



Blame it on LOVE

BY MARGARET LULL

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT PATTERSON

Patrick had to get the war done before he got around to a girl. But he reckoned without the generalship of Lissy Lee and the infiltration tactics of Mrs. Mahoney

YOU could say—and dodge the issue—that it was only spring and the Georgia moon, and cape jasmine blooming, filling white velvet nights with a heady fragrance that drugged the senses. You could say that Lieutenant Patrick Thomas Connolly, Infantry, who coveted his best friend's girl, would snap out of all this soon enough, because in the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns, and there were lots of girls besides Lissy Lee. But you'd be wrong. Because Patrick Connolly was different; nothing had ever been light with him, or

easy; more importantly, he'd never had a girl.

His feet paced the sidewalk in thumping rhythm with the feet of Lieutenant Billy Burns, his roommate in quarters, his friend, with whom he shared the thousand things, big and little, that make a soldier's life in training camp.

Billy, as usual, was talking of girls. "Take 'em tall," said Billy, "take 'em short. Take 'em thick or thin, blond, brunet or redhead—sooner or later you get your loving. Might be sooner, might be later, but you get it."

Patrick felt, with horror, an urge to snatch

Mrs. Mahoney thumped her tail and looked proud as the colonel began to pat her. Patrick stood gauping at Lissy Lee

Billy by the left shoulder, spin him around, shake a menacing fist under his nose and demand if by any chance he might be referring to the woman whom he, Patrick Connolly, loved. He swallowed hard, got out of step and said, "Yeah."

"Yeah," said Billy. "Take Lissy Lee." Patrick felt his face twitch. "Maybe," continued Billy, "she is the CO's daughter, maybe she's a lady and will take some time. I'm working on her old man, too. He's all softened up, anyway, on account of getting shifted to this camp, right in the back yard of his home town—goes around beaming all the time about being home with Lissy Lee and her mother and his dogs. My gosh, five dogs! Foxhounds and Irish water spaniels in a great big kennel out back. So I get the dogs, right now. A man's got to know where to start at the bottom."

"Yeah," said Patrick.

Fort Street loomed ahead of them, dream-like in the moonlight that came dappled through the leaves of ancient sycamores along the curb. They had gone out of their way, after the movies, so that they could walk up Fort to the highway bus stop. Fort Street was the Old Part of town, and those who lived here in these houses were Old Family. It was a lovely place of stately homes and lacy iron fences, full fit to harbor a lovely person like Melissa Lee Wyatt, the CO's daughter and Billy Burns' girl.

"That's her house," said Billy suddenly.

PATRICK did not say he knew it was her house. He did not say that last night, late, he had walked up Fort Street and looked at Lissy Lee's house, then caught the bus back to camp. He had lain awake in the warm dark, listening to Billy's lusty snoring, and he had felt a vast and troubled aching all through his heart and bones. He knew that tonight would be like last night.

"I thought," said Billy, "maybe she'd be out walking one of the dogs. It's only half past nine. The old man's kind of buzzardly about Lissy Lee making dates on week nights, on account of she has to get up so early and be a Nurse's Aide. But a man can't help it if he meets her on the street. Good timing," he added, complacently. "There she is."

The shadows along the garden path of the big house on the corner stirred and ruffled gently; a girl opened the iron gate and came out onto the sidewalk with a dog. The dog barked sharply and approached, muttering in his beard.

"Hey, Lissy Lee," said Billy. "It's me."

"Oh! Beauregard says it's likely burglars." She paused, smiling, a slim figure in a white dress with dark hair curling around her face.

Beauregard circled Billy once, then sniffed at Patrick's ankles, rubbed against his legs and sat firmly on his feet, looking up at him. Patrick bent and rubbed the dog's ears, thankful for something to do with his hands.

Lissy Lee said, "Is that you, Lieutenant Connolly?" And he said, "Yes—uh—good evening."

Beauregard jumped happily against Patrick's legs and knocked him off balance; he staggered, crashed into Billy and felt hot blood surging into his face.

"My gosh!" said Billy, straightening his hat. "I guess he thinks you're a rabbit, Pat."

"Beauregard," said Lissy Lee, "is just indicatin' that he likes Lieutenant Connolly. I reckon he knows you-all like dogs, Lieutenant."

"Well, I—had a dog once when I was a kid. He was partly bloodhound, I think." Patrick looked at her and looked quickly away, his heart pounding.

She nodded gravely. "Any kind of a hound is good," she said. "My father says hounds and spaniels. Hounds for huntin' and spaniels for retrievin'." Beauregard is a foxhound, and we have some Irish water spaniels, too."

"Where you going, Lissy Lee?" Billy moved confidently to her side and took her arm. "Maybe you better have a convoy."

(Continued on page 80)



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could say what was better never heard. "I just wanted to say I hope you took no offense at my coming in the room, as none was meant. I'm not much to talk. She don't rest when I'm not there, nor I don't, either. Never did for forty-six years. Now there isn't much left, it's more so, and whatever way things are, I don't notice them if she's there, or her with me on hand. We always just stick together. So that's why I come up."

"All right. I understand. Take care of her. And you'll have the nurse. She'll be all right now. Goodby."

He ran to the curb, flung open the car door, tossed in his bag, started the car. Then he sat still, deliberately waiting until the oil indicator crept up to normal. He did not force the gears or jump his starts. He drove slowly, eased his tires around bumps, brought the car to a standstill at each stop street, ran no yellow lights. He did not enjoy it, but he always drove so now. Always.

This was his private ritual, the devotions that he made for his country. An automobile may be an odd altar, but he had no other that was feasible. In a warring country, a man out of uniform gets to feeling lonely, to feeling useless, even when his hands are busy and his family close. So he invents a small secret way to help along what everybody else is doing openly, and it comforts him a little.

Of course, when the doctor is on an emergency, he cannot act so. At the thought, the speedometer needle quivered up from 30 to 35. Doctor Hodge slowed, bringing it down to 30 again. This is not an emergency, he said to himself. It honestly isn't. An honest mind, and an ability to adapt yourself to things as they are—that's what makes a man. Without it, you're only an animal.

At the echo of those words, his mind went back to his mother, to the brown varnished kitchen of her house, the white dress she always wore, the big yellow bowls in which she mixed things. The doctor went through medical school on fancy cakes, a sticky and uncertain vehicle. That house had been shabbier than the one he had just left. His mother had talked verities to him all her life; she had a theme song, and it was gravity. He was suddenly glad she had died before she had seen him like this, like a fool in a tantrum.

The night wind blew gustily against his car. It is cold, he thought to himself, winter is almost here. And then for the first time since he had left home that morning, he thought of Judy, his daughter, just as he swung out the car to turn into his own driveway. The curtain at her window, fluttering out on the wind, caught his eye.

IN THE dark garage, while he was locking the car, closing the doors, going out through the side entrance, her image before him made a pleasant light. She was a cream-colored child, not yet two, her hair tawny, her mouth unsmiling. He wanted to see her when she got up. He walked quickly to the house, a tired man with something to look forward to at home. Why, of course, I am going to see my darling, my baby.

Music from the playroom downstairs drifted and trembled in the kitchen, and two glasses close together in the sink vibrated and hummed a glassy tune. He moved them apart to quiet them, and then regretted it. Why shouldn't they sing? He tried to put them together again to make the song, but no matter how he arranged them, they were silent. They must have done it themselves before.

In the refrigerator he found milk and the makings of sandwiches. He pulled out the red ruffled stool from under the sink and sat down and fixed his food and ate it, not thinking of anything, just eating, with the swinging ivy that drooped overhead adangle on his hair.

Because for these few minutes his mind was empty—a rare thing—a thought came in and established itself: He knew that he was not pleased with his private world. Ruffles and dangles were not what he wanted. They were rouge, and he wanted health.

Doctor Ben Hodge said to himself: I want what the Haddons have. I want real love, the long, delightful warmth of unselfishness, the heart freely given. Nothing else. I want to live like that and build like that, and I shall do it.

Dancing Saturday Night

Continued from page 62

He popped the last bite of sandwich in his mouth. The sounds from below seemed to swell and grow nearer, and his wife's hand and arm, and the back of her head, appeared through the doorway. She was talking to someone in the dining room.

"I don't know," she said, and laughed and laughed. "I don't know. I tell you. I'm just waiting, too. Don't push, gentlemen."

Apparently they did push, and Nancy bounced gracefully into the kitchen, followed by three men in a rush.

"Why, Ben!" she exclaimed in her sweet voice. "I didn't hear you. When did you get home? My wandering husband," she explained to the one of the three Ben did not know—a boy in ensign's blues.

"The beast is eating," Joe said. He and Ben had been in school together.

"It has to be done once in a while. How are the germs—flourishing?" Dave Treadway put in his remark. He had been in college with Ben.

The ensign said nothing, but his look was long. One glance was all Ben needed to recognize that look, a symptom telltale as a scarlet-fever rash. The look said: So you are her husband! Well, yes, but he was other things also. A doctor, to listen and watch and tend; a man, to support the fight and the fighters; a father, to love his child.

Ben had an impulse of sympathy toward the ensign. Poor boy, poor human, believing that these are dreams come real, this silly pretty house and its mistress. They have no more substance than a paper lantern; they are no more filling than an empty box.

"Nice to have you here," Ben said. "You coming or going? Atlantic or Pacific?"

"I've just come." The ensign was defiant. "Pacific." He stared at Ben. "And you?" he asked huskily. "And you?" Twice, to make sure that the two watching, and Nancy, could not miss the suggested insult, the goad flung at this venerable civilian.

"Well, fella," Joe said quickly.

"Come on," Dave urged. "Let's get on with the business of the dance. You're drinks behind us, Ben. Move, Nancy; move, boy; how about it, Ben?"

"I'll be along. Go on down. Be right there."

After a bit, Ben stood at the top of the open stairs that led down to the playroom in the cellar, surveying the couples who gyrated, bathed in loud music. Some leaped and pranced, sparks and spray of sharp sound flying. Others clung, moved slowly with thoughtful feet, talking or feeling. Nancy danced with the ensign, slower and more languorous even than the other slow couples.

BEN sat down on the stairs, sipping his drink. The dancers came up to him, greeted him, urged him down. "The old man's beat," he said. "Leave me watch a while." Finally Nancy came, her follower close behind her as if to protect her. Ben said only, "Hello," and looked at the narrow space of floor between their feet.

"Did you see us dancing?" Nancy asked, and laughed.

Ben nodded.

"Well?"

Ben only shook his head. The matter was too clear and simple for speech, and he was tired, anyhow.

"Well?" Nancy demanded again. Her eyes shone with the excitement of conquest and battle. As if she had an irritation that only my quarreling could assuage, thought Ben, wondering. But he had to make some answer.

"What did you think you were doing?" he asked mildly.

"What I pleased."

"Then there isn't anything for me to say, is there? If you want to behave like that, you can."

"Wait a minute," the ensign said. "What do you mean—behave like that?"

Ben did not answer, or even glance toward him, and the ensign stepped forward, clenching his fists. Nancy gasped, and her eyes grew brighter.

Ben shook his head. "All right now," he said. "If I could fight I'd be wearing some other sort of stripes besides pin stripes. It isn't a fighting matter, anyhow. It's strictly between Nancy and me. She's my wife. This is our home. Our baby is asleep upstairs. Either Nancy finds this situation desirable, or she doesn't. You can't grab a good thing, fella. You have to make it, give your life to it. Sorry."

"Yeah, sorry. You know I haven't got the time, and I'll bet you're sorry," the ensign said bitterly. Where before there had been warmth and blissful touches, now again there was nothing but the need to move on. "Save your sympathy," the ensign added. "I'll push off. It's been quite an evening all round."

Before the outside door had slammed, Ben's impulse toward sympathy had faded, had been forgotten, the ensign and Nancy faded and forgotten with it. The music had risen loud all around him, voices singing, feet slapping on the stone floor. The clock said half past eleven.

"Excuse me," he said vaguely, and went back up the stairs. Nancy stared after him as if he were some sort of miracle.

He opened Judy's door softly. The light followed him in, lay on her smooth pink crib, lay on the yellow duck clutched tightly in one small hand.

"Hello," he whispered. "Hello, Judy, Judy, hello, ducky."

Her other hand reached out and clutched the ducky. Except for that, she did not stir, just watched him. He leaned over the crib and touched the warm curls, and slowly she moved her head to look at him. His hands fumbled with the blanket and the sleeping bag, trying to free her. Suddenly she gave a single small chuckle, and her father gathered her up.

He had his daughter in his arms. The room was full of music, and he danced, smooth little steps. She clung to him, urging him on with her knees as one might urge a horse.

The light from the hall grew brighter. Nancy stood in the doorway, watching them. "What on earth are you doing, Ben?"

"Dancing. This is the night for that. Go along, dear. I'll tend to her and be down in a minute. Go along now."

"Oh, you—you don't want me here! You don't want me here at all!" she cried, astonished. "Do you? Do you?"

"Not now." He moved away from her. "We're danc-ing, danc-ing, Judy," he hummed, swinging his daughter higher, smiling straight into her eyes.

"But this is silly," Nancy insisted. "I'm her mother."

"We haven't forgotten. Good night, Mother dear. Say good night, Judy, to Mother dear."

"You actually want me to go?"

Ben nodded.

"You know what I think?" Her voice rose. "I think you're just mean." She sobbed, one sorrowing sound, and then she put her hand over her mouth and ran, silver bracelets tinkling, silver stripes flashing, into the light, down to the music.

THE door swung slowly to, shutting the man and his baby into the cool darkness. He waited until it was quite closed, whispering shut on the sill, and the music only vague sounds in the distance. Then he kissed Judy and tended her, and when he was through he put her down for the night and covered her.

The child sighed and pushed the ducky away. Her hand came out and touched her father's cheek, and then she tucked both hands under her, and sighed again, and closed her eyes, murmuring in her warmth and small, dark security.

Little children are so nice, he thought. They never punish a man for his mistakes. Each moment is new, and they are new with it, and if a man is decent and gay and warm, they will be generous with their delight.

He bent over the crib and smoothed the coverlet and kissed her again. "Good night, my own darling," he said. "I'll see you tomorrow."

THE END



"Now see if I remember: Five pennies make one nickel, five nickels make one quarter, four quarters make one dollar—right?"

COLLIER'S

FRANK BRANDT

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had 2,200 prisoners who were being guarded by American glider pilots, the only men who could be spared; they had hundreds of their own paratroopers wounded; they were at half strength and being attacked by the Germans in regimental strength from the north and the south while they held the tiny island of Nijmegen, about as practical a place to hold as a sandbar with the tide coming in.

Or perhaps the difficulty of the whole operation is best demonstrated by the manner in which the great Nijmegen bridge was taken. You must now imagine a very American-looking bridge, no quaint little arched stone job but a double-lane roadway which I believe some proud Dutchman told me was the second longest bridge in Holland. The dynamite charges to blow this bridge were cemented into the structure and, to give you some idea of the size and intricacy of the steel construction, eight Germans were captured from their hiding places in the undergirders after the bridge was taken. The approaches to this bridge were hopelessly exposed to machine-gun fire on both banks as well as artillery and mortar fire.

One regiment of the 82d Division, the 504th, crossed the Waal to the west of the bridge in collapsible boats in the middle of the afternoon on a fine clear day. The Guards Armored Division of the British Second Army gave them the boats. One of the Guards officers remarked afterward that it seemed absolutely suicidal, as the Americans had never seen these boats and did not know how to launch them, but when that point was brought up, the Americans answered that they guessed it would be all right, and when asked whether they weren't concerned with the number of boats available, they answered again that they reckoned the English would do the best they could.

Some time later, in a thoroughly unlikable little piece of Germany which they were then holding, I met some of the paratroopers who made that river crossing. One of them said the final words about it: "There were three men paddling and the prow of that boat just stood up straight in the water. I wasn't even scared; I just gave up hope."

The regiment did cross the river and climbed a steep bank on which the Germans were well and truly ensconced, and they fought their way down along the shore to secure the north end of the bridge. The Irish Guards tanks lined up and became artillery, lobbing shells over to cover this amazing operation. Meantime, the Guards Armored Division fought in Nijmegen to clear the southern entry to the bridge. One company of the 508th Regiment of the 82d Airborne Division fought with the Guards. A Guards officer said, "You could see them fighting from the housetops, just swarming over them. They were absolutely splendid; wonderful sight seeing all those chaps swarming over the roofs."

Sweating It Out in the Rain

The mission of the 82d Airborne Division in Holland, which takes only one sentence to write and only a minute to say aloud, was completed in three fierce and sleepless days. It was entirely and successfully completed with a total of five bridges and a piece of essential ground taken. Then it became necessary to hold and they are holding still, sweating it out in the long rain that means another ugly winter of war.

This is the fourth campaign for the 82d Airborne Division, which has to its credit more campaigns and more combat time than any other American airborne division. They first jumped in Sicily, which was quite a mix-up from all accounts, due to the fact that they were not dropped where planned or anywhere near where planned. They fought for two weeks, during which time there was the small incident of the paratroopers who hired some rowboats and went out and took three islands off the Sicilian coast.

They left Sicily a month later and the next time they jumped was a hurry call to get in behind the beachhead at Salerno when it looked as if that murderous battle was going to fail. One regiment of the 82d was on the ground behind the beaches at Salerno exactly twelve hours after receiving the order to move and this, too, is some kind of a record.

Rough and Tumble

Continued from page 12

They fought with the English up to Naples, sharing the surrender of that city, and thence on to the Volturno River. The 504th Regiment fought at the juncture of the Fifth and Eighth Armies in Italy, in those beautiful, hated mountains near Cassino and after this it was shipped by sea to Anzio where it fought for sixty-nine days on that shelled mud flat.

The next jump was in Normandy in the early dark of the morning before H-Hour of D-Day. This was the first night glider landing in the European theater and perhaps the first anywhere and it does not need much imagination to think what that was like. You cannot be too exact anyhow about parachuting and here again there was what is known as confusion in the dropping of the paratroopers. For thirty-three days the division fought on the Cherbourg Peninsula and it is credited with the destruction of an entire German division. And there was Holland.

Earned the Right to Be Proud

The 82d is a very proud outfit, having earned the right to this pride. They do not boast when they say that where they fight, they fight without relief or replacements and that they have never relinquished a foot of ground.

This tells you something about them but not nearly enough. From the general on down, they are all extraordinary characters and each one's story is worth telling, for men who jump out of airplanes onto hostile territory do not have dull lives. My favorite characters are Private Bachenheimer and his friends and assistants who are known as "Bill One" and "Bill Two." They may not be typical of anything, for I certainly never saw their like before, but perhaps they could only have flourished and had their being in just such an outfit as the 82d.

Private Bachenheimer is twenty-one and tall and solid, with a dark, short mat of hair and bright small eyes and a curly mouth, and

he became a United States citizen at Fort Bragg while he was training to be a paratrooper. Private Bachenheimer was born in Germany and lived there and in Vienna until he was eleven and he speaks German perfectly and speaks English delightfully with a very faint accent. His father, who was a pianist and a musical director of opera, is dead now. I do not think a boy could say anything better about his father than what Private Bachenheimer said one day in Nijmegen. "Everyone," he said, "had to love him unless they were greedy or stupid."

Private Bachenheimer began to be famous in his regiment at Anzio where he was known as a man who never stopped going out on night patrols. This is very unpleasant work and anyone who volunteers for it steadily is likely to become known. His success was amazing, due to the fact that he thought nothing of going up to Germans in the dark and talking German to them as if he were an old soldier of the *Wehrmacht* himself. There are endless stories about these patrols, about Bachenheimer in a Kraut chow line, Bachenheimer gossiping in a German machine-gun post, Bachenheimer talking busily to German sentries. The work was dangerous and men got killed on these missions but Bachenheimer brought the necessary prisoners and information back.

In Holland he started out again by joining up with a patrol immediately after the landing and walking across the Grave bridge to draw fire. From there on he continued to Nijmegen which he entered alone and some time ahead of the main body of troops. He had a brisk fight with ten Germans in the railway station and was called upon by the Germans through the loud-speaker which announces the arrival and departure of trains, to surrender, as the Germans naturally did not imagine that one man alone was putting on this show.

When questioned as to why he undertook this hazardous solitary battle, Bachenheimer said, "Well, this was the first time any of these

Dutch saw an American and it wouldn't look right for the American to run off just as soon as he saw some Germans."

Private Bachenheimer then moved into the headquarters of one of the branches of the Dutch underground and at their request he took over command. He was very busy sending out patrols to mop up Germans in the town of Nijmegen, and other patrols to get information on German dispositions in the town and around the bridges so that he could keep his regiment informed. He also opened bakeries and organized civilian billets and nightly he visited the cellars where the citizens of Nijmegen were living in justifiable fear of the shelling.

That job of maintaining civilian morale is what he is proudest of now. He says he didn't feel any too sure of anything himself but he made the people believe everything was fine and dandy. I can only say that I think this was a terrific piece of work, because Nijmegen is not fine and dandy now and it must have been pretty appalling during Bachenheimer's early days there.

His headquarters is a very small crowded room in a former Nijmegen schoolhouse. Bill One, who is Willard Strunk of Abilene, and Bill Two, who is Bill Sellars of Pittsburgh—also old men of twenty-one—work with him in this room. They eat here and they have a neat, small arsenal hanging on the walls and they collect their souvenirs in one corner and they have the most fantastic list of callers every day.

I listened to Bachenheimer interrogating an Alsatian prisoner and never saw a prettier or more thorough job; next he received a German informer from whom he wanted to get some information about German defense constructions in the region; then two sergeants from other regiments who were also engaged in collecting information came and had a brisk argument about a patrol which they wanted Bachenheimer to send out and which he deemed unsound.

English officers also arrived from time to time, and Dutch undergrounders and Dutch civilians who wanted to get collaborators arrested or wanted to get people released from jail on the grounds that a mistake had been made. Nothing seemed to worry Bachenheimer, who is an extremely competent and serious boy, and nothing seemed to shake his modesty. His previous training for this work consisted of one job in America; he had briefly been press agent for a show that failed.

A Pacifist at Heart

Bachenheimer who has this curious talent for war is actually a man of peace. "As a matter of fact I am against war in principle," he said. "I just can't hate anybody."

He was not in his office when I went to say goodbye; he had crossed over behind the enemy lines. According to Bachenheimer it does not take more guts to work behind the enemy lines at night; it just takes a different kind of will. I think it must take a very special kind of guts as well as a cool and agile mind. But who am I to argue with Bachenheimer?

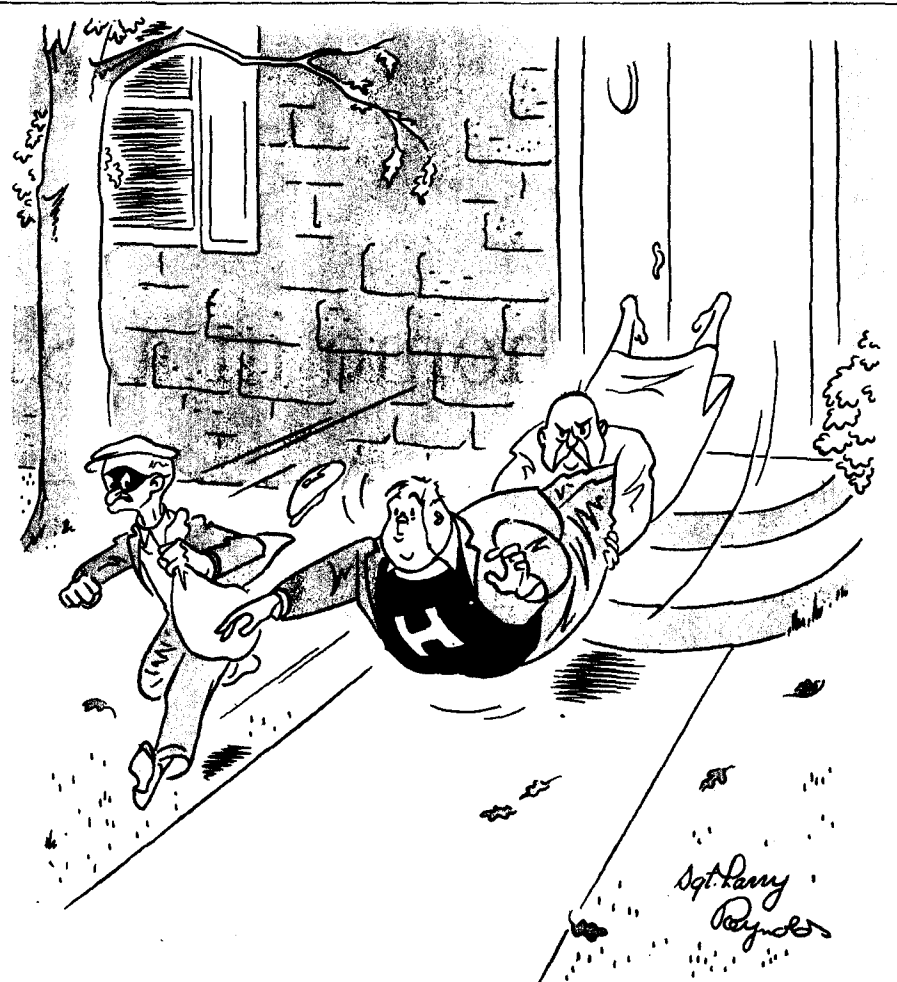
You are always happy with fine combat troops because in a way no people are as intensely alive as they are. You do not notice the rain too much or the ugly soaked flat land or the sadness of the yellowing trees that are rotting limply from summer into the nakedness of winter. You do not think much about what war costs, because you are too busy being alive for the day, too busy laughing and listening and looking. And you forget about the crude wooden crosses that mark where just such boys lie in Sicily and Italy and France and now Holland. You forget about the hospital in Nijmegen where devoted, weary men work in operating rooms that never cease to be appalling no matter how many such operating rooms you have seen. You forget, too, that the boys who last it out intact and whole have nevertheless given up these years which were intended to be young and happy.

The years are gone. But thinking it over afterward you wonder what happens to a magnificent division of brave men after the war. And you wonder who is going to thank them and how, and will it be enough?

THE END

BUTCH

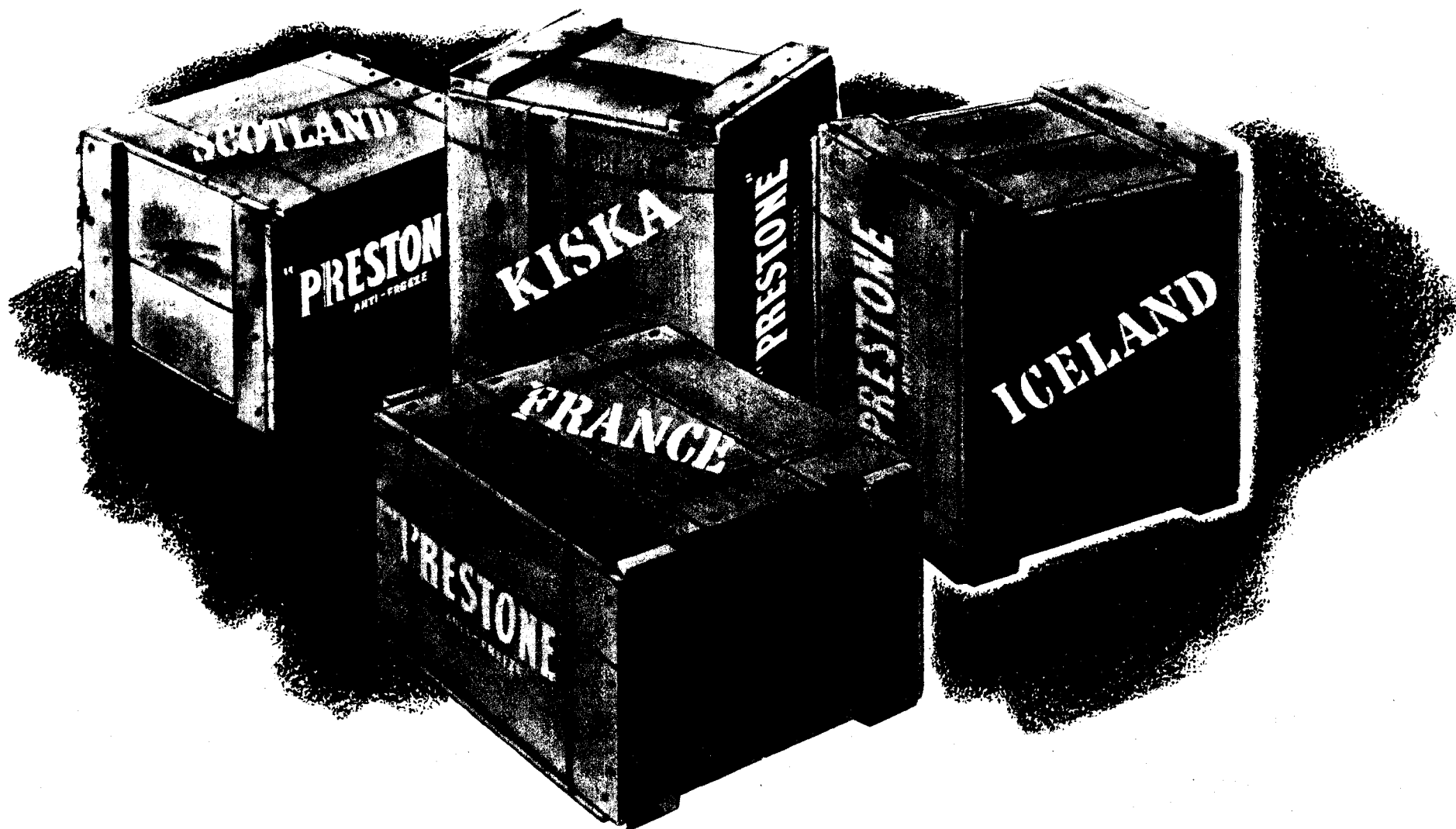
by SGT. LARRY REYNOLDS



"I told you just the jewelry, Butch. Harvard men are very attached to their sweaters!"

COLLIER'S

Collier's for December 2, 1944



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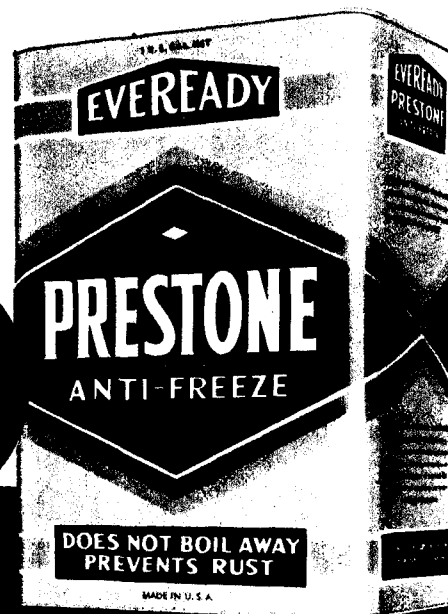
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Progress

Parson Sand learns that age cannot speak to youth, that each generation has its own language, but in the face of defeat he finds that the heart's language is universal

TO THE Reverend Jehu Sand it seemed for a season that Satan, pleased with diabolical progress elsewhere, concentrated his "going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it" on Parson Sand's immediate neighborhood. There was on this particular morning a horrible mess in the rectory. Parson Sand's household gear had arrived from Baltimore. He had moved from his comfortable room at the Orion Arms into this house so long unoccupied that the very spiders in their ceiling corner webs went on weaving and scuttling as though he were the most temporary of interlopers.

From the window of the ground-floor room he had chosen for a study, he could see his church, Gilead Chapel. It was clean enough now, within, but its outer look was repellent. Painters were unobtainable. Boys who might have done odd jobs on fence and lawn were away at a community camp. The cross, awry upon the steeple, could not be straightened until a pair of barn swallows nesting under its uptilted base had finished rearing their family.

He tried to focus his mind upon a vision of Gilead Chapel restored, receiving upon a sunlit Sunday morning a throng of people eager to worship, pray and serve the Lord. But the overflowing crates, stacks of books, his desk, with one leg broken in the moving so that its top sloped drunkenly, blocked the dream. Besides, he must watch the clock.

At eleven he was due at Willowmere for a conference with Mrs. Bradford Stiles. She had called on him at the Orion Arms and had explained herself very thoroughly.

"You know my house of course—Willowmere."

Parson Sand knew the house. It was large, well kept, one of the few slightly dwellings in the Gilead Chapel neighborhood. It was surrounded by a high iron fence. There were green lawns, masses of shrubbery, bright flower beds, a fountain tinkling and cool in the summer heat. There were also a number of signs: "No trespassing." "Keep out." "Private property."

"My grandfather built the house," Mrs. Stiles went on. "My father improved it. I have improved it. My dear husband and I agreed before his death that I should never abandon it. I have had to worship of late years in the new downtown church. But I love Gilead Chapel, and to have a man like yourself become its pastor gives me the deepest pleasure. I want to help; it is sacrifice enough that you must for the time being have as neighbors the type of people who have moved into our part of Orion since the war."

"They seem to be doing an excellent job in the near-by war plants," said Parson Sand.

"But the way they live!" Mrs. Stiles shut her eyes and lifted her hands, palms outward. "Whole families in one room. And that trailer camp! Have you seen that, Parson Sand?"

Parson Sand had seen it. It occupied what had once been a pleasant grassy common. Now trailers filled all but one bare space in its center. Children swarmed. Weary women hung daily washings in cramped spaces. Trash littered the borders.

"I have made every effort to keep the place from becoming a permanent eyesore," said Mrs. Stiles. "Before my husband died I once urged him to buy the property but he felt we had sufficient land. There are three acres around Willowmere, all landscaped. And I have an obligation to keep it beautiful. To keep Willowmere serene in these abnormal times is a duty, too, isn't it?"

Parson Sand lifted the bundle from Kathy's arms, so light, the face he glimpsed, so tiny, and said to Leith, "Name this child." "Charles Jackson Lemon," said Leith quietly

"I am sure it seems so to you," said Parson Sand.

"Oh, it does! But we really should be talking about Gilead Chapel. What are your plans, Parson Sand?"

Parson Sand looked at her again. "They are rather indefinite," he said slowly. "Taking over an active parish after my fifteen years in the editorial office of Modern Faith requires new techniques. I served as a chaplain in 1917-18 and so have no experience of a parish in wartime to call upon."

"And with your wife dead and your son—your only child I am told—missing in action, you are really quite alone in your effort."

Parson Sand smiled. "No. Not alone."

Mrs. Stiles raised inquiring eyebrows.

"God gives faith and hope and love—good companions all—to those who wish to do His work," said Parson Sand gently, matter-of-factly. "So you see, I could not feel alone."

Mrs. Stiles flushed. To speak of God as one would speak of a personal friend, or . . . or, she thought a little wildly, as a celestial groceryman delivering faith instead of steaks, was bad taste. She said sharply, "God helps those who help themselves. I came here to offer you help of a very substantial nature, Parson Sand. And I have a number of plans I should like to submit to you."

Parson Sand felt exhausted. There was, he reflected, a Mrs. Stiles in every community—well-groomed, well-cushioned, positive, moneyed. She was nevertheless, he reminded himself, a child of God, and though it was said to be easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye than for the rich to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, he never forgot the corollary to that pronouncement: "With God all things are possible."

So he said, "Mrs. Stiles, I am truly grateful for your offer. At the moment I am not prepared to discuss details of the restoration of Gilead Chapel. Could we meet again a little later on?"

"Why, of course. This day week at Willowmere? And you will stay to lunch with me? On the terrace. There is a marvelous view of the hills from the terrace."

AND now the day was here. In half an hour Parson Sand was due at Willowmere for talk about restorations, and lunch on the terrace, where he could lift up his eyes from chicken mousse and avocado salad to the hills from which had come the psalmist's strength.

He set a book in place. He stopped very still. There was something he must say to Mrs. Stiles. He looked out of the window. A soldier, not more than twenty; a young woman wheeling a baby carriage; two adolescent boys; and a middle-young man carrying a dinner pail walked by.

They count, thought Parson Sand. They count most. They're the generation fighting on the home front and abroad. After the last war we, who were young then, could get no hearing from our elders. So we turned to folly and let those elders shape the world. I'm fifty-five; Mrs. Stiles is no younger. We want to run things because we hold the terrible power of authority, wealth, entrenched position. Some of us want to do things for youth, yes; but we cannot bring ourselves to let youth itself shape even this little community of Gilead Parish.

Suddenly he felt better. He knew what he would say to Mrs. Stiles: Let the elders give, of time, money, experience, but let them give these gifts into the hands of youth to administer. "God channel this truth through me," prayed Parson Sand, then went whistling up the stairs to freshen himself for the battle which seemed to him as good as won.

As he finished his tidying up, he heard a knock on the door. That would be the postman. Pop Bailey, who, because Parson Sand had not yet put up a mailbox, courteously waited to deliver letters into the parson's own hands. Parson Sand ran down the stairs. There was always the chance of a letter from Jesse, his son. He opened the door.

"Morning, Parson. Quite a stack for you today. Nothin' from your boy, though." Parson Sand took the letters and laid them on a chair. There wasn't time to read them now.

Pop leaned against the doorjamb, wanting, Parson Sand supposed, to chat. Parson Sand fidgeted. He was on fire with the message