



Epicures come from far places to consult George "Omar" Mardikian about his baked lamb, shish kebab and other Armenian dishes. He's the final authority

OMAR HAD A *Little Lamb* BY FRANK J. TAYLOR

And so will you, when you taste some of the enticing lamb dishes that Armenians have been making for centuries. Best of all, Mr. Khayyám tells you how you can make a pound of lamb do for four

ARMENIA is a country where you never ask "What's cooking?" because you know already that it is lamb in some form or another. In fact, Armenians have such a healthy respect—and relish—for that animal that they even cook the tail. In that country, through ages of breeding, the shepherds have evolved lambs with fat, meaty, toothsome tails so heavy and unwieldy that toy trailers are sometimes hitched behind the animals to keep them from dragging on the ground. In the U.S., where sheep range the mountains, the tails are too negligible for cooking.

Teaching Americans to appreciate lamb was a pleasant hobby with stout, jolly George

Mardikian, whom some folks call Omar and others call Mr. Khayyám, because Omar Khayyám's is the name outside his restaurant door in San Francisco. With wartime meat shortages, his hobby blossomed into a one-man crusade.

"There are more ways of preparing lamb than any other kind of meat," says Mr. Mardikian. "I say this as an authority because I have traveled all over the world and seen it done." To prove it, he has just written and had published a cookbook—Dinner at Omar Khayyám's.

There are about 51,000,000 head of sheep in this country and 125,000,000 more in Australia—enough to keep us plentifully supplied with baked lamb chops, broiled lamb on skewers, lamb shoulder baked in parchment with vegetables, lamb kidney brochette, not to mention *misov spannak*, *turlu guvej*, *mosov sempoog*, and Victory Garden *dolma*, which are Armenian dishes advocated by Mr. Mardikian to make one pound of lamb satisfy four hungry people.

"I owe so much to America, and the only way I can pay it back is in good things to eat," he explains. "The big moment of my life," he continues, telling of his struggling

days in this country, "is when I walked out of the courthouse with my citizenship papers. I wanted to stop everybody on the street and say, 'Excuse me, please, but I am now an American citizen.'"

With his citizenship papers in his pocket, Mr. Mardikian signed on a round-the-world liner as steward. After working for a time in Alexandria as cook's helper to crusty old Cholakian, famous Near East chef, Mardikian visited refugee colonies in Genoa, Marseille and Venice, where he pored over ancient parchments in an old Armenian monastery, absorbing the cooking lore of the heyday of Armenia's great kings.

Two years later, Mr. Mardikian was the new owner of Coffee Dan's, a few hundred feet up O'Farrell Street from the site of the cafeteria where he first washed dishes in San Francisco. Soon he had transformed the famous old night spot into Omar Khayyám's, with walls done in soft murals depicting stanzas from The Rubáiyát. Here he featured lamb cooked in more ways than at any other spot on earth, and here epicures came whenever their travels brought them near by.

The trick about cooking lamb, says Chef Mardikian, is to start right, with cuts from

yearling lambs, not over sixty pounds in weight. You can tell a lamb's age by looking at the fat; if it is pristine white, it is lamb. If the fat is yellowish, look out; the butcher's trying to palm off some mutton.

The prize lamb dish among Armenians and Americans alike at Omar Khayyám's is *shish kebab*, which is to say, diced squares of lamb broiled on skewers. Mr. Mardikian soaks the pieces of meat, cut in one-inch cubes from leg of lamb, in sherry for several hours before skewering them alternately with slices of onion and green pepper. Then he salts and peppers them and adds a dash of origan herb, before broiling them over a charcoal fire.

"When I first opened Omar Khayyám's, was compelled to break my Boy Scout vow not to tell a lie," Mr. Mardikian confesses "My patrons would come in and tell me the wanted this *shish kebab*, but, no, no, the cannot eat lamb. 'All right, I will make it out of beef,' I would tell them. After they had eaten the *shish kebab* with great relish, would say, 'I am sorry, but I have fooled you. What you ate was lamb.' I had to do that at first, to get some people to eat lamb."

(Continued on page 68)



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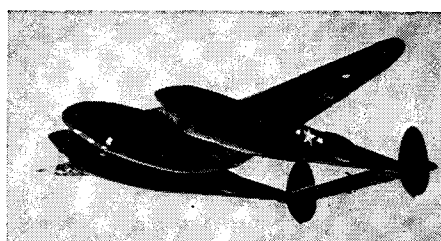
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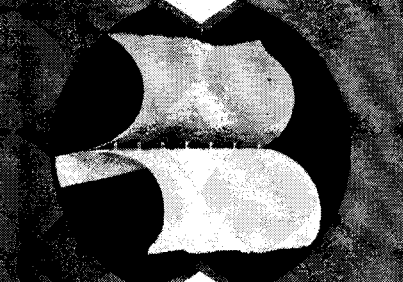
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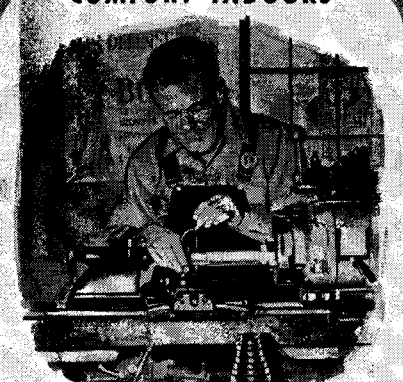
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"Listen, Mrs. De Puyster, do you want to have to make the rounds of the domestic help agencies again?"

COLLIER'S

REAMER KELLER

Blitz on the Anthony J.

Continued from page 24

everything thrown to it. Up above, on deck, the noise from the hold was terrific.

"You see? It's no damn' good," said the bos'n, and he got the purchase ready. He said to the old man, resolutely, "We're going down."

"I'm not responsible," said the skipper, nervously.

"Who the hell's asking you to be? When we give you the signal, heave away." The bos'n held the hook that was made fast to the tackle in one hand, hoping to slip it into one of the towing eyes in the forepart of the tank. Once he got close enough to accomplish that he felt the tank could be beaten.

"God be with you," said the old man.

"Chips," said the bos'n, laughing, "the skipper's going to lead a prayer."

THEY went into the darkness like two divers descending into the water. Below, it was stuffy and warm. For a moment the bos'n and Chips stood by until their eyes grew accustomed to the darkness.

"You got the crowbar?" asked the bos'n.

"Yah, sure."

"If the bugger gets away and looks like she's heading for me drive the bar into the treads."

"She's sliding, not rolling on her treads," said Chips.

"Got to try something."

"Yah, sure."

Cautiously, as though he were stalking a deer through the woods, the bos'n crept forward. Suddenly the Anthony J. rolled and the tank went charging across the space it had cleared for itself.

"Duck," yelled Chips.

The tank hit another truck, smashing it to pieces.

"Here goes," yelled the bos'n. He ran toward the tank. Again the ship rolled. The bos'n barely escaped being crushed between the tank and a case. Pausing a moment he breathed hard, wiped the perspiration from his face with his sleeve.

"Maybe," said Chips, "we better let 'er go, eh?"

"Get her this time," said the bos'n, as

though he were talking with the tank. Again, hook in hand, he made a dash for the tank. This time the machine swung around and slid in a forward direction. Its steel treads screeched deafeningly as the tank sideswiped the bos'n. He went hurtling through the darkness. In a moment his fo'c'sle mate was at his side.

"You hurt?" asked Chips, breathlessly.

"In my feelings," said the bos'n, disgustedly.

"It's like it was alive," whispered Chips.

"What the hell you whispering for?" asked the bos'n. "The lousy thing can't hear." He got up rubbing his bruised shoulder. Again he stalked the tank, head down, as though he were actually afraid the iron beast would see him.

Up on deck the old man yelled, "How you coming down there?"

"Jerk," muttered the bos'n. Then he shouted back, "Come on down, we're playing squat tag."

"Get 'er when she's rolling port," shouted Chips.

"Seems to see me coming, the bugger."

"She's starting to roll."

There was a shattering report as the tank hit the ship's side. The side battens were already smashed into splinters, the sounding pipes ripped from their moorings.

"Don't think she's leaking yet," said Chips, examining the side of the ship.

"Give her one more shot like the last one."

Jumping down from a case, the bos'n charged at the tank as though he intended to tackle it with his shoulder. But again he had to run for cover. Now he climbed up on a crate and waited. As the tank hit the side again he jumped down on it. Then the machine went hurtling to the starboard side of the hold, the bos'n hanging on precariously. Rather than be torn off his perch he had to let go of the tackle.

"Get up there, Chips," shouted the bos'n, "and hand me the tackle as we come through." The tank crashed into the already pulverized trucks, nearly jarring the bos'n off.

"Jump," yelled Chips, terrified.

"Like hell; I got her now. Get up there, damn you."

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Chips, obeying the bos'n, climbed up on a case and stood by with the tackle and hook. Now the ship rolled port and the tank came crashing out of its hole. It hit the pile of cases upon which Chips stood, and the Negro came down in a heap. The bos'n caught his breath, waited for Chips to get up. There was no sound in the hold, no movement. Then Chips yelled, his voice sounding muffled and distant, "Pass me the tackle."

"You hurt?"

"Damn it, pass me the tackle!"

Climbing down, the bos'n handed the hook to Chips, still lying between the tank and a crate. "Lord," murmured the bos'n, "let her roll the other way or he'll get smashed."

"She's all fast," called Chips.

"Get up," shouted the bos'n. "Hurry before she rolls again."

"My arm's caught," groaned Chips.

Flashing his electric torch for an instant the bos'n peered into the darkness. Chips' right arm was pinned under the tank tread. It was bent up in so fantastic a manner that the bos'n was sickened by the sight of it. Disregarding his crushed arm the Negro had secured the tackle with his left hand.

"Soon as she rolls the other way," called the bos'n, "I'll pull you out."

But now, as though the iron beast had taken hold of its victim, it refused to let go. The tank would no longer slide with the roll of the vessel. Quickly the bos'n rigged the hauling end of the tackle so that when the winches were turned the tank would be pulled off Chips' arm.

"Heave away," he yelled, as soon as he had finished.

Slowly the tank moved over, freeing Chips.

BY THE time they had gotten Chips to his bunk the sky was growing gray in the east. The bos'n turned out the fo'c'sle light and opened a porthole. It was very gray in the room, and Chips lay there with his eyes shut, his lips pressed tightly together.

"Do you feel any better now?" asked the bos'n.

"The morphine's wearing off," said Chips. "Pain's getting worse."

"The old man said you can have all the whisky you want."

"Very kind and Christian of him."

Leaving the room the bos'n soon returned with a bottle and several glasses. He put them down and went over to straighten the blanket that was covering Chips. It was soaking wet with blood.

"The tourniquet hurt?" asked the bos'n.

"Plenty."

"I'm afraid to ease up on it. You might lose too much blood."

"What's it say in the book?"

"To ease up on it every so often. Wish we had some of that plasma. But the destroyer'll be alongside soon. They've got plenty of it, and a good surgeon aboard."

Chips opened his eyes and tried to smile. It turned out to be a very sad excuse for a smile. "Break out the whisky," he said. His efforts to hide his suffering were futile.

After they both had a drink the bos'n asked, "Feel better?"

"Dizzy as hell."

"I always could take two to your one, Chips."

"I guess," said Chips, "I'm going to lose my arm."

"No."

"You're a good shipmate, bos'n. You

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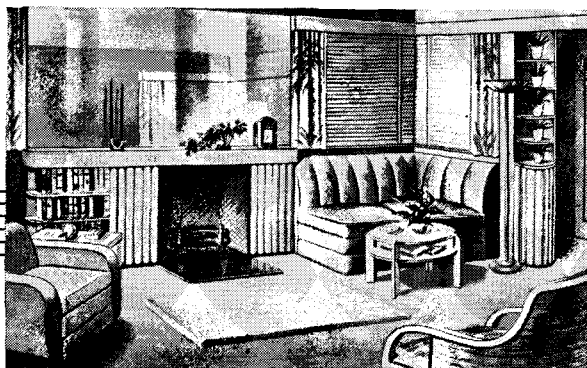
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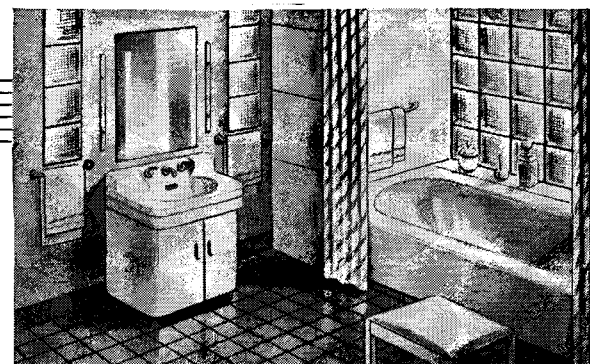
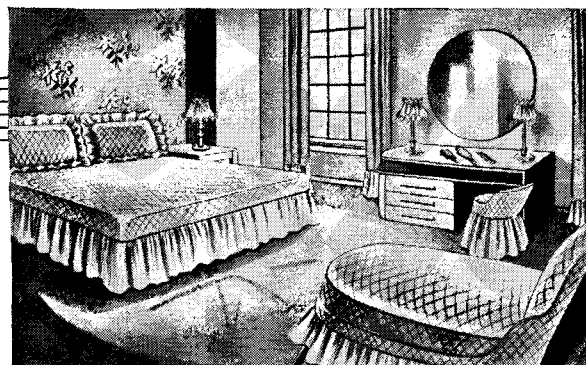
HEAT *that flows*

TO EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY . . .



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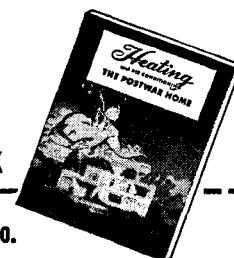
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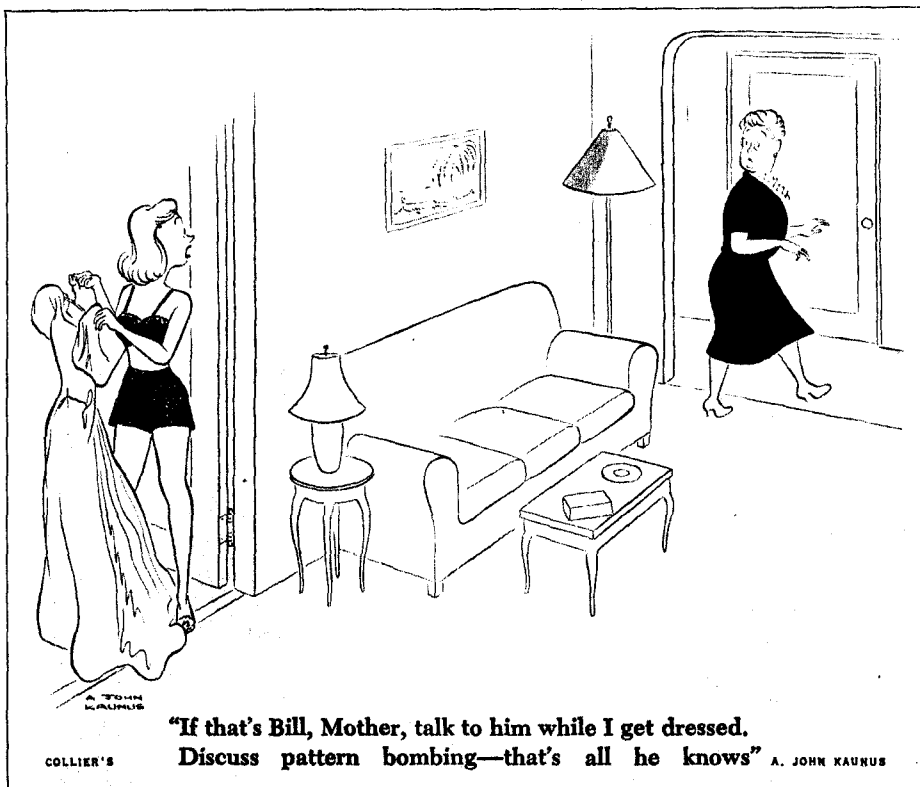
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aren't like most white folks. You don't hate me, do you?"

"What a loused-up question! Here I've been living in the same fo'c'sle with you, drinking with you and you pull one like that. If you could stand up I'd knock you down."

Said Chips, "Even with one wing I could still take you." A sharp pain pierced through the Negro's exterior of calm and he winced, pushing his head back on the pillow until the skin over his throat was stretched taut.

THERE was a long, uncomfortable pause in the conversation, then the bos'n said, "You'll collect heavy dough for this accident, believe me."

"They'll say it was an Act of God."

"Act of God! You think He was riding in the tank?"

"Don't say that," said Chips.

The bos'n looked quizzically at his fo'c'sle mate. "Want more whisky?" he asked.

After he had downed his drink Chips said, "Feel a little better now. You want to do me a favor?"

"Anything short of getting you a girl."

"Take the book out of my jacket and read to me. Don't tell anyone."

Removing a worn, leather-bound book from Chips' pocket the bos'n stood there looking at it, curiously. It was a Bible.

"Now," said Chips, apologetically, "you think I'm nuts."

"I didn't say anything, did I?"

"But you're thinking."

"Hell, I'm a thinking man, ain't I? Where do you want me to start reading?"

"You think I'm a hypocrite in reverse, don't you?"

"Stop beating your gums. Where do I start?"

"It's good literature," said Chips, "that's all."

"I didn't ask for any excuses."

When the destroyer came alongside Chips was unconscious. The bos'n still sat beside his fo'c'sle mate, reading to him in a low, hoarse voice, entirely unaware that Chips no longer heard him.

THE END



A black and white photograph showing a cow lying on its side on a dirt or gravel surface. The cow is facing towards the left of the frame. In the background, a vintage car, likely from the 1930s or 1940s, is parked. The car has a prominent front grille with a circular emblem in the center. To the left of the car, there is a wooden fence and some foliage, including a large tree. The overall scene suggests a rural or farm setting.



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-says Stopper

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Lucky Dice

BY NORMAN KATKOV



He had led with his heart once, and he was taking no more chances. Then a girl named Jean set out to show him love was still a good bet

THE rest of the office had their desks cleared, the "In" baskets emptied, and the phone cords lying neatly coiled around the phones when I came back from seeing the boss. There wasn't much done on Saturdays. The boys tried to clean up their stuff before twelve-thirty and then sat around talking about what they were going to do over the week end. For the last year and a half I hadn't worried about my week ends. I just let them go and filled my book with a movie on Saturday night and another after a dinner downtown on Sunday.

I pushed the papers on my desk together with both hands as you would shuffle a deck of cards, and threw them in the desk drawer. The men started drifting out and I was by the water cooler reaching for my hat when Walter Simons and Dwight Abell came up.

The two of them stood there looking at me for a minute. Then Walt began:

"Where you going, Jack?"

"Home."

"Look, Jack, it's none of my business, and you know I'm not a guy to stick his nose into anybody's life, but—"

"What's up?" I asked.

"Well, look, Jack, Helen's giving a dinner tonight. Dwight and Alice are coming, and Bill and Mary Tyler. There'll be a few other people around too, and I thought maybe you'd like to come along."

"Thanks, Walt, I've got something on for tonight."

"Yeah, your suit," Dwight Abell said, and then softly, "The movies stink this week, Jack."

"Thanks," I began again, "but there'd be all you people there, and me alone kibitzing, and I'd be no good there."

"That's just it," Walt said. "Listen, there's a girl works down at the courthouse with Alice—heck of a nice kid, I've met her—and I figured, well, maybe you and she . . ." He stopped talking like he was tired, and I could see he wanted to quit.

I put my hat on and stood there watching the two of them. Then I moved out between them, but Dwight took my left shoulder in his right hand.

"Jack, your wife's been dead a year and a half," he said. "So have you. That's a long time, Jack."

Walt walked around behind me and stood between the two of us.

"Look, why don't you call up this girl, Jack, and maybe pick her up this afternoon,

and go for a ride or something, and then if you like her you can bring her along to the house tonight, and if you don't—well, you still haven't lost anything."

"Her name is Jean Thompson," Dwight said, still holding my arm. With his left hand he reached into his pocket and gave me one of the firm's cards. I turned it over in my hand, and on the back I read, "Elkurst 6544."

They stepped away from me then and began walking toward the door. Dwight was whistling, but Walt kept watching to see if I would tear up the card. I put it in my pocket still telling myself I wasn't going to call, and Dwight whistled louder and then looked at me and laughed. I laughed too, and the two of them stopped and like a couple of kids they put one hand over their mouths and with the other hand they each pointed at me.

WE WALKED over together to the parking lot behind the building and split up there. I moved out of the lot and drove into town slowly. It was a mean day, cold, and the sky was dirty with clouds.

I thought about phoning her as I was having a double malted and a Swiss cheese at a drugstore, and I guess I knew I was going to call her all the time. And I knew why: I just wanted to talk to a woman again. I wanted to sit across a table from her, and light a cigarette for her, and ask her questions about herself, and let her lie a little, and when she asked me, to let me lie a little. I wanted to smell perfume again, and help a woman on with her coat.

In the phone booth, I got out the card and

Jean held up her right hand, with the middle finger crossed over the index finger. The banker asked me to shoot, and I came out with a ten

looked at it, then dialed quick, the way you call for an ambulance.

Someone said, "Hello," using a good voice, deep and round.

"This is Jack Gurnee," I said.

"Hello, Jack."

"Miss Thompson," I started. "Miss Thompson, I—" I tried again: "Miss Thompson, Walt Simons said that you, he said we—" I was going great.

She was laughing. "My name is Jean. I've been expecting you to call. I'm not doing anything this afternoon, but I'm wearing slacks and if that's all right with you I won't change."

I said something about wearing a sports coat, and then she told me where she lived and I said I'd drive right out. She was sitting on the porch when I drove up, and when she saw me, she came down the walk toward the gate of the fence. She walked slowly, wearing slacks and a man's plaid shirt open at the neck. She was blond, and you could see she didn't stop at drugstores to buy stuff for it all the time. I tried to make up my mind whether or not to get out of the car and was still arguing it out when she opened the door and got in. She put out her hand and I took it, and we said hello. Then I thought of the one thing that could keep me busy, and not let me make too much of a sap out

