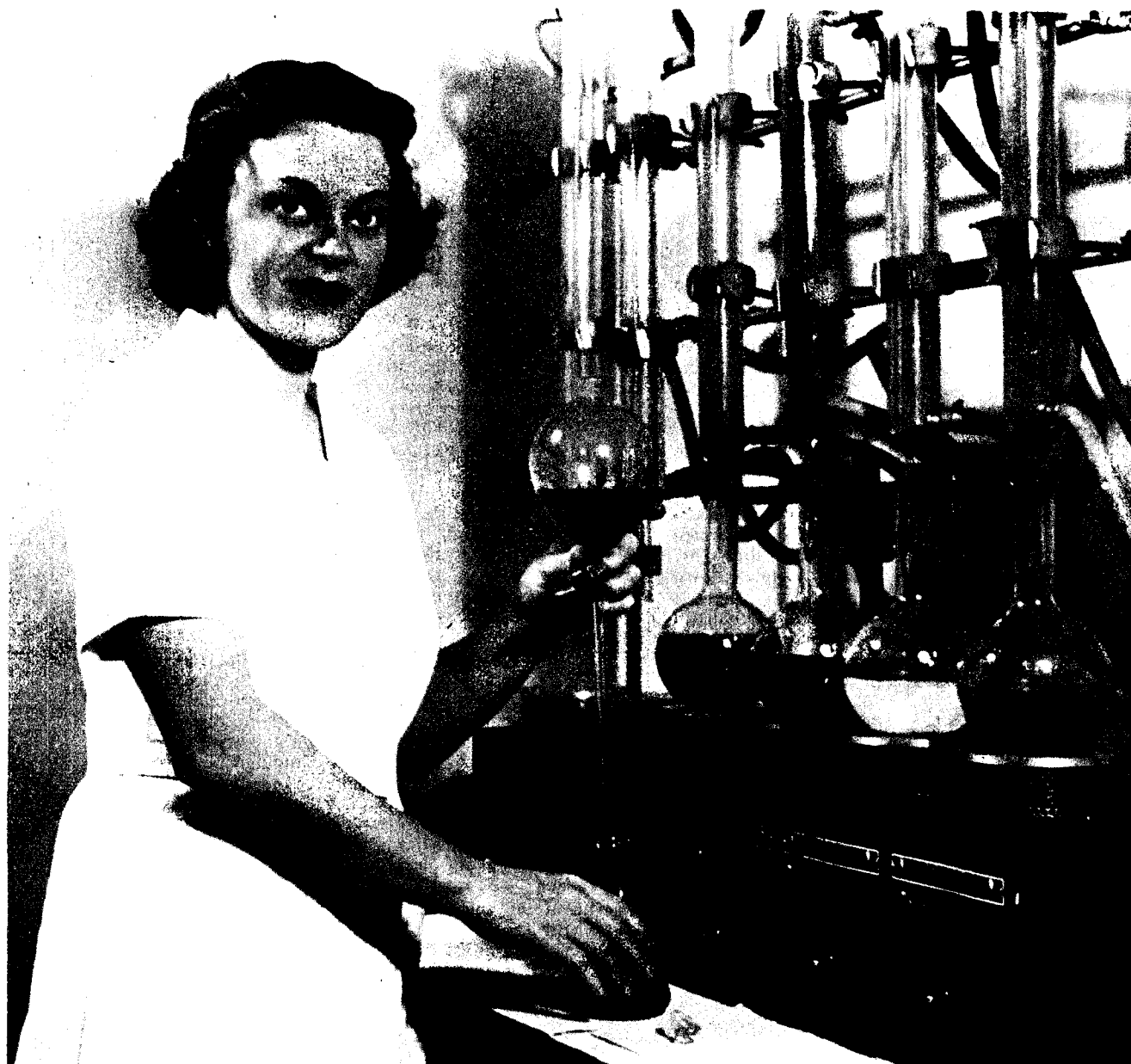


# Lady in a Lab

By LESTER DAVID



Mrs. Ellenson not only develops new salable products, she has salvaged many unprofitable ones

## Research chemist Evelyn Ellenson solves technical problems for small U.S. businessmen, thus providing many with a "new products division"

A WORRIED manufacturer of games and novelties dropped in to see Evelyn Ellenson at her kitchen-clean testing and research laboratory in New York City and tossed a flat, four-inch plastic box on her desk. Sales of a line of Chinese puzzles he had been marketing had petered out and he had been left with tens of thousands of empty boxes. "Figure out something for me to do with them," he pleaded.

Mrs. Ellenson began to figure. Could they be made into compacts? Too big. Cigarette cases? Too shallow. Pocket fishing kits? Market too limited. Finally, she struck on the idea of fitting the box with a miniature checkerboard for traveling, but found that the tiny checkers slithered around in the case. So she made another board of plastic, daubed it with metal paint, molded some checkers out of magnetized iron, and had the solution. The checkers clung to the board, could be easily moved, and the little game was compact enough to lie bulgeless in a pocket.

The manufacturer was understandably very de-

lighted, and in a little over a year has sold almost 100,000 all over the United States and South America, turning a total loss into a gross profit of \$25,000.

Research chemist Evelyn Ellenson is one of the few women in this country to own her own laboratory, and small businessmen pay her court because she helps them to make money. A far cry from the layman's notion of the attic-bound alchemist, Mrs. Ellenson is a dynamic little brunette in her mid-thirties, has a fashion-book figure and a gamin's grin, and seems as miscast in a stained laboratory smock as Eve Arden in a grease monkey's overalls. As chemist, inventor and shrewd businesswoman, however, she has salvaged tons of useless merchandise, developed new products by the score, and set dozens of people up in business—fattening the bank accounts of all concerned.

Helping Evelyn to pull off these minor miracles in Testing and Research Laboratories' six-room lab on Fifty-seventh Street in Manhattan, and in the downtown annex used for heavy-duty experi-

ments, is a permanent staff of six chemists, food technologists, engineers and bacteriologists. This number often swells to 20 or more when particularly complex jobs come along. Astonishingly, there isn't another woman scientist in the crowd, but this isn't a matter of policy.

"Every time I need a specialist," Mrs. Ellenson says, "I hope one woman applicant will turn up. But that never happens. There are mighty few female chemists around doing this type of work, even though it's a wonderful field for women—and I ought to know. I'm convinced there is nothing a man can do in a lab that a woman cannot, except maybe do a better job of opening a tightly corked chemical bottle."

Evelyn's clients, the majority of whom find out about her from other Ellenson customers, range from disabled veterans with shoestring financing to nation-wide corporations. "Most are small-to-middling fellows, however, who can't afford their own technical staffs," she says. "That's where we come in." Heads of widely varied enterprises refer to Evelyn as "my new products division."

### She Broods If Her Clients Lose

Although she has no financial interest in these businesses after she has helped to launch a product, Evelyn keeps in constant touch, brooding when the profits dip, which happens occasionally, and crowing happily when they zoom, which happens more often. She estimates that she has made several million dollars—for other people. Evelyn herself collects fees ranging from \$5 to \$5,000 for specific assignments, more than that only in rare instances.

Apart from working out ways for people to make money, a testing and research laboratory such as Mrs. Ellenson's is a catchall for technical problems of all kinds, involving everything from pharmaceuticals, paints and cosmetics to food products. Very few assignments are sufficiently quaint or fantastic to throw Mrs. Ellenson off her stride.

"One day," she recalls, "a middle-aged gentleman slipped into the office, furtive-like, his hat pulled far down over his eyes. Safely inside, he took off his hat. I blinked, for underneath it was a shock of bright pink hair. It seems he had gone to a beautician to have his graying thatch dyed, but something had gone very wrong."

Evelyn worked on his hair for five hours with countercoloring agents before she was able to get it back to normal.

Many jobs involve less spectacular, though equally troublesome, situations, such as the time the soundproofing kept falling on the heads of employees of a suburban New York telephone exchange. (The laboratory discovered that the workmen had simply applied the adhesive in blobs instead of thin coats, as required.) Or the time she was asked to produce a nonallergenic face powder for a woman who sneezed at the mere sight of a commercial product.

Evelyn's money-making alchemy takes off in many directions, one of which is that of breaking up unsalable or unprofitable products into their raw components.

Businessmen who find themselves stuck with things no one wants are thus delighted to learn that they contain materials far more marketable than the original products.

Such a happy situation developed recently for the head of a large Manhattan export house. He had bought up a huge quantity of European candles at a low figure, then learned that he could not market them here at a profit. Evelyn melted them down and found they contained large quantities of stearic acid, now commanding high prices because of shortages due to the defense program. Stearic acid, a fatty acid, is used in pharmaceuticals, rubber compounding and metal polishing, and for many other purposes. (Continued on page 48)

PHOTOGRAPH FOR COLLIER'S BY FRANK BAUER

No wonder...



I'm out of breath...



on Christmas morning...



## Everybody wants one!

EACH CHRISTMAS thousands and thousands of thoughtful folks make the season a little bit happier by giving a beautiful new General Electric Automatic Toaster.

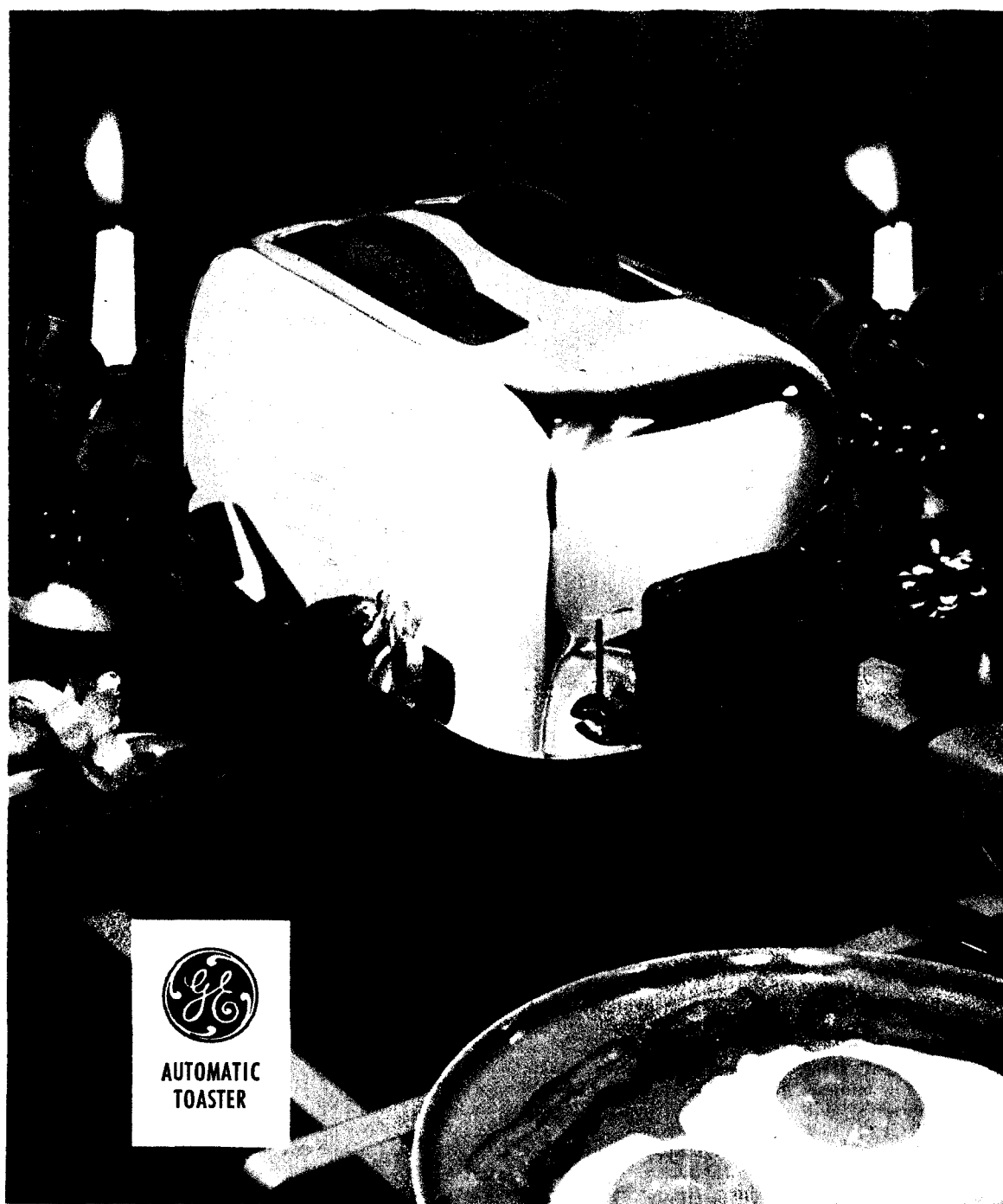
It's easy to see why they select this G-E beauty. It has *all* the new features you look for in a toaster.

Why, *this* toaster waits on *you*—toast pops up or keeps down until *you* want it! Every slice is toasted exactly the way you like it just by setting the control knob at light, medium or dark. And you keep it free of crumbs with a snap-in, snap-out crumb tray.

This toaster carries the famous G-E warranty which means years of dependable service.

So this season, give the gift that will remind them of *you* every morning of the year.

General Electric Automatic Toasters are on sale at leading retail stores everywhere. General Electric Company, Bridgeport 2, Connecticut.

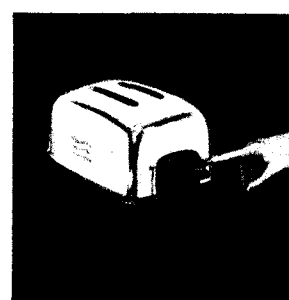


AUTOMATIC  
TOASTER

*Specifications subject to change without notice.*

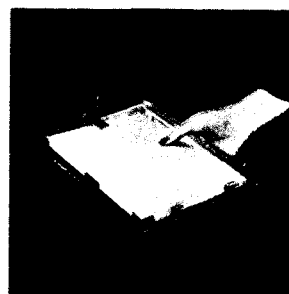
TOAST TO YOUR TASTE EVERY TIME

GENERAL  ELECTRIC



"A"—Toast pops up or stays down until *you* want it.

"B"—Set the control knob—light, medium or dark, and let *this* G-E brown each piece—the way *you* want it.



"C"—The snap-in, snap-out crumb tray cleans in 10 *speedy* seconds.



## Reclining Figure

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

California. Some are respectable establishments but others specialize in the quick turnover and are as much a part of the mating habits of the citizenry as convertibles. It was in such a caravansary that Blaise found a lodging for Hugh Norden. For still another few hours, it was important to keep Norden free, and the motel was ideal.

**T**HE cabin was mildewed and dreary, but Norden had a quart of whisky to help him overlook its shortcomings. "Don't worry," he said, when Blaise gave the bottle a perturbed look. "I'm not a drinker. I need this. My nerves are shot."

"For an innocent man," Blaise said, "you went to a hell of a lot of trouble."

"On paper," Norden said, "you can make it come out the way you want it. In the clutch, when the pressure suddenly comes on, clear thinking isn't so easy." He sipped his drink, and it seemed to be working for him. "There I was," went on Norden, "a trespasser on the Edgerton place the night Simon got killed—with my record, and with what I knew was going on. That's a beautiful spot for me, with no alibi."

"I take it," Blaise said, "that you've got one for last night."

"I was in jail." At Blaise's startled look, he said solemnly, "So help me! Guy gave me a lift, and something was wrong with his registration. He went through a light. The cops in some rube town up north held us until after midnight. There was a picture of me hanging in the squad room, but nobody spotted it."

"When you ordered those contact lenses, under an assumed name—wasn't that for a getaway?"

Norden nodded. "That's true, but I wasn't planning to hide from the police. Once I cashed in on the Renoir drawing, I didn't want to tangle with Kenneth Lurie. I figured on hiding from him, not from the police."

"Jonas Astorg was assuming that the forgeries were authentic Renoirs stolen from the Edgerton collection, wasn't he?"

"Yes. My plan was to cut in on Simon's share. I told him I wanted ten thousand dollars or I'd see to it that Astorg learned what was going on. The funny thing was that Simon didn't turn a hair. He told me he'd give me the money later on at the house. That's why I went there."

"And, meanwhile, you let him keep the drawing?"

"Oh, sure. I could still spill everything to Astorg, drawing or no drawing. You see," he said, with his shrewd, wolfish smile, "your problem is convincing an honest judge and an honest jury against the weight of the evidence. My problem was only to convince one crook that a couple of other crooks were robbing him. Astorg bought the paintings on sight because they came from the Edgerton collection. I could prove that was a lie. I don't know why Simon wanted to keep the drawing but I was glad to let him have it."

"I think I'm beginning to understand," Blaise said. "Stay out of sight," he warned Norden. "I'll look in on you later." . . .

Cassy strolled into the gallery at seven o'clock. She tried to maintain an air of unconcerned innocence, but her heart was pounding and she knew that some of the color had drained out of her face.

Edgerton was sorting some documents spread on the desk. He muttered, "Hello, Cassy," in a distracted tone. Then he looked up at her. "What's the matter with you?"

"Nothing. Why?"

"You look all washed out."

"Me?" She made a great show of peering in a mirror, pushing up her lip and sticking out her tongue. "I've got it," she said. "Edgerton's disease, the dread scourge of Highway 101. The symptoms are painful swelling of the ego, choleric rages, heavy deposits of money around the heart."

Edgerton said, "Oh! Blaise, huh? Well, in decency, I suppose you have to do a certain amount of fatuous mooning over him, so go right ahead. I'm surprised at you, Cassy!" he added. "Hell, Blaise must be old enough to be your father."

"He's thirty-one," she said. "I'm twenty-five. Is that December and May?"

"Thirty-one!" snorted Edgerton. Then he seemed to think about it. "Well, age doesn't mean a thing. He's an irritating, driveling loudmouth, and doesn't know his backside from a Tintoretto."

"I suppose that's why for nearly two years you've been telling everyone how smart he is."

"Me?" hooted Edgerton. Then in a

formation," he said, "Lieutenant Ives now suspects that I may have helped poor Weldon grind his colors. His suspicions were aroused by some significant ingredients in my workshop. Fortunately, I was able to tell him that they were imported to do some retouching for you. I am greatly in your debt," he added formally, "for confirming this story. Especially since there was not one word of truth in it."

Edgerton's fists were clenched and his eyes bright with anger. Grandi, in his old, paint-flecked clothes, faced him like an inquisitor.

"I confirmed what you told Ives," Edgerton said at last, "because you're always bringing in some smelly paints and chemi-

the switches rendering the alarm silent, then opened the door.

Blaise kissed her, holding her tight. "You're the best little confederate a second-story man ever had."

"I'm scared," she said, clinging to him.

"So am I. Leave me alone now, Cassy, so I can shiver in private. Your job is look-out. Here."

Cassy gasped as he slipped a gun into her hand. "I got this for you," he whispered. "Don't use it unless you have to, but then shoot straight and save the last bullet for yourself." She gulped weakly and looked down. She was holding a glass gun full of jelly beans, but before she could talk, Blaise eased her out. She moved around to the side, watching the approaches to the gallery. She could see Blaise through a window as he worked with a small flashlight in one hand, riffling through boxes in which the drawings and prints were stored. He worked neatly, replacing each drawer as he finished with it.

He had been alone inside for nearly an hour when Cassy saw Miriam Wayne come out of the house and start for the gallery. She rapped on the glass and, as Blaise's head turned, pointed frantically to the door.

He nodded, swiftly pushed the drawer he was working on back into place, then slid around behind the cabinets. Cassy's relief was instantly replaced by a new terror. If Miriam came into the gallery, she would have to give the all-clear code signal on the burglar alarm. Finding the alarm shut off, she would suspect an intruder and sound battle stations at once. At the last moment, as Miriam had her key in the lock, Cassy threw her head back and screamed. She had her heart in it, and all the power of her healthy young lungs. It froze Miriam Wayne at the door and it brought Blaise out of hiding and over to the window. He could see Cassy, apparently unharmed, then Miriam approaching warily from one side while a watchman came running from the other.

"There was someone here," Cassy sobbed. "A man. He was looking in the window. He ran off that way." She pointed to the beach, and as the others looked away, Blaise saw her gesture to him. It was an unmistakable signal to depart. He had three drawings, exactly suited to his purpose, and with these tucked away, he let himself quietly out and circled the gallery and went down to the beach. The watchman was supporting Cassy's limp body now—the fainting act was her way of stalling the man hunt—and Blaise blew her a kiss as he edged into the comforting obscurity of the dunes.

**B**LAISE was stretched on the couch in the living room of his suite at the Ocean Inn. He had a drink in his hand and, when Cassy saw him from the doorway, seemed to be disgustingly at ease.

"How can you be so calm?" she said. "I'm still weak in the knees."

Blaise jumped up, put his arm around her, and steered her to the couch.

"By the time I was pretending to faint," she said, "it was darn' near the real thing."

Blaise patted her hand. "You were swell, Cassy." He kissed her gently.

"Shot and shell fell all around," she said, "but I never flinched."

"Not once." He kissed her again.

She smiled up at him. "Now you know what a scream I can unleash. I had to do something. Miriam would have noticed that the alarm was turned off. You would have been cornered."

"I'm much obliged. I'm thinking about just how to reward you."

"Think hard," Cassy said. Then her smile faded and she described the scene between Edgerton and Victor Grandi.

Blaise studied her. "You feel disloyal, Cassy?"

"Who wouldn't? Here I am, helping you



JEFF KEATE

"We discovered the only time he really sleeps perfectly is when I'm coming back from the market with his carriage filled with groceries"

COLLIER'S

JEFF KEATE

pained, hurt voice, he said, "Well, he took me in." He turned away, and after a few moments, was happily absorbed in his papers. Cass watched him out of the corner of her eye. It would be difficult to stay behind if he finished for the day. Her hope was for a diversion that might enable her to stow away. It came in the appearance of Victor Grandi and an argument about the carving of a frame that took both men down into the vault.

Cassy slipped into the coat closet in the front of the gallery. She left the door a crack open. Edgerton, on returning to the gallery, would take it for granted that she had gone back to the house.

She heard their voices again after she had been in the closet only a few minutes.

"I made some tests on Ordman's painting today for Lieutenant Ives," Grandi said. "I'm afraid the lieutenant was disappointed. There is absolutely nothing to betray the forgery."

"Who says it's a forgery?" demanded Edgerton.

"You know it is," Grandi said quietly.

"You saw the drawing, and Cassy saw the forger practicing right in this room."

"You didn't see the forger practicing, Victor. What makes you so certain Blaise is right?"

There was always some mockery in Grandi's humility around Edgerton, and now it was openly derisive. "For your in-

cal. I took it for granted that this was just another batch."

"I think not," Grandi said gently. "Your main concern now is that the great name of Edgerton should not be connected with these forgeries. Not even through a lowly employee. I know what you think of your collection, what you're capable of doing to protect it."

"Gibberish," Edgerton said. "Jealous, spiteful gibberish. I'm locking up. Get out."

"Yes, sir," Grandi replied meekly.

In the closet, Cassy leaned weakly against the wall. The lights went out, one after another, and then she heard the sound of the door closing. Blaise would not appear until dinner was in full swing at the house, when the chance of detection would be at a minimum. So she had time to think, and, now, plenty to think about.

Grandi, she knew, could be bitingly sarcastic, and Lucas Edgerton evoked this trait in him. His remarks might mean nothing. On the other hand, she was afraid to let her mind stray to the bitterness between Lucas Edgerton and his son, or to recall the wild rage with which Simon had been ordered out of the gallery the night he was killed.

She tried to gather and focus her puzzling and elusive thoughts into some channel that would make sense. She was still gathering and focusing when she heard a tapping at a window, and, scuttling to it rapidly, saw Blaise crouching in the shrubbery. She set

set traps as if it was open season in the beaver country, and, for all I know, the prize catch may turn out to be my uncle."

Blaise nodded. "I understand. The drawings are on the table, Cassy. Take them with you. I'll try to think of something else."

She leaned against him. "That's no solution. You're the one I started out to help."

"I think," Blaise said, "that what Grandi told your uncle is pretty much the truth." He just wants to have the investigation wrapped up where it stands now, to keep the sacred name of Edgerton from being mixed up in a forgery scandal. He's not a public-spirited man and I don't think he cares who gets trimmed—just so he doesn't."

"That sounds like Uncle Lucas. You don't think his doings are any darker than that?" she asked.

"This time tomorrow," Blaise said, "he'll be bringing me my slippers, mixing me a drink, and offering to increase your dowry."

"Tomorrow night, huh? Do we have to wait until the check clears? If we don't," she rambled on contentedly, "we can have a police-station wedding, the kind every girl dreams about from childhood, with an arch formed by crossed night sticks."

THE telephone rang, and Blaise jumped for it. He said, "Yes, Ives." Then, after an instant, he said, "Right away," and put down the telephone. "Sorry I interrupted your reverie, Cassy."

"All right," she said. "But this is your last night for helling around in prowls. You'll be a better art dealer if you stay home nights and study." At the door, though, she clung to him. "Be careful, Blaise. Please be careful."

He tapped her under the chin with the drawings. "I'll be on deck tomorrow." He kissed her, and her arms came up to hold him tight. He disengaged himself reluctantly. "Ives is waiting for me, Cassy."

"Let him wait. I'm a taxpayer." But she let go, and Blaise went off alone, heading north to the motel where he had put Hugh Norden. The headlights of a parked car winked on and off, and Blaise pulled up behind it. Ives was walking to meet him.

"What's in here?" asked the detective.

"Your friend and mine, Hugh Norden."

"The hell you say!" It was the first time Blaise had seen the lieutenant actually startled. He told Ives how he had spotted the fugitive and of Norden's eagerness to square himself.

"I'll square him," Ives said. "I'll put corners on him while I'm about it."

"I located a couple of those drawings I mentioned," Blaise said casually. "If Norden really wants to help, I think we can go places."

"Let's go inside," Ives said. On the way, he reached under his coat to adjust the holster he was wearing.

At the sight of Lieutenant Ives, Norden's

eyes all but revolved in their sockets. The detective pushed him back in and closed the door. Together, Blaise and Ives told him what he'd have to do to save his skin.

When Norden left the cabin a half hour later, he was carrying one of the Renoir drawings Blaise had "borrowed" from the Edgerton collection.

ASTORG was resting on a couch in Kenneth Lurie's drawing room. Lurie was showing some pictures in the next room, and Astorg half listened to the patter, the clichés of buyer and seller which followed one another like tracer bullets. He was in a strangely lethargic state, as if, having accepted the leadership of Kenneth Lurie, he had relinquished all responsibility and initiative. He was afraid of Lurie now, and he felt helpless. He was afraid to leave, afraid to stay, and, most of all, afraid to ask questions.

Lurie brought his customer into the drawing room. "Jonas!" he cried. "You'll never guess what this wicked, wicked woman has done. She's taking away our Sisley!"

"No!" cried Astorg, in pretended disbelief. "She can't!" The Sisley was a shabby landscape, probably a sketch for a painting, reluctantly accepted in trade. "I wanted that for my personal collection!"

"So did I," Lurie said. "She went straight to it," he told Astorg. "Ignored all the things I wanted to sell. But it's going into a happy collection. Mrs. Parnell," he informed Astorg solemnly, "has the largest collection of Bouguereau in Texas."

Lurie was ready to take her away now, and Astorg bowed low over her hand, rugged hand. Her car was waiting in the street, and Lurie took her to it. His careful, fitted smile stayed on until she drove away. Then he started back into the house.

"Lurie!" The dealer stopped. Hugh Norden was standing ten yards away, his right hand in the pocket of his loose gabardine coat.

"Oh, it's you," Lurie said. "What do you want?"

"I'd like to show you a Renoir drawing," Norden said. "An early one, about 1875. Like the one I gave Simon Edgerton."

Lurie nodded. "I'll take you somewhere else, where we can talk. I'm not alone—"

"Astorg," Norden said, interrupting him. "I know. It's all right with me, if it's all right with you."

"Come in," Lurie said quietly.

On the doorstep, Norden said, "I've got a gun. This isn't a stickup—you know that."

"Come on in," the dealer said amiably. "We'll talk about it."

Norden followed him into the drawing room. "This is Hugh Norden, Jonas," Lurie said. "He'd like to show us an early Renoir drawing." When Astorg bounced upright, Lurie added, "He's got a gun."

Norden said, "Pleased to meet you, Mr. Astorg." He drew out the drawing and placed it before Astorg.

Astorg was trembling, but Lurie was calm, not even troubling to glance at the drawing.

"The Renoir?" Lurie asked politely.

"Or thereabouts," Norden replied with a smile.

Lurie moved around to look down over his colleague's shoulder. "How much?"

"Ten thousand."

"Just for one drawing?"

Lurie's eyebrows went up.

"For three."

Astorg spoke for the first time. "How many have you got?"

"Three," Norden said, grinning, and, at Astorg's skeptical glance, he added, "That's the lot."

"You've brought the other two?" Lurie asked.

"They're handy," Norden said. After a moment, he

# Christmas Gift Special



Give him deluxe size  
**PALMOLIVE**  
After-Shave Lotion



Your Shopping's Snappier...

Check 'em off your list . . . dads and dream-boys . . . brothers and boy friends . . . every man cheers for this brand-new idea in after-shave comfort! Especially in this strikingly handsome green-and-gold gift package!



His Face is Happier...

For here's one after-shave lotion that not only cools in seconds . . . but also, soothes for hours! What comfort! What a keen, outdoor aroma! Remember the name—Palmolive After-Shave Lotion . . . perfect gift for every big shaver on your list! At all good toilet-goods counters, everywhere.



"And how much hair will a quart let down?" CHON DAY



# PRESENTING PACK

*with motordom's newest, most exclusive beauty-*

*Fashion-Keyed  
by Dorothy Draper*

**Here is the newest** new automobile idea in over a decade!

Dorothy Draper, internationally famous decorator and color stylist, has touched the



*Throughout the fashion world, the achievements of Mrs. Dorothy Draper have long been legendary. Now, for the first time, she has brought her talents to the field of motoring . . . in the magnificent new 1952 Packard.*

1952 Packards with the magic of her color and fabric genius . . . *and the result is the most breath-takingly beautiful car of our time!*

**From the stunning** exterior combinations to the matching interior fabrics and trim, Mrs. Draper's artistic daring and instinctive good taste are in evidence everywhere.

Blendings, harmonies, color complements — one more magnificent than the next — are here . . . not only to win admiring glances from other motorists and pedestrians, but to suit *your* personality—*your* temperament—*your* taste!

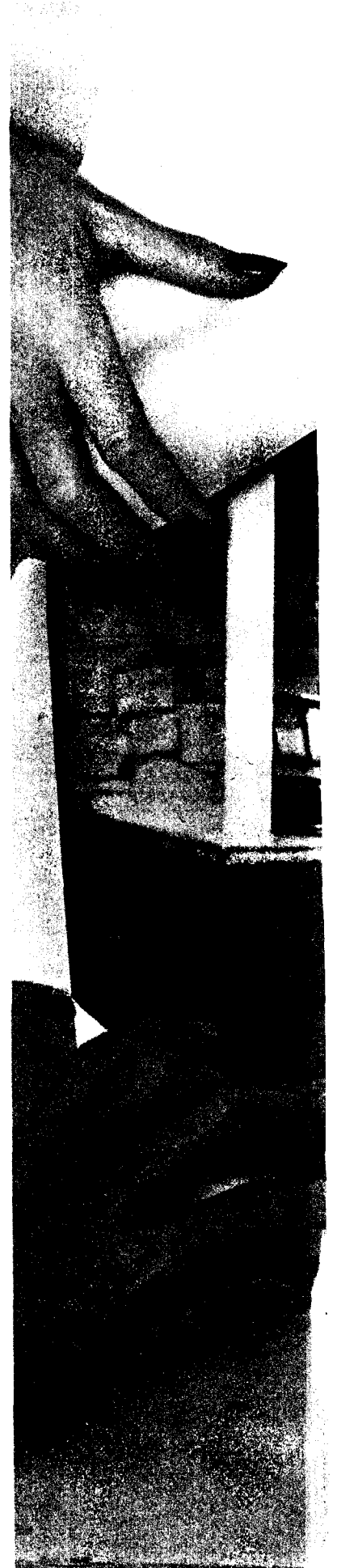
**And underneath it all** is the brilliance of Packard engineering and precision workmanship: From new Packard Thunderbolt Engines, America's *highest-compression eights* . . . and Packard's exclusive, now smoother-than-ever Ultramatic Drive . . . to revolutionary new Packard Easamatic Power Brakes!

The total effect is definitely something to see—something to drive—something to own!

*It's more than a car--it's a*

## PACKARD

*Ask the man who owns one*



Photographed at House & Garden's "House of."

# RD FOR 1952



per Brookville, Long Island.

Most luxurious motor car in the world: New Packard Patrician '400' for 1952. One of eight brilliant new models in four price ranges.





## Winter-Time Warm-up!

### TRY Spudnuts and COFFEE

When it's cold outside . . . try those golden Spudnuts with a cup of hot coffee inside for an appetite-satisfying winter warm-up! Good anytime — morning, noon, or night — and good for you, too! Made of finest ingredients, deep-cooked in creamy shortening, Spudnuts are energy-packed, digestible! Perfect for holiday parties . . . more than 300 Spudnut dealers throughout the nation are waiting to serve you tantalizing goodness by the dozen!

### America's Finest Food Confection

The formula for Spudnuts is a closely guarded secret, but one ingredient is especially prepared potatoes, softly folded into the basic Spudnut recipe. Raised in a proofing box just like the finest French pastries, you'll love the fluffy, golden goodness of Spudnuts!

More and more Spudnut Shops now have Spud-Overs, the All-American Fruit Confection and other exciting Spudnut Pastry Varieties — each making yum-yummy eating history. Ask your nearby Spudnut Shop!



**Spudnuts** — made only by authorized, franchised dealers, and sold in the genuine Mr. Spudnut Bag or Box. Be sure you get genuine Spudnuts!



Franchises Available: Write the Franchise Division, Pelton's Spudnuts, Inc., 1488 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah. Canadian Offices, 1307 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B. C. Copyright, 1951

asked, "How handy is the ten thousand?"

Lurie looked at Astorg. "What do you think, Jonas?"

Astorg pushed himself up. He stared at Norden, his eyes wide, his mouth a little slack. "Blackmailing devil," he muttered, and launched himself at Norden, his fingers curved into raking claws. Norden fell back quickly, whipping out the gun. Lurie caught Astorg's shoulder, spun him around, and pushed him away. Norden let his hand fall back into the pocket.

Lurie smiled apologetically. "He's not used to these transactions. I'll handle this for both of us. All right, Jonas?"

Astorg nodded. Lurie turned back to Norden. "You've got three drawings—that's all?"

"Three," Norden repeated firmly.

"I take it you don't plan to spend the money right here in southern California," Lurie said.

"A friend of mine is on a ship going out of San Pedro tomorrow morning. He'll sign me on—if I raise some money," he finished pointedly.

Lurie reached into his breast pocket for a thin sheaf of currency. He glanced at Astorg and, when the dealer nodded, tossed the money on the table. "There's a couple of thousand. I'll bring you the rest later tonight."

"Fine," Norden picked up the money. "I'm at the Far West, a motel out on the highway."

Lurie was studying the drawing. "You got this from Paul Weldon, didn't you?" he asked.

"I picked him up one night about a month ago," Norden said. "He was pretty drunk and I helped him get home. After he passed out, I had a look around. I found these drawings and a half-finished Renoir. Believe me, I had a new respect for Paul Weldon."

"A month ago eh? But you didn't approach Simon Edgerton until the other night?"

"I couldn't approach him—or anybody. I didn't know what was involved. I knew a big forgery racket was going, but I had to know how and with whom before I made a move."

ASTORG was sitting up straight now. His voice was impatient. "Go on. I might as well hear it all now."

Norden glanced at Lurie, who shrugged. "Mr. Astorg is entitled to know the truth," Lurie murmured.

"I watched Weldon until I picked up the connection with Simon Edgerton," Norden said. "That damn' near drove me crazy for a while. I knew that if the forgeries were destined for a collector, you wouldn't need Simon—it would mean admitting that the paintings were stolen property. Then I learned that Mr. Astorg had these great new Renoirs. It all made sense then: you were selling him paintings ostensibly stolen by Simon from the Edgerton collection, and Paul Weldon was knocking them out for you in his studio. A great idea," he said respectfully to Lurie.

"Brilliant!" Astorg said stiffly. He turned a bitter stare on Lurie. "My partner! My friend!"

"Don't be a fool," Lurie said. "Am I in business to make friends? Are you?"

"Anyway," said Norden, "once I knew the program, all I had to do was pick the weakest spot. I thought it would be Simon," he finished thoughtfully. "As it turned out, that may have been a mistake. You knew by the time I went to Simon that the Renoirs were forgeries, didn't you?" he asked Astorg.

The dealer shook his head. "I'm rather more dense than you think."

"Oh. I thought you did because—" Norden's voice trailed off. "It doesn't matter."

"He means," said Lurie, "because he saw you at the Edgerton place the night Simon was killed."

"I'll say good night," Norden said politely. "I'm sure you must have a lot to talk about."

Lurie took Norden into the hall. He

came back with a humidor from which he selected a large cigar. "Want one?"

Astorg shook his head. "Bad for my heart," he said.

"You must be careful," Lurie said gravely. He closed the humidor, picked up a small, gracefully executed bronze, and placed it on the lid. "This little statue was in the first good collection I ever handled," Lurie said. "I sold everything else and at last decided to keep it for luck."

"The story of your life, when you get around to it," Astorg said, "should be very interesting. Let me know if you need a finish."

Lurie laughed. "I'm glad you're showing some spirit, Jonas. You were beginning to depress me. I'm ashamed of what happened here. That a sniveling little thief should have the gall to demand money!"

"Is that why you gave it to him so readily?"

"I'm not a fool. It would be silly to deny that Norden can make trouble. But," he added with satisfaction, "we've been lucky so far."

"What are you going to do?"

Lurie tapped the ash gently from his cigar. "Would you really like to know, Jonas?"

"No!"

Lurie smiled. "That's what I thought. I'll do," he said, "what I have to do. Neither more nor less. Something like this has been inevitable. I was never content with running just a business. Were you?" he asked abruptly.

"I know what you mean," was Astorg's low, hesitant reply.

"I'm sure you do. My earliest admiration for you was touched off years ago when I saw what you sold an automobile manufacturer. A quarter of a million dollars' worth of great paintings, but you couldn't resist including a few worthless pre-Columbian vessels made here in Los Angeles. That gave me great pleasure. I knew then that we were destined to be partners."

"Why did you have to fool me?" Astorg demanded. "Of all people, why me?"

"Challenge, I suppose. Most collectors bore me. I am frequently honest with them only because they're sitting ducks. But with you, Jonas," he said affectionately, "my faculties had to be at their very keenest. Besides, as you know, my own facilities and standing would have been inadequate." He put down his cigar. "I'm going now," he said. "Shall I drop you, or will you wait for me here?"

"I'll go home," Astorg said. He paused in the hall and caught Lurie's arm. "Give Norden the money," Astorg said, in a pleading tone. "Don't get crazy notions of pride or

revenge now. Give him the money. I want to be sure Norden isn't going to trouble us."

Lurie smiled. "I give you my word. My word of honor."

AT THE Far West Motel, Ives had requisitioned the two cabins adjoining Norden's, and another facing this layout on the other side of the court. His men were installed in them, and all was in readiness.

Norden rendered a faithful account of his interview, after which Ives relieved him of the two thousand and the gun. Sergeant Bonner took charge of both, settling himself in a corner with the money and several sheets of closely typed paper.

"If it's all the same to you, Lieutenant," Norden said, "I'd just as soon meet Lurie in an armored car."

"Sit down, scum," Ives said. "I'm using you, but don't crowd your luck. If you're useful, I may let you plead to something easy. If you're not, you'll wish Lurie had stuffed you with cement."

"Yes, sir," Norden said uneasily.

"The lieutenant really likes you," Blaise said. "His manner is gruff but underneath beats a heart like—" He never finished the simile. Sergeant Bonner jumped up from his researches. "Here it is. The entire two thousand is part of what Weldon drew out of the bank."

"Well, what do you know!" Ives said.

The sergeant showed Blaise how the bank kept track of its currency. "We don't know the exact bills the bank issued to Weldon," the sergeant explained, "but we know that on the day of this withdrawal the serial numbers were somewhere in this range. And here they are."

"How much did Weldon have?" Blaise asked.

"He got six thousand in this batch," Ives told him. "We may get more of it later."

In a frightened voice, Norden said, "My God, Lieutenant, you don't really think Lurie is coming here to give me that money, do you?"

"Shut up." Then Ives condescended to add, "Of course he'll give you the money. He's got to have the drawings. His best bet is to kill you," he said thoughtfully, "but not until he has the drawings, and definitely not here."

"Is there any way I can meet Lurie?" Blaise asked, and, at Ives's curious look, he added, "It was my idea."

"If anything happened to you, there'd be an awful stink. This one"—he jerked his thumb at Norden—"he's expendable."

"I'd like a drink," Norden said.

"Give it to him, Bonner," Ives said.

Sergeant Bonner, whose duties were varied, took a bottle from a cupboard and



"It's the only light we have, so you'll have to work fast!"

COLLIER'S

FRITZ WILKINSON

poured a stiff drink into a tumbler. Norden swallowed it, then lighted a cigarette with trembling fingers. "All I need now," he said bitterly, "is a blindfold."

A tape recorder, its spool wound for two hours, was planted in a cupboard. Sergeant Bonner started the device, checking for noise or vibration, and it was left running.

Norden looked like a horse with a broken leg who knew he was about to be abandoned to die.

"You're doing fine," Blaise told him reassuringly.

Bonner stayed in the shadows outside Norden's cabin, crouched at a window. The lieutenant and Blaise went into the adjoining cabin. A thin, nervous crackling issued from a loud-speaker on the floor, over which they heard the heavy sound of Norden's footsteps. Then the footsteps stopped, to be followed by a gurgling splash.

"He's at the whisky," Ives said.

"Do you think he'll be all right?" Blaise asked.

Ives nodded. "Do you suppose I'd risk it if I didn't think so? It's a hundred to one Lurie won't try anything here, and if he should, Bonner is the best shot in the department. My main concern is whether or not Lurie talks."

"I think he will," Blaise said. "He won't just take Norden's word that these are all the drawings. He'll try to—"

Ives gripped Blaise's wrist as Lurie's voice came over the speaker. "I'm a few minutes early," he was saying in his grave, deliberate voice. "I'm pleased to find you at home."

They heard Norden fiddling with the bolts. Then Lurie said casually, "Let me see the three drawings."

"Two drawings. I gave you one at the house."

"So you did." There was a pause, then Lurie said, "My colleague thinks you may be holding back a few things as security for your old age."

"I'm not. I had four of Weldon's drawings originally. I gave one to Simon Edgerton, left you one tonight. I've got two more and that's all."

"I hope so. Even an impoverished old age is better than none. I'm giving you a great deal of money."

"Because you've got a hell of a lot at stake. You've got at least two more fake Renoirs and now there's nothing to stop you from unloading them."

**L**URIE spoke calmly. "I'm well aware of that. However, the proceeds have to be divided into several shares. Frankly, I thought we had too many partners all along. To be sure, the ranks have thinned out somewhat. You might speculate on the hazards of the career you are embracing. Would you care to know the life span of the average blackmailer? No? Well, perhaps the subject is a depressing one." In a brisk, businesslike manner, he said, "I've brought the money. Let me see the drawings."

Ives, still listening and waiting, had nevertheless moved to the door. The microphone next door picked up and transported the rustle of papers.

"Beautiful! Wonderful work! These are good enough to fool anyone," Lurie said. "Actually, for all I know, these might even be genuine. This one on top has even been mounted, as if it had been exhibited somewhere."

"I wanted—I tried to sell it when I was ducking the police," Norden muttered in a frightened, quavering voice.

"You lying stool pigeon!" bellowed Lurie. "What kind of drawings are these?"

Ives yanked the door open and, gun in hand, jumped from the top step. Blaise followed him, just as the two shots were fired almost simultaneously. Sergeant Bonner, also with his automatic ready, reached the front of the bungalow from his post as Ives rushed up, then the door banged open, silhouetting Lurie as in a frame. He was clutching his shattered right wrist, his face twisted with pain, but when he saw the police and Blaise he dropped

both arms and forced the muscles of his face into their accustomed composure. Hugh Norden, unharmed, leaned weakly against the cupboard in the background.

"This way out," Ives said quietly, and Lurie followed the two detectives to the waiting car.

**T**HOUGH he was a man of erratic personal habits, in some ways Lucas Edgerton followed an inflexible pattern. One of these was his breakfast, served to him alone every morning at seven thirty in the huge dining room. The hour itself generally afforded privacy. Beyond that, it was a rare being who would face Edgerton on an empty stomach. He betrayed no surprise, however, when Cassy padded in. She was wearing a housecoat, some inches of nightgown protruding at the hem.

"Damn it, Cassy," said Edgerton, who was wearing a blue blazer with brass buttons over his pajama coat, "can't you get decently dressed for breakfast?"

Cassy ignored him. "I want caviar, blintzes with sour cream, and a pint of champagne," she said dreamily to the startled butler, and Edgerton's coffee cup banged the saucer in his astonishment. "Do not unquiet yourself," she said. "I have odd whims, but I'm not pregnant."

"Fine talk," muttered Edgerton. Then he looked up at Jennings. "You heard Miss Cassandra," he roared.

Edgerton concentrated on his scrambled eggs.

"I talked to Blaise," Cassy said.

Edgerton nodded. "The boy G-man," he muttered.

"He's coming out," she continued imperturbably.

Edgerton shrugged. "Don't suppose I could stop him. I remember when this place used to be private property. Nothing but a lousy public picnic ground now."

"You need more contact with the outside world," Cassy said. "This gilded hermitage has made you grumpy, arbitrary, pigheaded, and vain. However, Blaise and I are going to live with you for the first few years. The house will be filled with the laughter of young people, and—who knows?—perhaps the patter of little feet."

"Are you joking?"

"No, I'm not. We're getting married. Right away."

Edgerton reached out and patted her hand. "All right, Cassy," he said gently.

At this sudden and warm surrender, Cassy broke into tears. "Damn it, Cassy, stop crying!" Edgerton said. "It's all right, I say."

"You don't mind?"

"What the hell—I suppose you've got to marry somebody."

"I do. I'm all matured and everything." She took the handkerchief he held out to her. "By the way, you've never told me about the birds and the bees. This is your last chance."

"I'll buy you a book. Incidentally, I don't suppose you managed to suppress the facts about your income, did you?"

"He knew," Cassy said proudly. "He checked up right away. He's really awfully smart."

"You were able to overcome his manly opposition to living on your money?"

"The facts are, as you darn' well know, that Blaise is very successful." She shut off his attempted interruption. "And today you need him more than he needs you. He was right about the forgeries, and you were as wrong as Christmas in July. If he isn't working for you, people are going to be asking themselves why he was fired and probably coming to the conclusion that he got canned because he was too smart and too honest to have access to the great Edgerton collection. Mix that," she concluded, "in your brown umber, add a touch of zinc white, and smoke it."

"He's thought of all that, has he?"

"I've thought of it, and I'm not the type to keep secrets from my husband."

"You'll make a great wife for an art dealer, Cassy," he said.

"That's my plan," Cassy replied. "And

**Protection**

**AC OIL FILTERS**

**NEW AC ALUVAC ELEMENT**

**The New AC Aluvac Oil Filter Element Guards Your Engine Against Hidden Enemies**

Constantly picking off the enemies that shorten engine life—removing the grit that grinds and the sludge that clogs—the new AC Aluvac Oil Filter Element gives vital protection to any engine.

Dirty oil comes in—clean, safe oil goes out, in an endless stream of protection for all moving parts. You'd be amazed to know how little wear takes place when engine oil is always clean.

You'd be equally astonished to know how fine and uniform the filtering pores of the AC Aluvac Element are. They take out dirt particles as small as 1/100,000th of an inch in size.

You'll get a lot of mileage—low cost mileage—out of your AC Aluvac Element, too. Size for size, it has 10 times the filtering surface of ordinary elements—double the sludge-retaining capacity.

So there's both quantity and quality for you, in one precision-built package.

And remember this: It's the filter element that does the work in an oil filter. The next time your filter element needs changing, replace with an AC Aluvac Element. Your service man has a size and type to fit almost every oil filter.

**IF YOUR ENGINE HAS NO OIL FILTER, don't leave it unprotected any longer. There's a complete AC Oil Filter, with Aluvac Element, to fit your engine.**

AC SPARK PLUG DIVISION



GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION



you'd better bear it in mind if you still want to fire Ellis Blaise."

"Fire him?" Edgerton looked shocked. "I want to buy a piece of the business." . . .

The morning papers were scattered all over the desk in the library, headlines and pictures telling the story of last night's arrests of Lurie and Astorg. The words "art forgery," "conspiracy" and "wealthy collector Lucas Edgerton" figured prominently, as did the name Ellis Blaise. Blaise's first act was to gather them and drop the bundle in the fireplace.

"They shot my bad profile," he complained, looking at the subdued group around Edgerton. Wesley Corum rewarded him with a weak smile, but neither Victor Grandi nor Miriam Wayne ventured any comment.

"You're a red-hot celebrity," Edgerton sneered. "I'm hoping you'll give me your autograph."

"I've already been invited to appear on Meet the People," Blaise said, "and I think I can arrange a booking for you on It Pays to Be Ignorant."

**F**OR a moment Edgerton was about to shoot up like a rocket, but he subsided at last. "I guess I had that coming to me."

"I think we have all underestimated Mr. Blaise," Grandi said.

Blaise handed Edgerton the three drawings. "Anyway, you earned an assist."

"I'll be damned!" Edgerton said softly, when he saw them. He looked up at Miriam. "Did you give him these?"

"No," she said, "but I think I understand your niece's fainting spell last night."

"I was collecting these in the gallery," Blaise said. "It isn't easy to find three early Renoir drawings in a hurry, and Lurie and Astorg had to be convinced that proof of the forgery still existed. You can still have me juggled for breaking and entering."

Edgerton laughed out loud. "They thought these were forgeries? What mugs! Do they know how they hung themselves?"

"There were some bitter reproaches," Blaise said. "In the heat of recrimination between the partners, a good deal of the background of the conspiracy was exposed." His gaze swept the group, and Dr. Corum cleared his throat nervously.

"My God!" said Edgerton, in an awed voice. "Don't tell me he was in on it?"

A word at a time, like a faltering school-boy, Dr. Corum said, "I authenticated the painting that was sold to Nathan Ordmann."

"That's no disgrace. Anybody would be fooled."

"I vouched for the history of the painting," Corum said. "I corroborated the background Astorg made up." In what was almost a wail, he continued, "The painting was perfect. I would have taken an oath it was genuine. I needed the fee," he finished miserably.

"It was all very plausible," Blaise said. "Roger Vernet was right here to swear the paintings had been in his family for years. By the way, Vernet had no idea the paintings were forged. He was told that they had been bought from Nazis who were hiding in South America. He didn't object to that, despite the fact that both his brothers were murdered by the Germans."

"It's quite a cast of characters. Sit down," Edgerton said, as Corum got to his feet. "Don't start slinking out like an unmarried mother in a melodrama." He turned to Blaise. "What else?"

"I believe the floor is mine," Victor Grandi said promptly. With no apparent embarrassment whatever, he went on, "Lieutenant Ives has already notified me that I am to await questioning. You see, our poor Paul Weldon was only a fair chemist. A long time ago he came to me with questions about the composition of colors. It was soon obvious that he was trying to duplicate Renoir. The poor chap—his first attempts were ludicrously bad."

"You helped him?" demanded Edgerton. Grandi smiled. "Why not? I knew that his forgeries would be sold to sophisticated

dealers and collectors. My work has not filled me with boundless respect for these guardians of our culture."

"Meaning me, I suppose," Edgerton said dourly.

"I was delighted to help Weldon," said Grandi. "I did not, however, receive a fee."

"Get out," Edgerton said.

"Gladly," Grandi paused on his way to the door, addressing Blaise directly. "I did not know that Simon Edgerton was involved in any way with Weldon, Lurie or the forgeries." Then, with a little bow, he added, "I will await Lieutenant Ives in my cottage."

"Don't do anything rash," Blaise advised. "When I left Lieutenant Ives, he was trying to figure out what laws you'd broken and he hadn't found one."

"I think far too much of myself to even consider self-destruction, Mr. Blaise." He bowed again, and was gone.

"Which the hell side are you on?" Edgerton asked.

"I like him," Blaise said candidly. "He

stance—it doesn't really amount to very much."

"I thought"—her low voice was barely audible in the huge room—"we all thought it was Lurie."

"So did I. Another of my cockeyed ideas."

"Oh, well," Miriam said. "I'm sure you'll have another theory before long."

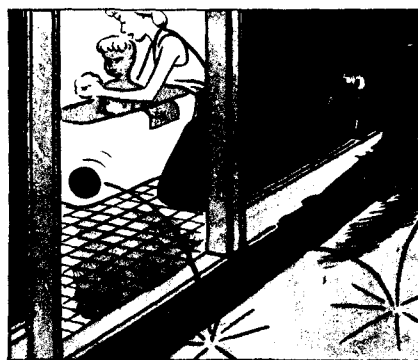
"I've got it." The girl was still in her position against the cabinet, but her hands gripped the edge now, her knuckles showing white. "Walk out that door," Blaise said, "and you'll find out what it is."

She looked at him steadily, then she walked to the door, her head held high. As she threw it open, Sergeant Bonner stepped up to fill the doorway.

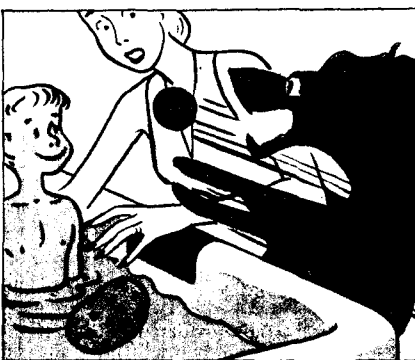
"Will you wait, please, miss," he said politely. He reached in for the knob, the girl taking two short backward steps to let him close the door. She did not turn to face Blaise.

"That was Sergeant Bonner, Miriam. You once talked to him on the phone."

## CLANCY



COLLIER'S



JOHN RUGE

practically pushed me into action on the forgeries when everyone else was steering me wrong or blowing dust in my face."

"I want to make it plain," Dr. Corum said hoarsely, "that I was no part of any plot. I did a foolish and greedy thing, Lucas, but—"

"Oh, be quiet, Wesley. Nobody suspects you of being anything more than a fathead and I've known that for thirty years. If you were strapped, you should have come to me—" As Corum, pale with shock, rocked unsteadily, Edgerton jumped to his side. "Easy now. Easy, Wes." He supported the wilting art critic with his arm. "Come on and we'll put you to bed for a while. You need a rest."

**B**LAISE stepped up to help, but Edgerton waved him away and led Corum out. Then Blaise turned to look at Miriam Wayne. She was leaning back against a low cabinet. "Amazing what odd reactions an act of violence churns up," Blaise said. "I thought the old man's heart was set in a hand-carved frame, shellacked and lacquered against the elements."

"Perhaps you bring out the best in people," the girl said. "We are all very much in your debt."

"I did only what any red-blooded American boy would have done," Blaise said. "Besides, until a few petty details are filled in—the identity of the murderer, for in-

stance—she swung around. "That's not true!" she cried.

"Take it easy," Blaise said. "Why be so vehement? Let's talk quietly, shall we?"

She looked up. Her dark eyes were luminous. "I suppose Lurie has talked some nonsense. Well, I did supply some of the books and drawings Weldon worked from. That much is true."

"What else is true?" Blaise asked. "Were you in love with Simon Edgerton, or did it just seem like an advantageous marriage?"

"I loved Simon." Her voice was low, a little shaky. "And he was in love with me."

"On the night he was killed," Blaise said. "I accused Simon of stealing paintings from his father's collection. He laughed at me. He seemed relieved that I suspected him of that. I didn't understand his attitude then, but now I do. Simon never knew the paintings were forgeries. They were brought here and he thought he was stealing them. That was done to give you a hold on him. If he tried to shake you, you could expose him to his father."

"That's a lie."

"No, Miriam, it's not a lie. When Norden tried blackmailing Simon, he inadvertently did him a favor. Simon learned the truth and you knew you'd lost him forever. It was a fatal favor."

"You fool," she said. "Can't you see that Lurie is trying to distract you from himself—"

"Oddly enough," Blaise said, "this isn't his theory—it's mine. Lurie did say that you insisted on handling Simon yourself, and on keeping him in the dark about the true nature of the paintings. He thinks your plan was to force Simon to marry you. He doesn't believe you killed him. On the other hand, I do."

"That leaves Paul Weldon," she said. "I killed him, too, of course. How about the Black Dahlia? And have you thought of searching my room for Judge Crater?"

"The night he was killed," Blaise said steadily, "Simon first came into the house, woke you up, if you were asleep, and told you he was out from under the whip hand. Then he had to get the cards back into the gallery. That gave you a few minutes to think beautiful thoughts. When he came out, you were waiting for him. You could get up close, maybe to plead for another chance—it had to be someone he knew to fire point-blank like that."

"You're crazy! You're talking absolute nonsense."

"Don't listen," Blaise suggested. "Read an improving book, write a letter, or—if your thoughts turn in that direction—make your will."

"You heartless son of a—"

"I suppose I should be sorry for you," Blaise said. "But then I think of Simon, and of Paul Weldon, who was not even a real threat to your safety, but you saw a chance to pin it all on him. It only meant one more killing, an easy one, considering the shape he was in. Am I boring you?" he asked politely.

**S**HE struck at Blaise suddenly, a round-house slap, then cried out in pain as he caught her wrist an inch from his face.

"I see that I'm not boring you. I'm glad. You jumped too soon and too high when I mentioned Sergeant Bonner. As a matter of fact, that's when Lieutenant Ives began to measure you for this part. Weldon was drunk and incoherent; anyone might have imitated his speech, even a woman, provided her voice was naturally low. But it had to be someone who knew that I was out, and that Bonner, who had never heard Weldon's voice, was in my room waiting for the call. That narrowed it down to someone in this house. Weldon was desperate for money because we know now that Lurie had taken what he had hidden in the studio. He knew he was washed up, and he was frantic to get away. Despite that, he spent twenty-five minutes here after he locked Cassy in the vault. He spent that time with you, Miriam, pleading for help! Needless to say, he got a bullet instead."

He was still holding her wrist. When he relaxed his grip, she staggered back and slumped into a chair. Her eyes were boring into his, as if she were searching for an avenue of escape. "You can't prove that," she said hoarsely. "Not a word of it."

"Ives can," said Blaise, "and he will. Everything in your apartment has been carted downtown, and Ives is up in your room. Did you burn what you wore in that last scene with Simon Edgerton, and what you wore when you snuggled up to Paul Weldon in the car? Are you counting on Kenneth Lurie to save your pretty neck if it means risking his own?"

She buried her face in both hands suddenly, and a shudder rocked her slim body. There was a choking sound, as though she were gasping for breath, then great, anguished sobs.

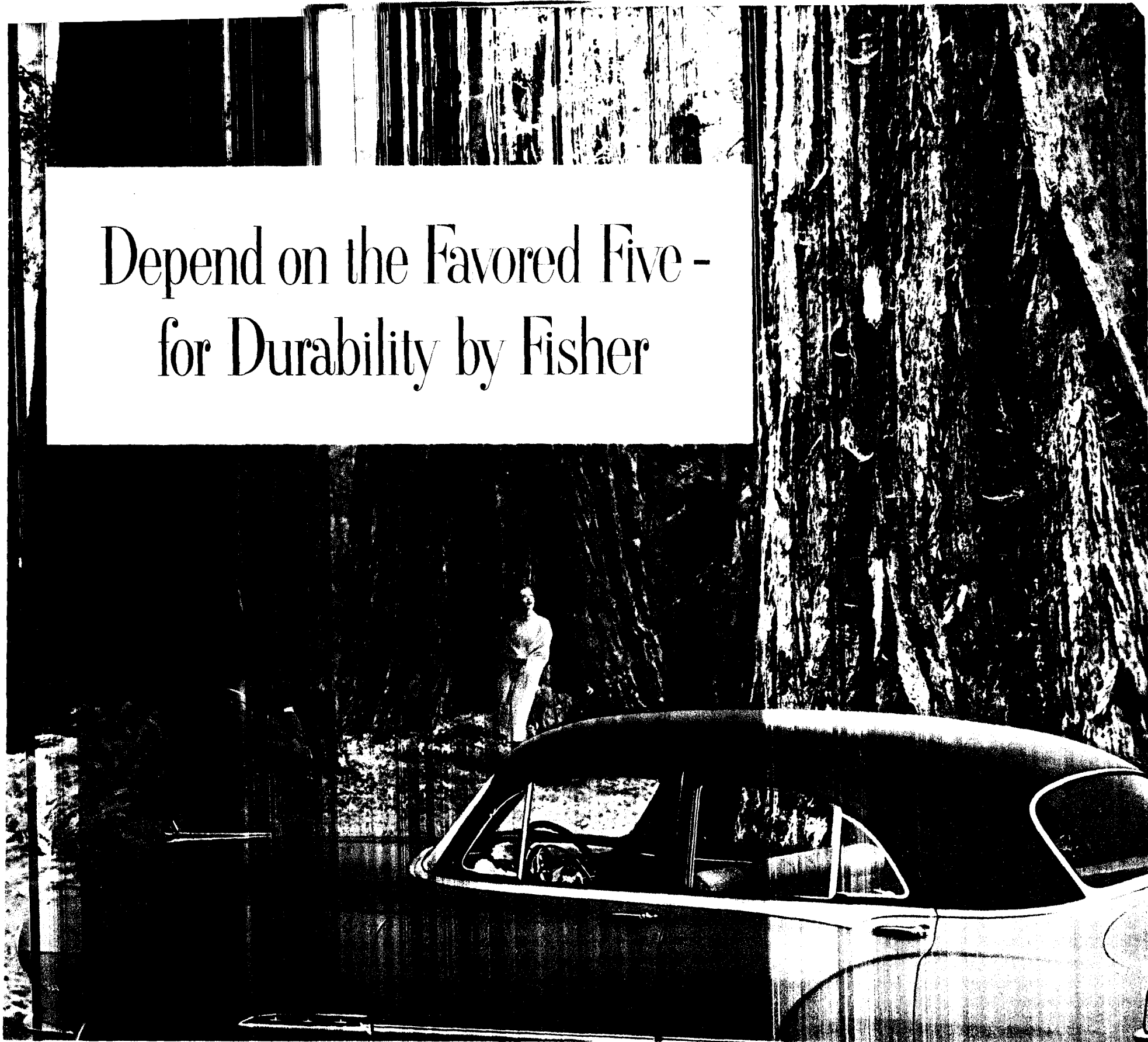
Blaise watched her for a moment, turning away when he heard the door open. It was Lieutenant Ives, grim and hollow-eyed in his rumpled clothes. He was holding the door open.

A little wind was whipping in from the sea as Blaise came out, and he was grateful for the clean, stinging breeze. He walked across the lawn to the beach, and saw Cassy far out on the rocks jutting into the surf. She was waving to him, scrambling back in, and he stood at the base of the jetty until she appeared overhead. He raised his arms, bracing himself in the loose sand, and she jumped.

THE END

Collier's for December 1, 1951

# Depend on the Favored Five - for Durability by Fisher



**H**OW many automobile bodies can you name? To most people only one name immediately comes to mind. That one name is Body by Fisher — a name as enduring as this body itself.

Most car owners, in fact, believe Body by Fisher to be the best body built.

Fortunately, it is easy to have the great

durability of this famed body on your next car.

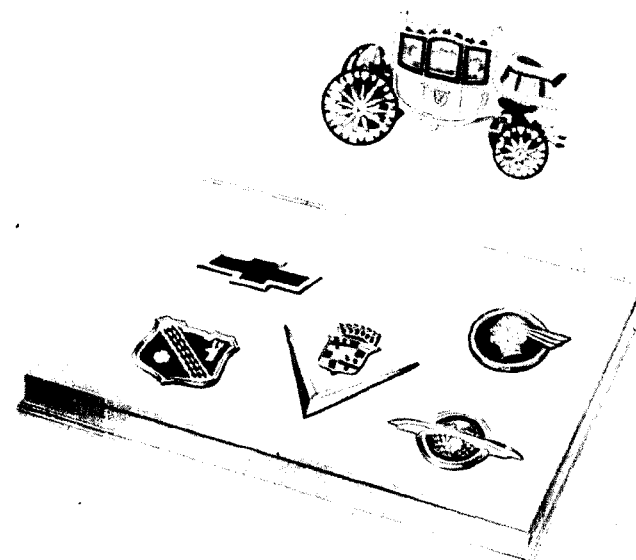
*Simply make sure* to select one of the five cars bearing the Fisher emblem of lasting excellence.

Choose one of these favored five — Chevrolet, Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Buick and Cadillac—America's only cars built with Body by Fisher.

## Body by Fisher

*\*On General Motors cars only:*

CHEVROLET PONTIAC OLDSMOBILE BUICK CADILLAC





## Killer in the Pass

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

cry!" he shouted. "You do not have me yet!"

The wolf moved in nearer, bolder now, to resume its watch. Nanka Tal ran the ball of his thumb over his knife blade and rammed the knife back in the sheath and hunched down on a rock. The morning sun had laid a wicked dazzle upon the snow and the farther peaks sparkled along the horizon, but in the valley below he could barely distinguish the outline of the village. At that distance it appeared deserted, dead, and no sound reached him across the vast, icebound silence.

He was used to solitude, to the empty brooding desolation, but today it mocked him. No help would come. He had been too proud to admit that he might fail, so he had climbed the pass alone. If he did not return within a week, they might begin to wonder, and organize a search—those who were still able to walk—for the village needed his rifle, whether Nanka Tal lived or died. There were only the wolf and himself, waiting each other out.

A NEW sound, faint and faraway, drifted along the ridge and lost itself against the cliffs, rousing Nanka Tal from his stupor. He strained forward and held his breath, listening intently. The wolf pointed its muzzle into the wind and howled again, as though in reply. Nanka Tal understood. The wolf was calling to its mate.

He wiped a hand over his eyes and looked down at the hut. Whatever he did he must do now, at once, before another wolf came. He could not sit here any longer in the numbing cold. He had no fuel for a fire, not even a few twigs with which to warm himself. He glanced at the staff of the prayer flag; then he wrenched it loose from the rocks and tested its grain across his knee.

Working with feverish haste, he cut two strips of sheepskin from the bottom of his cloak and bound the handle of his knife to the tip of the pole to make a sort of crude spear. Stretched out on the snow, the wolf had been watching him through half-closed eyes, and now it got to its feet and began to pace nervously back and forth. Nanka Tal drew the smaller of the two pieces of meat from his bag and flung it down beside the sheep carcass.

"Now," he said, "let us see how brave you are."

The wolf sidled in cautiously and stopped a length away from the meat. Nanka Tal dropped to the snow, braced his back against the cairn, and thrust out the spear. For some while they stood face to face, measuring each other, before Nanka Tal drove forward. He made a lunging stab, but the wolf jumped clear of the blade and twisted away.

Nanka Tal spun around to meet its rush, tripped over a rock, and fell heavily on his face. He groped frantically for the knife and dropped it with a scream as pain flared along his leg. Kicking with his other leg, he broke the wolf's grip on his boot, rolled over, and staggered to his feet. The wolf attacked again, ripping at his cloak, but Nanka Tal reached the shrine in two long strides and pulled himself up.

His blood made a bright stain on the snow, but it seemed too great an effort to examine his wound. He sank down and closed his eyes, listening to the wolf munch on his meat. First his rifle and now his knife. A hunter so careless of his weapons deserved to die, but dying was too easy. If he died, then Ladar too would die, and a man who left no son behind would be lost and nameless for all eternity. For the sake of his boy, and for Rura, who had given him heart when he needed it most, he could not surrender to despair.

A shadow brushed across his upturned face and he sat up with a start. A lone vulture that had been hovering above him on outspread wings climbed in a widening

spiral and flew off. Nanka Tal shuddered. The vulture too was hungry, impatient for him to die, not even waiting for the last sign of life to drain away. He was caught between them: the wolf below and the obscene eater of carrion above. One or the other would strip his bones, as they had stripped the sheep before him.

He looked down at the carcass. Now the female had joined the dog wolf and was restlessly circling the shrine, whining and scratching at the snow. She was smaller than her mate, darker and quicker of movement, but just as gaunt in rib and flank. Presently she prowled off to sniff inside the hut and backed out the door, tugging at Nanka Tal's blanket. Again and again she slashed it with her teeth until she had satisfied herself that it was nothing to eat; then she came back to lie beside the male.

Nanka Tal eyed them appraisingly. They were more intelligent than any animals of

smell. They jumped at his outstretched hand in a slavering frenzy, and he drew back his arm and sailed the stone in hard, spinning flight far across the brow of the ridge and watched it curve out of sight.

The she-wolf raced off in the lead, with the dog in pursuit. Nanka Tal waited until they had disappeared; then he hopped down from the rocks. Limping across the snow, he picked up his knife and started for the hut. He stopped abruptly at an unexpected blur of movement along the ridge. The wolves were coming back already, charging down upon him with unbelievable speed. He had thrown as far as he could but it was not far enough. The wolves were as fast as they were wily. He fled back to the rocks and scrambled up.

Down by the hut, a third wolf rounded the corner and poked its snout into the open door, followed by its smaller mate. They jumped at Nanka Tal's yell and flattened,

If he had the patience and the nerveless will to lure it down, there still might be a chance.

He lay back on the rocks, face up, and let his hands go slack at his sides. Through narrowed eyes, he watched the distant dot against the sky. The wind had died, the sun beat down from a cloudless sky, and sweat beaded along his lashes, dimming his sight, but he dared not brush it away. If he moved—so much as twitched a muscle—the vulture would take alarm, for it feared all creatures that were not carrion.

The wolves had stopped their fretful whining, and the stillness deepened around him. This was the craziness of hunger, to act as one already dead when death lay crouched only a few feet away. Hunger was the enemy. It was worse than thirst or heat or cold or pain because it fed upon itself, gaining strength while he grew weaker. He scarcely dared to breathe. He could only wait and pray that the vulture's hunger-craze was greater than its caution.

Then the bird glided back into his line of vision, low and black and large against the sun, its scrawny neck extended as it surveyed the scene below. With exquisite deliberation it hovered and dipped, making its decision; it planed away uncertainly and swung back, then swooped down to make a pass and swooped again to strike. Nanka Tal saw the hooked beak and the talons that were sharp enough to blind a man, and his throat tightened.

AS THE vulture settled on his chest with a ruffle of feathers, he reared up and grabbed it. He caught it first by the leg, then gripped its neck with both hands. The broad wings beat, struggling to lift Nanka Tal into the air, and the beak raked viciously at his face, but Nanka Tal held on. Gradually the thrashing subsided and the bird went limp in his grasp. Nanka Tal flopped the reeking carcass over beside him and gulped down the nausea that shook him.

All four wolves had closed in upon the shrine, their heads lifted and their eyes expectant, but it was the big brush-tail white, his first attacker, that Nanka Tal hated as he had never hated any living thing before. He stared down at the cruel, gaunt head. "You would eat your mate, eat your own young," he said. "If all your breed are like you—they are not fit to live."

With his knife, he began to cut his sheepskin cloak into one-inch strips, glancing now and then along the ridge, where the second pair of wolves had come. Each strip he knotted to another until he had a rope of pliant leather. He doubled it back, bound the ends together, and doubled it again into a four-strand line some twelve feet long and as stout as he could make it. At one end he tied a slipknot, fashioning a wide noose. Gaggling at the stench, he sliced a hunk of flesh from the vulture's breast.

Straightening wearily on top of the cairn, he gazed down at his valley, conscious of some atmospheric change. The wind had sprung up again but it blew from the south, not the north—a fresh warm breath that carried the feel of a thaw and coming spring. He touched the prayer beads around his neck. The gods could do no more. The rest was up to Nanka Tal.

He doubted that even a ravenous wolf could stomach vulture meat, but surely this one would try, greedy as it was. Carefully, he lowered his noose to the snow and dropped the piece of bait beside it. The white dog growled deep in its throat, its hindquarters gathered and its lips drawn back. The female jumped to her feet, but the dog sprang first, pouncing on the meat. Nanka Tal slipped the noose over its head and around its throat and heaved the slipknot tight.

The wolf's backward leap almost jerked him off his perch, but Nanka Tal braced his heels against a rock and hung on with all his ebbing strength. The wolf pawed



"I'm not hurt . . . I just don't feel like playing any more!"

COLLIER'S

DICK SHAW

his experience, almost human in their cunning and persistence. If he had time to learn their habits, he might devise a way to trap them, but now he had to guess. He had to find their weakness, as they had found his.

Taking out his last piece of meat, he chewed it in half and tossed one piece out in front of them. They got to their feet together, the dog bristling its ruff and snarling, but the female sprang first. She yelped as the dog wolf nipped one hind leg and turned to snap at him, but he cuffed her aside and jumped ahead to snatch up the meat. She leaped upon him in savage fury and they rolled over and over. But the moment Nanka Tal started to climb down, they stopped fighting and ran back to the foot of the pile.

Nanka Tal dragged up his feet. He had learned something. But could he use the knowledge to help himself? His leg had begun to throb, and his eyes ached from the glare of the sun, and hunger was becoming a torment. If he could not kill one wolf, certainly he could not kill two. To escape from this trap, he had to lure them both away.

He searched the pile for another stone, and picked up a small, flat piece of slate upon which some devout worshiper had scratched the inscription: *Sacred Jewel of the Lotus*. Smiling wryly, Nanka Tal thonged it to his last miserable scrap of meat and held it out for the wolves to

their ears back and their teeth bared. He stared at them in sick dismay, unable to move or think. There was for him only the thudding of his heart, the sour brassy taste in his mouth, the agony of failure.

The new pair approached the first two suspiciously, their blunt black noses smelling out the situation. The females sniffed each other and the dogs came shoulder to shoulder, stiff-legged and growling. Then, as though by reluctant consent, each couple hunkered down on opposite sides of the shrine. Nanka Tal beat his fist into his palm. An hour ago there had been one wolf; now there were four. By sundown there might be a pack of fifteen or twenty, lured by his scent.

THE running had reopened his wound and the blood was a sticky trickle inside his boot. He stretched out his leg and rubbed snow over the gash. He had no more tricks, no more food. He had used it all and his bait was gone. The only bait was Nanka Tal, once the hunter of Rongbar village, husband of Rura, father of Ladar, who now had nothing to share but his hunger.

A speck high in the sky caught his eye and he watched it dully, then with frowning concentration. It seemed to be motionless, suspended in space, but he knew it was the vulture, and a hope that had never quite died stirred in his heart. An animal hunted by smell but a bird hunted by sight, and this one's vision was as keen as any hawk's.

Collier's for December 1, 1951

and tried to slash the rope with its teeth, but Nanka Tal snapped up its head, maintaining tension so the rope could not slip forward over its ears. The big white beast flung itself sideways, gasping and choking against the pressure of its own weight. Nanka Tal gave another upward yank, and the wolf let out a wheezing cough and jumped again, with diminishing force.

The yellow eyes glazed over. The wolf dug in its feet and tugged, feebly now. Suddenly the noose pulled loose and Nanka Tal was holding a slack rope, but it had served its purpose for a few crucial seconds. The wolf gave one convulsive jerk and rolled over in the snow, not dead but strangled into temporary helplessness.

Nanka Tal relaxed his grip on the rope and stared down at the other three wolves in a shocked and wondering daze. If he had learned anything about these killers, it was to respect their near-human cunning. But they were less than human in their lusts; they would not share or help one another. That was the weakness and the curse of their kind.

The gray dog bristled and sniffed at the still twitching white, then jumped with a savage growl and ripped at its throat. Crimson spurted across the snow, and the gray female leaped in with flashing teeth. The white she-wolf hesitated, and then she too hurled herself into the snarling, snap-

ping fight to gorge on the flesh of her mate.

Nanka Tal shook his head, lost in a brief and, for him, rare moment of reflection. A man could learn much about himself from the study of animals—learn and profit. He climbed down the opposite side of the rocks and ran, limping, toward the hut.

He reached the door and got his rifle from the ledge without interference. When he stepped back to the doorway and brought up the gun, the three wolves were still at the cairn, oblivious of him and everything but the carcass they were tearing apart in great red chunks. Nanka Tal, out of some sense of propriety, dropped the white she-wolf first, then the gray pair, with a total expenditure of five shots. Then he walked on to have a look at them.

He prodded one of the great muscular bodies with his toe, and drew air deep into his lungs. Here was meat. Not sheep, true, but meat nevertheless, meat enough to feed his people until he found sheep. The Reds would return in the spring, perhaps, but so would the game. A patient man could always find ways to survive, a man with a woman like Rura.

In a little while, as soon as he had eaten, Nanka Tal, the hunter of Rongbar village, would start down to the valley with food, but first he had a duty to perform. Climbing to the summit, he placed the largest rock he could find on top of the shrine. **THE END**

## 48 States of Mind

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

but Mr. Cluney says too many things are being blamed on the flood. "I happen to know," writes Mr. Cluney, "that a couple of big politicians in the junk business have been around here lately."

★ ★ ★

Some time ago, the government bought a whole city in Nebraska. The name of the place—Republican City. This was not done, as you may suspect, by a Democratic administration eager to wipe out reminders that there is another political party, but rather to use the townsite as a part of the new Pick-Sloan dam area on the Republican River. The government agreed, generously enough, not to wipe out the populace of Republican City, too, even though it is overwhelmingly Republican. Instead, it told Republican City to move four miles into the hills out of the water's way, and gave its rulers \$448,000 to do it with. And now the government refuses to let new Republican City build a school because, it says, that would call for 25 tons of scarce steel. Our partisan informant, Mrs. Jennie G. Laudenschlager, refuses to believe that this is due to a steel shortage. "They're afraid good schools are apt to turn out good Republicans," says she.

★ ★ ★

While we were briefly on the West Coast, we were invited to say something into a San Francisco radio microphone. We asked our host, Mr. Jim Braughan, what we'd better say. "Say anything you want," replied Mr. Braughan. "It will sell a lot of radios. Half the people listening will want to sell theirs immediately afterward."

★ ★ ★

The Honorable Sam Lumpkin has decided to write **THAT BOOK**. He's at it now. The clack-clack of Mr. Lumpkin's typewriter can be heard by apprehensive politicians in Mississippi—from Oxford in the north, where another writing guy, Faulkner by name, works, to Biloxi on the Gulf. Mr. Lumpkin is Mississippi's lieutenant governor. It's high time, thinks he, that the world knew what was going on in "secret conferences and hotel-room powwows" and he's the boy to tell us. The recent federal job sales scandals in Ole Miss will be as mild as the Natchez flower bazaar compared with what Mr. Lumpkin proposes to set down. Local politicians are shrugging their shoulders—a bit stiffly. Wan-

smiles of professed unconcern may be seen on their faces. Mr. Lumpkin's friends assure us that **THAT BOOK** is going to be published and that it will not, like the one threatened by the late Senator Theodore (the Man) Bilbo, die on the typewriter. We remember asking the senator about his book. "I gave the idea up for the good of humanity," said he.

★ ★ ★

One of Louisville's best cops is Allen Kennedy. He's a detective. From 4:30 every afternoon until 12:30 A.M., he tracks down malefactors. Does it pretty successfully too, his boss, Major James Malone, says. But by day Detective Kennedy studies for the ministry at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In a couple of years Detective Kennedy will enter the pulpit. "Trouble with many ministers," he told us, "is that they've seen only one side of life. Just now I'm seeing it at its worst. Maybe I'll be able to do something about making the worst a little better."

★ ★ ★

Sam Ragan, of Raleigh, North Carolina, reports that a speaker at a parent-teacher meeting in his city pointed out that there are two types of speeches: the Mother Hubbard type, that covers all but touches nothing; and the Bikini bathing suit type—brief, but covering the high spots.

★ ★ ★

Progress has hit the jailhouse in Houston, Texas, a heavy censorial blow. They're about to set up TV cameras and microphones in the cell blocks—as an aid for the guards. In 10 offices and squad rooms, screens will be erected. Hereafter, every word and every action of the prisoners will be heard and seen 24 hours a day by all who care to look and listen. We just assume the show won't be sponsored.

★ ★ ★

In Michigan an old man, who for 20 years had been living on back-door handouts and free grub from charitable organizations, decided that sort of thing had gone far enough. He dropped dead. The police searched him. Found more than \$12,000 in his pockets. But we can't share in the ensuing excitement. The old boy probably was merely saving his money until he'd be able to eat a meal in a good restaurant.

# Tough BUT OH SO GENTLE

TOUGH on oil-pumping  
GENTLE on cylinder walls

You'll be money ahead if you replace worn-out piston rings at the very first sign of wear. Worn-out rings cause oil-pumping . . . loss of power . . . destructive engine wear.

It will pay you to replace those rings with Hastings Piston Rings. They're engineered for *replacement* service. They *stop* oil-pumping, *check* cylinder wear, *restore* engine performance. They're chrome-faced, for heavy-duty service.

It's the best money you can spend on your car.

HASTINGS MANUFACTURING CO., Hastings, Mich.  
Hastings Ltd., Toronto  
Piston Rings, Spark Plugs, Oil Filters, Casite, Drout



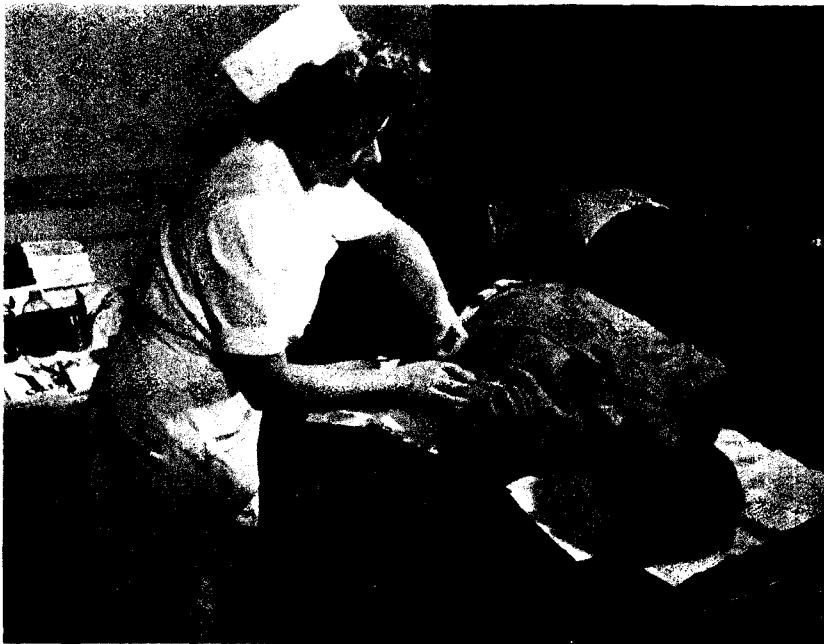
# HASTINGS

STEEL-VENT  
PISTON RINGS





CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6



Red Cross Nurse Mary Wolfe takes blood from Marine Sergeants Al Williams, of Buffalo, and Merle Evans, of Stratford, Conn.

## Blood Brothers

Some Marines, who know how much it is needed, donate blood for Korea. Can't you do as much?

A FEW weeks ago a dozen or so United States Marines—officers and enlisted men in dress blues—went to a Red Cross center in New York City, rolled up their sleeves and gave up about a pint of blood each for the men still fighting in Korea. They kidded one another, talked about being blood brothers of Marines they had never seen, tried to date the nurses on duty and made good-natured cracks about the "postoperative refreshments" the Red Cross ladies served up. But as each man took his turn on the couch and watched the blood dripping out of his vein into the sterilized bottle by his side, the horseplay went out of him. One of them later said it was "a little like going to church."

What went on in the minds of those Marines while they lay on the Red Cross couches? Most of them thought about the action they themselves had seen on Guadalcanal, Tarawa and Saipan, on Iwo and Peleliu Island. As they lay there, their thoughts drifted to all their brothers in arms in Korea. They thought about Seoul and Kimpo Airfield and Hwanchon and Pyongyang. And how it must have been in the fights for the Iron Triangle, Kumsong and Heartbreak Ridge.

A sergeant who had just got back from

Korea reported that he could think of nothing but the day his outfit crossed the 38th parallel. The sun was shining that day, and he had a vision of being home again, when suddenly he saw his buddy crumple and fall not six yards away from him. The sergeant remembered the way his friend clutched at his wounds, trying to keep the blood in. The medics showed up in time, and he lived. There was enough blood that day in those sterilized bottles to help. But suppose there hadn't been? Suppose he had to wait in line for the stuff? Suppose when they carried him into the aid station the nurses turned away, and the doctors had to tell him: "Sorry, pal, no blood's arrived in over a week"? He wouldn't have complained about the service. He would have been dead.

The Marine sergeant in dress blues felt a slight tug in the crook of his arm. The Red Cross nurse took the bottle away, and the memory faded.

Maybe you've never seen anybody suffering from pain and shock, desperately needing blood and plasma. But you know what life and laughter are—don't deny them to the young men in Korea. A half hour of your time can mean a lifetime to them. Give—for them—today.

THE END



RICHARD BEATTIE

These ex-combat men have seen lives saved with blood we give

Evidently America has come of age. We have measured up to the many demands of history in the making. We have grown up intellectually, and we have matured emotionally. When a group of American writers shows such historical sense and reveals such a depth and scope of constructive imagination, there is no doubt in my mind that we are equal and answerable to the thousand calls of duty expected of our leadership...

I enjoyed reading every word of this issue, because it seems to me that this is the right way to approach the solution of the problem you have tackled. You have convinced me that the management of Collier's understands the nature of God and the purposes of man.

RALPH R. RICE, Oakland, Calif.

... Congratulations on your terrific October 27th issue!

This thing ought to be translated and distributed through every land of the free world and balloon-barraged behind the Iron Curtain. It's too good to keep to ourselves! I'm sending my copy to England.

EDWARD S. HINCKLEY, Owensboro, Ky.

I think you are to be congratulated on the idea in the first place, and on the excellence of execution in the second.

MILES H. WOLFF, Greensboro, N. C.

... I am far from rich, but I would gladly kick in a few dollars to see the first Russian edition of *Koliers* printed now, namely a Russian edition of your October 27th issue. A Russian would remember it for a decade, and wonder about it in odd moments. I think few who could read a copy would remain exactly the same, for who can remain the same when they have seen a glimpse of hope? And no ordinary Russian would be wholeheartedly inclined to fight a foe who seemed more sympathetic than his "friends" to him and his people.

There ought to be some way of smuggling a million copies into Russia. If 10 per cent of them slipped past the MVD agents, the effect would be fantastic.

Another point: if war ever did start, America ought to drop 20,000,000 copies by parachute. Distributed in that way, your issue might easily become the greatest single bit of external propaganda ever to affect the course of a nation.

DONALD KINGSBURY, Montreal, Can.

... Your current issue devoted to Preview of the War We Do Not Want strikes me as having a strong note of hope in that it attempts to show what might be done in the rehabilitation of a defeated Soviet Russia. This is especially well brought out in the articles by Koestler, Chase, Kasenkina and Senator Smith.

However, I wish you had included suggestions for the reconstruction and development, agriculturally, of what could be the greatest farming country in the world. Surely we would need to help get maximum food and fiber production under way to feed and clothe the huge population of an occupied U.S.S.R. Surely our agricultural scientists would want to look into Russian progress with *Kok-sagy*: (the so-called rubber dandelion) and their attempts at developing a "perennial" wheat through crosses with lime grass and other weeds. And, above all, they would want to free Russian agronomy from the pernicious doctrines of Lysenko and his anti-Mendelian theories.

JULIAN BENTLEY, WBBM, Chicago, Ill.

... It is my opinion that this issue furnishes an outstanding contribution to our country in this trying time. May I compliment you and your associates on bringing to the attention of the American people the seriousness of the situation which we now face.

I feel sure that the Civil Defense Organi-

zation for Canton, as well as similar ones, will receive a tremendous boost as a result of your excellent presentation.

HAROLD A. MCQUISTON, Canton, Ohio

... Congratulations to you for your October 27th issue, an epic of masterful coverage on what is no doubt the most important event of the twentieth century—whether or not the world shall remain half slave and half free, or go one way or the other, just as our Civil War was perhaps the most important event of the nineteenth century.

FRED E. HECKEL, Detroit Lakes, Minn.

... I'll do my best to brief this up, but I think your October 27th issue stinks. It offers nothing in the way of public service.

GEORGE B. RUSSELL, New York, N.Y.

... The October 27th Collier's is truly magnificent! Your combined effort of 10 months has exposed still further the God-fearing, humble greatness of the American heart.

PAUL GARTENSLEBEN, Philadelphia, Pa.

... Only one complaint with your magnificent issue—you didn't give us enough of Howard Brodie's Moscow sketches.

HARRIS V. ARNOLDE, New York, N.Y.

Here's another Brodie to add to the Moscow Sketchbook.



Near St. Basil's was a youngster blowing bubble gum—"My mama and my babushka think I'm crazy, but I think it's fun."

... You have certainly in your own way and through a wonderful foresight and knowledge given to the readers of Collier's a very definite picture of the error that needs to be seen and overcome—so that man can go forward, free as he was intended.

MRS. ANITA ANDREWS, Seneca Falls, N. Y.

... I read with keen interest your October 27th issue—an excellent issue in every possible way. Congratulations on a fine piece of work. May I express an opinion concerning the statement made by R. E. Sherwood: "The most important neutrals at the outset were Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland, Egypt, India, Pakistan and Spain"? Mr. Sherwood, what are your reasons for stating that Ireland—or, more correctly—the Irish Republic—would remain neutral in a war against Communist tyranny?

G. C. BYRNE, Toronto, Can.

... I sincerely hope your endeavors may bring about the proper solution of avoiding war.

R. E. GODSHALL, Reading, Pa.

Collier's for December 1, 1951