in warm waves of sound; yet for two weeks Pierce never left the boundaries of his claims. He rigged up a sluice box, shoveling pay dirt into the sluice and turning water from flume to sluice. At the end of the first week, when he cleaned out the riffles of the sluice box, he had five hundred and forty dollars of dust.

During the second week he moved over to work Barney Morris' claim. This was an obligation. The dead man's hand held him and the dead man's instructions bound him. Half of the gold from that claim went to him, the other half to Mary Morris, Centerville, Ohio. Sometimes at night, just before falling into dreamless sleep, he thought about

Barney Morris' widow two thousand miles away, who depended on a man she had never met—and at that moment the hint of a better reason for life touched him with its softness, and went away.

During the middle of the first week A. J. Oliver came up to see him. "That eight thousand dollars you brought into the Bannack office is still there. The toughs know about it, of course. They won't try to lift it out of the safe but the moment I start it to Salt Lake they'll stage a holdup on the road."

"How'd they find out?"

Oliver gave him a gray side glance. "They hear everything. Don't ask me how. It leaks out from places you wouldn't expect. You don't know with whom you're talking in this camp. I thought I'd wait until a good strong caravan of freighters started from Bannack and send the gold by messenger with them."

"Probably they're waiting for that," said Pierce. "Eight thousand is worth waiting for. I wouldn't do it, Oliver. I'd let it stay in the safe. About a month from now let's drop the news around that you've already smuggled it out. Might throw them off guard. Then we'll figure a way."

"You can't be the man to do it," said Oliver. "If you show up in Bannack the toughs will catch on."

"We'll do it through somebody else."

"All right," agreed Oliver. As he turned down the Gulch he stopped to add, "You know they've got you on the black list, don't you?"

"Yes," said Jeff. "I know."

THERE were no secrets in the Gulch.

News traveled from Summit to Junction with the wind, seeming to need no human carrier. Everybody knew the toughs had him on the list. But it was strange how this same news brought him friends. There was, it appeared, an underground wire for the honest ones. During the latter part of the first week Parris Pfouts, one of the new merchants in the Gulch, came up along the diggings. All he said in the beginning was, "You're Pierce, aren't you? I'm Parris Pfouts." Then he stood by, idle in the sun and not making much out of the visit; yet Pierce felt the survey of the man and the following judgment. Presently Pfouts added, "Barney Morris was a particular friend of mine. I hated to see him go. Any ideas on who did that?"

"Yes," said Pierce, "I know who did it." He kept on working. Pfouts remained indolent under the warming sun, not pressing the subject. He was, Pierce realized, wise enough to know that a direct question would be out of order. In this country men were closemouthed before strangers, and so far he and Pfouts were still strangers. Pfouts simply said, "There will come a time of reckoning."

"There was a time of reckoning," answered Pierce, "when you had Lyons and Stinson and Forbes cold with the goods. But the boys were washed out on a flood of tears. It is too late now. The toughs have the whip."

Pfouts said, "I have seen toughs before who had the whip. But they always used it too hard. And then they got wiped out."

"Not until this Gulch quits voting on tears. The strong and the smart always run things, Pfouts."

"I agree. The strong and the smart—and the honest."

"Maybe."

Pfouts smiled. "I heard you were considerable of a hard one. Don't believe in much, do you?"

"Not too much."

Pfouts moved up grade to drop a word with Archie Caples on the adjoining claim; and later returned to Virginia City. This was on Thursday. On Friday, moving in much the same casual manner, Jim Williams appeared on a beautiful bay gelding and paused at the sluice box. Williams was near Pierce's age, a broad-chested and muscular young man with a dark and gentle face. His ragged mustache ran down around his mouth and fell into equally ragged chin whiskers and his eyes were a melancholy brown. He rested his arms on the saddle horn and, as Pfouts had done, took his time to estimate Pierce. "That flume," he observed, "saves a lot of work."

"Yes," said Pierce.

"I heard a piece of talk in town this morning," went on Jim Williams. "Ketchum opened his mouth in Tanner's and some brave words fell out. Your name was with the words. It is none of my business, of course."

"Thanks," said Pierce. He stopped his work and met Jim Williams' glance, and for a little while they frankly swapped inspections. This Williams was no talker. Pierce had met him before in Virginia City and had observed that he always kept in the background of a group, and yet he had also observed that Oliver and Pfouts and the substantial men of the district always liked to have Jim Williams' opinion. He was that kind of man, reserved and thoughtful; with an underlying sadness or pessimism strongly influencing his character. Pierce said, "Pfouts came up to drop a hint yesterday. He is too optimistic about law and order."

"There will be no law and order," said Jim Williams in a half-asleep manner, "until things get a good deal worse."

"The pack," said Pierce, "always follows the strong side."

"How many men does it take to make a strong side?" murmured Jim Williams.

"One man is enough," said Pierce. "One man against the whole world—if he's not afraid of dying."

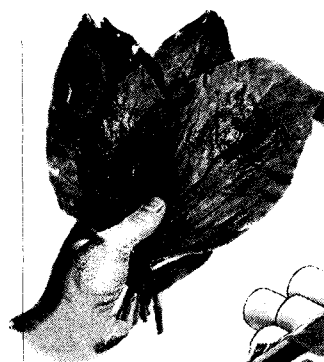
Williams made a brief nod of his head and then he smiled. Pierce answered that smile and at that instant these two knew each other well, and trusted each other completely. Williams reined around and trotted off.

Two days afterward, near twilight, Pierce noticed Rube Ketchum move up the Gulch on the opposite side of the creek and pass by, neither looking toward him nor showing curiosity. Yet



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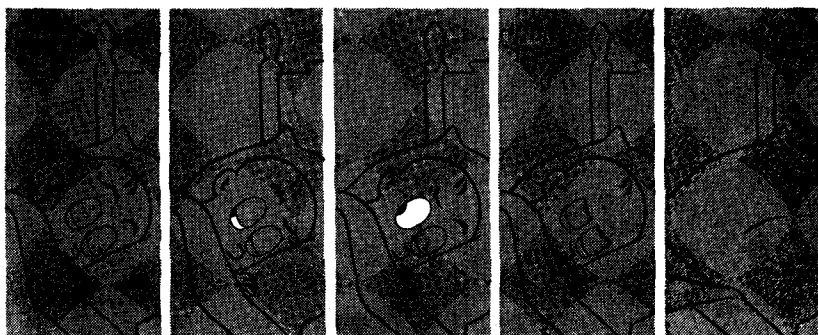
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CROCKETT JOHNSON



THIS YEAR more people will receive Longines Watches for Christmas than ever before, and this year, also, more people will be disappointed. We are sorry, there will not be enough Longines Watches for all who will want them. Longines, the world's most honored watch, has won 10 world's fair grand prizes, 28 gold medals, and more honors for accuracy than any other timepiece.

The new 75th Anniversary Longines Watches are now shown by Longines jewelers, priced \$44.00* upward, see also the Wittnauer Watch, a companion line of moderate price, from \$27.50*—products of Longines-Wittnauer Watch Co., Inc., New York, Montreal, Geneva.

*Federal tax included



that lack of curiosity was itself a warning and after he had finished supper he took his shotgun and blankets and climbed the ridge of the side canyon and made camp in the brush. He repeated this the following nights. On Friday of the second week, again near dusk, Ollie Rounds and Ben Scoggins appeared before his small supper fire.

"We were having a drink in the Senate," said Scoggins cheerfully, "and we thought of you. Seemed natural to pay a visit. Ain't seen you for ten days or so."

DAY after day with himself, dawn to dark, he had begun to turn sour. There was a limit to a man's loneliness, a time when cabin fever, or its Gulch equivalent, began to turn his nerves ragged and to canker his disposition. He was genuinely pleased to see them and threw an extra chunk of alder on the fire. Scoggins and Rounds dismounted and settled by the blaze. Rounds said, "You smoke these things," and offered Pierce a cigar. The three men lounged back and let the silence run. All up and down the Gulch fire-lights burned from claim to claim, and traffic went scratching and gritting along the gravel bars and voices kept calling.

Pierce said, "I heard about that sardine venture, Ben. You're a damned Yankee trader. What's next?"

"Well," said Ben Scoggins, "I hauled lumber from Bannack for couple of days until I got my bearings. Met a fellow over by Bannack last week who was busted down with a load of flour he'd freighted in from Salt Lake. So I made a dicker and brought the flour up the Gulch."

"Sell it?"

Ben Scoggins laughed aloud. "Buyin' and sellin' my business. I sold out before I got to Central. There ain't enough of anything in this country."

Rounds pointed out a possibility: "Population around here doubles every week. If you'd held that flour a month, Ben, you'd gotten more for it."

Scoggins shook his head. "Always take a profit when you see it."

Pierce remarked, "You were in the flour business. Now you're out of it. What's next?"

"I bought a corner on Jackson Street. Puttin' up a store building. Sent to Salt Lake for a stock of general merchandise. Should be open by late July."

OLLIE ROUNDS, never a restless man, seized a stick and worried the coals of the fire around and around. "You have found your spot. Fifty years from now you'll be on Fourth of July platforms, talking about the old days of Alder Gulch."

"No-o," said Scoggins, coolly making his forecast. "I will ride this wave until I see it about to break. Then I will sell and go. You never saw a mining camp live very long. All these fellows in the Gulch are travelers. They don't make a country. They don't stick. If you're bankin' on the future go to a country where men bring their families and take up land and start stringin' fence lines. Where they put up a school and go to tradin'. Traders make towns. Farmers make towns. Grist mills. Boats stoppin' at a landing make towns. This country ain't meant for big towns. It is grass-and-gold country. Gold will go. Grass will stay—and then the cattle will come." He looked at the other two men with his thoughtful eyes. "Maybe that's what I'll do. Take up land for a ranch."

Ollie Rounds grinned. "You leave that life to the tough fellows, like Jeff here. You stick to your last."

Pierce lifted his eyes to appraise Ollie Rounds thoughtfully. Horsemen slashed through the creek's gravel, bound toward Virginia City in haste. A

hundred feet beyond this spot another fire burned large and bright, whereby Archie Caples did his laundry in a half barrel, his knuckles drumming on the corrugated washboard. Pierce said, "What are you doing, Ollie?"

"I never do more than I can help," said Ollie.

Pierce said, "Don't let the world make a sucker out of you, Ollie. It tries. That's the only game worth playing—to buck the big tiger trying to destroy us all. Well, buck it. Don't let it push you along."

"Now, now," said Ollie Rounds, half surprised and half resentful, "no use giving me a lot of fatherly advice. Don't tell me to be useful and thrifty. That's Ben's game, not mine."

Ben Scoggins spoke in his amiable way, "Funny how three fellows like us—not the same kind of men in any respect—got thrown together. Does seem a long time ago, too, since we got on the Tenino, bound upriver."

"Willy-nilly," said Ollie Rounds. "The cards fall, nobody knows where. We're the cards. It is all one big joke on us."

"Don't rightly believe that," said Ben quietly. But, true to his manner, he swung the subject to keep the talk pleasant. "I have got no complaint. I have made ten thousand dollars in tradin' around."

Ollie blurted out an immediate warning: "Don't ever say it aloud."

Pierce's glance lifted again and struck across the flame. He watched Ollie Rounds with his lids half shut, with his face pulled together. Ben Scoggins saw this, looked at Ollie, and broke the silence: "Pretty night."

"All nights are pretty," said Ollie. "That's my belief—that's what I live for." He was once more his old casual self. He said to Pierce, "You can't work like a horse without getting ornery. How long since you've had a drink?" He reached into his pocket and pulled out a pint flask. "Ben and I thought this might be a good idea."

He passed it to Pierce, who removed the cap and held the bottle to the light. "Valley Tan," he said.

Pierce watched the bottle turn amber and brown under the firelight. He had something to say, and framed it in his mind carefully, and said it. "It just occurs to me that both you boys, or either of you, may some day need help. I never offer my help, as a rule. But if you need help, just give a shout and I'll be with you." Then he said, "How," and took his drink.

A single horse came up the Gulch and turned against Archie Caples' campfire.

The rider got down and spoke in a short tone at Caples. Caples reared back on his heels. He looked up at the rider and shook his head; and then the rider moved at him and hit him across the face, knocking him against the gravel.

Ollie Rounds looked on, neither moving nor changing expression; it was a scene to him, nothing more. Ben Scoggins grumbled, "What's that for?" and was genuinely troubled. It was Pierce who acted. Reaching behind him, he seized up his water bucket and flung the full contents on the fire, killing the flame at once. He was on his feet, and he said, "That's for me, Ben, not for him." Then, the water bucket still in his hand, he ran toward the creek.

"What the hell?" grumbled Ben, and lifted to his feet. Ollie Rounds' hand came out and seized Ben's leg. "Drop down, you fool!"

Ben kicked Rounds' hand away. "He's in trouble, ain't he?"

"You're big as a barn up there! Get down and crawl!"

The stranger at Archie Caples' fire slowly circled Caples as the other struggled up from the ground. Caples tried to turn and keep his eyes on the stranger, but the stranger side-stepped steadily and when Caples got to his feet the stranger jumped in again, hit Caples a great blow on the back of the neck with his forearm, and dropped him. Ben Scoggins growled in his throat and began to crawl ahead on his hands and knees, Ollie Rounds following behind. Rounds kept murmuring, "Watch it—watch it, Ben."

PIERCE suddenly appeared up on the edge of the other campfire and threw a fresh bucket of water on it, immediately quenching the blaze. A gun yelled from the near-by Gulch wall and the bullet scuttled on the gravel and sang away. Both Rounds and Scoggins, now running on, heard the sudden crush of Pierce's body against the stranger. The stranger let out a harking shout and the gravel reported the stamp of Pierce's feet as he rushed toward the Gulch wall, toward the unseen gun. Briefly he was a blur in the dark; afterward he faded. Both Rounds and Scoggins moved after him, guided by the sound of his feet. Ben Scoggins called out, "Hey, Jeff!" And Ollie quietly cursed Ben for it. The gun on the ridge emitted its dry, round voice into the dark, leaving a flickered bloom of light behind. Pierce fired at once in reply and then the hidden man's gun sounded again from a different angle of the hill and steps rattled up the side of the ridge.

(To be continued next week)

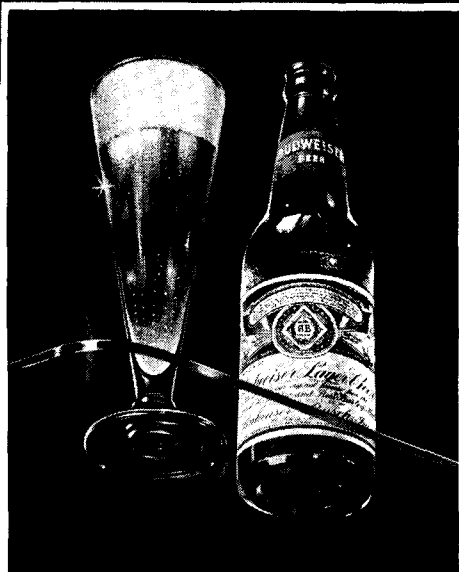


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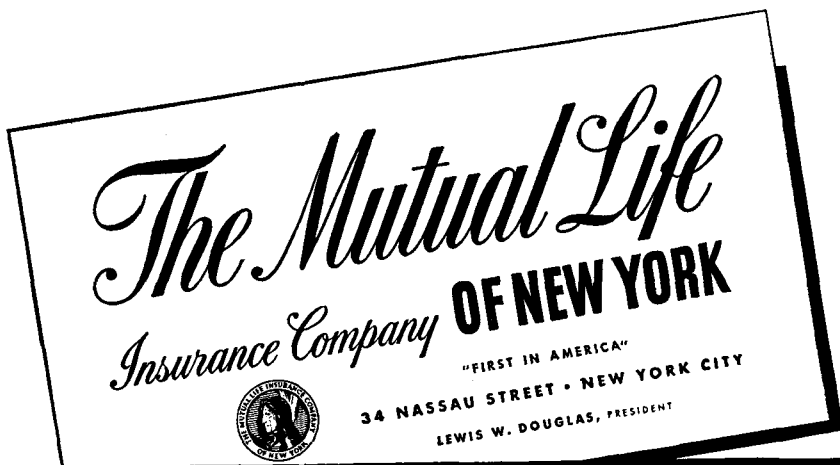
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Shoeshine Boy

Continued from page 15

with a deadly destructiveness such as Refugee had never faced.

THE passing days passed in subglacial tempo for Free Wheeling Johnson. For Free Wheeling Johnson had his ticket for the fight, secured in his watchless watch pocket with a safety pin where he could reach down and take it out and look at it any time he wanted to.

That's what Free Wheeling was doing when he stepped from behind the car at the curb in front of the cab. Fumbling the ticket out to look at it.

Refugee Smith came into the Eatmor Fish and Chips Shoppe of Senate "Slippery" Ellum the morning of the fight. "Where at Freezy?" he asked. "He ain't between here an' Lenox."

Slippery looked up, came around the counter. "Ain't you heard?" he asked.

"Naw," Refugee said. "Heard what?"

"He done collide with a taxicab," Slippery said. "He layin' in the hospital, dog-sick."

"He bad hurted?"

"He dog-bad hurted," Slippery Ellum said. "His sister lookin' frantic for somebody to give him some blood of what they call the three kind."

"Three kind?"

"Yes, man. That's the kind o' blood little Freezy's got—such as he got left—an' he need some fresh of the same number an' the three kind folks is scarce."

Refugee Smith was running when he hit the door. It took five or six minutes for him to get to the hospital and it took them fifteen minutes more to

type his blood. But he was a type three, all right, and Freezy was conscious during part of the transfusion.

"Hello, Mistuh Smith," he said. "What you doin' up here?"

"I'se givin' you a little blood," Refugee said.

"Hot dog," Freezy said weakly. "Dat fightin' blood I'm gettin'. I'll be all right, now."

One of the nurses quieted him but Freezy managed one more sentence. "I sho hated to miss de fight," he said.

Refugee Smith walked out into the hall, feeling a little funny. He went on down to the desk.

"De little colored boy," he said there. "I'll pay up his bills when dey come due. He a friend of mine."

"And who are you?" the man behind the desk asked.

"I'se Refugee Smith," Refugee said. "De middleweight prize fighter. Mr. Willie Wurtzel is my manager."

A doctor tapped Refugee on the arm. "The boy is apt to need another transfusion tomorrow," he said. "He is badly hurt."

"He dat bad?"

The doctor nodded. "We have no professional donors available of the right type," he added.

"I'll find somebody," Refugee said. "I'se busy tonight but I'll look in this afternoon and in de mornin'."

Refugee Smith came back to his corner from the center of the ring where he had stood with Willie Wurtzel and received his instructions. Willie Wurt-



"Confound it, McArdle, make me believe in you!"

GEORGE PRICE

zel threw a practiced and accurate eye over the house, noticed the empty ring-side seat. "Where's your little tarball pal?" Willie asked.

"Who?"

"The shoeshine boy?"

"Oh," Refugee said. "He got hit by a taxicab. He in de hospital. By de way, Mr. Willie, you ever give anybody some blood?"

"Yeah," Willie said. "I give a rabbi a transfusion once." He grinned at the recollection.

The bell rang and Refugee went out. He went out languidly and Johnny Revolt was on top of him and moving in, slugging for Refugee's belly, his bright blue eyes expressionless. Refugee boxed with him, going away, but Johnny Revolt scored with a left hook and Refugee was in trouble at the bell.

Willie Wurtzel got him back to the corner. "Boy," he said, "if you wasn't so black black I'd think you looked pale. Do you feel all right?"

"I feels a little peaked," Refugee said, "but maybe I'll warm up."

"Go to his right," Willie Wurtzel said, "this guy is very sharp with his right hand."

THE second round brought no comfort to Willie Wurtzel and it brought a welt above Refugee's right eye and a thin trickle of blood from his nose.

"What you doin', boy? You gotta fight that guy, he's mean."

"I'se tryin'."

"You feel all right?"

"Naw, suh."

"What you been doin' today?"

"I ain't did nothin' 'cept go over to de hospital an' give little Freezy some blood. I been restin' since den like you tol' me to."

"Blood! Say, boy, you didn't give that kid a transfusion?" Willie Wurtzel's voice rose in pure anguish.

"He bad need de blood," Refugee said. "He might go for to die but for it."

"How much? Oh, it don't matter. You're thirsty and you're weak and you're in there with Johnny Revolt and if you beat him you get the champion only you ain't gonna beat him . . ." Willie Wurtzel's voice trailed off in a wail of pure pain.

"I'll keep tryin', Mr. Willie."

Willie Wurtzel started to say something but the warning buzzer caught him. He clambered out of the ring and watched Refugee go back, almost go down once, stagger back to his corner, with the bell.

"Boy," he said into Refugee's ear, his voice dripping passion, "what'd you want to know about my blood for?"

"He need some more tomorrow, the three kind."

"Type three?"

"Yes, suh."

"Listen, boy. You go out for this guy. This round, you go out for him. You won't get no stronger. You go out for him this round and I'll give the kid some of my blood tomorrow. I remember now. I'm type three."

"You do dat, Mr. Willie?" Refugee Smith said.

"Yeah. And Refugee. What if that boy's listenin' on the radio, it'll kill him he hear Sam Taub say you lose."

"Dat a fact, Mr. Willie. I'll go out."

"Okay, boy."

"Mr. Willie. Did dat rabbi get well?"

Willie Wurtzel scanned the crowd, found a bearded man that looked healthy visible in the ring light. "I'll say he did," Willie lied. "There he sets."

Refugee Smith bowed down his head. "Lord," he said, "I ain't askin' you to help me, but don't put no props under Mr. Revolt does I get to him?"

Freezy Johnson didn't hear the fight, of course. Freezy Johnson was hovering someplace where the only thing that

he was apt to hear was Gabriel's trumpet. But a lot of people heard it, and seventeen thousand of them sitting in Madison Square Garden saw it.

Refugee Smith came out of his corner and he carried his hands down, cocked, and he took a left that cut the welt above his right eye, to fire a sucker right from his hip. It was a winging, awkward punch and it caught Johnny Revolt too high to hurt him, but the very impact of it threw him slightly off balance and into the left hook Refugee had sent following the right.

Johnny Revolt was a tough, game boy. He got up and he came in. He didn't know anything to do but to come in and Refugee came in to meet him and they were both swinging and Refugee's head flew back and he was down. But he didn't take a count, he came up swinging, coming in to meet Johnny Revolt and Johnny Revolt came in, too.

They were screaming. Seventeen thousand people can scream, and they were screaming. They weren't seeing anything that remotely resembled the art of self defense, manly or otherwise. They were seeing two men, one black, one white, who wanted to do away with each other in the shortest possible time.

The difference was with the black man. The black man's jaw had an ounce more iron in it, and while the black man's heart may have been pumping a pint less blood than the white man's heart the black man's heart carried a pity for a little boy lying in a hospital, and a pity, channeled into action, is—for a round at least—worth a pint of blood.

Johnny Revolt went down from one of those rights, and he pushed up on his hands and knees but he couldn't make it up inside the count and Refugee bent down to help him to his corner, and Refugee Smith fell down, too.

WILLIE WURTZEL came out of the room and the doctor came out of the room with him. The doctor was smiling. "I think he'll make it now," the doctor said. Willie Wurtzel walked over and got a drink of water and slumped down in a chair.

"How you feel, Mr. Willie?" Refugee asked, his face anxious under his bandages.

"I don't feel like fightin' no Johnny Revolt," Willie said.

A nurse came out of Free Wheeling Johnson's room and nodded to the doctor and the doctor went back in.

"How come," Refugee asked, "you knowed I'd stop that fellow if'n you tol' me you'd give Freezy some blood?"

Willie Wurtzel took a cigar out of his vest. "Aw," he said, "you're just that kind of a big stupid ape."

"But you given him some blood, too. You didn't have to."

"Hell," Willie said. "I'd naturally want to keep a guy alive that'd shine my shoes for a nickel. Blood don't cost nothin'."

Refugee grinned, started to say something but the doctor came back out of the room.

"He's conscious now," the doctor said. "He talked a little."

"What'd he say?" Refugee asked eagerly. "Did you tell him I won de fight?"

"Yes," the doctor said. "I told him and he was awfully pleased."

"But what'd he say?"

"He said," the doctor went on, smiling, "that this all must cost a lot and that he thought he would raise his price to a dime when he got out. I don't know exactly what he meant."

"He a shoeshine boy. . . ." Refugee began.

"Well, I'll go to hell," Willie Wurtzel interrupted, his voice rich with wonder. "That blood of mine has gone to work already."



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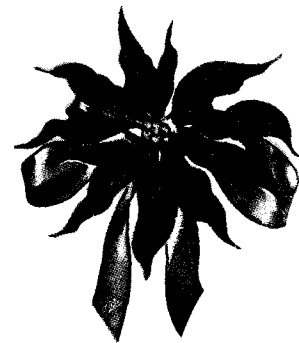
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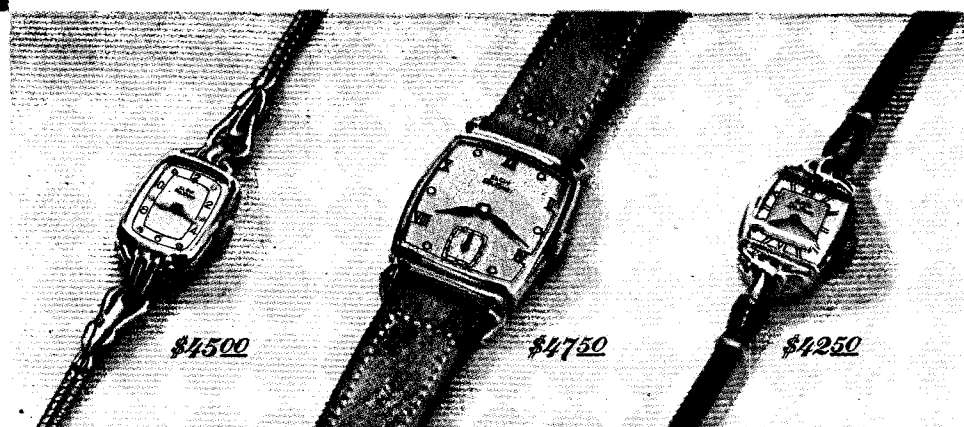
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Broadway Cop

Continued from page 22

will find this impossible to believe) suffered a one-round knockout in the only formal fistic engagement of his life.

After the war Broderick became a New York fireman, then shifted to the police force in 1923. Things began happening to him immediately and will continue to happen to him. A few hours after he had been sworn in, back in 1923, he broke into a burning tenement on his beat and rescued two kids. And late in 1941, while this piece was being written, Johnny leaned far out of a speeding police car and shot a rear tire off a rocketing gangsters' car and thus trapped five of them.

A few things happened in between these adventures. Take 1926 for instance: That year he battled a squad of armed Communists all over the street during the fur strike, and was later exonerated of their charges that he accepted bribes from fur companies—and exonerated by a judge who never went out of his way to do a cop a favor.

Then one bleak November day, in the same fateful 1926, three gunmen imprisoned in The Tombs suddenly whipped out guns, mysteriously obtained, killed their keeper and warden and raced into the walled yard of the grim old prison. The prison guards began blazing away at them, but the three men—Hymie Amberg, Robert Berg and Red McKenna—ducked behind a big pile of coal. Their improvised fort completely stymied the police.

All In the Day's Work

Broderick arrived. He always does. He watched the cops shooting at the coal pile for a while. Then he asked them to stop. Next he picked the lid off a near-by trash can, held it up as a shield, pulled out his automatic—a persuader he prefers not to use—and strode into the open prison yard. With bullets spanging off or through the shield, or scuffling around his legs, Johnny advanced on the coal pile, always edging a little to the side. The murderers began edging too, to keep the bulk of the pile between them and their stalker.

Twenty feet from the pile Johnny charged with a yell, his gun spitting fire. The terrified gunmen made one blazing stand, through which Johnny somehow lived, then fled from behind the coal pile—and were riddled by the fire of the waiting police.

When it was all over, Johnny went to the nearest place where he could get a drink. "Give me a coke, please," he asked politely.

Johnny haunted the hoodlums who made Broadway their haunt during prohibition. The host of human rodents on whom the New York police declared war fought back with considerable enthusiasm, especially from their entrenched Broadway positions.

"I'm taking that — Broderick for a ride tonight," the late and heartily unlamented Legs Diamond announced one night in a speak-easy. "C'mon, let's find him." Diamond began the search, and as it continued the size of his grim entourage increased. There were a lot of guys who wanted to bear witness.

Broderick was tipped off that he was being hunted, so he began hunting Diamond. He met Diamond and his satellites at the corner of 46th and Broadway. The milling crowds were unaware of the tense little scene, even when Diamond's mob stopped, with hair bristling, while Broderick sauntered silently into their midst. Broderick stood in front of Diamond and stared at him piercingly for a moment—at the end of which Dia-

mond's principal bodyguard turned heel and fled. Some of the others disappeared.

"Understand you're looking for me," Broderick said. He can talk without moving his lips, and his voice has a low and terrifying sound.

Legs swallowed. "Aw, hell, Johnny—can't you take a joke?"

Johnny's left hook caught Legs exactly right. "Not from you I can't, y'bum," Johnny said. But Legs didn't hear him. Legs didn't hear anything for twenty minutes.

Then there was Johnny's engagement with another product of prohibition—the afternoon in 1931 when 300 policemen cornered Francis "Two Gun" Crowley in his ground-floor apartment hideaway a block off upper Broadway. A lively war was in progress when Johnny arrived. Crowley's citadel was being shelled and tear-gas-bombed, but he was holding out with great fervor.

"Drop that gun, y'runt, and keep your hands in the air," Broderick ordered. Crowley hesitated . . . just long enough for Broderick to clip him.

As bouncer emeritus of Madison Square Garden, during the Roaring Twenties and Thirties, when fights used to attract the almighty and the scum of the underworld, Johnny engaged in countless bare-knuckle duels with well-heeled mugs. One night stands out particularly. That was the night Broderick brushed aside two bodyguards of the late Vannie Higgins and clouted that perfumed public enemy on the jaw so hard that Higgins arched upward and backward through a telephone booth in the Garden lobby. It was certainly the best punch thrown that night at the Garden.

At the same Garden Johnny protected more than one fighter from armed rascals who were trying to move in on the pug's purse, and came to the rescue of

way. Then he dropped his cue, spit on his hands and cleaned out the nest.

Johnny's fists have held together very well, considering the punishment they've taken. They haven't always been used on jaws, either. Not long ago, while en route to the Polo Grounds, Johnny saw some short-winded citizens giving half-hearted chase to a Negro thief. Johnny joined the chase to the thief's house, unhesitatingly put his fist through the plate glass of the locked front door, opened it, caught the Negro at the top of the stairs and knocked him out with a punch before he could pull his gun. His fists have been taking it like that for a long time. His knuckles and fingers have been broken so many times that X-ray plates of his hands are on file at Bellevue to illustrate how properly set bones will heal.

The paradox of the man is that, withal, he is gentle, shy, sentimental and a good friend to hundreds who can never do anything for him in return. The man who won the Leroy M. Baldwin Medal for disarming a one-man arsenal who was holding up a crowded Childs' Restaurant at Columbus Circle, and who once hit a tough guy so hard that the gorilla's glass eye popped out fiercely and socked Broderick, likes nothing better than an evening at home with his family or a chat with a sports writer.

Cop Saves Crook

Several years ago Broderick was present in court and heard the testimony that sent a young second-story man to Sing Sing. It was a cut-and-dried case, nevertheless Broderick began to worry. He didn't like it. He decided that the boy was innocent of this particular felony. So Johnny began a private investigation. He worked overtime, day and night, finally nailed the real guilty party and saw to it that he was substituted in Sing Sing for the dazed young second-story man.

Johnny has a horror of talking about his profession, and won't recount any of his adventures, except in formal reports to his superiors. A few years ago when several hundred admirers tendered him a testimonial dinner, Johnny rose to his feet when called on to speak, looked out over an audience that tensely expected to hear something about his life and tough times, and said, "Aw, nuts. I'd rather sing." So he sang Sweet Rosie O'Grady. Without a drink, too, for the man who has worked for years knee-deep in night clubs and saloons, has never had a drink of whisky in his life.

Broderick relaxes at gangster movies. He likes to sit in the dark theaters and chuckle at the tough actors. But now and then he isn't pleased. Not long ago he was off duty and resting in his modest suburban home—where he lives with his good-looking wife and their two 'teen-age daughters—when his phone rang. It was his friend Toots Shor, owner of a popular pub.

"Hey, Duke, can you come over to the joint?" Shor asked. "Edward G. Robinson's here and wants to meet you. You know . . . he played the part of you in Bullets or Ballots."

"Tell him I don't want to meet him," Johnny barked. "Tell him I oughta flatten him."

Shor was struck dumb for one of the few times on record. "What's eating you? Robinson's a fine guy."

"Yeah?" growled New York's toughest cop. "Suppose I had let my kids go to see that picture—and they had seen him, playing the part of me, actually taking a drink and smoking a cigar?"



Broderick knew Crowley well, and asked for permission to try to reason with the trapped rat. When the permission was granted, Broderick walked out from behind a barricade in full view of the dead-eyed sniper. He walked across the open street to the apartment house, banged on Crowley's door and yelled: "Hey, they got you, Crowley. Why don't you give up?"

Crowley was close to the door. "You know me good enough, Johnny. You know the only way I'll come out of here is shootin'."

"Aw, you're nutty," Johnny observed, impatiently. "Tell you what I'll do: I'll go around the corner for two hours. If you ain't out by then I'll come in and get you." And with his back to Crowley, Broderick strolled off.

Two hours later Broderick returned, and once more the firing and bombing stopped. Broderick went back to Crowley's door, supported now by a few other detectives, and hit it with a splintering football block. The door broke, admitting Broderick more suddenly than he expected. Crowley faced him, his gun aimed at Broderick's belly. Then Crowley began backing out of the room, ready to take his stand in another section of the apartment.

more than one beleaguered sports writer.

Broderick is really a hard man to tag. He actually had a fight with fifteen young toughs one night. One of them called him on the phone and said, "You think you're tough, Broderick? Well, I can lick you." Johnny regarded this as an affront to the police force. He got the address, rushed to Brooklyn, walked into the house and promptly went down under the impact of fifteen waiting hoodlums. Johnny's buddy, Cordes, arrived eventually with a platoon of cops, for Broderick had left a note telling him where he was going. Broderick was nearly unconscious when Cordes arrived, but was still swinging.

His best fight came when he was assigned to find and disperse a gang of plug-uglies who were annoying women en route to an uptown Catholic church.

The devout Broderick rushed to this assignment with great relish. When he came into the pool hall that was their hangout, one of the plugs recognized him, picked up the cue ball and pegged it at Johnny's skull. Johnny barely ducked the bean ball, snatched a cue out of a near-by rack just in time to bunt off another bean ball, and thus bunted or leaned out of the way of the rest of the ivory ammunition that was flung his



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Delayed Verdict

Continued from page 12

All this while he had kept a hand in his right coat pocket. Wharton became aware of a bulge there and it made streaks of redness fade from his face. His protest came hoarsely: "You're building it all on a guess. What's that in your pocket?"

"A gun," Evan said.

"You wouldn't dare shoot me! You'd hang for it! It'd make two convictions—"

"Yes, it'd be my second conviction," Evan broke in harshly. "But you and I know the first one was for your own crime. You let me rot in prison ten long years; and you tried to buy off your conscience. Ten cartons of cigarettes; then a hundred dollars; then five hundred. Did it make you feel any better, Wharton?"

Wharton kept staring with a fearful fascination at that pocket bulge. Evan withdrew his hand from the pocket.

"I brought the gun along," he explained, "only to keep you from killing me. You *did* kill once, so you might try it again. In the meantime, I'd like to begin life over with a decent job. As an ex-con, I can't get a job except a cheap one like I've got now, wiping engines on a ship. My only chance is to prove in court that you, and not I, killed Ronald Bruce."

ABRUPTLY Evan Keith turned his back and left the garden. A gate admitted him to a side street and he walked briskly down a lane of magnolias toward the business section.

He must report back to his ship, which shortly would be returning to San Francisco. What then? Well, on his day ashore at San Francisco he could dig for a closer tie-up between Bruce and Wharton. And at each successive call of his ship here at Honolulu, he could work on Wharton in person. The man might crack up, if he kept at him.

Evan swung with long strides down a hill and came to a park with public buildings on one side and with a giant banyan tree in the center. The banyan branches dipped down to take root again. A bench was there and Evan paused to rest. He looked curiously at this hundred-legged banyan; and then at a Portuguese boy making love to a Japanese girl on the next bench; and then Evan Keith wrenched his thoughts back to Wallace Wharton—and to Ronald Bruce.

In diamond-sharp detail he remembered the only time he had ever seen Bruce. Ten years ago in San Francisco. Evan, fresh out of college, was driving a shiny new flivver down a residential avenue. Bruce, in a heavy sedan, had come banging out of his driveway to a collision. No one was hurt, but the flivver was scuttled.

The usual heated argument, each driver claiming the other to be at fault. Harsh words drew a crowd which heard Evan demand that Bruce pay the damage; and which heard Bruce refuse; and which heard Evan erupt bitterly, "If you don't pay it, I'll take it out of your hide."

Then Evan had called a wrecker to tow his wreck to a shop. An estimate for repair had come to a hundred and seventy dollars. With this estimate in hand, just after dusk, Evan had returned to the Bruce residence. He would insist on Bruce footing the bill. But crossing Bruce's lawn he had stumbled over murder. Bruce's body lay on the grass there; by it lay the club which had struck him down. Evan, shocked, had picked it up because it looked like a spoke from the front wheel of his

wreck. He was standing with it in hand, by the body, when two of the Bruce servants found him there.

"Guilty," the jury said.

Evan remembered somebody clicking a camera as they led him from the courtroom. And now he heard one again. He whirled nervously, then saw it was only a tourist lady. She was pointing a camera at the hundred-legged banyan.

He got up and hurried on past the post office and to the water front. A shrill whining of winches echoed through the dock warehouse as Evan strode across it to the moored Matsonia.

Then, as he was about to go aboard via the crew's plank, an elderly Chinese touched his arm. "You Mister Keith, please, maybe?"

"I am."

"This for you, please." The Chinese grinned amiably, then extended a sealed note.

The envelope bore Evan's name, nothing else. He opened it and saw a single line of writing. The writing had a feminine roundness:

"Please stay away from W. K. W. until you've seen me. A Friend."

Evan read the line twice, then stared suspiciously at the messenger. The Chinese was gray, wrinkled, neatly dressed. He might be the head servant of some well-ordered household.

"Who sent you?" Evan demanded.

"Come, please. I take you there."

The messenger bowed, then turned and walked with dignity from the warehouse. He seemed to take for granted that Evan would follow.

It might be a trap. Wallace Wharton could have dispatched this Oriental for the purpose of seducing Evan to some secluded spot where, at Wharton's order, Evan could be safely murdered.

What other answer could there be? Who else but Wharton could possibly know Evan's errand here?

Then Evan put a hand in his pocket and fingered the gun. He squared his shoulders and followed the Chinese messenger to the street. The man led him to a parked coupé. Evan, a hand in his gun pocket, got in. His guide took the wheel and drove away.

THEY took a street which followed the shore line. Soon Evan saw that they were passing handsome estates and hotels which fronted one way toward this street and the other way toward the sea.

The Chinese turned in at the drive of a hotel and drove the coupé up a lane between brilliant flame trees. He came to a stop at the hotel entrance and announced, "Writer of message waits in garden by sundial, please."

Evan got out and went into the hotel lobby. It still might be a trap, though the chance seemed less likely now. This was clearly a respectable place, not a deadfall for murder. The other side of the main foyer fronted on Waikiki Beach.

Evan went out to the flagged garden and saw a sundial there. By the sundial was an awning divan swing. Its back was toward him; but the swing was swaying and so Evan knew someone was in it.

He crossed the garden to its seaward side; then he saw a young woman seated alone in the swing. Almost at once Evan had a feeling he had seen her before. He couldn't think where.

His uncertain stare drew a smile. A faint flush came with the smile and he

knew it was she who had sent the note. She wore a traveling suit and a ginger lei, and didn't seem tanned enough to have been here long.

"Won't you sit down, Mr. Keith?"

Evan caught a nervous note in her voice. He sat down in a rocker facing the swing. "Why did you send for me?"

"To stop you," she said. "You're mistaken about Wallace Wharton."

So that was it! Evan was disappointed. So Wharton was using a pretty woman to plead his innocence! "Your message found me too late," Evan said coldly. "Because I've already seen Wharton."

Her look of alarm seemed real. "You went to his house? Did you—?"

"Did I manhandle him? No, I just told him what I know."

"But you don't really know anything," she protested. "You're just guessing."

"Guessing what?"

"Guessing that he sent three gifts."

"Didn't he?" Evan's stare probed at her. Unless she was in touch with Wharton, how could she know these things?

"No, he didn't," the girl said. Her eyes met Evan's with a disarming candor. Then he saw that she wasn't just a girl, but a mature woman of about his own age, which was thirty-one. "Why would he?" she argued. "Conscience wouldn't make him do it. Because Wallace Wharton hasn't any conscience. Not the tiniest speck."

"Who are you?" Evan demanded.

The question seemed to surprise her. "Don't you know? I'm Pamela Bruce."

Then he remembered. He had seen her at the trial, ten years ago. She was the widow of Ronald Bruce.

"Did you think I did it?" he asked.

Her "No" came quickly, almost eagerly. "I didn't think you were guilty. Then, after you'd been three years in prison, something happened to make me doubt it all the more."

"What?"

"An old neighbor called to see me. I'd almost forgotten him. He took me out to dinner, talked to me about his life in Hawaii."

"Wallace Wharton?"

She nodded. "And before the eve-

ning was over, he asked me to marry him. When I said I wouldn't, he went away. That was seven years ago."

"And that started you to thinking?"

"It made me remember that when he lived next door I'd often played golf and tennis with him. And that in an unobtrusive way he'd been attentive. He'd made no advances—but a girl can tell when a man likes her. Then I remembered something else: Wallace Wharton went abroad the next day after Ronald's murder. And he never announced where he was, Mr. Keith, until after your conviction."

"You decided he was guilty, just on that?"

"No. I simply realized he might be, because it suggested a motive. But I wasn't sure enough to accuse him. You, I felt sure, were innocent. So I sent you the cigarettes."

Evan saw instantly that there was no coincidence. The cigarettes had arrived on the first of three dates, but only because Wharton's presence in San Francisco that day had made Pamela think of Evan. "You later sent money to my mother?" he prompted.

She nodded. "I didn't see Wharton again for three years. Then he called again, took me out to dinner and again asked me to marry him. So again it pointed my suspicion of him and made me think in pity of you. By that time I'd learned about your mother. It was the same again three years later. Don't you see?"

EVAN saw it clearly. Three times, at three-year intervals, Wharton had gone to the mainland. Each time he had proposed marriage and been refused. And his approach in each case had brought the same consistent reaction to Pamela.

"That explains the gifts," Evan said. "But it doesn't explain why you're here in Honolulu."

"When you were released a week ago," she said, "I wondered if employers would give you a cold shoulder. If so, maybe I could help. I'm a director in Bruce Industries, you know. So I consulted Sam Wang."

"Who's Sam Wang?"

"An old Chinese servant who prac-

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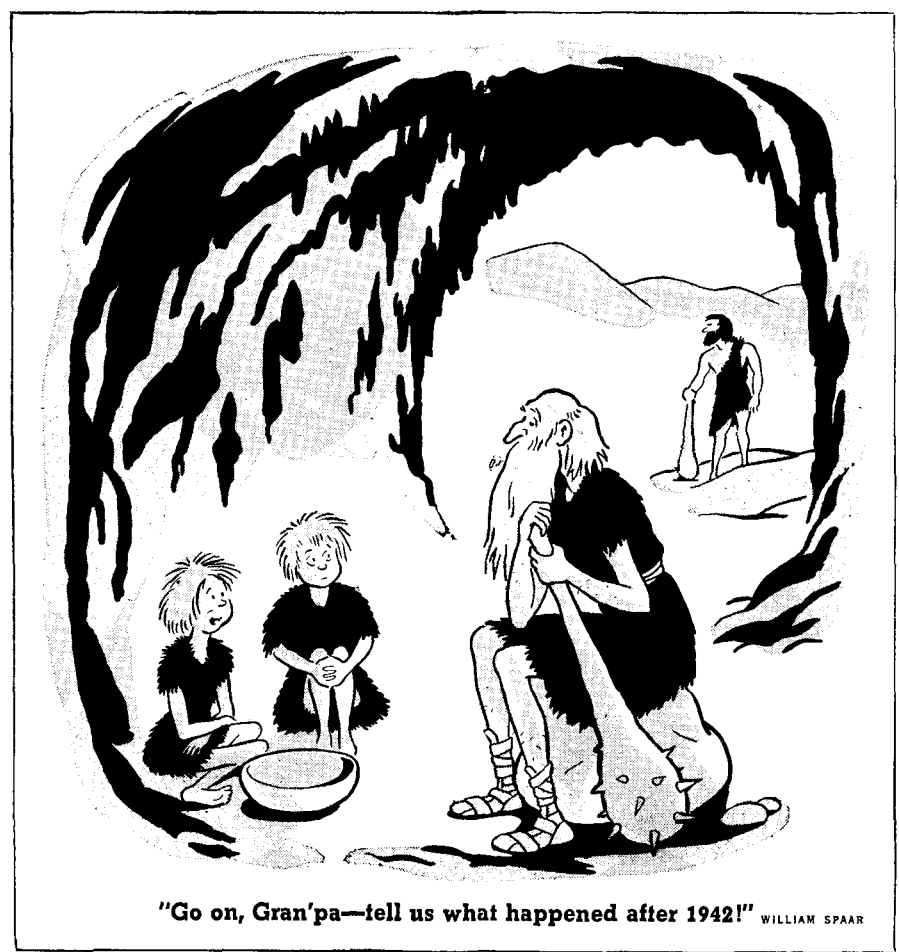
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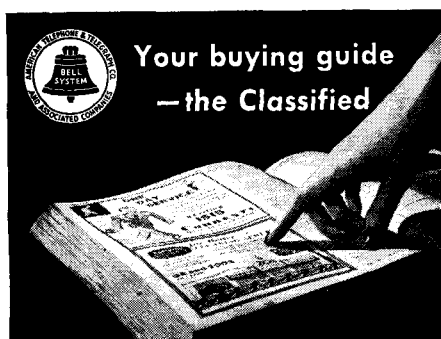
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What a lot of useful information you'll find in the Classified section of your Telephone Directory—

The names, addresses and telephone numbers of local tradespeople. Helpful facts about the services which many businesses offer—delivery, charge accounts, hours, terms, etc.

A typical instance of this usefulness: when Mrs. T. of Los Angeles needed a chimney repairman she consulted the 'yellow pages' and was attracted by the convenient location of one firm. She called them in.



tically raised me. I talked it over with Wang. He agreed that a young widow can't properly wait at the prison gates to greet the man who was convicted of murdering her husband. So Wang said he would find out your plans, and that we would help you some way while keeping under cover."

Evan looked at her and the bitterness melted from his eyes. He said "Thanks, Mrs. Bruce," and it sounded flat and stupidly inadequate.

"But Wang," she said, "phoned me that you were trying to get a job at a hotel. He said you had called at seven hotels and had been turned down, and now you were cooling your heels at the Presidio. I knew the manager of the Presidio quite well. So I rang him and asked him to give you a job."

Evan stared. "So that's why I got a break there!"

"An hour later he called me back," Pamela said, "and told me you hadn't asked for a job. He said all you wanted was to see his registrations for three old dates. They were the dates I had sent those gifts—"

"So you knew exactly what I was after!" Evan exclaimed. "And that I'd find the name Wallace K. Wharton registered on all three dates."

"So I sent Wang to find out what you'd do about it. He reported that you'd bought a secondhand pistol. And that you had then booked as a wiper to Honolulu. I guessed what for."

"You thought I'd walk in on Wharton, and start shooting? Why didn't you cable the Honolulu police?"

"And say what? That a man who has just served a prison term for the murder of my husband is on the war-path after a third man who, during the prison term, has been trying to marry me? And that the police must stop him, and take away the gun?"

Evan laughed uneasily. "You're right. It couldn't be handled that way."

"So Wang and I clipped over to handle it ourselves."

"And now that you've handled it, what else do you want?"

"Justice," Pamela said, "for both you and Wharton."

"That's exactly my ticket," Evan said. "A cleared name for me and conviction for Wharton."

"You're sure he's guilty?"

"I'd bet my right arm on it."

"So would I," Pamela said.

"So let's nail him," Evan said.

"How?"

A polite voice intruded: "For you, Mrs. Bruce." An attendant was standing there with a telephone. Its long extension cord reached halfway across the garden.

Pamela took it and answered the call: "Hello. This is Mrs. Bruce."

THEN Evan saw her expression change. And uneasy tension was in her voice as he heard her respond, successively:

"How did you know I was in town? . . . The evening paper? Oh, of course; they publish the names of all clipper arrivals. How are you, Mr. Wharton? . . . Dinner tonight? Please, I've hardly unpacked yet. . . . Well, tomorrow, then. Goodby." She hung up and turned troubled eyes to Evan.

"You're right," Evan said grimly. "He hasn't any conscience."

"I detest seeing him," she said. "But we'll have a better chance, don't you think, if he doesn't guess I suspect him?"

Evan approved with decision: "Keep him on the string. Call him Wally. Have him all softened up by the time I get back from San Francisco."

Pamela agreed. She knew, of course, that the Matsonia made a round trip between Hawaii and the mainland once each fortnight.

Exactly two weeks later Wallace Wharton answered the telephone at his Honolulu residence. He brightened at the sound of Pamela's voice.

"Can you drop by this afternoon, Wally? There's something I want to talk about."

Wharton exulted. She was calling him Wally again, just as when they'd been tennis partners ten years ago. And three times during these last two weeks she'd dined with him.

Everything comes, Wharton thought, to him who counts ten. Even if you have to count ten long years while you wait for a woman.

He drove to Pamela's hotel and parked his car in the drive there. At the desk he announced himself and the clerk rang Pamela's suite: "Mr. Wharton calling, Mrs. Bruce."

Pamela's voice said, "Send him right up."

Her second-floor suite consisted of a sitting room, a balcony, a bedroom and a bath.

Sam Wang answered Wharton's knock. Wang bowed, took the caller's hat and cane. Then he ushered Wharton through the sitting room and out upon the balcony.

Pamela stood up to greet him and her face seemed serious. Troubled, rather. "I'm afraid we're in for something unpleasant, Wally," she said. "I'm all upset about it myself."

Her manner confused him. "What's up, Pamela?" Then he decided she was embarrassed rather than troubled.

"You'll promise not to be offended, Wally?" she asked anxiously.

When she spoke to him like that he was willing to promise anything. Wharton sat down on a rattan settee. He brought out a cigar, trimmed it, and a smile creased his broad, pink face. "I like a good mystery, Pamela."

She sat down, facing him, and asked suddenly, "Do you remember a man named Evan Keith?"

He stiffened. One could almost hear the watch in his pocket tick ten times before he answered, "Keith? He was the man who killed Ronnie, wasn't he?"

"He's the man they convicted for it," she said, "and now he's been released from San Quentin. He seems to have a job on the Matsonia."

"He hasn't annoyed you, I hope?"

"He came here," she admitted, "just

after his boat docked today. And he has an obsession, Wally."

"A what?"

"He thinks you murdered Ronald."

Again the ten-second wait. Wharton was deciding whether to say, "I know it; he called two weeks ago and accused me to my face," or "That's too ridiculous!" He compromised by saying, "What makes him think I did it?"

"He claims you had a motive, for one thing. He thinks I'm the motive."

"He's what they call stir-crazy," Wharton said.

"Still, I think we should be kind to him, reason with him. You can listen to the case he thinks he's built up, then show him that it's all illogical and impossible. Don't you see?"

Wharton moistened those thin, tight lips of his. "I see," he murmured.

"So I asked him to call again at five," Pamela said. "You don't mind talking to him, do you?"

WHEN the house phone rang, Wang brought it to Pamela. The desk clerk's voice announced, "A Mr. Keith calling on you, Mrs. Bruce."

"Send him up, please," Pamela said.

Wharton braced himself. His best line, he decided, would be to patronize Keith. Treat him politely, but like a child.

They heard a knock and Wang went to respond. Then Wang returned to the balcony ushering Evan Keith. Evan bowed stiffly to Pamela, then stared at Wharton like a man with a chip on his shoulder.

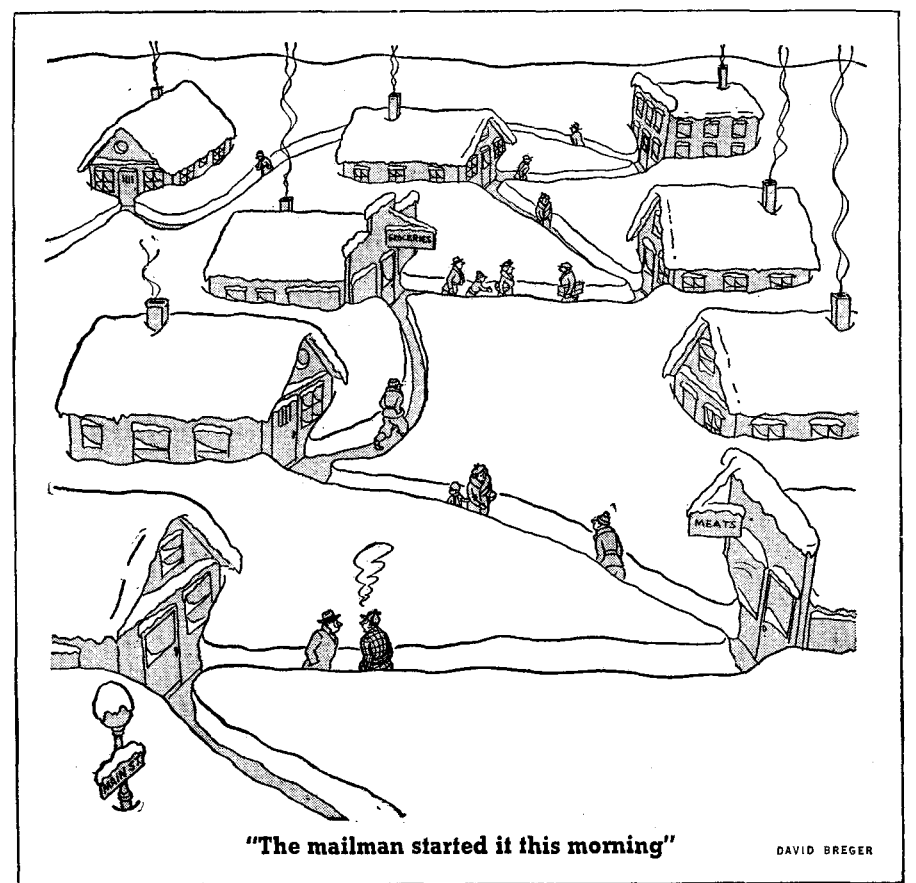
Pamela was gracious: "Won't you sit down, Mr. Keith?" Wharton liked the way she met this difficult situation. She was humoring this fellow, smoothing down ruffled feathers. Wharton tried to adopt exactly that attitude himself.

"Suppose we talk this thing out, Keith," he suggested throatily. "I mean about this obsession of yours that it was I who killed Ronnie Bruce." Evan took a seat near Pamela.

"I'll reconstruct the crime for you," he proposed bluntly.

"Go right ahead." Wharton's tone was expansive.

"On that day in 1931," Evan said, "there was a collision out in your street. Two drivers quarreled about who was to blame. Bystanders gathered, yourself among them. You heard me say to



Bruce, 'If you don't pay the damage, I'll take it out of your hide.'

"You hoped I would. You wanted Bruce out of the way for a motive we'll not mention now. After dark that evening you saw Bruce walking among the shrubs of his front lawn. You went to the street and picked up a wheel spoke—debris from the wreckage of my car. You used it to kill Bruce. That's the outline."

Wharton waited ten beats of his heart. Then, with a tolerant unctious, faintly satirical, he answered, "And of course I knew you were on the way there from a garage with a repair bill in your hand, and that—"

"I can't prove you knew I was coming," Evan broke in. "What I can prove is that you found out, too late, that your crime had been witnessed."

Wharton felt hot stings spreading on his face. He brought out a silk handkerchief not so much to mop at them as to hide them from Pamela. Somehow he managed to respond, not too angrily, "The crime was witnessed, you say? By whom? Please don't keep me in suspense."

Then Wharton turned to see how Pamela was taking it. Her look reassured him. It seemed to say, "Be patient with him, Wally. The poor fellow."

"If there wasn't a witness," Evan countered, "why did you leave town in such a hurry? With me booked for the murder you had nothing to worry about—unless you were afraid of some witness."

The man was bluffing on some rank guess, Wharton decided. He assured himself that bluffers never win at a showdown. All you need do is sit tight and call them.

So Wharton put a tongue in his cheek. He asked Evan, "But who was this witness, if it's no secret?"

Evan chose to ignore him and explain directly to Pamela: "While my ship was in San Francisco this last trip I had a day or two ashore. So I went to the police with a list of three dates. June 19, 1934; June 6, 1937; August 2, 1940."

Wharton knew that those were the three dates that he had registered at the St. Francis Hotel.

Pamela asked Evan, "But why would the police be interested?"

"They weren't," Evan said. "Then I asked them if any unsolved crime was committed on any one of those three dates. They looked up the first date and said no. They looked up the second date and said no. Then they looked up the third date and said yes, on August 2, 1940, a little ambulance chaser named Moses Ginsberg was found murdered in his office. The homicide was still unsolved."

WHARTON sat perfectly rigid, like a pillar of ice. It was more than ten pulse beats before he could challenge, brassily, "All right. I was in San Francisco that day. And so were a million other people."

Evan continued speaking directly to Pamela: "The name meant nothing. But the man's profession jolted me. Ambulance chasers follow car collisions. The Bruce homicide followed a car collision. The connection was still thin, but it jostled my memory. It made me go back to the garage which repaired my wreck ten years ago. The same man still runs the place. I rehashed the old incident with him and we supplemented each other's vague recollections of it."

"We recalled that while I waited for the estimate, a shifty little lawyer came in. He saw the wreck and asked me if I was hurt. I said no. That disqualified me as a possible client. So he asked who was the other party in the colli-

sion and I told him. He left and I forgot all about him. Soon I left myself and went to Bruce's house. I didn't know that Moses Ginsberg, preceding me by ten minutes to inquire if Bruce had been hurt in the collision, and if so would he care to file suit, had arrived on the lawn just in time to witness Bruce's murder by Wharton."

Wharton stood up and his knees almost buckled. "I think this has gone far enough, Pamela. Don't you?"

The fact that she didn't answer him, or even look at him, frightened him more than anything Evan had said.

EVAN went on: "So I looked up Ginsberg's family and got the name of his bank. At the bank I said I was checking up on the Ginsberg murder. I handed them a list of three dates."

"The same three dates?" Pamela asked.

"Only two were the same. The first two. For the date of Ginsberg's murder in 1940 I substituted the date of Bruce's in 1931. I asked the banker to see if any unusually large deposits were made by Moses Ginsberg on those three dates. It wasn't easy. At first the banker wouldn't show me a thing. So I went to the judge who had sentenced me to prison ten years ago. He's retired now—I found him at his club. I told him what I'd uncovered so far. And did I get action! That old judge drove me back to the bank in his own car and he had a heart-to-heart talk with the banker."

"Then the banker looked up the old Ginsberg account. He found that on the day following the Bruce murder, Ginsberg had deposited three thousand dollars in cash. And on the 1934 date, Ginsberg banked one thousand in cash. And on the 1937 date he again banked one thousand in cash."

Evan turned to Wharton and continued: "You got tired of those pay-offs, Wharton. So on your 1940 trip to the mainland you put a stop to it. Yes, there were a million other people in town. But of all that million, only one left town on the first of four dates and returned on each of three others."

"A coincidence," Wharton pleaded desperately.

"A triple coincidence," Evan derided, "like having three wild-goose feathers fall in the same chimney on the same day every third year."

Even then Wharton didn't see just how tightly it wove a noose for him. He heard Pamela say, "Tell him where you next took your list of dates, Evan." Pamela's look was different now. Wharton realized that she'd been conniving with Evan Keith all the while.

"With that square-shooting old judge still battling for me," Evan said, "I went to the Trans-Pacific telephone people. What calls from Frisco to Honolulu on or near those three dates? I found that just before the murder of Ginsberg, Ginsberg called Wharton at Honolulu. Wharton immediately clipped to San Francisco."

Wharton said hoarsely, "What are you going to do about it?"

"It's already been done," Evan told him. "The warrant's been issued. Police are waiting at your car now."

Wharton stepped to the balcony railing. He looked down and saw his car parked in the hotel drive. Four policemen stood by it. Three were of the local force; the other wore the uniform of a San Francisco inspector.

Evan Keith moved over to stand by Pamela. Wharton looked at them and counted ten—not ten pulse beats of discretion, but one for every year he'd stolen from Evan's life; and one for each year he'd waited for Pamela.

Then Wharton turned to see Sam Wang holding out his hat and stick. "You go, please," Wang said.

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Louise passes some of her famous d'oeuvres (see text for details) group of highly appreciative guests including, extreme right, the IFOR T

Friendly Louise runs one of the most unusual restaurants in New York. But don't let the simple, home-like atmosphere fool you. The most glamorous people in New York eat there, and the food is delicious

THERE is no sign on Louise's place. You'd never know that the brownstone house on East 58th Street is a restaurant unless you walked through the basement door some evening around seven o'clock.

Then you would see a small, intimate room with a bar at one end crowded with friendly groups, tables with red-check covers, and some of the smartest-looking people in New York. Louise with her merry smile and dark eyes circulates among them, stopping to chat with those she knows. When she tells you who dines there regularly you'd think she was reading from the Social Register.

Barbara Hutton, Brenda Frazier, and among the band leaders, Pancho, to mention but a few. And the town's most beautiful glamor girls. When the models began to haunt Louise's a few years ago the debs picked up the trail.

So there you have it. A restaurant with the most homelike atmosphere you can imagine, with a distinctly sophisticated clientele who like the food, the informality, the absence of cameramen, but most of all Louise.

No ordinary restaurant proprietor, Louise found herself in the business quite by accident. And she still treats her customers as though they were guests of the house.

Louise used to do embroidering for a large dress shop, but when this kind of handiwork passed out of the picture, she had nothing to do. In the summer of 1933 she and her husband, Nick, rented a bungalow at Long Beach, N. Y. Pancho, who had his band at the Atlantic Beach Club, used to come over to their house to eat. Soon he began bringing friends along, and Louise fixed dinner for them, too.

That winter Louise took a house on East 58th Street and let out some of the

rooms. The people who lived there came downstairs to eat with her family. Word traveled fast about her wonderful cooking and she found herself feeding twenty-five and thirty each night.

Across the street was a speak-easy and, with repeal, the owner wanted to retire. The real-estate man who handled her house suggested Louise take over the bigger place and open a restaurant. He offered her a month's concession. She decided to take a chance, rent out the two upper floors and try her luck with a restaurant on the two lower floors.

No Vacations and No Chef

With a smile Louise says, "I thought with that month's free rent I could afford to go to the country for a rest, but I never got there. The first day forty people came to dinner and every night there were more.

"For a couple of years I cooked for a hundred every night to save the expense of a chef. After closing time, around two or three o'clock in the morning, we'd go down to Washington Market and get all our fresh vegetables for the next day. "That's a wonderful place." Louise's

eyes light up when she tells you. "Some Italian officers and officials were eating here one night after visiting the World's Fair, and they wanted to go down to the market with me. This was more thrilling for them than anything they had seen out at the Fair.

"But you should see my farm," Louise tells everyone. "The house is 125 years old, all tumbling down, but I like it that way. And my vegetable garden! String beans, tomatoes, spinach, cucumbers, lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower. And we have our own chickens too, and eggs," Louise announces proudly.

"You know, I have a country maid who has taught me to preserve. You must taste the apple-quince and the plum and grape jelly we made last summer. It is delicious. We still have 500 jars left."

Louise takes pride in her cooking. She started doing it for friends when she was about 17, when she used to invite the girls from the dress shop to her house for dinner. She never took a lesson and doesn't consult cookbooks. She doesn't measure amounts, but uses her own judgment, as most real cooks do. Louise loves to fix hors d'oeuvres, and