



ILLUSTRATED BY LOUIS S. GLANZMAN

Mr. Haskins' Escape

By JACK WEEKS

INEXORABLY, inevitably, we are moving into an area of total darkness. Whatever horrors we may visit upon the enemy will almost certainly be repaid in kind. New York as well as Moscow, London as well as Shanghai can safely be said—unless some unexpected wisdom touches the world's rulers—to be doomed.”

Mr. Haskins' favorite columnist seemed this morning to have reached the bottom. Mr. Haskins had followed him faithfully for a good many years but he knew a dead end when he saw one and, though he was fifty-five, he still had a little flexibility. “This is where I get off,” he said aloud.

He hadn't meant the remark literally but he acted on it just the same. He threw his morning newspaper to the floor of the subway train and got off at the next stop and started walking back uptown. In a few blocks he came to a little park and sat down on a bench. The park reminded him of London, which he had got to know when the firm sent him over on business in 1940. He had stayed through the blitz to make a survey of industrial defense methods, so he understood something of the horrors referred to in the press. He noticed that he was breathing hard and wondered if he wasn't getting just a little panicky. He hoped not. He hoped the decision he was reaching came from pure logic. Mr. Haskins took out a neat notebook and small gold pencil and began calculating.

In a few minutes he concluded that the decision was sound. There was no earthly reason why he couldn't retire now and get out of this city whose doom was foretold so surely by so many reliable prophets. He and his wife would go away from here, to some place in the Catskills, he thought, where the fishing would be good. The children

could come along, if they wanted, though they were grown now and preferred to take care of themselves. Friends would be welcome, too. But if no one else cared to join the movement, Mr. and Mrs. Haskins, at least, were going.

He spent the rest of the day settling his affairs and that evening he took his wife to dinner at her favorite restaurant. He waited until the brandy before telling her his plan. She sat perfectly still while he talked, not interrupting, and when he finished she covered her face with her napkin. He realized that she was crying.

“What is the matter with you?” he said.

He was afraid that she disapproved of his program and for a moment he was close to rage.

“I'm so relieved,” she said. “I've been so worried.” . . .

A month later they were in their new home. It was a fine little house, chalet style, tucked neatly at the foot of an old, lonely mountain. A wild stream tumbled past the front door. Mr. Haskins thought of it as a moat. The nearest neighbor was half a mile away.

They were entirely happy. They lived exactly as they pleased, Mrs. Haskins planning her rock garden and experimenting radically in the kitchen; Mr. Haskins tying trout flies and drawing neat maps of the streams he intended to fish. They kept the radio turned off. In the evenings they read a little, but nothing serious. Their attitude was symbolized one night when Mr. Haskins came upon the John Donne passage: “No man is an ilande . . . Any man's death diminishes me because I am involved in Mankind . . .”

“Not any more,” he said, and tore the page from the book and threw it into the fire.

“Don't you think that's going a little far, dear?” his wife said.

“I do not,” Mr. Haskins said.

Mrs. Haskins finished sewing some pants that her husband had snagged during a woodland stroll that day, and laid them aside. “There's a town meeting tomorrow night,” she said.

“I know it,” Mr. Haskins said, “and I intend to go to it. But not to participate. Simply out of common courtesy.”

MR. HASKINS waited until the last possible moment before arriving at the town hall the next evening, and took a seat by himself near the end of a back row.

He listened without interest while the secretary read the minutes of the previous assembly and the chairman made the routine announcements. He was not much more interested when the principal speaker was introduced except that he felt some curiosity about why the young man had only one arm. Mr. Haskins learned later that the other arm had been removed in a field hospital below Cassino. The young man did not bother to explain this. The point he wanted to make was that just now he was officially concerned with civilian defense.

“What's he doing up here?” Mr. Haskins asked himself.

The speaker lost no time in explaining that.

“I've been instructed,” he said, “to visit your community and others in this general area to seek your co-operation in the defense of New York. I'm sure you all realize that, though you are not residents of the city itself, you are connected with it very intimately.”

He paused. Mr. Haskins glared at him and thought: In the name of God, how?

The speaker smiled. “After all, you live practically on the banks of one of those great reservoirs which provide what might be called the lifeblood of the largest and most important city in our country.”

Mr. Haskins shut his eyes. The room faded from his mind. The mountain scenery that had been his background for what now seemed like a very long time melted away. He saw again the towers of Manhattan and the millions who lived in the Five Boroughs.

“In that sense,” said the man with one arm, “this community is an integral part of Greater New York. The Ashokan Reservoir is a target of primary importance.”

The speaker looked around the audience. “Now the first thing we have to do,” he said pleasantly, “is organize a local committee to keep in touch with the defense people in the city and lay plans, and carry them out. I hope that some of you here have had some experience in civilian defense. Is there anybody present who has seen defense operations under real emergency conditions?”

No one responded.

Mr. Haskins remembered the blitz, when the walls were coming down and firemen were dying of exhaustion and children were crying under the rubble.

“Don't be bashful,” the speaker said. “The slightest kind of experience would do for a start. Somebody has to be chairman, you know.”

Mr. Haskins thought of the mornings he was going to spend on trout streams this spring and the pleasant evenings sitting quietly and irresponsibly beside the rock garden. He looked around at the townspeople, praying that one would volunteer. He saw them leaning forward in their seats, anxious, ill-prepared by their quiet, safe lives. Thus, he thought, the people of London must have looked when the first warnings came. He knew from experience what those same people could do when one among them took on the obligation of leadership, and he recalled, freshly and warmly, the respect and affection he had felt for them.

“Oh, come on,” the speaker said. “Hasn't anybody here ever helped put out a fire, for instance?”

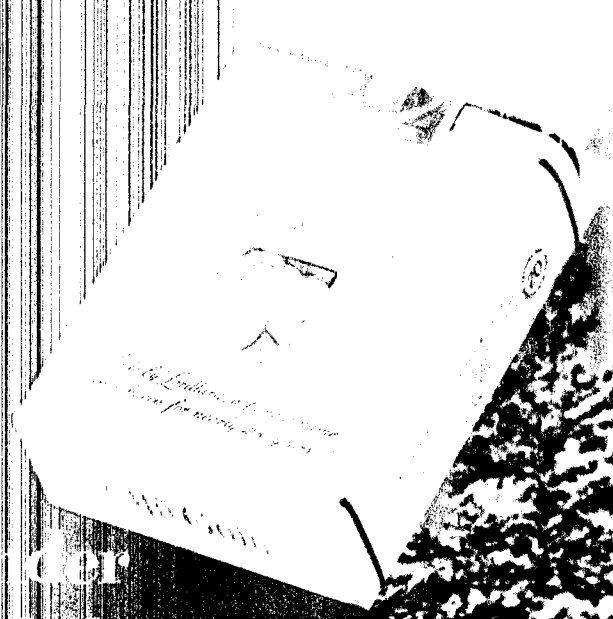
Mr. Haskins sighed and stood up. “I have.”

“Good,” the speaker said. “Could you tell me just a little bit about it? So I can make a report.”

“Well, it was in London,” Mr. Haskins said. “In 1940.”

Somebody with a memory for historic dates began clapping and the rest took it up. Mr. Haskins found himself walking toward the platform, with sinking heart, to accept the chairmanship of the local defense committee.

THE END



We smoke under
written health claims...

...for **TREATMENT** of a **TREATMENT**

I smoke **ONE GOAL**



Queen Elizabeth of Garfinckel's

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21



Never neglect a knee scratch

The tiniest injury can become infected. Never take a chance. Always use BAND-AID, the only adhesive bandage that gives you Johnson & Johnson quality.

Always look for the name
on the box



*BAND-AID means MADE BY
Johnson & Johnson

grandfather was proprietor of the general store at Accident, Maryland. She remembers being held up to get a full view of the splendid bustle worn by a niece of President Buchanan.

Bustles were going out by 1905, but skirts still literally swept the floor. Two weeks after he opened his Washington store, Julius Garfinckel hired Elizabeth Fairall as salesgirl. She waited on Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt and her daughter Ethel (later Mrs. Richard Derby) when they came over from the White House three blocks away. There followed Mrs. William Howard Taft (a lady with quiet but very definite tastes); the first and second Mrs. Woodrow Wilson and the Wilson daughters. Indeed, all the White House families—except, for some reason, the Hardings—have been Garfinckel customers.

Miss Fairall resents the tales about Calvin Coolidge being a pinchpenny. "So far as his wife's clothes went, he was the most open-handed President I've known about," she says. "I sold Mrs. Coolidge practically everything she wore in the White House, and in the President's mind nothing was too good for her." He used to window-shop on early-morning walks with the Secret Service men. Later Miss Fairall would receive a call from Mrs. Coolidge asking that a certain dress be sent over, as the President wanted to see it on her.

While Mrs. Coolidge was trying on a dress one day in the White House, the President appeared in a doorway behind her and held up a finger to the Garfinckel fitter for secrecy. Then he walked over quietly behind his wife, and spoke suddenly to her. She turned, and in dismay saw he was standing on the train of her new ball gown. Then she realized he had carefully removed his shoes.

In 1930, during the Hoover administration, Garfinckel's moved to its present nine-story building near the Treasury. Mrs. Hoover, who needed a new outfit, asked if she might be the first customer, and on the Saturday before the public opening Miss Fairall, a salesgirl and a fitter waited on her in the new building. On the following Monday each received a bouquet of red roses from the White House.

F.D.R.'s Fur-Lined Overcoat

She also recalls that the Garfinckel starter recognized Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt one day and offered her a special elevator, but the first lady waved it away and rode with the other customers. The young Roosevelts regularly shopped at the store. On Franklin D. Roosevelt's last Inauguration Day, although the store was closed, Garfinckel executives had to open the storage vaults to get out his fur-lined overcoat.

Margaret Truman went along recently while her mother was buying a Garfinckel hat. "Oh, don't pay any attention to me," she told the salespeople. "I'll just look around." And she did so, as naturally as if she had been in Independence, Missouri.

Garfinckel's third, or glamor, floor is Elizabeth Fairall's particular concern. In Paris she may pay anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000 for original designs, but these are not sold to American customers, as the 90 per cent duty and the profit markup would make the price exorbitant. She brings them over in bond, displays them, and lends them to American manufacturers for copying and adaptation. The American version may be labeled "Original by Fath. Copy by Nanty."

Dresses, suits and furs created by New York designers or by the New York offices of French designers are, of course, bought for resale. By custom, the markup is uniform among the leading specialty houses throughout the country. The scale is a trade secret, but it's less than 50 per cent of the retail price.

Both these and the Paris copies may retail at anywhere from \$89 to \$1,000, depending on the type of garment, the material and other factors.

Standing in her office not long ago, Miss Fairall turned the pages of a book showing the awkwardly corseted figures of 1905. "I hate to think that I sold many of these atrocities," she said. "They're simply incredible."

"Women's clothes become basically more utilitarian season after season," she continued. "This is proved by the demand for tailored suits, short cocktail dresses and 'separates.' Clothes must still be smart and have a great deal of style and beauty, but fundamentally they must be wearable and useful. Slim lines will continue, and skirts must be a becoming length. Women generally didn't like the long skirts of the New Look."

"In choosing a dress, suit or hat," she advises, "remember the important thing is what it will do for you. Judge it as part of you, not as it looks in a window or on a rack."

"If a model displays it, remember that she was probably chosen because she had a perfect figure, and almost anything looks well on a model. It takes a type, for instance, to wear an Adrian suit."

"Vertical stripes don't necessarily make you look thin, nor do horizontal stripes necessarily make you look plumper, as people used to think. It depends entirely on the way the designer handles the material."

"Texture and color are often more important than pattern. Avoid shiny materials if you're afraid you're getting stout. Satin makes a woman look larger than crepe. Generally a plump woman should avoid bright colors unless she's tall. Most women can wear any color they like by changing their make-up."

"Bring your husband along if he has veto power over your purchases. Besides, most men are good judges of fabrics."

"Deal with a reliable store that screens the merchandise and stands behind what it sells. If you're in a strange town and don't know a reliable store, ask for brand names you know. If there is no other way to judge goods, price is not a bad criterion. By and large, you get pretty much what you pay for, in style, wear and store service."

"And if you order by mail, send not only your shoe and dress sizes, but your weight

and the color of your hair. Even if the store has facts about you on file, you keep changing."

Miss Fairall has deep sympathy for the bewildered male, and has always taught her salespeople not to oversell him. "When a garment is shown by a model," she warns men, "don't look at the girl. Think of the article on the recipient. You aren't taking the model home."

"Don't get flustered and pay more than you should. If it's for your wife, chances are she'll bring it back for something more sensible."

"Find out her size. The principal cause of exchanges is a man's tendency to look at the salesgirl, no matter what her height and weight are, and say, 'She's about your size.'"

"And don't feel that you must always buy her perfume. Most women are just as fussy about the scent they wear as they are about their clothes. If you know her well, you know her interests and hobbies. Try something that will fit one of these. If you don't know her well, costume jewelry or a handbag is usually welcome."

Women Are Taller and Thinner

Women are much easier to sell than ever before, Miss Fairall says, because they're clothes-conscious. Even if they're far from city shops they read the magazines. Also, they're getting taller and thinner. Fourteen and 16—misses' sizes—are the most popular dress sizes today; 30 years ago the big demand was for more ample women's sizes.

The reason for the change, Miss Fairall says, is that "the modern woman simply won't let herself get fat."

Skirts, in Miss Fairall's opinion, should be between 13 and 16 inches from the floor, the exact distance depending on the wearer's height and weight. "A woman with beautiful legs can, of course, wear them much higher than her short, fat sisters," she added.

Elizabeth Fairall's counsel for young people planning a career like her own is to stay out of retailing unless they have patience and like hard work. As for herself, she has served notice that she will ignore Garfinckel's current attempts to put her on a five-day week, and that she isn't going to retire.

THE END



"The 7th, 28th, 56th and the 88th Armored Divisions will break through here and liberate the oppressed masses toiling under the Imperialistic yoke. Then the 96th, 97th, 161st, 77th, 66th, 3d, 9th, 112th and 33d Divisions will follow to help keep the people in line"

COLLIER'S

JOHN RUGE

Collier's for February 10, 1951

City Under a Dagger

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

said. "Too expensive." At last he seemed to realize that I intended no more offerings, and he led me out of the building. As I walked down the sunny street, mingled relief and amusement overcame me and I shook with laughter.

After that, I strolled through the Chinese section—to the accompaniment of clattering wooden sandals—and then back toward the European part of town. Suddenly, as I rounded a corner, I came upon a magnificent Gothic cathedral, all coral and black. I pulled out my sketchbook and started to draw. Soon I was surrounded by a milling, gaping throng. I moved away, anchored myself firmly against a nearby wall, and tried again. I was almost mobbed. The people didn't seem malicious, just curious. I smiled. They chuckled back at me.

I slipped my pad into my pocket, entered a store across from the church, and asked permission to use a room upstairs for a while. I was welcomed into an apartment by a serene young Viet-Nameese lady. A picture of Christ hung from one wall; near the window were a table and chair, and a hard, mat-covered bed occupied one corner. I moved the table, sat down by the window and went to work, while my hostess and an older companion sat primly on the bed and knitted.

I stayed there for four hours. Twice I was offered tea, and once coffee. Otherwise I was left entirely alone. Deeply grateful, I tried to pay the gracious young lady; she refused to accept my money. I left with a warm feeling, and a new opinion of the people of Hanoi.

It was when I rejoined my fellow Westerners that I started to become really uneasy in Hanoi. Their conversation carried a foreboding of doom. A correspondent asked me if I owned a weapon, and added: "I don't feel safe around here." Another said he became nervous if he had to ride the native taxis through the shadowy streets at night. A businessman commented that he was sure there were hundreds of Viet-Minh regulars in town. All had advice to offer in the event that Viet-Minh forces attacked Hanoi.

At twilight I went to the post office—and almost snared myself on a single strand of barbed wire stretched across the sidewalk at the building's entrance. Two French soldiers carrying tommy guns and blankets entered with me to stand their night-long guard duty.

I went to sleep that night to the strains of a bugle—a mournful reminder that I was in a city which was under a dagger, waiting for a blow to fall.

THE END

48 States of Mind

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

is an icicle remover. Some little time ago, after looking over the roofs and eaves of Effingham, he put an ad in the newspapers saying that for \$1.50 an hour he'd be very glad to clear same of snow and icicles. He's doing a nice business, busy seven days a week. Biggest icicle so far was a six-footer. Says he's thinking of taking the summer off.

★ ★ ★

A fellow pretending to be a friend of ours has just been in to tell us that all this beefing about the inflated cost of living is nonsense. Said he'd just come from Pittsburg, New Hampshire, where he had rested overnight at a plush hotel. Had a beautiful room, dinner and breakfast. Total cost five dollars. At dinner he had a steak two inches thick—"big enough for four hungry men"—potatoes, tomatoes, celery, hot rolls, jam, pie and coffee. For breakfast, wheat cakes, cereal, bacon, eggs, toast and coffee. "Of course," he said, "there's always the danger that coming out of inflation into Pittsburg like that you might make a hog of yourself and get sick. Then you're out of luck. The nearest doctor is 27 miles away; he'll tax you \$16 or \$18 to come over to fix you up. But maybe it's worth it."

★ ★ ★

There's a barkeep in Salt Lake City who, you'll be amazed, has no objection to drinking. Nevertheless, he bought himself a sign and hung it over his bar: "It's all right with me if you drink like a fish—so long as you drink what a fish drinks."

★ ★ ★

In Washington we were planning to drop in on the Honorable Harold O. Lovre, Republican, of South Dakota. As we were about to enter his outer offices, a friend warned us that if we could possibly put off our call for a while it might be better all around. We took the advice because, even through the heavy oaken door, we could hear Mr. Lovre telephoning to the Housing and Home Finance Agency; and we congratulated ourselves that we were not the Housing and Home Finance Agency. Mr. Lovre had just learned that the agency had bought a large number of aluminum roofs for the nice new modern houses the government is erecting for Eskimos whom

they hope to lure out of their ice-domed igloos. At the moment Mr. Lovre was no doubt the most irate congressman in our capital. The gentlest word we heard from him was "asinine." We'll call on him later.

★ ★ ★

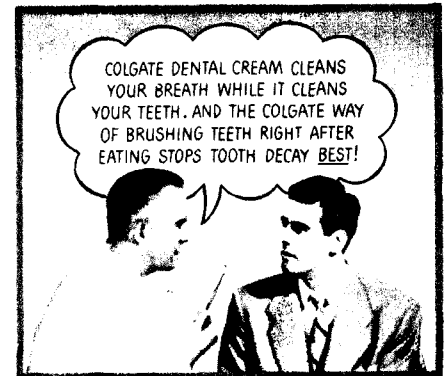
From Kansas to California they're now talking about three categories of farmers—suitcase, sidewalk and rural. A suitcase farmer lives at least 30 miles outside the county where his acres lie. Some several hundred miles. He's not that unpopular figure, the absentee landlord. At regular intervals he visits his farm, spending a couple of weeks. Therefore the suitcase. Sidewalk farmers are fellows who have moved into town, opening up a shop or small business, but not giving up the farm. And of course the rural farmer stays home and just farms. This valuable information comes of painstaking research by Dr. Walter Kollmorgen of the department of geography in the University of Kansas. Says the suitcase and sidewalk classifications are growing disconcertingly fast.

★ ★ ★

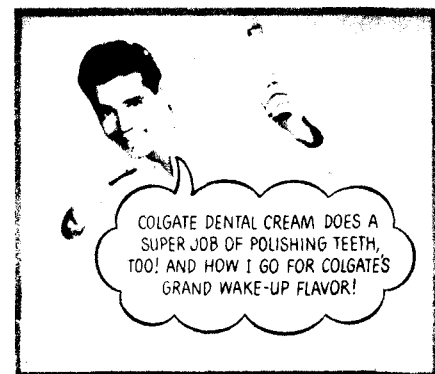
Excuse us, please, while we rush to the aid of the great state of Tennessee. In the capital, Nashville, there is a problem which we can solve in a souped-up trice. They have four portraits of Tennessee war heroes, winners of the Congressional Medal of Honor, for which they can't find wall space in the state Capitol. Our incomparable suggestion is that four portraits of former governors be taken down and those of the heroes substituted. Next step, take down the rest of the paintings of former governors. We'd send all those ex-governors, gilt frames and all, to the next of kin and let each follow the dictates of his conscience. Thus, not only will the interior of the Capitol be hugely improved but future governors will work in much more cheerful surroundings and be better governors for it.

★ ★ ★

Any doubt that you may have had about the seriousness of the world situation should be dispelled by the news that the Town Board of Riverton, Illinois, recently voted the town marshal the right to carry a gun. Bought it for him too.



LATER—Thanks to Colgate Dental Cream



READER'S DIGEST* Reported The Same Research Which Proves That Brushing Teeth Right After Eating with

COLGATE DENTAL CREAM STOPS TOOTH DECAY BEST

MOST THOROUGHLY PROVED AND ACCEPTED HOME METHOD OF ORAL HYGIENE KNOWN TODAY!

Reader's Digest recently reported the very same research which proves that the Colgate way of brushing teeth right after eating stops tooth decay best! The most thoroughly proved and accepted home method of oral hygiene known today!

Yes, and 2 years' research showed that the Colgate way stopped more decay for more people than ever before reported in dentifrice history! No other toothpaste or powder—ammoniated or not—offers such proof—the most conclusive proof ever reported for a dentifrice of any type!

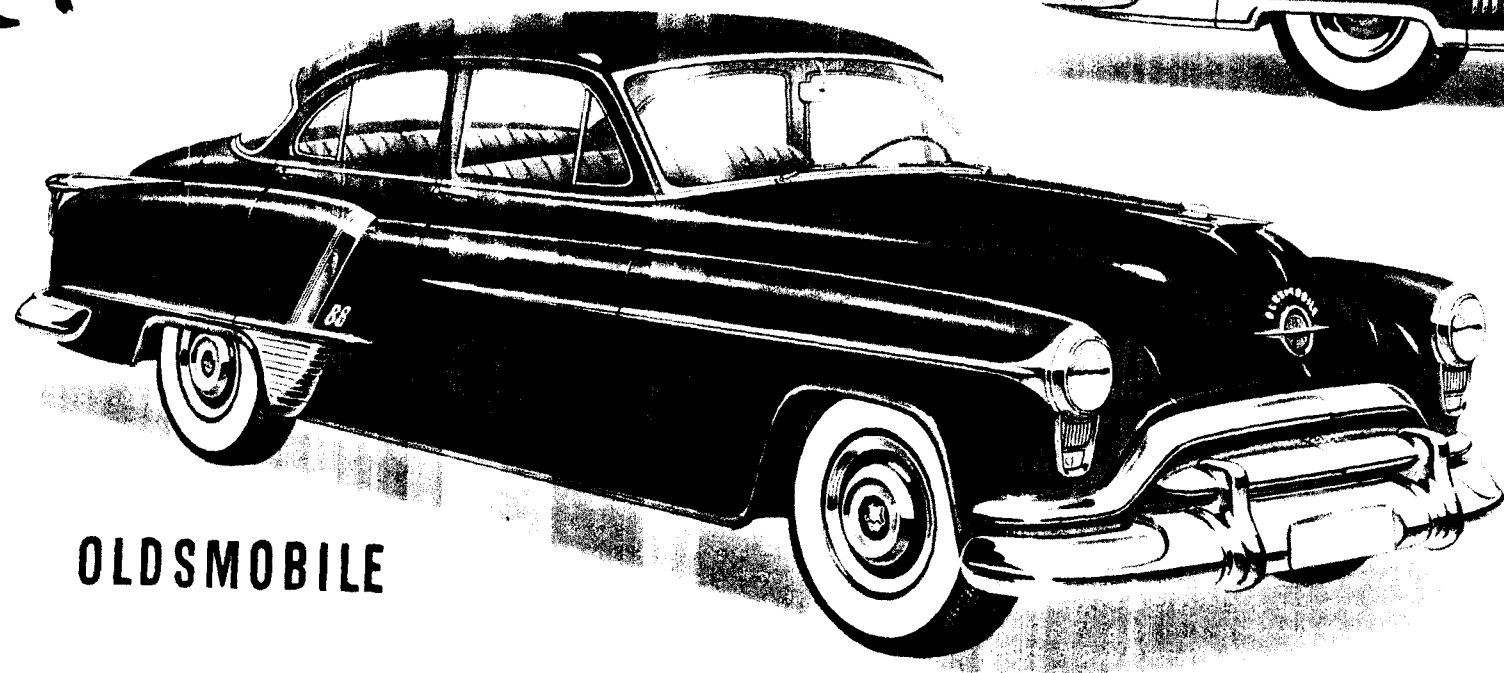
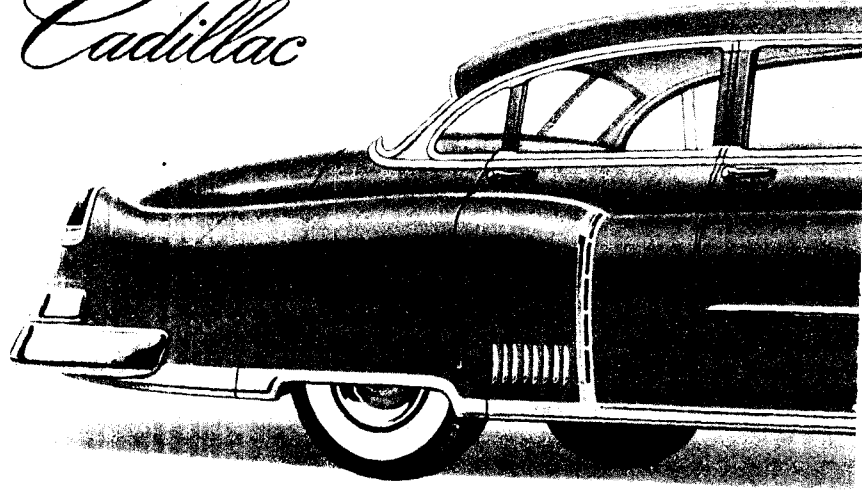
Use Colgate Dental Cream To Clean Your Breath While You Clean Your Teeth—And Help Stop Tooth Decay!



*YOU SHOULD KNOW! Colgate's, while not mentioned by name, was the one and only toothpaste used in the scientific research on tooth decay recently reported in Reader's Digest.



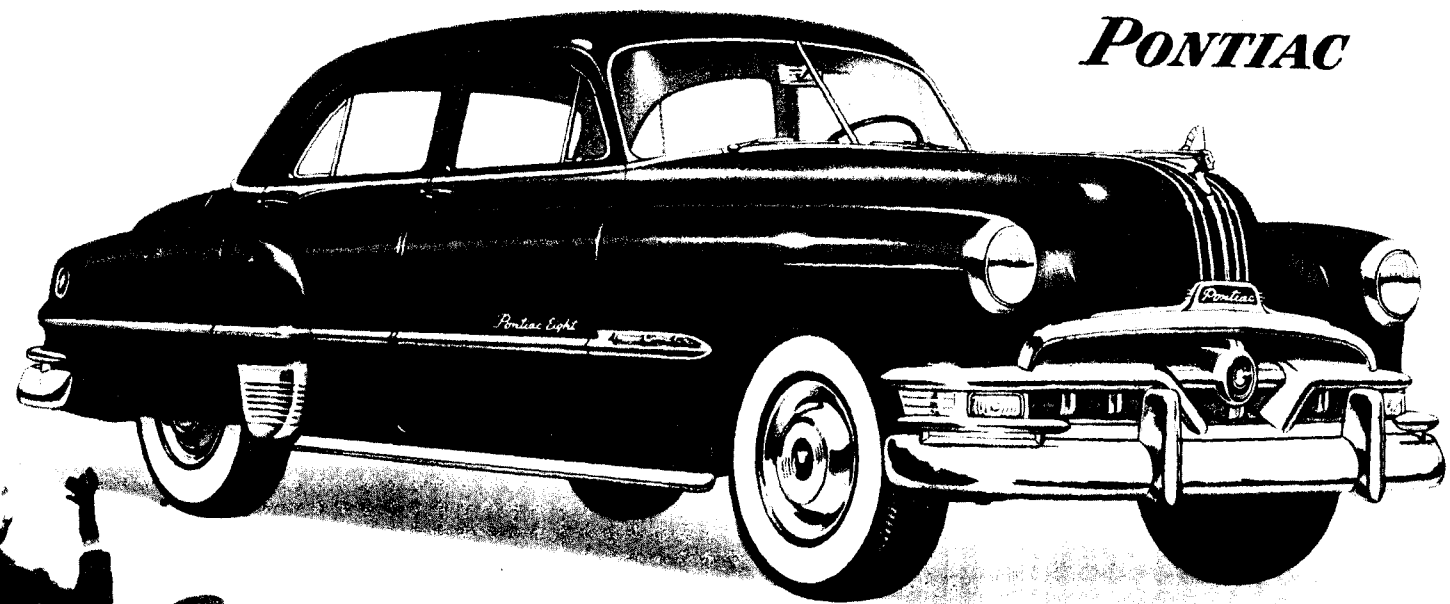
Cadillac



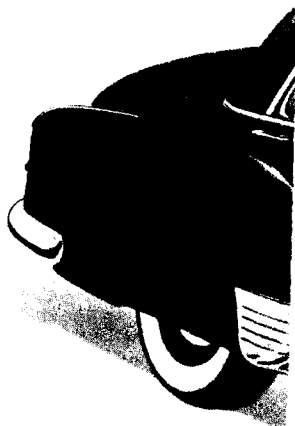
OLDSMOBILE



Everybody's looking at the
KEY VALUES FOR 1951



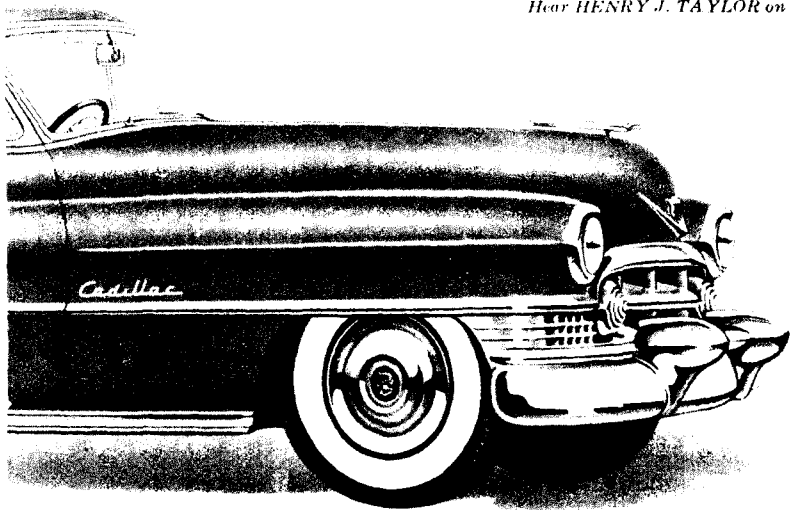
PONTIAC



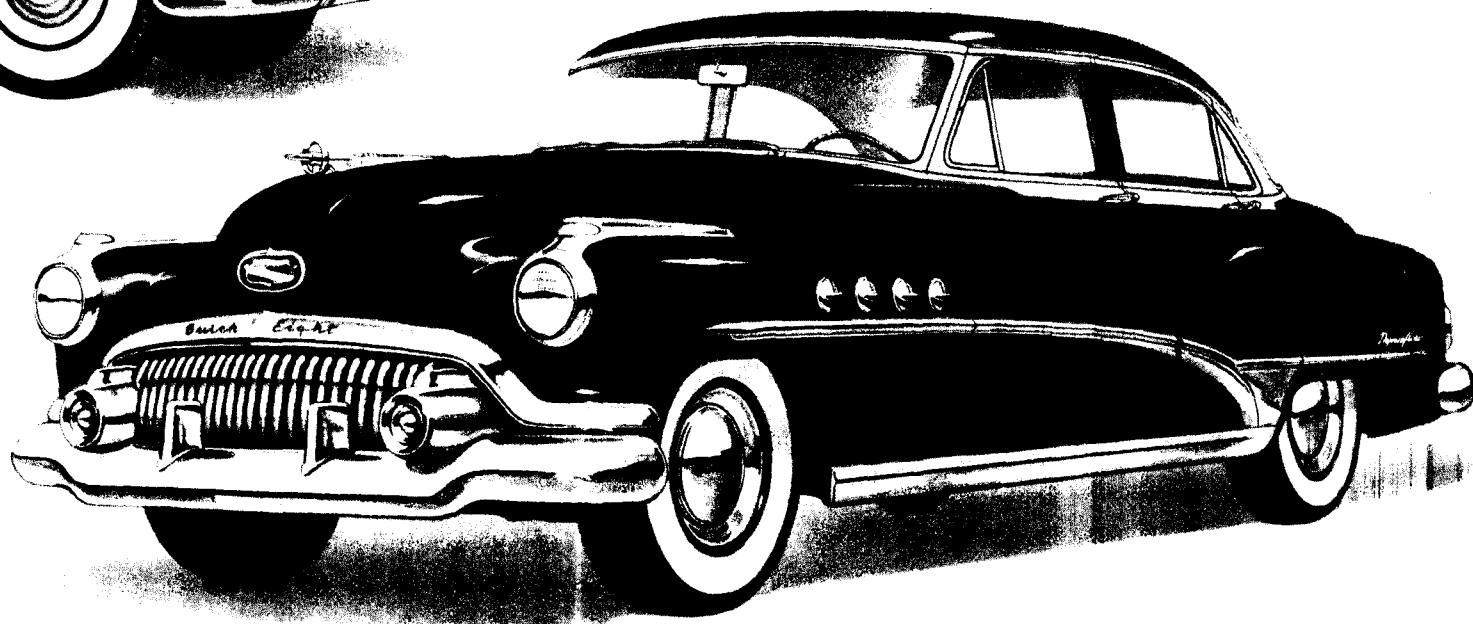
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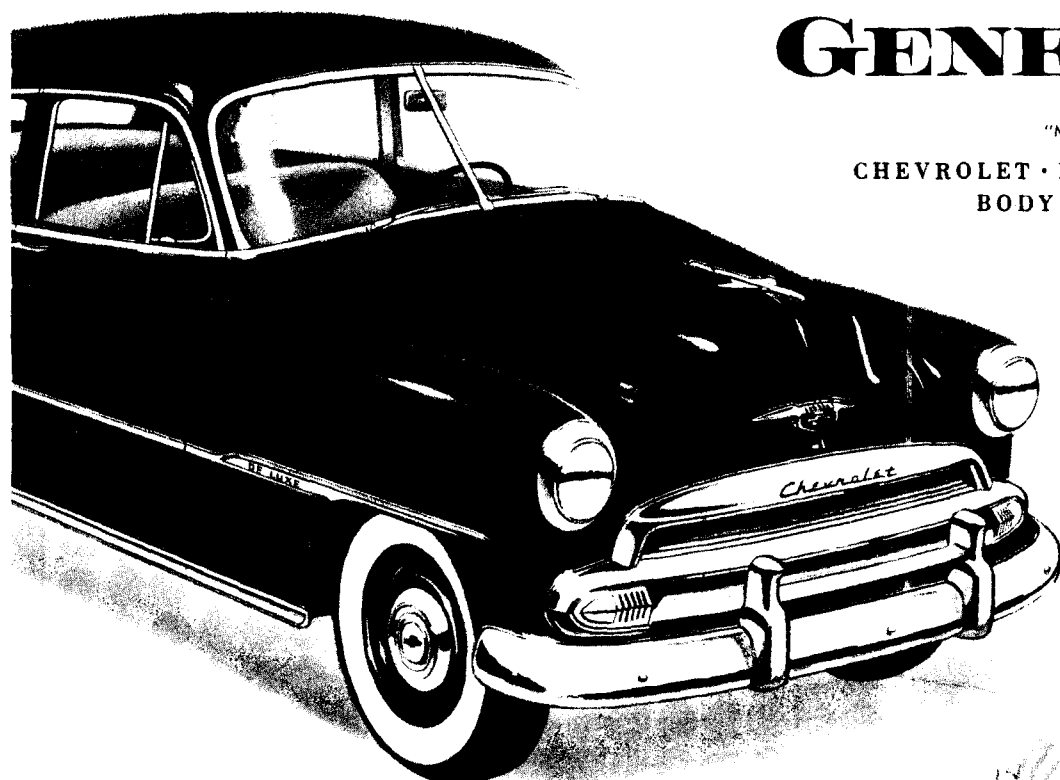
For each has benefited from the continuing program carried on, year after year, by GM's research, engineering and

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This exploration is concerned with a multitude of things—from window glass and finishes to metallurgy and the chemistry of fuels. The net result is the richer beauty, finer quality and superb performance that make the new GM cars the key values for 1951.

We believe they will supply the better transportation millions of Americans still need, and invite your critical inspection—at the showrooms of your local GM dealers.

Standard equipment, accessories and trim illustrated are subject to change without notice.



GENERAL MOTORS

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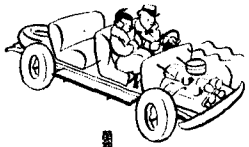
CHEVROLET • PONTIAC • OLDSMOBILE • BUICK • CADILLAC
BODY BY FISHER • GMC TRUCK & COACH

Your Key to Greater Value

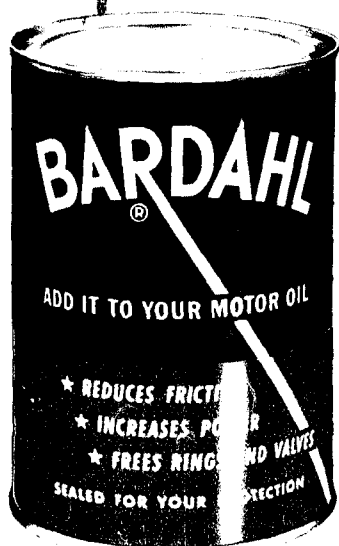
The Key to a GENERAL MOTORS car



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Letter to a Child

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

translated the whole child into your understanding.

The collie went immediately to Lyle and slipped its nose into her gloved hand. Eve went to Mark, and Mrs. Seville introduced us. The little girl, her eyes almost on a level with my own, looked at me with frank insolence. Then, without warning, she seemed to change her mind about me.

"You're nice," she said in an unexpected, gruff voice. "Millie said you were, but Millie is such a goon about people."

Mrs. Seville laughed delightedly. "You can see how all my children treat me, Chris," she said. "No wonder I have an inferiority complex."

Mark said fondly, "The trouble with you is that we didn't get hold of you young enough."

"Don't ever have any children, Chris," Millie said. "You can fool other people, but—"

"Can you?" Lyle said good-naturedly, and immediately there was a little area of silence around the words, imparting more meaning than her well-bred voice had given them. She and the dog had gone up the steps and were standing in the lighted rectangle of the door, and I suddenly realized that all this playful spoiling of Millie by her family was a form of spotlighting which annoyed the younger woman.

Over the cocktails, I studied Lyle. There seemed nothing she couldn't take in her stride. I could not bear to think of Mark being married to her.

"Watch it, Chris," Mark said suddenly to me from across the room. Nobody else seemed to notice that he had said anything.

But once more I knew that this man and I could open doors into each other's minds. Eve, sitting on a footstool beside my chair, suddenly got up.

"Wanna see my ants?" she asked.

"I'd love to see them," I said too loudly.

EVE'S bedroom told me all her ardent enthusiasms. There was a huge dirty-faced rag doll, a well-made airplane model, and a movie actor's glossy publicity photograph. Next to a shabby chintz rocking chair stood a glistening, incongruous pink satin chaise longue, Mark's latest Christmas gift.

"Imagine Mark giving me such a wonderful thing," she said worshipfully. "I can't imagine how he knew how I feel about it."

"He's probably fond of you," I said.

"You mean—if you love somebody, sort of, you can tell how they feel?" Her skinny little throat was pink at the overwhelming wonderfulness of talking about love. For after all, she was in love with a chaise longue, and a dirty-faced rag doll, and a square-jawed movie hero, and her brother.

"Lyle says it gives me a delusion of power, knowing I can shake up the jar and destroy their world," she said. "Lyle says it's morbid. Do you think it's morbid?"

"No, I don't think so."

"I say it's very normal of me," Eve went on. "And besides we couldn't live if we didn't have some delusion of power. And where would I get it in this house, if I didn't have ants or something?"

I didn't try to keep from laughing. "Eve, it isn't power that makes people happy. The whole thing is finding out in time what you enjoy, instead of taking somebody else's word for it."

She looked at me thoughtfully. "I believe that's exactly what Mark thinks. He says that's what gripes him most about Millie. She always wants to tell people what they enjoy. I ought to warn you—"

"Wonder if I'd look well with a pompadour?" I said quickly.

She forgot her warning and looked at me critically. "It's not your type," she said. "You're the absent-minded type. You'd know, to look at you, you were different."

"But I don't want to be different. I'd like to be like your sister-in-law."

She held her nose inelegantly. "Anybody can be like Lyle. Anybody who is sap enough to work at it."

There was a stir at her door, and then it was pushed open and the collie came in. But it was Mark's voice that said, "What's all the profundity going on in here?"

Eve grinned at him admiringly. "I simply love you," she said.

"You're nauseating," Mark said.

"That's the way he talks to me," Eve said. "He doesn't want me to guess he cares."

Mark wiped the back of his hand at her. But she reached out and caught his hand, and held it against her face with an indescribably young and pathetic gesture.

Her eyes suddenly were dark and tragic. "Oh, Mark, why does everybody in this house have to be unhappy?"

Mark's attitude softened to tenderness. He caught her to him roughly. "Nobody's unhappy, Eve," he said.

"Yes, we are. I can tell because we're all so darned full of merriment in this house. We act like juke boxes." Almost in shame because she was unexpectedly out of her depth, she muttered, "I hate this living business, Mark."

"Don't hate it, Eve," he said. "It's just being a kid that makes you feel you'll die of loneliness and stuff."

"Did you feel like that, Mark?"

"Yes, I did, Eve. But you hold on a couple more years. You'll see." . . .

Sunday was a blur to me. Now after five years, when I try to think back over it, it is only a pain which my mind refuses to feel.

Everything in that house looked so right—the people, casual and fortunate, laughing and lounging in their chairs about the table long after dinner; the gleam of old silver on sideboards; the garnet eye in the wine; the brushing murmur of the wood fire—and yet there was tenseness in this house. We were all too merry, as Eve had said.

All day I had a feeling that Lyle wanted to get me off somewhere and find out about me; all day I was afraid someone would leave me alone with her.

It never occurred to me that she might have some discomfort about me.

I think they are often the ones who need the help—the beautiful fortunate people whom nobody can quite forgive for being beautiful and well off and sure-looking.

Toward Mark, Lyle was extremely courteous. But I could not tell whether she loved him very much or not at all. I could not tell because my own love for him was so outrageous that I didn't see how anyone could possibly be in a room with him and not realize how wonderful he was.

What he felt about Lyle was a black abyss into which I dared not peer.

Everyone had assumed that I would be staying Sunday night, but suddenly when the afternoon tide of neighbors had gone out and the evening tide was beginning to drift in, I knew I could not stand any more of it.

I asked Millie if there wasn't a taxi that could take me to the station, and mumbled something about an appointment early tomorrow. Then Lyle's voice spoke behind me, cool and courteous. "I'll drive you in to town, Chris. I'm staying in town tonight anyway," she added, and that settled it.

WHILE I was back in the guest room putting things in my little bag, Millie came in and flung herself in one of the fire-place chairs, and hung her legs over the arm exactly as Eve would have.

"I found out just what I wanted to know," she said.

"Oh?"

"You're just as much of a child as I knew you were. But just as nice."

"I think I must be a disappointing guest," I said. "I really haven't any parlor tricks, Mrs. Seville."

"What I wanted to tell you," she said, "is this: If you ever want me for a friend, Christine Bruning—"

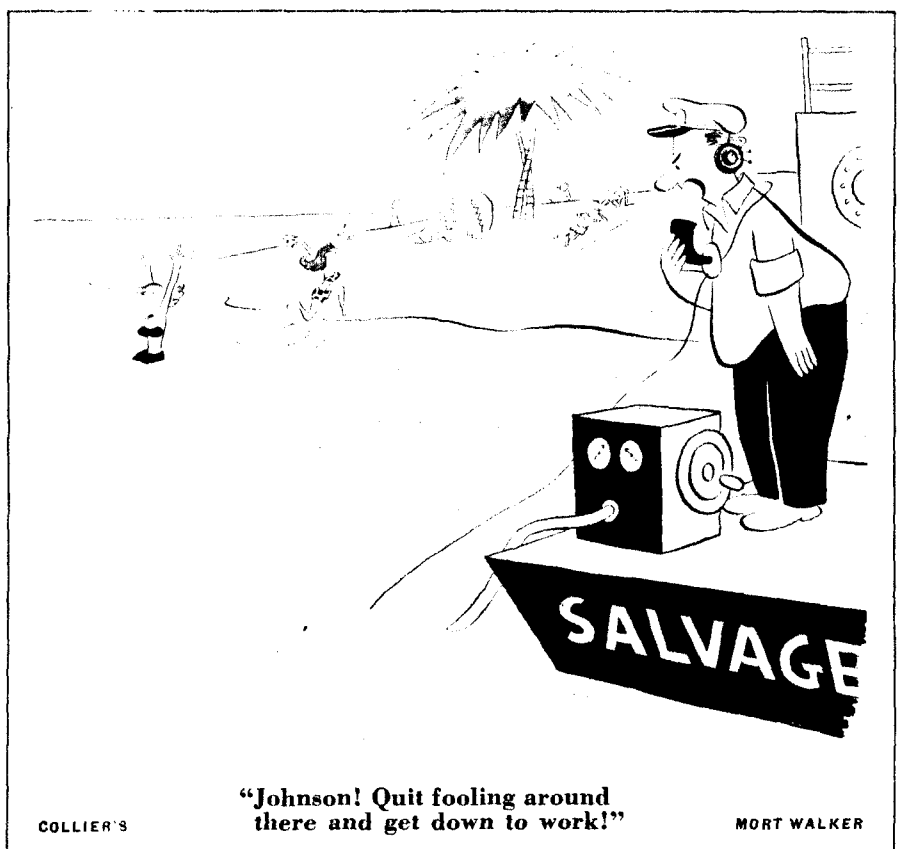
It was the first time I had seen her momentarily disconcerted about anything. "I mean, no matter how things go from here—"

"Go?" I said stupidly.

She got up and left the bomb hanging in the air. "Well, anyway, I got it said."

All the warnings, spoken and implied, which I had been given about Millicent Seville came back to me. I remembered the half-irritated, half-playful way Mark had talked to her coming up from the station, and Lyle saying something pointed about Millie and her managing. So now she was offering to take me within the circle of her dangerous solicitude.

Millie put her arm around me as we started down the stairs together. "I just



"Johnson! Quit fooling around there and get down to work!"

COLLIER'S

MORT WALKER

wish I'd found you four years ago. We'd all have led a different life, Chris."

Mark was standing at the bottom of the stairs. I looked up into his face, and over me like a huge wave surged all the contradictions between that merry boyish man who had watched the seals, and this tight-lipped person. "About Tuesday," he said. "Isn't that my next sitting, Chris?"

I knew while he was saying it that he would not have a sitting then. Nor any day. And I could see he knew it, too.

I tried to look as if I were considering my afternoon's plans. "Why, yes—yes, indeed."

"Okay, then."

We were both so hearty and explicit. But I felt as if I would never see him again. And he was looking down at me as if he felt it, too.

Lyle's car, an open convertible, was

scene, like most of the scenes involving this ardent, ridiculous child, was terribly touching to me.

"Listen, Eve," I said. "We wouldn't get much out of this anyway."

"But it's mostly that I don't want to leave you alone with—"

Lyle said impatiently, "Get in, Chris. This kind of thing can go on for half an hour, once Eve gets the spotlight."

We drove off without another word, and I looked back at the two in the driveway. At that moment I loved them more than any two people on earth.

At that moment, too, I realized that Lyle and Mark had not spoken to each other, not even to say good-by.

Lyle said, "Let me see, you live somewhere on the East Side, I think Mark said."

"Just leave me anywhere that's convenient," I said. "I love walking."

"Nonsense. Nobody loves walking," Lyle said. Then she slanted a long look at me. "No, I believe you really do!"

We drove along, and the wind made wings brushing against our ears. Gradually I loosened a bit and began timidly to study Lyle. There was a stillness about her face now that was not arrogant at all, but sad.

She was asking me about my painting, with that gentle courtesy of hers which was at the same time supercilious and ingratiating.

"I used to write poetry," she said, smiling disparagingly, "and of course I wanted to be an actress. As who doesn't?"

"I never wanted to be an actress."

"No? You're quite unique, aren't you? You like to walk and you never wanted to be an actress." She was mimicking me to torment me a little now, but I did not resent it, for I understood why. I wanted to say to her, "Don't bother to hurt us, Lyle—the little pains don't keep the big ones from happening."

She said, "If Mark doesn't come back, for any reason, I may give acting a whirl again." She didn't mean that, of course. She said the sentence only as a sheath to hold the dagger of the first five words. What she actually had said was, "What I do in the future depends completely on Mark, for his future belongs to me."

We were coming down the river drive now, and I was almost sorry we were nearly at my house. If I had been an older woman—if I had been the

woman who is writing this—I could have helped her. "I won't come up," she said reassuringly. "I know you don't want me to look at my husband's portrait."

I got out of the car, thanking her for the drive. But my legs were trembling.

She looked at me carefully. Then a slow smile spread over her wide mouth, a shrewd smile. "As a matter of fact, Christine, Eve was quite wrong about us."

"Of course," I said, uncertain of what she meant.

"We're amazingly congenial. In one way, particularly."

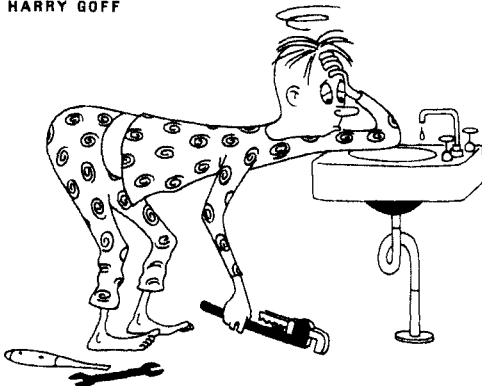
"What way, Mrs. Seville?"

"I also fell in love with a man who was not in love with me," she said. "But in my case, it was a bit different. I knew exactly how to handle the whole thing."

I could understand her wanting to be cruel. But this was some higher refinement of cruelty. I knew that she meant Mark. And I knew that she meant she had no intention of giving him up. . . .

I remember that it was raining on that Monday I must tell you about now. But not this cozy kind of rain we know here in the country where I await your coming, my

HARRY GOFF



NOW HEAR THIS!

I

VACUUM CLEANER. MEEEE—EEEE—IIII—suzzle-suzzle (edge of rug)—EEEE—AAAH—OOOOM—MMMM—tik (a pin)—OOOOOO—MMMMMM.

DRIPPING FAUCET. glop—glop—glop—GLIP—gloglop—GLIPPLE—GLOP—glop—gloglop—glop.

CREAKING DOOR. REEEE—ick!

POURING FROM A CARAFE. GUGGLE—GOGGLE—GOOGLE—GAGGLE—GEGGLE—GIGGLE—GIG—GIG—gig—gig—gig—guh. (Empty.)

—PAULINE GALE

standing in the drive and Lyle was already at the wheel, talking to a figure bundled in a flapping coat.

"But I think I have a right," a high, excited voice was saying. I realized it was Eve, once again in some crisis within her own dimension of drama.

"Oh, for God's sake," Lyle said. "We're only taking an hour's drive. This isn't a world cruise, you know."

Then they both saw Mark and me. "Hi, Chris," Lyle called out. "One of your conquests here wants to drive in to New York with you, and come back by train. Maybe both of them would like to do it."

Eve threw herself on Mark. "It isn't important, of course," she cried, "but I've just got to drive in with Chris."

"They're so congenial," Lyle explained.

"Well, we are. You wouldn't know anything about that," Eve said angrily.

"Wouldn't I, baby?" Lyle said with utter gentleness. "Happens I would, honey."

"What have you and Chris got to be congenial about?" Eve asked insultingly.

"Plenty," Lyle said briefly.

"Okay, Eve," Mark said. "I guess that'll do for this round." Eve was crying now, unbearably humiliated and furious. The whole

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Model Illustrated AW 462

*Better than some "automatics"—
yet costs far less!*

Here are just a few of the reasons why:

Extra-large capacity. G.E.'s new deluxe has a 10-lb tub. Now do your whole wash at once!

Each piece washed individually! Every piece of your wash is given individual washing action to get it clean.

Clothes are pressure-cleansed, with this new Instinctive Wringer. Stops by a mere tug at clothes!

Shuts off automatically! Or you can set it to HOLD position for a continuous washing action.

No bending or stooping! All controls are at fingertip level. Top opening for easy loading.

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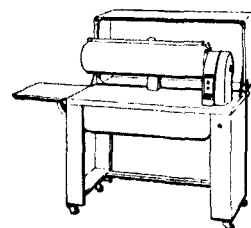
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Takes the "hard work" out of ironing!



With a G-E Rotary Ironer you sit in easy comfort . . . work really fast with better results!

The large ironing roll takes the biggest pieces of your laundry. Automatic operation . . . adjustable ironing temperatures. Model AR 60 illustrated.

Iron in comfort with G-E ROTARY IRONERS

FOR "QUICK-CLEAN" WASHING AND "SIT-DOWN" IRONING

GENERAL ELECTRIC

child. Rain in New York, especially on a day you are forlorn and lost, is an unfriendly element.

After that week end with Mark's family, I felt crushed and humiliated and afraid of what lay ahead. I had gone over Lyle's words a hundred times.

My mind ran round and round a dizzy spiral of unhappiness. I did not stir from my rooms. All day long it rained, a whipping noisy rain.

BY NIGHT I was tired. I brushed my hair and braided it in two fat curly little stubs of braids. I put on my faded gingham pajamas at a child's bedtime hour, and then I realized that I was very hungry.

I heard steps coming up my stairs, and a knock at my door, and I knew it was Mark.

We just stood and looked at each other when I opened the door.

"I just thought I'd better come and tell you that I can't come tomorrow for the sitting."

"That's all right," I said. "I can finish the portrait for your mother without another sitting."

"You understand, don't you?"

I only nodded my head. Then, feeling the ridiculous stubby braid bobbing against one cheek, I reached up and pulled off the red ribbon knotted on the end of the braid, and flipped my fingers through my hair.

"We'd never go through any ghastly gagging mess of politeness," he said harshly.

"People do it to help each other," I said in a whisper. "I think it does help, Mark."

After my day of being lost and bewildered, I felt now a comforting inner presence, something there for Mark's peace as well as for my own.

"Oh, Chris, how could I get along without you?" He asked it as a simple question, and there was no answer to it, except the answer the long years ahead would give.

"How could I get along, now that I know?" he said again. "Before, when I didn't have anything, it was bad enough. But I thought that was just the Big Hoax. I thought that was just probably what life is for everybody—things looking fine outside, and inside everything hollow. But now I know how it *could* be, Chris."

He picked me up in his arms, and all that was within me twisted in a slow twining like a tendriled vine turning and turning in its mysterious spiral of growth. He put me gently in the chair, and then, not speaking, he dropped down on the hassock and rocked back and forth like a man in pain.

He looked up into my face. Then he got up quickly because of something about me he had seen.

"Listen, my young friend," he said. "You know what you've got on?"

I looked down at myself guiltily. The faded gingham pajamas, rumpled and innocent.

"I've got a robe somewhere," I said unsteadily.

"That's hardly the remedy. Can't you get into some clothes? Fact is—"

"Fact is, I'm starving to death," I said. "Maybe you'd invite me out somewhere to dinner, if I were properly dressed."

Outside, the rain had stopped and the moon was out and the air was sweet.

"Air? In New York?" Mark said, sniffing noisily. He put my hand in his pocket and we swaggered along recklessly. We hadn't solved anything, but we walked boastfully as if we had won some great victory.

We found a little blue-fronted Swedish shop, a mere pocket of a place on First Avenue. It was long past closing time, but inside an old man was scrubbing the floor with a mop. We rapped on the glass door and he shook his head, but all the time he was coming over and unlocking the door. A whiff of warm bread and some delicious soup came wafting over his shoulder.

"I must have my own dinner. I have no place for customers," he said, but all the time he was saying it, he was laying three places at a bare, scrubbed table. The three of us, leaning our elbows on the table, after

the good simple food was eaten, gave a reassurance that somehow brought back into safe balance the danger that teetered between Mark and me.

We walked along the river after we had finished our dinner. I turned my back on the water and rested my elbows on the fence, looking up at Mark.

"How much of it do you want to hear?" he said abruptly.

"None of it, Mark."

"You've got to hear it sooner or later," he said. "Even if I never see you again."

"I don't need to know."

"Is that fear? Or sureness, Chris?"

"Sureness."

He looked down at me, and turned my face up to the light so he could see me better.

"I suppose nobody can account for things," he said. "Gets you either into blaming somebody or making excuses. So maybe it's better not to try to explain."

back. Millie thought she could fix everything. So then, I was leaving anyway, and besides—"

"Mark, none of this concerns me."

He said nothing at all then. There was nothing either of us could do. We had known each other such a little while. It was only fair that we both should go apart and consider what had happened to us. If it was as real as it felt, it would wait.

I knew now that talking would never make any of this easier between us. I had been weary all day, and now my very skin was creeping with fatigue.

"Let's go back," I said. "It's cold out here, Mark."

"Yes. It's cold as hell," he said shortly, and I knew I had hurt him.

We walked along the steep little street up from the river, and there was no rhythm in our walking together now.

"Chris, don't marry anybody while I'm gone," he said unexpectedly. "You don't

his face was bland and cautious. He was making up his mind whether he would just brush them off, or whether I was worth scolding and hurting so that I would wake myself up and try harder.

Then he turned around quickly and looked at me with pity. "Go away, Christine, and take a little rest."

"I am going away," I said with dignity. "I thought I'd go up to Ogunquit."

"No sea painting, please," he said. "Some nice cool little houses, some children in a daisy field."

"You're talking to somebody else," I said as impudently as I could; "this is Christine Bruning, Peregrine."

"That's what you think!" he cried testily. He lighted a cigarette and smoked nervously for a minute. That calmed him a little, and he grew wheedling.

"Listen, darling, why don't you maybe go out and find some nice boy and go dancing in some cool place? You know, the young spirits, the kicking up of the heels."

"Leave the heels out of this," I said. But I dabbed with my bare fingers at my eyes.

"I'll take my vacation," I said in a shamed mutter. "Then I'll start painting again, and you'll see."

SEVERAL times Millicent Seville telephoned to me about the portrait. "I don't like to seem to nag you, my dear," she said. "But I'd love to have it."

"I couldn't let it go in this state." But I knew I would never give the portrait to her, nor to anyone else.

Then, one hot afternoon, I opened the door to a rap, and there was Mrs. Seville, tanned and beautiful in a white linen suit. She had a large decorative basket in her hand, filled with tomatoes and cucumbers and ears of corn.

"Hope I don't look too much like Little Red Ridinghood visiting her grandmother, Chris," she said. "I've brought you some of our wonderful homemade vegetables."

"Do come in." As usual with her I was aware of the inadequacy of bare feet in straw sandals, paint-smeared blue shorts, and an indifferent chiffon handkerchief knotted around my hair. I said quickly to myself, "Don't apologize for your appearance. That always puts you off on the wrong foot."

She was bubbling along, not too much at ease. Her eyes had quickly taken in my studio. "What a delightful place!" she cried, going over to my window and looking up at the bridge.

I admired the vegetables.

"Eve picked them," Millie said, "so you can see why they are practically valentines."

Suddenly I realized there was something rather touching in her coming, dressed so scrupulously and bringing her gift, then reinforcing the gift with Eve.

"I haven't come about the portrait," she said quickly. "You needn't even show it to me if you don't want to."

"I never show unfinished work," I said.

"All right, darling. Whenever you get ready." She crossed her elegant legs, and lighted a cigarette. "I really came to ask a favor of you."

"Oh?"

"Mark says I always seize what I want out of people by first asking them for favors." She was still playing for time.

But, unaccountably now that she was in the room, I wanted to show her the portrait. Before I could change my mind, I went over to it, and turned it around facing the room.

"Look, Mrs. Seville. I'd like to have you see it."

For a few minutes she stood there, saying nothing at all. Her chin was quivering. I knew it was because she loved this son of hers more than Mark realized.

"Oh, Christine, you've painted something in his face that nobody else has ever seen there."

"I think it's quite a good likeness," I said falteringly.

"It's much more than a good likeness."

Collier's for February 10, 1951



"Events explain themselves if you can just wait long enough, Mark."

"Besides, unhappiness never does make any sense unless you'll accept it as a stage toward growing up. Nobody had ever really loved me before, Chris, except Dr. Rob and a servant or two of Millie's. I've never been an easy person to love, Chris."

I kept myself from saying, "You've been easy for me to love."

"That's why I understand Eve," he explained. "Unless people have love sort of woven into them when they're made, they seem to fight off the very thing they're starving for."

"Yes. They want it so much they're afraid of it. They wanted it way back there where they can't remember, way back before they were born, and then it failed them, and injured them, and now before it has a chance to happen again, they beat it off."

He accepted that most elementary fact thoughtfully.

"So after a while," he said at last, "I thought marriage would give it to me. Then, after that was over—" He was stumbling along. "I wanted you to see Lyle. She's everything that's admirable. You could see that. You know what I've often wished? I've wished I was in love with her, and she hated the sight of me."

As obliquely and delicately as he had given me the original poison when we stood looking at the Irish glass, now he gave me the antidote.

There wasn't much I could say. I kept my head bent in the shadow. The wind was chill on the back of my neck.

"She wanted a divorce, and then the war came, and Millie persuaded her to come

know me yet. You think I'm just a moody guy whining about my marriage. Well, just forget me, will you?"

"All right, Mark."

"But don't get mixed up with anybody else. Just give me until I get back here. Let's start again. I'll get the wreckage cleaned up, Chris, and when you meet me again—"

THE hot summer days went by. Ten times a day I ran downstairs to look for mail, and ten times I crept back up to my studio. Of course Mark had not written me. It never would have been Mark's way to write to me while his affairs were in chaos.

As the weeks went on, I became sure that he had come to his senses about me. Who was I, after all? A serious, simple girl with nothing enticing about me. What had I to offer him?

"Naturally, he's come to his senses," I said a hundred times a day. But I could not come to mine.

I painted that summer. But I knew before I took my work in to Peregrine that something had happened to my painting. He helped me out of a taxi, and carried the wrapped canvases into his gallery, wagging all over with anticipation.

"Um-hum . . . five? Six? Um-hum . . ."

He stood up the first one along the ledge in his gray office.

"Um-hum. A little impatient?" he suggested gently.

He stood up the second one and crumpled his face down into a scowl to look at it.

"Please—the bones show too much on the houses."

Then he put up the rest quickly, and now

Guard Against Throat-Scratch

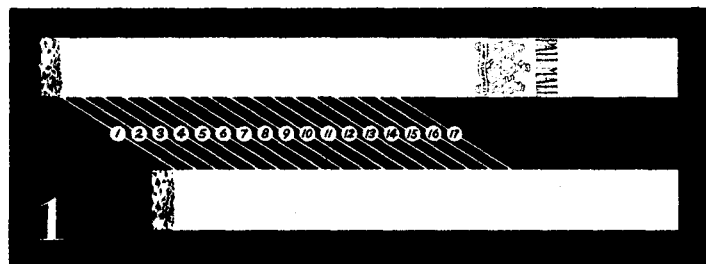
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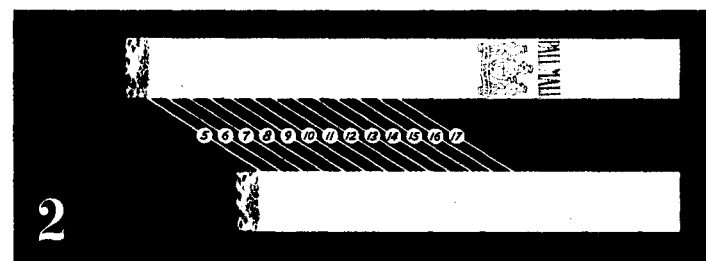
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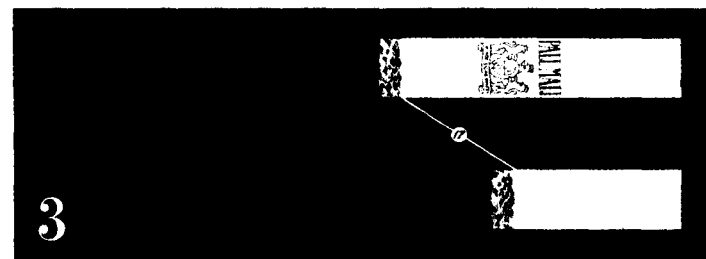
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The further your cigarette filters the smoke through fine tobaccos, the milder that smoke becomes. At the first puff, PALL MALL's smoke is filtered further than that of any other leading cigarette.



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Wherever you go today, you will see more and more people smoking PALL MALL—the cigarette whose mildness you can measure.

Outstanding—and they are mild!

she said with a slow earnestness I never had heard in her before. "It's Mark as he could be if—"

She took a little navy linen handkerchief out of her breast pocket, and dabbed at her eyes.

"Chris, I can't talk about it."

She went back to the chair, and sat down. This time she wasn't a pert young thing with elegantly crossed legs; this time she was a woman of fifty.

"It makes it easier for me to ask you," she said at last.

I felt my whole being withdrawing within me, and a quick nausea swept up into my throat. I could not discuss Mark with her. "But, Mrs. Seville—"

She was still stumbling along, helplessly. "I've just never got over the idea that life ought to be happy for people," she said. "I've worked at being happy all my life, and it seems to me I've never accomplished anything except to confuse myself and annoy other people."

She was crying now. "I've always pretended everything was wonderful."

"You know what I think, Mrs. Seville," I heard myself saying in a cold impersonal voice which didn't seem to belong to me. "I think you are one of the most badly spoiled women I've ever known. And being spoiled is unhappy business, because it uses everybody else around you. So whatever it is you want of me—"

"But it's not for myself," she said in a kind of whimper. "God knows I've wanted very little for myself, Chris."

"Well, stop wanting things for other people," I said. "Try letting people do their own wanting, Mrs. Seville. Try keeping your hands off."

If she had gone blundering on then and had begged me in some way to do something about Mark, I think I would have said no, and made myself free. Free, and robbed forever.

BUT I shall never know about that. Suddenly the conversation veered off at a totally unforeseen angle, for it wasn't Mark she had come to talk about.

She nodded slowly. "You have some secret in you, Chris. All of us felt it. Even Lyle."

"I haven't any secret," I said wearily. "I'm as open as a book." I felt myself mounting into hysteria. How could anyone have any secrets around her—a woman with bold fingers prying into every shut thing she saw?

"You know how to live your own way," she was saying. "I suppose you couldn't tell anybody how to do that—but for somebody to be with you a while, just living your life a bit—"

I looked in horror at her now. "Mrs. Seville, I haven't the least idea what you're talking about."

"I'm talking about Eve. Chris, please help us with Eve."

"Eve!" I cried, almost hilarious with the unexpectedness of this. "What on earth can I help Eve about?"

"We've had such a ghastly experience this summer," she said. "We sent her to a very good camp. She didn't want to go, of course. But then she didn't want to stay home either. She's so difficult!"

"And?"

"Eve—my Eve—has been caught stealing. Money and jewelry. I still can't believe it. And I still don't know how I've lived through the shock." The words came tumbling out now. There was no mistake about it. Miss Whitney had sent her home. They had taken her to a psychiatrist. Eve said she'd kill herself; they were afraid to leave her alone.

"What can I do about it?" I said, against my better judgment.

"I've got it all worked out," Millie said, quite characteristically. "If you'll just take Eve away from here for a few weeks—just the two of you—before she has to go back to school."

"I see," I said dully. "You mean you want me to go as a kind of nursemaid?"

Then she really began to cry. "It was too

much to expect, I suppose. But if only you could . . ."

I kept protesting that I didn't know anything about children.

"Eve doesn't need a psychologist, or a nurse or a teacher," Millie said. "Eve needs what we all need in my family. Somebody who will love us, and show us how to live a little more bearably. Chris, you know how. It sticks out all over you, the way you—"

I started to say, "I haven't known how this summer, Mrs. Seville." Then I remembered that I dared not say that to her. The memory of the last arid weeks rushed over me, and I thought: What have I to give any child? What secret have I left to give anyone? I cannot even help myself.

But larger than all this was the sudden remembered sight of Mark and Eve standing in the driveway of their house as Lyle drove me away in her car.

For the first time in many weeks, some feeling stirred in me. The vision of the child was not waving now, but beckoning. Just as Eve had reached for something in me that night, and had not been allowed to find it, she was reaching now.

THE Sevilles had an old seaside farm on the bay side of Cape Cod, and it seemed a good place for Eve and me to spend our vacation.

Eve didn't care where we went or what we did. She was defiant and indifferent.

A few days later, while we were driving up through Connecticut, she said with an embarrassed smirk, "I s'pose we might as well get it over with early, Chris."

"Get what over with?"

"I know my mother's told you all about me and everything. I suppose you know I'm practically a juvenile delinquent. I suppose you left your watches home, and everything. Well, you don't need to worry. I'm not going to steal anything."

"I know you're not, Eve," I said, not looking at her, but keeping my eyes carefully on the road. "Because for a couple of weeks you're going to have everything you want. There'll be nothing to steal about."

She thought this over sullenly, and then she said, "I'd like to have heard Millie down

on her knees begging you. Just for curiosity's sake, which one of her arguments made you decide to take me over?"

"None of them. I said no to everything Millie said."

"No kiddin'?"

"Yep. I didn't want any part of it," I assured her.

"Well, what did make you finally say yes?"

"I said yes because I like you, and I think you're a good egg, and I believe we could have fun together."

"Gosh," she said, and she slipped down in her seat in a long relaxed slump. "Gosh. I don't believe anybody on earth ever said they liked me before. Except Mark."

That touched me, for I knew it was probably quite true.

After a few minutes I said, "Your mother spends a lot of her time thinking about things to do for you, Eve."

"You know that isn't the same thing," she said gruffly. "Oh, sure. She kneads me like bread, that woman. Only I don't stay kneaded."

"Let's don't talk about Millie," I said. "It's too nice a day, chum."

Then we looked at each other and we both grinned.

We got to the old house just before dark. The Cape Cod cottage hugged the cliff as if it were afraid it might be blown into the sea, and it was a house you couldn't help loving on sight.

"I haven't been here since I was ten," Eve said. "Seems to me the house was bigger then."

The white door opened then and a grim-looking, angular woman came out on the stoop.

"Why, for mercy's sake! I been expectin' you people since about two o'clock." Her black eyes were kinder than her voice. I jumped out of the car.

"You're Mrs. Crannich. Mrs. Seville told me what a good neighbor you've always been."

We both stood there smiling at each other; then she said, "For mercy's sake, come on in. I got a nice clam chowder all ready for your supper."

"We're starving," I said.

In a rasping undertone she said, "Is that Miss Millicent's girl? Not much for looks, is she?"

The house was just what you might have expected. Millie had probably inherited it from some maiden aunt, and then in a frenzy of originality she had built two stories down the face of the cliff. The beautiful upper rooms were furnished with old maple and cherry furniture, and round hooked rugs on the wide wavy boards.

A circular stairway spiraled downward to the two lower floors, which must have been Millie's hobby and sport for a summer or so. There seemed an unlimited number of bedrooms in a bewildering succession of bright colors.

"Millie used to keep people here," Eve said shortly. "Let's just keep the downstairs closed."

And that's what we did, until Mark came.

I WOKE early to the whirling cries of the gulls. My room in morning sunlight was innocent and lovely. Along the mantel of the fireplace stood four daguerreotypes framed in red velvet and gilt. I got out of bed and ran over to look at these. Yes, there was a tall, stern-faced man in uniform who could have been Mark's great-grandfather, and a wispy-waisted belle with a firm chin.

I tried to make up my mind, then and there, that I would not spend this visit searching for crumbs about Mark.

In my bare feet I ran across the hall to the room where Eve was sleeping. Her pompadour was a mess, with metal curlers at the ends, and I gave myself two days to make her forget to put her hair up. When she was sure enough of herself she wouldn't bother.

She woke up then, and stretched up her bony young arms.

"Gosh, we're here, aren't we?" she said with a sleepy grin.

"No doubt about it. And you better get up, if you don't want the day to slip away while you've got your back turned."

She lay a while longer, quite still except that her toes were clapping and unclapping.

"Last one down on the beach is a ring-tailed monkey," she said suddenly, and hopped up and dragged the covers with her.

The whole day was like that. Young and insane, but good for both of us. We ate pancakes (not quite as good as Eve thought they were) in a sunny little circle of sandy grass just outside the grape arbor.

After breakfast we went clammimg, squatting with blissful absorption over the quickly filling holes in the sand. After luncheon Eve took a nap on the sand while I did a lazy water color. And then it was time for dinner. We ate in the kitchen, standing beside the refrigerator.

"I like meals informal, or else simply stinking with good manners," Eve said.

"You like meals, period," I said, being fourteen years old myself after such a day.

We played records before we finally went to sleep again. Eve didn't bother washing her face; simply too worn out, she said.

"Besides, it can't be too dirty. We live such a clean wholesome life, don't you think?"

"You don't have to wash it for two weeks if you don't want to."

But she did manage to put up the pompadour in the crimpers. You can't quite ignore the amenities. Natch.

There were twelve of such days, and our skin smelled sunny and salty, and Eve's eyelashes and brows were bleached a bit, and I suppose mine were too.

And gradually I came to know that all the loneliness and despair which had choked me day and night since last I had seen Mark had eased. At last I was myself again. Whatever the child had found here on this lovely shore, I had found myself, the welcomed-back friendship of myself for me.

Could it be possible that some big-sister archangel had arranged all this? If I consented to help the child, then should I find my peace again?

(To be continued next week)

Collier's for February 10, 1951



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All the King's Horses

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

the eye sockets and heavy brows of the pilot from Salt Lake, now bloomed red for a second at the thin lips of the sergeant.

Kelly looked from the men to what seemed in the twilight to be a small hillock by the door. There, his wife Margaret sat, with the blond heads of her sleeping sons cradled in her lap. She smiled up at him, her face misty white. "Darling—you're all right?" Margaret asked quietly.

"Yes, I'm all right."

"Sarge," said the corporal, "ask him what Pi Ying said."

"Shut up." The sergeant paused. "What about it, sir—good news or bad?"

KELLY stroked his wife's shoulder gently, trying to make the right words come—words to carry courage he wasn't sure he had. "Bad news," he said at last. "Rotten news."

"Well, let's have it," said the transport pilot loudly. Kelly supposed he was trying to reassure himself with the boom of his own voice, with brusqueness. "The worst he can do is kill us. Is that it?" He stood and dug his hands into his pockets.

"He wouldn't dare!" said the young corporal in a threatening voice—as though he could bring the wrath of the United States Army to bear on Pi Ying with a snap of his fingers.

Colonel Kelly looked at the youngster with curiosity and dejection. "Let's face it. The little man upstairs has all the trumps." An expression borrowed from another game, he thought irrelevantly. "He's an outlaw. He hasn't got a thing to lose by getting the United States sore at him."

"If he's going to kill us, say so!" the pilot said explosively. "So he's got us cold! What's he going to do?"

"He considers us prisoners of war," said Kelly, trying to keep his voice even. "He'd like to shoot us all." He shrugged. "I haven't been trying to keep you in suspense, I've been looking for the right words—and there aren't any. Pi Ying wants more entertainment out of us than shooting us would provide. He'd like to prove that he's smarter than we are in the bargain."

"How?" asked Margaret. Her eyes were wide. The two children were waking up.

"In a little while, Pi Ying and I are going to play chess for your lives." He closed his fist over his wife's limp hand. "And for my four lives. It's the only chance Pi Ying will give us." He shrugged, and smiled wryly. "I play a better-than-average game—a little better than average."

"Is he nuts?" said the sergeant.

"You'll all see for yourselves," said Colonel Kelly simply. "You'll see him when the game begins—Pi Ying and his friend, Major Barzov." He raised his eyebrows. "The major claims to be sorry that, in his capacity as a military observer for the Russian army, he is powerless to intervene in our behalf. He also says we have his sympathy. I suspect he's a damn liar on both counts. Pi Ying is scared stiff of him."

"We get to watch the game?" whispered the corporal tensely.

"The sixteen of us, soldier, are the chessmen I'll be playing with."

The door swung open. . . .

"Can you see the whole board from down there, White King?" called Pi Ying cheerfully from a balcony overlooking the ornate, azure-domed chamber. He was smiling down at Colonel Bryan Kelly, his family, and his men. "You must be the White King, you know. Otherwise, we couldn't be sure that you'd be with us for the whole game." The guerrilla chief's face was flushed. His smile was one of mock solicitude. "Delighted to see all of you!"

To Pi Ying's right, indistinct in the shadows, stood Major Barzov, the taciturn Russian military observer. He acknowledged Kelly's stare with a slow nod. Kelly continued to stare fixedly. The arrogant,

bristle-haired major became restless, folding and unfolding his arms, repeatedly rocking back and forth in his black boots. "I wish I could help you," he said at last. It wasn't an amenity but a contemptuous jest. "I am only an observer here." Barzov said it heavily. "I wish you luck, Colonel," he added, and turned his back.

Seated on Pi Ying's left was a delicate young Oriental woman. She gazed expressionlessly at the wall over the Americans' heads. She and Barzov had been present when Pi Ying had first told Colonel Kelly of the game he wanted to play. When Kelly had begged Pi Ying to leave his wife and children out of it, he had thought he saw a spark of pity in her eyes. As he looked up at the motionless, ornamental girl now, he knew he must have been mistaken.

"This room was a whim of my predecessor,"

was gone. Now he recognized the eerie calm—an old wartime friend—that left only the cold machinery of his wits and senses alive. It was the narcotic of generalship. It was the essence of war.

"Now, my friends, your attention," said Pi Ying importantly. He stood. "The rules of the game are easy to remember. You are all to behave as Colonel Kelly tells you. Those of you who are so unfortunate as to be taken by one of my chessmen will be killed quickly, painlessly, promptly." Major Barzov looked at the ceiling as though he were inwardly criticizing everything Pi Ying said.

The corporal suddenly released a blistering stream of obscenities—half abuse, half self-pity. The sergeant clapped his hand over the youngster's mouth.

Pi Ying leaned over the balustrade and

your king's pawn," said Pi Ying. "If you haven't chosen one, Colonel, I'd like to recommend the noisy young man down there—the one the sergeant is holding. A delicate position, king's pawn."

The corporal began to kick and twist with new fury. The sergeant tightened his arms about him. "The kid'll calm down in a minute," he said under his breath. He turned his head toward Colonel Kelly. "Whatever the hell the king's pawn is, that's me. Where do I stand, sir?" The youngster relaxed and the sergeant freed him.

Kelly pointed to the fourth square in the second row of the huge chessboard. The sergeant strode to the square and hunched his broad shoulders. The corporal mumbled something incoherent, and took his place in the square next to the sergeant—a second expendable pawn. The rest still hung back.

"Colonel, you tell us where to go," said a lanky T-4 uncertainly. "What do we know about chess? You put us where you want us." His Adam's apple bobbed. "Save the soft spots for your wife and kids. They're the ones that count. You tell us what to do."

"There are no soft spots," said the pilot sardonically, "no soft spots for anybody. Pick a square, any square." He stepped onto the board. "What does this square make me?"

"You're a bishop, Lieutenant, the king's bishop," said Kelly.

HE FOUND himself thinking of the lieutenant in those terms—no longer human but a piece capable of moving diagonally across the board; capable, when attacking with the queen, of terrible damage to the black men across the board.

"And me in church only twice in my life. Hey, Pi Ying," called the pilot insolently, "what's a bishop worth?"

Pi Ying was amused. "A knight and a pawn, my boy; a knight and a pawn."

Thank God for the lieutenant, thought Kelly. One of the American soldiers grinned. They had been sticking close together, backed against the wall. Now they began to talk among themselves—like a baseball team warming up. At Kelly's direction, seeming almost unconscious of the meaning of their actions, they moved out onto the board to fill out the ranks.

Pi Ying was speaking again. "All of your pieces are in place now, except your knights and your queen, Colonel. And you, of course, are the king. Come, come. The game must be over before supertime."

Gently, shepherding them with his long arms, Kelly led his wife and Jerry and Paul to their proper squares. He detested himself for the calm, the detachment with which he did it. He saw the fear and reproach in Margaret's eyes. She couldn't understand that he had to be this way—that in his coldness was their only hope for survival. He looked away from Margaret.

Pi Ying clapped his hands for silence. "There, good; now we can begin." He tugged at his ear reflectively. "I think this is an excellent way of bringing together the Eastern and Western minds, don't you, Colonel? Here we indulge the American's love for gambling with our appreciation of profound drama and philosophy." Major Barzov whispered impatiently to him. "Oh, yes," said Pi Ying, "two more rules: We are allowed ten minutes a move, and—this goes without saying—no moves may be taken back. Very well," he said, pressing the button on a stop watch and setting it on the balustrade, "the honor of the first move belongs to the white men." He grinned. "An ancient tradition."

"Sergeant," said Colonel Kelly, his throat tight, "move two squares forward." He looked down at his hands. They were starting to tremble.

"I believe I'll be slightly unconventional," said Pi Ying, half turning his head toward the young girl, as though to make sure that



sors, who for generations held the people in slavery," said Pi Ying sententiously. "It served nicely as a throne room. But the floor is inlaid with squares, sixty-four of them—a chessboard, you see? The former tenants had those handsome, man-sized chessmen before you built so that they and their friends could sit up here and order servants to move them about." He twisted a ring on his finger. "Imaginative as that was, it remained for us to hit upon this new twist. Today, of course, we will use only the black chessmen, my pieces." He turned to the restive Major Barzov. "The Americans have furnished their own chessmen. Fascinating idea." His smile faded when he saw that Barzov wasn't smiling with him. Pi Ying seemed eager to please the Russian. Barzov, in turn, appeared to regard Pi Ying as hardly worth listening to.

THE twelve American soldiers stood against a wall under heavy guard. Instinctively, they bunched together and glared sullenly at their patronizing host. "Take it easy," said Colonel Kelly, "or we'll lose the one chance we've got." He looked quickly at his twin sons, Jerry and Paul, who gazed about the room, unruffled, interested, blinking sleepily at the side of their stunned mother. Kelly wondered why he felt so little as he watched his family in the face of death. The fear he had felt while they were waiting in their dark prison

pointed a finger at the struggling soldier. "For those who run from the board or make an outcry, a special form of death can be arranged," he said sharply. "Colonel Kelly and I must have complete silence in which to concentrate. If the colonel is clever enough to win, then all of you who are still with us when I am checkmated will get safe transport out of my territory. If he loses—" Pi Ying shrugged. He settled back on a mound of cushions. "Now, you must all be good sports," he said briskly. "Americans are noted for that, I believe. As Colonel Kelly can tell you, a chess game can very rarely be won—any more than a battle can be won—without sacrifices. Isn't that so, Colonel?"

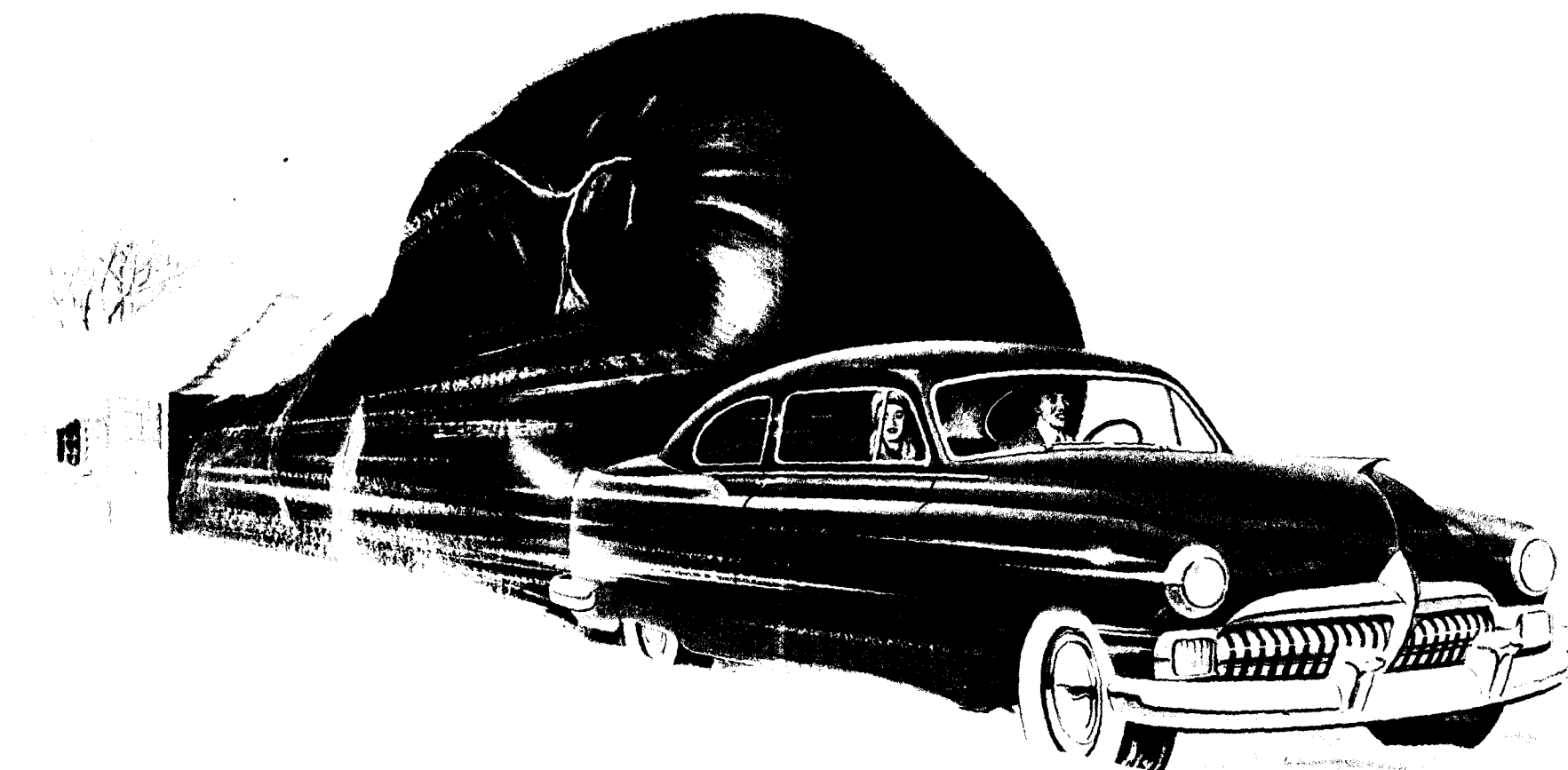
Colonel Kelly nodded mechanically. He was recalling what Pi Ying had said earlier—that the game he was about to play was no different, philosophically, from what he had known in war.

"How can you do this to children!" cried Margaret suddenly, twisting free of a guard and striding across the squares to stand directly below Pi Ying's balcony. "For the love of God—" she began.

Pi Ying interrupted angrily: "Is it for the love of God that Americans make bombs and jet planes and tanks?" He waved her away impatiently. "Drag her back." He covered his eyes. "Where was I? We were talking about sacrifices, weren't we? I was going to ask you who you had chosen to be

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she was sharing his enjoyment. "Move my queen's pawn forward two squares," he instructed a servant.

Colonel Kelly watched the servant slide the massive carving forward—to a point threatening the sergeant. The sergeant looked quizzically at Kelly. "Everything okay, sir?" He smiled faintly.

"I hope so," said Kelly. "Here's your protection . . . Soldier," he ordered the young corporal, "step forward one square." There—it was all he could do. Now there was no advantage in Pi Ying's taking the pawn he threatened—the sergeant. Tactically it would be a pointless trade, pawn for pawn. No advantage so far as good chess went.

"This is very bad form, I know," said Pi Ying blandly. He paused. "Well, then again, I'm not so sure I'd be wise to trade. With so brilliant an opponent, perhaps I'd better play flawless chess, and forget the many temptations." Major Barzov murmured something to him. "But it would get us into the spirit of the game right off, wouldn't it?"

"What's he talking about, sir?" asked the sergeant apprehensively.

Before Kelly could order his thoughts, Pi Ying gave the order. "Take his king's pawn."

"Colonel! What'd you do?" cried the sergeant. Two guards pulled him from the board and out of the room. A studded door banged shut behind them.

"Kill me!" shouted Kelly, starting off his square after them. A half-dozen bayonets hemmed him in.

IMPASSIVELY, the servant slid Pi Ying's wooden pawn onto the square where the sergeant had stood. A shot reverberated on the other side of the thick door, and the guards reappeared. Pi Ying was no longer smiling. "Your move, Colonel. Come, come—four minutes have gone already."

Kelly's calm was shattered, and with it went the illusion of the game. The pieces in his power were human beings again. The precious, brutal stuff of command was gone from Colonel Kelly. He was no more fit to make decisions of life and death than the rawest recruit. Giddily, he realized that Pi Ying's object was not to win the game quickly, but to thin out the Americans in harrowing, pointless forays. Another two minutes crept by as he struggled to force himself to be rational. "I can't do it," he whispered at last. He slouched now.

"You wish me to have all of you shot right now?" asked Pi Ying. "I must say that I find you a rather pathetic colonel. Do all American officers give in so easily?"

"Pin his ears back, Colonel," said the pilot. "Let's go. Sharpen up. Let's go!"

"You're in no danger now," said Kelly to the corporal. "Take his pawn."

"How do I know you're not lying?" said the youngster bitterly. "Now I'm going to get it!"

"Get over there!" said the transport pilot sharply.

"No!"

The sergeant's two executioners pinned the corporal's arms to his sides. They looked up expectantly at Pi Ying.

"Young man," said Pi Ying solicitously, "would you enjoy being tortured to death, or would you rather do as Colonel Kelly tells you?"

The corporal spun suddenly and sent both guards sprawling. He stepped onto the square occupied by the pawn that had taken the sergeant, kicked the piece over, and stood there with his feet apart.

Major Barzov guffawed. "He'll learn to be a pawn yet," he roared. "It's an Oriental skill Americans could do well to learn for the days ahead, eh?"

Pi Ying laughed with Barzov, and stroked the knee of the young girl, who had been sitting, expressionless, at his side. "Well, it's been perfectly even so far—a pawn for a pawn. Let's begin our offensives in earnest." He snapped his fingers for the attention of the servant. "King's pawn to king three," he commanded. "There! Now my queen and bishop are ready for an expe-

dition into white man's territory." He pressed the button on the stop watch. "Your move, Colonel." . . .

It was an old reflex that made Colonel Bryan Kelly look to his wife for compassion, courage. He looked away again—Margaret was a frightening, heartbreaking sight, and there was nothing he could do for her but win. Nothing. Her stare was vacant, almost idiotic. She had taken refuge in deaf, blind, unfeeling shock.

Kelly counted the figures still surviving on the board. An hour had passed since the game's beginning. Five pawns were still alive, among them the young corporal; one bishop, the nifty pilot; two rooks; two knights—ten-year-old frightened knights; Margaret, a rigid, staring queen; and himself, the king. The missing four? Butchered— butchered in senseless exchanges that had cost Pi Ying only blocks of wood. The other soldiers had fallen silent, sullen in their own separate worlds.

"I think it's time for you to concede," said Pi Ying. "It's just about over, I'm

stood behind him, fitting a cigarette into an ornate ivory holder. "It's a very distressing thing about chess," said Barzov, admiring the holder, turning it this way and that. "There isn't a grain of luck in the game, you know. There's no excuse for the loser." His tone was pedantic, with the superciliousness of a teacher imparting profound truths to students who he was sure were too immature to understand.

Pi Ying shrugged. "Winning this game gives me very little satisfaction. Colonel Kelly has been a disappointment. By risking nothing, he has deprived the game of its subtlety and wit. I could expect more brilliance from my cook."

THE hot red of anger blazed over Kelly's cheeks, inflamed his ears. The muscles of his belly knotted; his legs moved apart. Pi Ying must not move his queen. If Pi Ying moved his queen, Kelly would lose; if Pi Ying moved his knight from Kelly's line of attack, Kelly would win. Only one thing might induce Pi Ying to move his knight—a fresh, poignant opportunity for sadism.



afraid. Do you concede, Colonel?" Major Barzov frowned wisely at the chessmen, shook his head slowly, and yawned.

Colonel Kelly tried to bring his mind and eyes back into focus. He had the sensation of burrowing, burrowing, burrowing his way through a mountain of hot sand, of having to keep going on and on, digging, squirming, suffocated, blinded. "Go to hell," he muttered. He concentrated on the pattern of the chessmen. As chess, the ghastly game had been absurd. Pi Ying had moved with no strategy other than to destroy white men. Kelly had moved to defend each of his chessmen at any cost, had risked none in offense. His powerful queen, knights and rooks stood unused in the relative safety of the two rear rows of squares. He clenched and unclenched his fists in frustration. His opponent's haphazard ranks were wide open. A checkmate of Pi Ying's king would be possible, if only the black knight weren't dominating the center of the board.

"Your move, Colonel. Two minutes," coaxed Pi Ying.

And then Kelly saw it—the price he would pay, that they all would pay, for the curse of conscience. Pi Ying had only to move his queen diagonally, three squares to the left, to put him in check. After that he needed to make one more move—in- evitable, irresistible—and then checkmate, the end. And Pi Ying would move his queen. The game seemed to have lost its piquancy for him; he had the air of a man eager to busy himself elsewhere.

The guerrilla chief was standing now, leaning over the balustrade. Major Barzov

"Concede, Colonel. My time is valuable," said Pi Ying.

"Is it all over?" asked the young corporal quizzically.

"Keep your mouth shut and stay where you are," said Kelly. He stared through shrewd, narrowed eyes at Pi Ying's knight, standing in the midst of the living chessmen, the horse's carved neck arched, nostrils flaring.

The pure geometry of the white chessmen's fate burst upon Kelly's consciousness. Its simplicity had the effect of a refreshing, chilling wind. A sacrifice had to be offered to Pi Ying's knight. If Pi Ying accepted the sacrifice, the game would be Kelly's. The trap was perfect and deadly save for one detail—bait.

"One minute, Colonel," said Pi Ying.

Kelly looked quickly from face to face, unmoved by the hostility or distrust or fear that he saw in each pair of eyes. One by one he eliminated the candidates for death. These four were vital to the sudden, crushing offense, and these must guard the king. Necessity like a child counting cenny, meeny, miney, mo around a circle, pointed its finger at the one chessman who could be sacrificed. There was only one.

Kelly didn't permit himself to think of the chessman as anything but a cipher in a rigid mathematical proposition: if x is dead, the rest shall live. He perceived the tragedy of his decision only as a man who knew the definition of tragedy, not as one who felt it.

"Twenty seconds!" said Barzov. He had taken the stop watch from Pi Ying.

The cold resolve deserted Kelly for an instant, and he saw the utter pathos of his position—a dilemma as old as mankind, as new as the struggle between East and West. When human beings are attacked, x , multiplied by hundreds or thousands, must die— sent to death by those who love them most. Kelly's profession was the choosing of x .

"Ten seconds," said Barzov.

"Jerry," said Kelly, his voice loud and sure, "move forward one square and two to your left." Trustingly, his son stepped out of the back rank and into the shadow of the black knight. Awareness seemed to be filtering back into Margaret's eyes. She turned her head when her husband spoke.

Pi Ying stared down at the board in bafflement. "Are you in your right mind, Colonel?" he asked at last. "Do you realize what you've just done?"

A faint smile crossed Barzov's face. He bent forward as though to whisper to Pi Ying, but apparently thought better of it. He leaned back against a pillar to watch Kelly's every move through a gauze of cigarette smoke.

Kelly pretended to be mystified by Pi Ying's words. And then he buried his face in his hands and gave an agonized cry. "Oh, God, no!"

"An exquisite mistake, to be sure," said Pi Ying. He excitedly explained the blunder to the young girl beside him. She turned away. He seemed infuriated by the gesture. "You've got to let me take him back," begged Kelly brokenly.

Pi Ying rapped on the balustrade with his knuckles. "Without rules, my friend, games become nonsense. We agreed that all moves would be final, and so they are." He motioned to a servant. "King's knight to king's bishop six!" The servant moved the piece onto the square where Jerry stood. The bait was taken, the game was Colonel Kelly's from here on in.

"What is he talking about?" murmured Margaret.

"Why keep your wife in suspense, Colonel?" said Pi Ying. "Be a good husband and answer her question, or should I?"

"Your husband sacrificed a knight," said Barzov, his voice overriding Pi Ying's. "You've just lost your son." His expression was that of an experimenter, keen, expectant, entranced.

Kelly heard the choking sound in Margaret's throat, caught her as she fell. He rubbed her wrists. "Darling, please—listen to me! He shook her more roughly than he had intended. Her reaction was explosive. Words cascaded from her—hysterical babble condemning him. Kelly locked her wrists together in his hands and listened dumbly to her broken abuse.

PI YING'S eyes bulged, transfixed by the fantastic drama below, oblivious of the tearful frenzy of the young girl behind him. She tugged at his blouse, pleading. He pushed her back without looking away from the board.

The tall T-4 suddenly dived at the nearest guard, driving his shoulder into the man's chest, his fist into his belly. Pi Ying's soldiers converged, hammered him to the floor and dragged him back to his square.

In the midst of the bedlam, Jerry burst into tears and raced terrified to his father and mother. Kelly freed Margaret, who dropped to her knees to hug the quaking child. Paul, Jerry's twin, held his ground, trembled, stared stolidly at the floor.

"Shall we get on with the game, Colonel?" asked Pi Ying, his voice high. Barzov turned his back to the board, unwilling to prevent the next step, apparently reluctant to watch it.

Kelly closed his eyes, and waited for Pi Ying to give the order to the executioners. He couldn't bring himself to look at Margaret and Jerry. Pi Ying waved his hand for silence. "It is with deep regret—" he began. His lips closed. The menace suddenly went out of his face, leaving only surprise and stupidity. The small man slumped on the balustrade, slithered over it to crash among his soldiers.

Major Barzov struggled with the Chinese

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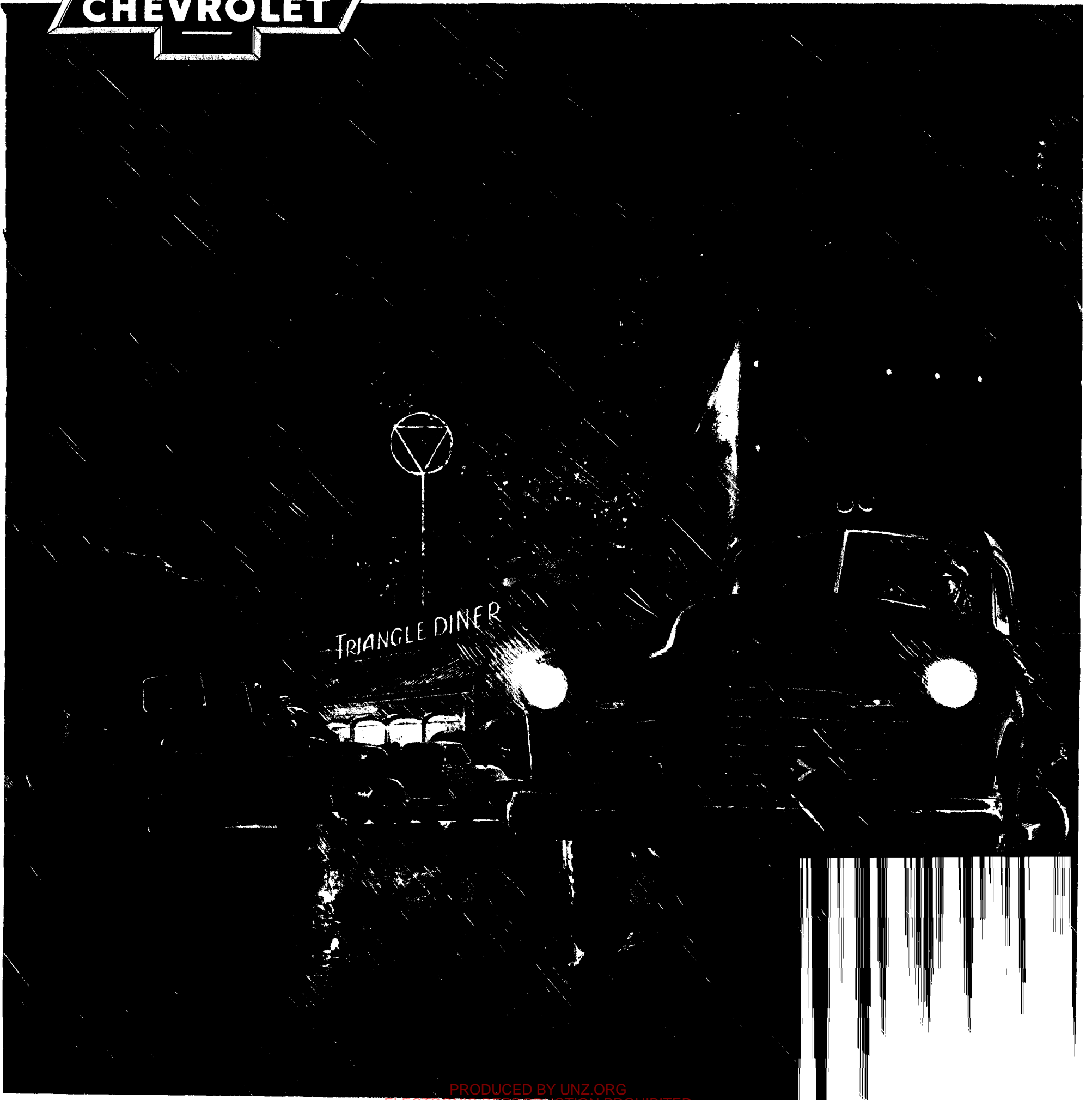
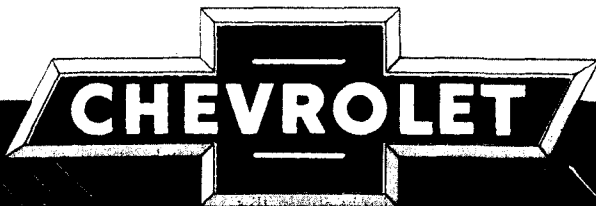
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girl. In her small hand, still free of his grasp, was a slender knife. She drove it into her breast and fell against the major. Barzov let her fall. He strode to the balustrade. "Keep the prisoners where they are!" he shouted at the guards. "Is he alive?" There was no anger in his voice, no sorrow—only irritation, resentment of inconvenience. A servant looked up and shook his head.

Barzov ordered servants and soldiers to carry out the bodies of Pi Ying and the girl. It was more the act of a scrupulous housekeeper than a pious mourner. No one questioned his brisk authority.

"So this is your party after all," said Kelly.

"The peoples of Asia have lost a very great leader," Barzov said severely. He smiled at Kelly oddly. "Though he wasn't without weaknesses, was he, Colonel?" He shrugged. "However, you've won only the initiative, not the game; and now you have me to reckon with instead of Pi Ying. Stay where you are, Colonel. I'll be back shortly."

He ground out his cigarette on the ornamented balustrade, returned the holder to his pocket with a flourish, and disappeared through the curtains.

"Is Jerry going to be all right?" whispered Margaret. It was a plea, not a question, as though mercy were Kelly's to dole out or to withhold.

"Only Barzov knows," he said. He was bursting to explain the moves to her, to make her understand why he had had no choice; but he knew that an explanation would only make the tragedy infinitely more cruel for her. Death through a blunder she might be able to understand; but death as a product of cool reason, a step in logic, she could never accept. Rather than accept it, she would have had them all die.

"Only Barzov knows," he repeated wearily. The bargain was still in force, the price of victory agreed to. Barzov apparently had yet to realize what it was that Kelly was buying with a life.

"How do we know Barzov will let us go if we do win?" said the T-4. "We don't, soldier. We don't."

And then another doubt began to worm into his consciousness. Perhaps he had won no more than a brief reprieve. . . .

Colonel Kelly had lost track of how long they'd waited there on the chessboard for Barzov's return. His nerves were deadened by surge after surge of remorse and by the steady pressure of terrible responsibility. His consciousness had lapsed into twilight. Margaret slept in utter exhaustion, with Jerry, his life yet to be claimed, in her arms. Paul had curled up on his square, covered by the young corporal's field jacket. On what had been Jerry's square, the horse's carved head snarling as though fire would burst from its nostrils, stood Pi Ying's black knight.

Kelly barely heard the voice from the balcony—mistook it for another jagged fragment in a nightmare. His mind attached no sense to the words, heard only their sound. And then he opened his eyes and saw Major Barzov's lips moving. He saw the arrogant challenge in his eyes, understood the words. "Since so much blood has been shed in this game, it would be a pitiful waste to leave it unresolved."

Barzov settled regally on Pi Ying's cushions, his black boots crossed. "I propose to beat you, Colonel, and I will be surprised if you give me trouble. It would be very upsetting to have you win by the transparent ruse that fooled Pi Ying. It isn't that easy any more. You're playing me now, Colonel. You won the initiative for a moment. I'll take it and the game now, without any more delay."

Kelly rose to his feet, his great frame monumental above the white chessmen sitting on the squares about him. Major Barzov wasn't above the kind of entertainment Pi Ying had found so diverting. But Kelly sensed the difference between the major's

demeanor and that of the guerrilla chief. The major was resuming the game, not because he liked it, but because he wanted to prove that he was one hell of a bright fellow, and that the Americans were dirt. Apparently, he didn't realize that Pi Ying had already lost the game. Either that, or Kelly had miscalculated.

In his mind, Kelly moved every piece on the board, driving his imagination to show him the flaw in his plan, if a flaw existed—if the hellish, heartbreaking sacrifice was for nothing. In an ordinary game, with nothing at stake but bits of wood, he would have called upon his opponent to concede, and the game would have ended there. But now, playing for flesh and blood, an aching, ineradicable doubt overshadowed the clean-cut logic of the outcome. Kelly dared not reveal that he planned to attack and win in three moves—not until he had made the moves, not until Barzov had lost every chance to exploit the flaw, if there was one.

"What about Jerry?" cried Margaret. "Jerry? Oh, of course, the little boy. Well, what about Jerry, Colonel?" asked Barzov. "I'll make a special concession, if

could be no out for Barzov. This was it—the last of the three moves.

"Well," said Barzov, "is that the best you can do? I'll simply move my queen in front of my king." The servant moved the piece. "Now it will be a different story."

"Take his queen," said Kelly to his farthest-advanced pawn, the battered T-4.

Barzov jumped to his feet. "Wait!" "You didn't see it? You'd like to take it back?" taunted Kelly.

BARZOV paced back and forth on his balcony, breathing hard. "Of course I saw it!"

"It was the only thing you could do to save your king," said Kelly. "You may take it back if you like, but you'll find it's the only move you can make."

"Take the queen and get on with the game," shouted Barzov. "Take her!"

"Take her," echoed Kelly, and the servant trundled the huge piece to the side lines. The T-4 now stood blinking at Barzov's king, inches away. Colonel Kelly said it very softly this time: "Check."

Barzov exhaled in exasperation. "Check indeed." His voice grew louder. "No credit to you, Colonel Kelly, but to the monumental stupidity of Pi Ying."

"And that's the game, Major." The T-4 laughed idiotically, the corporal sat down, the lieutenant threw his arms around Colonel Kelly. The two children gave a cheer. Only Margaret stood fast, still rigid, frightened.

"The price of your victory, of course, has yet to be paid," said Barzov acidly. "I presume you're ready to pay now?"

Kelly whitened. "That was the understanding, if it would give you satisfaction to hold me to it."

Barzov placed another cigarette in his ivory holder, taking a scowling minute to do it. When he spoke, it was in the tone of the pedant once more, the wielder of profundities. "No, I won't take the boy. I feel as Pi Ying felt about you—that you, as Americans, are the enemy, whether an official state of war exists or not. I look upon you as prisoners of war."

"However, as long as there is no official state of war, I have no choice, as a representative of my government, but to see that all of you are conducted safely through the lines. This was my plan when I resumed the game where Pi Ying left off. Your being freed has nothing to do with my personal feelings, nor with the outcome of the game. My winning would have delighted me and taught you a valuable lesson. But it would have made no difference in your fates." He lighted his cigarette and continued to look at them with severity.

"That's very chivalrous of you, Major," said Kelly.

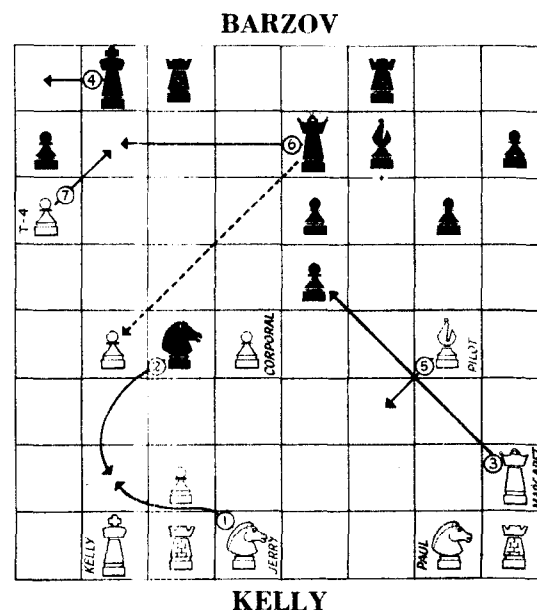
"A matter of practical politics, I assure you. It wouldn't do to precipitate an incident between our countries just now. For a Russian to be chivalrous with an American is a spiritual impossibility, a contradiction in terms. In a long and bitter history, we've learned and learned well to reserve our chivalry for Russians." His expression became one of complete contempt. "Perhaps you'd like to play another game, Colonel—plain chess with wooden chessmen, without Pi Ying's refinement. I don't like to have you leave here thinking you play a better game than I."

"That's nice of you, but not this evening."

"Well, then, some other time." Major Barzov motioned for the guards to open the door of the throne room. "Some other time," he said again. "There will be others like Pi Ying eager to play you with live men, and I hope I will again be privileged to be an observer." He smiled brightly. "When and where would you like it to be?" "Unfortunately, the time and the place are up to you," said Colonel Kelly wearily. "If you insist on arranging another game, issue an invitation, Major, and I'll be there."

THE END

Collier's for February 10, 1951



you like. Would you want to take the move back?" The major was urbane, a caricature of cheerful hospitality.

"Without rules, Major, games become nonsense," said Kelly flatly. "I'd be the last to ask you to break them."

Barzov's expression became one of profound sympathy. "Your husband, madame, has made the decision, not I." He pressed the button on the stop watch. "You may keep the boy with you until the Colonel has fumbled all of your lives away. Your move, Colonel. Ten minutes."

"Take his pawn," Kelly ordered Margaret. She didn't move. "Margaret! Do you hear me?"

"Help her, Colonel, help her," chided Barzov.

Kelly took Margaret by the elbow, led her unresisting to the square where a black pawn stood. Jerry tagged along, keeping his mother between himself and Kelly. Kelly returned to his square, dug his hands into his pockets, and watched a servant take the black pawn from the board. "Check, Major. Your king is in check."

Barzov raised an eyebrow. "Check, did you say? What shall I do about this annoyance? How shall I get you back to some of the more interesting problems on the board?" He gestured to a servant. "Move my king over one square to the left."

"Move diagonally one square toward me, Lieutenant," Kelly ordered the pilot. The pilot hesitated. "Move! Do you hear?"

"Yessir! The tone was mocking. "Retreating, eh, sir?" The lieutenant slouched into the square, slowly, insolently.

"Check again, Major," Kelly said evenly. He motioned to the lieutenant. "Now my bishop has your king in check." He closed his eyes and told himself again and again that he had made no miscalculation, that the sacrifice had won the game, that there

Gene Tunney's Place in Ring History

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

that champions always choose their conquerors: they look like the softer touches beforehand.

It occurs to me that Tunney, because of his style, would have had a much better chance than most fans think to defeat Dempsey if they could have been matched at their respective peaks. Conversely, Dempsey with comparative ease liquidated tough opponents who would have raised Cain with Tunney. So, on balance Dempsey was a far greater fighter.

Jack's value to the game, too, was greater than that of any other champion. Dempsey and World War I increased public interest in prize fighting and made millions of new fans. Military training awakened the young men to the value of boxing as a sport and spectacle and, fortunately, Dempsey was there to provide the spectacle.

Boasts Mask Secret Fears

As for Gene Tunney, I've been asked for an objective evaluation of the man. I know him so well. I know, for example, that he had his moments of fear—and when they occurred, to help build up a barrier against his anxiety, he resorted to brave utterances within earshot of sports writers. He boasted that he would lick Dempsey, probably in two or three rounds. (Such effrontery.) It made headlines.

Fear is a common emotion experienced by prize fighters. At least once in most champions' careers, and oftener with less capable fighters, they experience almost overpowering fear which frequently helps them lose. Jim Jeffries was afraid of Jack Johnson; Firpo was afraid of Dempsey—that's why he banked everything on a swift, crushing onslaught, which almost succeeded. Carnera was afraid of Max Baer, and Max was scared witless of Joe Louis. I doubt, however, if either Dempsey or Joe Louis was ever afraid of anyone—certainly Dempsey was far from afraid of Tunney.

Tunney had the wondrous knack of thinking of a fight as a noble cause. Accordingly, like a crusader of old, he put his heart and very soul into the winning. He would rather have been killed in the ring than to have lost to Greb in the second fight, or to Dempsey in either fight. It takes considerably more than mere skill and strength to defeat that spirit. My pugilistic protégé would have to have this faculty.

Typical of Tunney's turn of mind, he decided that he would topple Dempsey from his throne seven years before he actually did it. To him it was as simple a decision as making up his mind to buy a new suit when he got out of service.

It came to Tunney while he was talking to Corporal Jack McReynolds, the company clerk, while the two were leaning on the rail of a boat sailing down the Rhine. Tunney was one of a group of A.E.F. fighters sent to Germany to entertain the occupation forces. Tunney asked McReynolds, who had been a sports writer before the war, if he had ever heard of Dempsey. As it happened, McReynolds had refereed one of Dempsey's fights, in addition to covering a few for his newspaper.

"He'll murder Jess Willard and take the championship away from him," McReynolds predicted. "But Dempsey can be defeated by speed, defense and scientific form. When Dempsey loses, it won't be because he's outfought, but because he's outboxed." Tunney told McReynolds then and there, on the Rhine in 1919, that someday he was going to lick Dempsey.

When he finally got within hailing distance of the crown, Tunney started laying the groundwork for the clash with Dempsey. In 1921, the ex-Marine was matched in a prelim battle with Soldier Jones of

Canada, preceding the main event at Boyle's Thirty Acres in Jersey City—Dempsey versus Carpentier. Tunney had put on a lot of weight since his previous fight, and it slowed him down so he couldn't get out of his own way, no less that of Soldier Jones. Several of the Jones boy's wild swings landed on Tunney's jaw in the first round.

Gene's career could very well have ended ignominiously that day. There probably weren't three people among the 90,000 souls who witnessed that dismal spectacle who would have taken a 100 to 1 bet that the sluggish Tunney with the powder-puff punch would later defeat both of the principals in the main bout.

After this mediocre exhibition, Tunney stayed near the ring, still clad in trunks and robe, to watch the main event. He studied closely Dempsey's famous shifting, weaving, crouching, the shuffle-in, blazing speed and tremendous wallops. In the second round Tunney spotted what he was looking for—the chink in Dempsey's armor. Carpentier got in there, without feinting or jabbing to produce an opening, and landed a smashing right blow on Dempsey's cheek. It rocked Dempsey on his heels and for a moment he was dazed. Far from a knock-out, but it told Tunney volumes. Gene made a mental note—Dempsey could be hit with a straight right and hurt. This was later proved again in the famous bout with Firpo, when the Wild Bull of the Pampas, clumsy as an inebriated pachyderm but packing a terrific wallop, sent Dempsey sprawling out of the ring with an unannounced, ponderous right smash.

Gene had the perfect plan but not the weapons to carry the plan out. His hands were tender and easily bruised. Since he couldn't rely on landing a KO punch against Dempsey, he had to perfect his boxing technique. He figured that Dempsey would depend on his own brain-numbing punches to stop Tunney and would neglect his boxing practice.

To repair his battered hands, he worked for a few months in a Canadian lumber camp, chopping down trees. After months of ax swinging, his knuckles mended and his hands were sound. He still wasn't going to rely entirely on them.

Meanwhile, the newspapers helped Tunney's game by constantly playing up his brittle hands and the fact that he would probably indulge in a running boxing match. It's fair to assume that Dempsey made his plans accordingly.

Studying Dempsey's Defense

Tunney went to every Dempsey bout after the Carpentier battle to memorize the champion's every stance and move. He obtained motion pictures of training-camp activities and earlier battles, as well as of those he himself had seen. He ran them over and over again, studying them for weak points in Dempsey's defense. Convinced that only a straight right, with everything behind it, would floor Dempsey, he practiced sharpening his blows with heavy and fast punching bags. Tunney's plan was to land his long-practiced blow as early as possible in the first round. If it didn't work, he'd box his way to victory on points.

When he got into the ring, he was relaxed. Dempsey on the other hand was tense and nervous. Tunney increased Dempsey's tension by taking his time as his hands were taped.

The fight started precisely as Tunney had figured—as all of Dempsey's fights had started. Dempsey rushed in ready to floor Tunney, who fended him off. He charged a second time, and again Tunney eluded him and clinched to heighten the impression that he wanted to make it a waltz con-



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Our daughter Alice is the real musician in the family. My wife and I are strictly amateurs.

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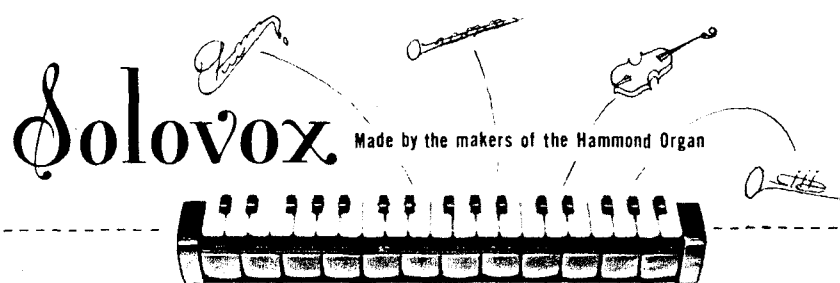
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test. Dempsey came in for the third rush, readying a wide left hook, his head down as always.

Tunney stepped in, as he had practiced so many times, caught his right heel in a depression in the canvas which gave him just the right leverage and unleashed a pistonlike straight right—the punch he had learned from Carpentier. It missed Dempsey's jaw but smashed against his cheek. Jack was stopped in his tracks, his knees sagged. Tunney could see he was badly hurt.

Perhaps if that blow had met Dempsey's chin, it would have knocked him out. In any case, it won the fight for Tunney. It took all the steam out of Dempsey, and it was comparatively easy for Tunney to sail along for the rest of the fight and cut the champion to ribbons. At the end—instead of people trying to figure out what was right about Tunney, they were all muttering: "What was the matter with Dempsey? He didn't fight his fight. There was something wrong with him." Sure there was, Tunney said; it was that straight right in the first round—the unexpected blow—which dazed Dempsey and paved the way for his defeat.

Tunney did have one weakness which could have cost him his career at an early stage. He was a sucker for a sob story. When he fought Battling Levinsky in 1922, Bat pleaded with Tunney in the final round not to knock him out. Tunney took him seriously and slackened his efforts. This was what Levinsky was waiting for, and he immediately let loose a savage blow designed to pulverize Tunney. But Bat's cunning was greater than his prowess and the ruse didn't work.

Twice again, Tunney heeded pleas of badly battered veterans not to finish them off—once against the very man who had previously given him the worst beating of his career, the incomparable Harry Greb.

His first meeting with Greb was easily the most bloody slug fest ever put on in New York City in modern times. During the fight, Doc Bagley, Tunney's manager, to stop the flow of blood from a broken nose, repeatedly filled the palm of his hand with adrenalin chloride and had Tunney snuff it up his nasal passages. He used up six bottles in all, which made Tunney violently ill by the twelfth round.

The Only Time He Passed Out

Besides his smashed nose, both eyes sported cuts three inches long which refused to stop bleeding despite adrenalin; and his torso was a kaleidoscopic hunk of bent ribs and raw flesh. After he was dumped into his bed at the hotel, Tunney passed out cold, for the first and only time. Normally, after his fights he felt the extreme tension he kept under control before the battle, and had trouble sleeping.

This fight was also the beginning of his breakup with Doc Bagley. When Bagley came to see him at the hotel the next day, still too weak from the punishment he had taken to rise early, all Bagley could say was, "What trouble you caused me last night trying to keep you on your feet." Not a word of sympathy or encouragement. Tunney had bad luck with his next manager, too. Billy Gibson, who though lovable proved quite irresponsible.

Tunney lacked the ability to hate, which might have imbued him with the killer instinct so noticeably lacking in his make-up. He was severely criticized for this "shortcoming," particularly after the Carpentier fight, which he took easily though he made no great effort to put the Frenchman to sleep. Even his stanch friend, W. O. McGeehan, wrote with great reluctance that he feared Tunney lacked this essential quality of a truly great fighter.

Dempsey and Joe Louis were endowed with the killer instinct to a high degree, as were many lesser champions; it made them spectacular and, accordingly, good newspaper copy, therefore more popular.

The nearest Tunney ever came to hating an opponent was when he was preparing to



fight Jack Hanlon, a Wall Street runner, shortly after being discharged from service. A friend of Tunney's told him that Hanlon was being free with publicly voiced references to "that bum Tunney." When they met in the ring, Tunney went at Hanlon like a gored bull. Within 30 seconds, Hanlon was on the floor, senseless, blood streaming from his mouth, his jaw broken. Perhaps if Tunney had shown more of this capacity for viciousness stemming from anger in later, more important battles, he would have been more popular with the press and public.

Tunney always had, and still has, the greatest respect and admiration for Jack Dempsey. And for Harry Greb, the man who gave him the worst licking of his life. Greb, who was later beaten four times by Tunney, was one of his best friends.

Tunney made his share of mistakes, too, proving at least that he was human, some sports writers to the contrary. One of his earliest bloopers, which could have blasted him from the ladder leading to the championship, involved the then Italian champion, Erminio Spalla. It happened at Yankee Stadium in 1924.

In the first round, Tunney found himself at the wrong end of a barrage of swings. He was astonished. He thought he knew Spalla's style well. They had trained together for months and had boxed with each other countless times. Yet there was Tunney taking all the punishment and giving none. In the brief minute between the first and second round, Tunney ruminated on this strange and perplexing state of affairs. He realized that Spalla was out to make the kill but how come Tunney couldn't stay out of his way? He managed to figure it out—every time he feinted, Spalla pressed in with lefts and rights. And in feinting, Tunney would pull back, supposedly out of his reach. It was an orthodox maneuver, but that put his head in position to receive a long secondary barrage following Spalla's original misses.

In the second round, Tunney changed his tactics—after each feint, instead of drawing his head back, he leaned forward and brought it down. Spalla's swings tattooed the top of his noggin—and for the rest of the fight, none of the intended hay-

makers landed. Tunney won the fight by a technical KO in a few rounds.

Tunney was surprised at the to-do made over the fact that he could read higher literature. The way feature writers put it, an artistic nature and boxing ability rarely are teammates. Yet, for example, Spalla, who had a fine singing voice and cherished ambitions to be an opera singer, was one of a long list of contradictions to this theory. John L. Sullivan acted in *Honest Hearts* and *Willing Hands*. Jack Johnson played a part in *Aida*. Jim Corbett played the title role in *Cashel Byron's Profession*, George Bernard Shaw's novel about early nineteenth-century prize fighting, inspired by an Irish prize fighter, Gentleman Jack Burke. Shaw himself was once an amateur boxer—his sparring partner was a famous poet—and he was a great booster of Tunney's. (Shaw had predicted that Tunney would beat Dempsey after he saw the movies of the Tunney-Carpentier bout.) George Hackenschmidt, a onetime great European wrestler, wrote a book of philosophy after he retired which earned high praise from Shaw. Jack London was noted for his boxing ability. Among contemporaries, Max Baer is still a successful actor; Mickey Walker is a passably proficient fine-artist; and Ernest Hemingway is highly esteemed as a boxer who sometimes writes. Obviously, brains and brawn make excellent matchmates.

Although Tunney read a lot of books as a youth, his brush with higher literature was the result of his friendship with Corporal McReynolds, the company clerk of his Marine outfit. McReynolds gave him a book of Shakespeare's works. Their camp life was so boring—their major assignment was to play nursemaid to a hangar full of blimps—that Tunney had plenty of time to read and reread the Bard. It took him several perusals to begin to understand *A Winter's Tale*. He trained for the A.E.F. championship on *Hamlet* and *Othello*.

When Harry Greb first heard that Tunney invariably read a heavy novel before each fight, he told him: "You're crazy." That was the general attitude.

While he was training in the Adirondacks for the first fight with Jack Dempsey, Tunney read Samuel Butler's *The Way of*

All Flesh. One day, Brian Bell of the Associated Press dropped in for an interview and spotted the book. He pumped Tunney and learned of his particular fondness for Shakespeare. Tired of the routine stories coming out of the training camps, Bell went back and filed a highly dramatized story of how the Fighting Marine had become the Great Shakespearean.

Sports pages everywhere picked it up with wisecracks and silly jeers. People everywhere scoffed—"How can a prize fighter train on a book?"

This was exactly what Tunney wanted, for it helped Dempsey to underestimate him. Mike Trant, Dempsey's bodyguard, enhanced the illusion by reporting to Dempsey: "The fight's in the bag. That s.o.b. is up there reading a book!"

A Case of Mutual Gratitude

For the second fight with Dempsey, Tunney trained on *Of Human Bondage*. When Tunney met Somerset Maugham some time later, he thanked him for the help his novel had given him in licking Dempsey the second time.

"My dear fellow," Maugham replied phlegmatically, "I want to thank you for the most free advertising I ever had."

A short while after the second fight with Dempsey, Tunney lectured on *Troilus and Cressida* at Yale. When Dempsey heard from newspapermen that Tunney had given this lecture, he pondered for a while, shrugged his shoulders, then cracked: "If it helps his racket, I'm for it."

For his last fight, with Tom Heeney, the game New Zealander, Tunney trained on *Thoreau*, which may have given him the urge to retire to bucolic peace with his books and memories. For 16 months after he retired, which time was spent in Europe, he led the life of a traveler voracious for knowledge. But Tunney soon discovered that a vigorous young man can't live on books and travel alone. So, he dispatched the book-loving pugilist to the nether world, returned to the U.S.A. and has imitated the businessman ever since.

During my extensive travels then and since, I have observed firsthand the esteem in which people the world over hold prize-fighting champions. Because of the universality of the sport, they are held in higher regard than any other type of athlete. Our other sports are not as popular in other countries. Accordingly, the great names, for instance, of football, baseball, basketball and the like are practically unheard of. But in even the remotest countries, ring gladiators are appreciated.

Everywhere in the world (and I have visited practically all of it) my receptions have been enthusiastic and large, with one exception. Even as late as 1944, in Montevideo, Uruguay, 16 years after retiring as champion, the greeting accorded me in the streets was filled with good will and affection. But in one major European capital, which I visited in 1931, not one person met me at the station or paid any attention to my arrival, although the station was teeming with people. All during our three-week stay, not a soul acted as if I were anybody other than a visiting American salesman. That was in Moscow. Tokyo and Shanghai were complete contrasts. The enthusiasm was unbounded.

These more or less random reminiscences should give the young man I spoke of at the beginning of this article an indication of what is in store for him. It should give him an idea of the kind of fame and calumny, riches and stretches of indigence, exaltation and depression he can expect to have. And at the end of his career, with me, he might think: "A sporting life may not be noble, but it's never dull." THE END

Next Week

The Personal Memoirs of Herbert Hoover

The Last Word on Holmes

MY NAME is Dr. Watson, and for more than 50 years I have been hanging about the Baker Street lodgings of my friend Sherlock Holmes, taking his guff and all that. Back at the turn of the century when Holmes was at his peak, he could size up any client in a trice. "You, sir," he used to say, "had bloater for breakfast: I know because your cravat still smells like Brighton Beach. No, no, don't tell me your name. I am quite aware I am addressing Ludwig Tadpole Tophaven, fifth Duke of Wassail-Pippin." He has slowed up a lot since then.

Modern man has become so difficult to figure out that today even a trained psychiatrist must prod for hours just to find out a patient's home address so he knows where to send the bill. In our vague new world, Holmes has need of greater stimulants than needle candy and violin concertos to keep with deducing. He finally has lost his grip, and I shall endeavor to recount the events in what I purpose to call The Singular Case of the Plural Twosome.

Our visitors had taken their leave so rapidly that on the way out they bowled over Mrs. Hudson, our landlady. Holmes watched them off from our picture window. Then quietly plunging himself full of Benzedrine, the great man turned to me.

"Well, Watson," he said, "what do you make of them?"

"Really, Holmes," I sputtered, "the woman was magnificent. Didn't think much of him though. Blighter looked like something won in a raffle."

"You have eyes, but you see not, Watson," Holmes said. (That Holmes! He thinks he knows everything. Well, just wait till those liver spots catch up with him. Then we'll see who's the straight man in this act!)

"Obviously," he continued, "the man is the owner of a television set."

"Amazing!" I responded. "However did you know?"

"By the way he answered my questions without once turning his head. People who watch television a lot acquire this habit. It comes from being forced into conversation by a guest at the very moment one must keep one's eyes glued to the screen so as not to miss a bit of Kukla, Fran and Ollie. I might also add his place of business is many miles from his home."

"You mean the man is a commuter?" I asked.

"Yes. And an unsociable fellow to boot."

"Come, come, Holmes," I cried. "Now you are twitting me!"

"I was never more serious, my dear Watson," Holmes tugged at his long white fingers. "Did you notice how our man sat down directly in the center of the sofa, taking up all the room? That is a typical commuter's trick, squatting oneself in the middle of a carriage seat so as to have space to open up one's newspaper."

"But why brand him unsociable?" I demanded.

"Had he been a sociable chap, he would have turned the sofa around and sat with his back to us."

"But why on earth why?"

"So that he could ride backwards and enjoy a rubber of bridge with the chaps in the seat opposite. Another thing I deduced is that both the man and the woman go shopping together at the supermarket." Holmes smiled so patronizingly that I could stand it no longer.

"I gather you gathered that," I began, "from their entrance when they so carefully skirted your end tables as if fearful of tipping over a pyramid of Canned Corn Specials? Or possibly because the lady kept picking up and examining your bric-a-brac in the manner of one accustomed to reading the labels on tapioca boxes so that she doesn't get laundry starch by mistake? Or was it because the gentleman walked about with his arms extended, unconsciously slipping into the behavior pattern of a husband long addicted to pushing basket carts?"

"Precisely!" Holmes exclaimed, clapping me on the shoulder so smartly that I slipped a pectoral. "You are improving, Watson!"

"Not only am I improving, Holmes," I said, "but you are getting lousier. While you sat over there fingering your violin and deducing away like mad, I engaged the young lady in conversation, thereby

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CARL ROSE



The sofa springs are broken down in the middle, so he winds up in the cave-in

By W. F. MIKSCH

getting the facts firsthand, just as Michael Shayne or Sam Spade would do it. The truth is, you were wrong on every count!"

Holmes pooh-poohed the idea, but I out-poohed him.

"The man is not a commuter," I pointed out, "they do not own a video, and whether or not they shop at the supermarket has no bearing whatever on their actions. They simply are a couple who for long months have been trying to build a home. His habit of staring into space results from weeks of peering through open studding, searching for some sign of the contractor who had promised to be around with the window sashes the first week of January if not sooner. Tiring of this lonely vigil in his half-finished house, our gentleman went out and rented a floor-sanding machine just for something to do. He has been running it all today, which accounts for the peculiar way he holds his arms."

During my recital, Holmes's chagrin was touching, but I went doggedly on, destroying our beautiful friendship and enjoying every minute of it.

"The reason the woman pounced upon your bric-a-brac, Holmes, is quite rudimentary. She is searching for something she can give the painters, some bit of color sample that is just the exact shade she wants for the dining room. Naturally, being a lady, she hasn't yet found it."

"But how about the way he sat on the sofa?" Holmes gasped.

"Elementary, my dear Holmes. While waiting for their house to be completed, they've taken up residence in a furnished room. The sofa there is broken down in the middle—springs, you know—so that no matter which end he starts out sitting down on, he eventually winds up in the cave-in anyway. Hence the poor chap has conditioned himself to sitting in the center of seats to begin with."

Holmes clapped an artistic hand to his high forehead. Since I had awaited this moment for fifty years, I admit I gloated.

"Ah, I must be getting old!" Holmes cried.

"Yes, Holmes—and too small for your britches," said I.

THE END