

Saint MULLIGAN



"Glory be!" gasped Mulligan. "Shure, and it's a halo I'm wearin'!"

By NELSON S. BOND

IT'S not so much what a man does that matters. It's who he does it for. There are approximately seven and a half million people in Greater New York. For almost any of these, Patrolman Patrick Mulligan could have done what he did, and no more would he have earned for his efforts than a careless nod or—at most—a little cash something wherewith to bathe the esophagus. But as it was . . .

Well, it happened this way:

"FLANNERTY," read Mrs. Mulligan aloud. "Aloysius X. Benedict Flannerty, who was yestiddy permoted to Lootenant in the Traffic Squad—" She laid down the morning paper with a rustle of indignation. "So!" she said. "So!"

Officer Mulligan hunched diligently over his coffee. "A slice o' toast, will ye, Bridget? There's a good girl!"

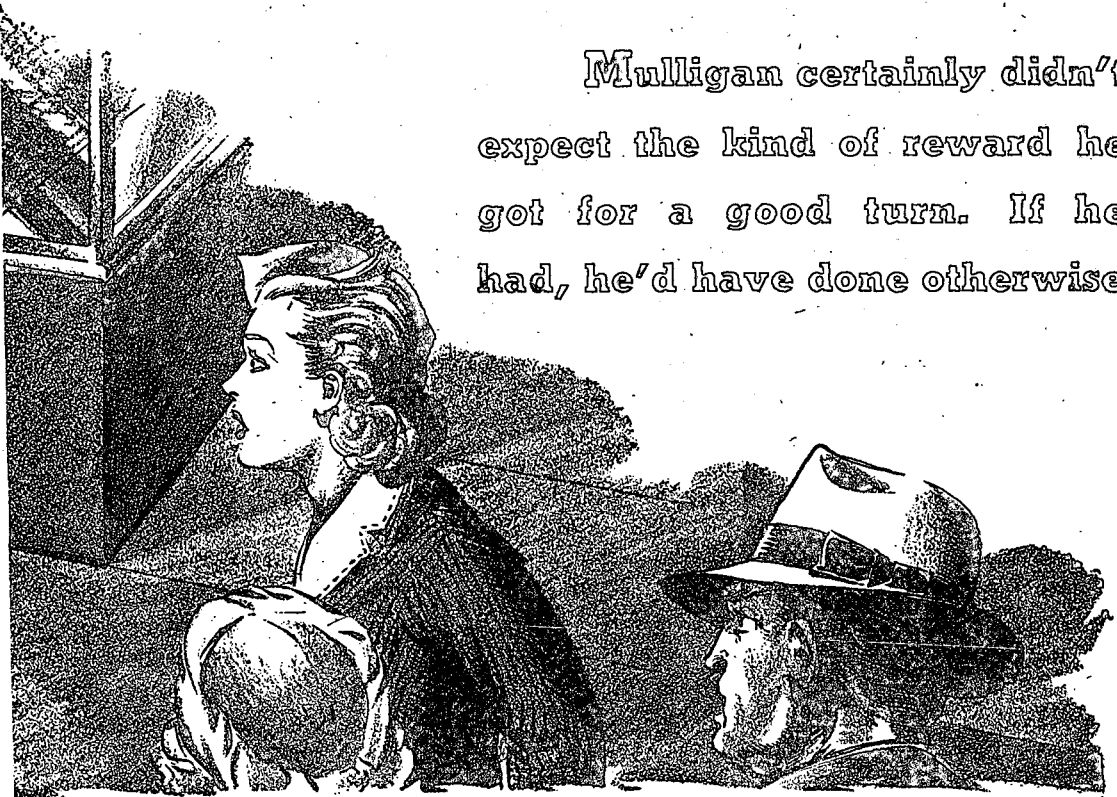
"Al Flannerty!" said Mrs. Mulligan.

"It looks," frowned Pat, "like rain. The weather, I mean; not the coffee. I'll be wearin' my raincoat."

"Two years you'd been pounding a beat," said Bridget irately, "when he joined the Force. And now look at the pair of yez! You're still Patrolman Mulligan—and he's Lootenant Flannerty, with bars on his shoulders and his pixchure in the morning paper! Arragh, what a man I married! Me, that could have had my pick of—"

"And my rubbers as well," decided Mulligan. "'Twill likely be wet underfoot. Come to think of it, never mind the toast. I'd best be runnin'

Mulligan certainly didn't expect the kind of reward he got for a good turn. If he had, he'd have done otherwise



along. 'Bye, mavourneen!"

And he beat a hasty retreat. But it was a strategic withdrawal in no way victorious. He knew all too well he had won but a temporary respite. By supper-time tonight, Bridget would have marshaled all the accusations, incriminations, and arguments now seething within her into one devastating attack . . . and this second time there would be no escape.

Mulligan sighed, methodically wending his way toward the busy intersection which was his traffic post. No escape—because there was no denying the rightness of Bridget's fury. He *was* a sluggard, a slow-poke, a stick-in-the-mud. He ought to be, by this time—after ten years in uniform—at least a sergeant. Instead . . .

"Good morning, Pat!" called a voice from the doorway of the Church of the Sacred Name. Pat turned and touched the peak of his cap respectfully.

"An' the top o' the mornin' to you, Father."

Father O'Rourke smiled, studying the corrugated brow of his parishioner with shrewd understanding.

"You look troubled, Patrick. Anything wrong?"

"Nothin', Father. Well, that is—" Pat decided to make a clean breast of it—"nothin' much. *I'm* okay. But my Bridget, she's sort of upset about Al Flannerty."

"Ah, yes. A fine lad. Won a promotion, didn't he?"

"That's just it, Father. Bridget says—well, maybe she's right. I've been on the force two years longer than he has, but here I am, still a plain policeman, an' he—Father, what's wrong with me? Why can't I win a permotion?"

FATHER O'ROURKE said quietly, "Now, I wouldn't worry too much about that, Pat. You do your duty,

don't you?"

"That I do, sir. Or try to."

"And you're honest. There's not a police officer in the whole of New York City with a finer reputation."

"Which same I'm proud of, Father. But where does it get me? Other men get permoted over my head—"

"I shouldn't fret about that. Responsibility weighs heavily on a man's shoulders, Patrick, and too much authority is an awkward burden. The higher a man rises, the farther he has to fall. Why not be content to fill a humble post well?"

"'Tis only natural—" grumbled Mulligan.

"You'll win your reward," promised the priest, "when the time is ripe. Now, run along to work, Pat. I'll drop in on your good wife sometime this afternoon and have a bit of a chat with her. Maybe I can make her see things differently."

"Well," said Mulligan dubiously, "if you say so—"

"I do. Goodbye, my boy."

"Goodbye. And—thanks, Father."

So, with lightened heart, Patrolman Patrick Mulligan moved on down the street. With happy *camaraderie* born of ten years acquaintanceship he waved to Schneider, the butcher; to Greenstein, the tailor; to Dimitropoulos, the green-grocer; to a score of other friends and neighbors.

At precisely 7:58 a. m. he unlatched the call-box and reported on duty. At exactly 8:00 he took his post where the car-lines cross in the center of 39th Street and York Avenue. And at 8:03 . . .

At 8:03 on the dot, Patrolman Patrick Mulligan saved the life of—an angel!

NOW, strict ecclesiastics may contend that this is a contradiction in

terms. No mere mortal, they will argue, can salvage the existence of a Being endowed, by Its very nature, with the gift of immortality.

Be that as it may; the fact remains that the angelic visitant himself acknowledged his debt to Mulligan. After he had picked himself out of the gutter into which Pat's frantic thrust had elbowed him out of the path of a ten-ton truck, he turned to Pat and said:

"Officer, I thank you! You saved my life!"

"Foosh!" said Mulligan negligently. "'Twas nothin'. I seen the truck, an' you didn't."

"Nevertheless, it was a noble deed, nobly performed. Words alone cannot express my gratitude—"

"Look," said Mulligan impatiently. "If you're okay, say so. If you ain't tell me so's I can commandeer a car to take you to the hospital for examination. Whichever, make up your mind. While we stand here finoodlin', traffic's gettin' all snarled up."

"Perhaps," said the stranger thoughtfully, "I should tell you who I am. You don't seem to understand what a great service you have this day rendered unto a Superior Being."

"Superior— Hey, wait a minute!" interposed Mulligan suspiciously. "You ain't one o' them there Nazis, are ye?"

"Certainly not!" answered his companion with a touch of hauteur. "I, Officer—I am an angel!"

Mulligan squinted. Mulligan stroked his chin with a leathery paw. Mulligan mused: "I guess I'd better commandeer that car, after all. You just set down an' rest a spell—"

"And as such," said the stranger, staying him with a wave of the hand, "it lies within my ordained power to reward you with the fulfillment of any wish you might care to make." He smiled beatifically. "Well, Officer?

What would you like to have? Wealth? A glorious martyrdom? Eternal life. . . .?"

"Mister," said Mulligan flatly, "I got a job o' work to do. I got no time to bandy words with the likes o' you. So, scoot along back to Bellevue, before the keepers find out you're missin'. Scram, now, before I run you in!"

The stranger smiled serenely. "Tell me, first, your wish? What do you want more than anything else?"

"There's only one thing I want," growled Pat, "and a whacky like you can't help me get it. So, beat it!"

"Say the word, my mortal friend—"

"Awright, then!" roared Pat disgustedly. "I'll tell you, if you must know. A permotion; that's what I want most! A permotion!"

"A—er—excuse me?" The sedately-dressed stranger looked puzzled. "Per-motion? I'm afraid I—er—don't quite understand . . ."

"A better job," elucidated Pat. "A higher rank than I got now. What's the matter; don't you talk English?"

"Oh—I see!" The other studied Mulligan seriously. "A raise in status, eh? Mmm! Really, this is a bit awkward. I mean, that's hardly *ever* granted while the recipient lives. If you'd be willing to wait twenty or thirty years—?"

"Oh, git out o' here!" snorted Mulligan wearily. "I been waitin' ten years already, an' what've I got to show for it? Flat feet! I thought for a minute you was on the level, that maybe you had an in at Headquarters. But now—oh, beat it, will you? Before I—"

The stranger shrugged.

"Very well, Officer. A promise is a promise; a debt must be repaid. If that is what you *really* want—"

HE RAISED one arm, and Pat Mulligan gasped in alarm, suddenly

and belatedly aware that this was no ordinary person with whom he had to deal. For in that instant the stranger's commonplace garments seemed to fade into insignificance, his visage brightened with a strange and terrible glory . . . and his lips framed a series of syllables unintelligible to Mulligan, but awesome in their majesty.

Misgivings shuddered through Pat. He cried: "Wait a minute, Mister! I was only—"

Then he fell away from his companion, blinded by the eye-searing radiance which seemed to descend from the heavens to envelope the stranger like a cloak. And from the heart of the effulgence came words:

"Thy desire is granted, O mortal! Go in peace! But beware the Antagonist, who will surely come . . ."

"—foolin'!" cried Pat. "I didn't know you m—"

He stopped abruptly, his jaw falling, and remaining, foolishly agape. For he stood not on the curb, but back upon his traffic pedestal in the middle of the intersection; about and around him swirled the flow of early morning traffic.

And the mysterious stranger—was gone!

"WELL!" said Patrolman Mulligan. "Well, I'll be!"

"Speaking to me, Officer?" asked a quiet voice.

Pat, spinning wildly, located a small, dark stranger standing beside him in the safety zone; a lean and hawk-nosed man with bright, beady eyes.

"No!" barked Pat explosively. "I was just—Get off this platform!"

"Sure—sure. No harm done," shrugged the dark man, and strolled away easily.

A thought struck Mulligan. He called:

"Hey! Hey, you—come back here

a minute!"

The little man glided back as smoothly as a mop on a waxed floor. His black eyes glittered.

"Yes? Something I can do for you, Officer?"

"Nope. All I want to know is—did you see anything happen around here in the last few minutes? Anything funny?"

The lean man laughed lightly.

"You should know!" he said—and slipped away again. This time he had disappeared into the shuttle of moving autos before Pat could call him back.

Mulligan stared after him angrily for a moment, then forgot him as his bewildered brain took up the problem of deciding what—if anything—had really happened to him—~~within the last few minutes.~~ Had something happened, or was it just a day-dream? Had he saved the life of a man who claimed himself to be an angel, and had he with his own eyes watched the stranger disappear in a burst of radiance? Or . . .

A voice interrupted his reverie. As he pondered, he had, by force of habit, been fulfilling his duties. Allowing traffic to run with the line of his shoulders, barricading it with his back; whistling, waving motioning. Now from a taxi held in throbbing abeyance a few yards away came the voice of an old acquaintance, Licensee No. 65809, Mike Dominick.

Mike's greeting was curiously strangled.

"H-ha-lo!" he croaked. "Mulligan! H-h-ha-lo!"

"An' hello yourself!" snapped Mulligan. "What's the matter, Mike? Asthma?"

"Y-your head! Around your—Aiee, Domine mio!" And with a garbled moan, Mike rammed in the clutch of his jalopy and with hectic disregard for both civic ordinances and Pat's bul-

warking stance streaked across the avenue against the line of traffic and out of sight.

Red anger blazed in Mulligan's law-abiding heart; he grabbed for his cap, in the lining of which reposed a book of tickets and a pencil. The idea! Who did Mike Dominick think he was, anyway? The very idea of . . .

Then something cool and tingly, like an icy electric shock, thrilled the tips of Pat's groping fingers. His blunt hand skidded smoothly about the perimeter of a—a something! A hotly-cold circular something which shouldn't be . . . *couldn't* be there. But was!

For the first time in ten years of service, Mulligan deserted his station. With a cry of alarm, he charged across the street to the huge plate-glass window of Shimer Brothers, stared wildly at the image of himself reflected therein—and howled in awestruck anguish.

Dominick had voiced no greeting. The circular thing suspended a few inches above his head was a brightly gleaming halo!

NOW, it might here reasonably be argued that Patrick Mulligan was foolish to fly into a dither about a halo around his pate. There is nothing about a halo to panic a person of good character. To the contrary . . . the implications of a halo are good, rather than un-ditto.

Nevertheless, for a moment or so Mulligan completely lost his head. The explanation of this lies in the fact that Mulligan was an absolutely normal man, and nothing confuses a normal man more than to find himself suddenly confronted with an abnormal situation.

Fortunately there were, at this hour of the morning, few pedestrians on the street. And since New Yorkers have by painful practice become accustomed to such peculiarities as a pyrophile

mayor and a self-avowed deity with a flair for high finance, Mulligan's appendage passed unnoticed by the handful who brushed by him, intent on their own affairs.

But Mulligan, to Mulligan, felt as conspicuous as an ermine wrap in a Sixth Avenue fur-shop. Therefore he ducked, as quickly as possible, into the murky sanctuary of the store before which he stood: *Shimer Brothers, Men's Wearing Apparel and Ready-to-Wear, Formal Attire Rented.*

"Moe!" he cried weakly. "Moe, for gosh sakes—!"

But it was not Moe Shimer who answered his call, nor was it any of the other multitudinous Shimer Brothers, all of whom were well known to Pat. The salesman who appeared was a tall, dark man with a pointed mustache and a querulous smile.

"Yes, Officer? Is there something I can do for you? A new suit, perhaps, or—"

"Who," demanded Mulligan, "are you?"

"Permit me," smiled the clerk, and handed him a card on which was neatly engraved: "*Abe Addon. Formerly associated with the Nessus Corp., Men's Custom Shirts.*" "Now, sir—if I can be of any service. . . .?"

"It—" said Pat hoarsely—"it's *this!*" He pointed with trembling finger to the shimmering circle hovering above his head. In the semi-gloom of the haberdashery it dispelled an alarming amount of light. Pat waited breathlessly for Abe Addon's bleat of terror.

But the salesman's dark, saturnine countenance never changed a muscle. He just said quietly, "Yes, sir. You wish to get rid of it, sir?"

"I want to *cover* it," corrected Pat, "till I can get to Father O'Rourke an' find out what it means. Got a top hat handy?"

"Just—cover it?" repeated the clerk. He sounded a bit disappointed. "You're sure you wouldn't like to sell it? No? Ah, well—" And he moved to a compartment. He hobbled somewhat awkwardly; he had, Pat noticed, a club foot. "A top hat. Here you are, sir. This one should fit you."

Pat removed his uniform cap and settled the silk hat firmly upon his brow. That is, he tried to. It was a trifle low. The imprisoned halo, barely fitting into the headpiece, had a tendency to float the topper from his forehead. But it would do.

Pat said, "This is fine. Thanks!" and shoved a bill into Addon's hands. He started for the door. But the clerk, moving with surprising speed, intercepted him at the doorway.

"Excuse me, Officer. Your change—"

And he held out to Pat a double handful of coins. A look of amazement overspread Mulligan's face. For an instant avidity wrestled with his customary honesty. What a mistake! There must be almost fifty dollars worth of silver. . . .

What he might have done is hard to say. Nor will it ever now be known. For at that moment the halo began buzzing and sparking like a hive of heated hornets. Pat blanched and broke for the door.

"Your mistake!" he cried. "'Twas only a five I give ye. Tell Moe I'll bring the hat back tomorrow!"

And he fled up the avenue. Behind him the new clerk faded quietly back into the murky depths of the store.

PAT knew, of course, that his pell-mell flight would attract attention. That was inevitable. A cop on the run is always worth a second look—and a *top-hatted* cop is, even to blasé New Yorkers, something of a novelty. Therefore, it did not occur to him that

he was creating even more of a mad-house than he had expected until it dawned upon him that spectators were not merely staring at him and gasping; they were *running away from him and screaming!*

Now, that did not make sense! Even in his confusion Pat Mulligan retained sufficient logic to recognize that this was carrying matters a wee bit too far. His pace lagged . . . he panted for breath with which to demand an explanation. Oddly enough, as he slowed down there reached his ears something he had not noticed before. The sound of singing voices.

"Alleluja!" these bee-thin, tinkling voices chanted. "Alleluja! Allelu—" Mulligan looked up.

And moaned.

Circling above him like an iridescent covey of alate Borneo trophies was a swarm of gossamer-winged heads! It was these who, fluttering valiantly along with him in his flight, maintained that incessant piping chorus: "Alleluja! Al—"

"Stop it!" howled Mulligan.

The chanting died abruptly. Almost relievedly. One of the grisly little monstrosities mopped his forehead with a pin-feather and panted: "Well, now—that's more like it! We were beginning to wonder when we'd get a moment's rest—"

"Who," demanded Pat hollowly, "are you?"

"Us?" piped another of the torsoless choristers complacently. "Why, we're cherubim, of course!"

"Cheru—!"

"Your cherubim."

"My cheru—!" Mulligan croaked with sudden horror, identifying his companions, now, with semblances painted upon the nave ceiling.

"That's right. We're your cherubim. And Jake, over there—" The

most loquacious of the genii bobbed his head—"he's your seraphim." He added apologetically, "Usually they appoint two, but Jake was the only one they could spare right now. Change of seasons and all that, you know; they're short of help in the Weather Department—"

"Cherubim! Seraphim!" Mulligan was glad the street was deserted. Glad, but at the same time apprehensive. That only served to further prove the fear growing upon him. "But that means I—I must be dead!"

The covey fluttered fretfully, and the spokesman bit his lip.

"That's just what *we've* been wondering about. We've decided there's something highly irregular about this canonization. You've got all the rights and privileges, but you're not dead! Of course, it's not my place to criticize—" The cherub shrugged. That is, Pat thought he did. It was rather difficult to judge, seeing as how the little ecclesiastic had no shoulders—"but *I* think there's something lousy in Limbo. Not, of course, that we won't serve you faithfully and to the best of our ability, St. Mulligan, but—"

"Saint!" gasped Pat. "Did you say *Saint* Mulligan?"

"Why, yes. Of course. Didn't you know?"

"All I know," groaned Pat, "is that I want to get to Father O'Rourke as quick as possible! I wish I was there now—*Oooooops!*" A brief giddiness assailed him; he was conscious of a sensation of flight, of movement. "Hey, what's goin' on around here! What—?" "Hello, Patrick!" said a familiar voice. "This *is* a surprise. What are *you* doing here?"

Pat opened his eyes dazedly—then clamped them shut and shook his head—then opened them again. He

stood in the private study of Father O'Rourke!

"SO THEN?" asked Father O'Rourke.

"I've told ye just about all," said Pat. "The grand *fee-nale*, was when I wisht I was with you, an'—*bingo!*—here I was." He stared at the priest miserably. "What am I goin' to do, Father? What is it?"

"If you were a drinking man," said the intermediary, "which I know you're not, I'd say it was alcoholic hallucinations. Which, looking at *that*—" He studied Pat's unveiled halo dubiously—"and not being a drinking man myself, I know it isn't. And you say there were cherubim, Patrick?"

"A baker's dozen of 'em," gulped Mulligan, "flittin' around me head like flies around sugar. Where they went to I don't know. But they was there."

"And a seraph?"

Pat shuddered at the memory.

"Yes, sir. Four stories high if he was an inch, an' with six pairs o' wings—"

"The description," mused Father O'Rourke, "is right. But the circumstances— This stranger, Patrick; the one whose life you saved. He called himself an angel?"

"That he did, sir. An' disappeared in a bonfire."

"Mmm-hmm. And it was immediately after he went away you discovered the halo?"

"Yes, Father."

Father O'Rourke said: "Then I'm afraid there is only one possible explanation, my son. Incredible as it may seem, he *was* an angel, and he gave you your wish."

"But—" moaned Mulligan—"but I didn't wish for to be made a saint, Father! All I asked for was a per-mo-tion—"

"Exactly! To an angel that could mean but one thing—a promotion from mortal status to the hierarchy of sanctification. Patrick, my boy—" Father O'Rourke frowned sadly—"I warned you against ambition. 'Tis a bad mess you're in now. And the Church as well!"

"A living Saint! The whole Calendar will have to be revised to include a feast day for St. Mulligan. There'll be special orders from the Diocese and a Papal investigation—"

Pat said meekly: "I might could make it go away; the halo I mean, Father."

"Go away, Patrick?"

"There was a man," explained Pat, "offered to buy it from me. A dark man with a clubbed foot, name of Abe Addon."

"Abe Addon!" cried Father O'Rourke sharply. Only he said it so fast he ran it all together. "Abaddon! Someone who called himself that offered you money? Pat—you didn't take anything from him, did you?"

"Not me, sir! 'Twas a funny thing, though. Why Moe Shimer should hire a new clerk who accepts a five-dollar bill and tries to give back eight times that much in change.

"Pat," said the priest gravely, "you've been exposed to deadly peril! I believe you're all right, else by now the halo would be gone. But to be on the safe side I'll give you a wee sprinkle with the holy water. Wait here!"

AND he hurried from the room. Mulligan stared after him curiously for a moment, then shrugged, completely at sea. Nor had he time to puzzle overlong, for at that moment came a flapping sound, and in through an open window came his winged familiars, red-faced, tousle-feathered, and chanting somewhat raggedly.

"Alleluja . . . Allelu . . . Oh, *there* you are!" grunted the foremost dourly. "A fine trick that was! Throwing a miracle and leaving us right there in the middle of the street. Next time you decide to vanish, let us know in advance, will you?"

"I will," promised St. Mulligan. "I'm sorry—"

"Well, all right. But don't let it happen again. A cherub has *some* rights. Oh—Alleluja!" appended the cherub, almost as an afterthought. He dropped to Mulligan's shoulder and rested there, fanning himself with one wing. "Anyhow, we didn't mind much," he admitted. "We had lots of fun watching the bank-robbers—"

"The what? Bank-robbers!" The ~~average circle still~~ wreathed his head, but St. Mulligan was once again just plain Patrolman Patrick Mulligan.

"Yes. Down the street. You sure missed it. Should have seen 'em, St. M. They were smoother than the highway to Hades! Scooped up everything in sight and beat it before you could s a y 'antidisestablishmentarianism'! Not a mortal knows *yet* that they're driving smack down Fifth Avenue in a hearse! Imagine it—a hearse! Wouldn't that singe your pinions?"

"The Citizen's Second National," said Pat, "robbed!" His Irish ire was shining. "An' the criminals exscapin' in a hearse! Golly, if I could just—" Then a terrific idea hit him. "I can! Then what am I waitin' for? I—" Pat drew a deep breath—"I want to be near them bank-robbers—"

Woo-oo-oosh!

He was.

HE WAS standing on the running-board of a huge, old-fashioned, black Packard hearse which was proceeding down 5th Avenue at the modest speed demanded by decorum. The

hearse's shades were drawn—as were the blunt-nosed automatics of the driver and his two companions on the front seat when they saw Pat. One mobster, obviously a movie-fan, gasped: "Jiggers—the Law!"

"Pull over to the curb!" commanded Pat.

"Blast him!" howled the man in the middle. "Let him have it, then step on the gas!"

He set an example by leveling his own rod at Pat and firing at point-blank range. Gouts of angry orange spat from the gun; the biting stench of cordite cut Pat's nostrils, and something like the backlash of a wayward riveting-machine hit him not once, or twice, but a half dozen times. In the head, the arm, the wish-bone—athwart the floating ribs . . .

Pat bounced from the running board to the street and landed on his southern exposure—hard! While traffic ground to a startled halt about him, he sat there dazed and stunned, waiting for the lethal dose of lead-poisoning to take effect.

Nothing happened. No pain—no rending paroxysms of bloody coughing—no visions of Aunt Nora in a trailing white nightgown . . .

He just sat there, his right hand toying idly with a tiny pebble . . .

Pebble!

He looked down.

The object in his hand was but one of the half-dozen flattened lead pellets which lay strewn about him like molars in a Golden Gloves ring!

In an instant, he was on his feet, breaking clear of the throng of eager First Aid students bearing down upon him, deadily in their earnestness and vice versa. But the escaping crooks had gained precious time. Already the speeding hearse was out of sight.

Pat groaned—t h e n remembered.

This time he had his own pistol in his hand when he expressed his desire. "Back!" he voiced hoarsely. "Back alongside o' them again!"

Woo-oo-oosh!

"Pull over to the curb!" roared Officer Mulligan.

THIS time his order was obeyed.

Not out of a spirit of coöperation, but because his second visitation loosed fear and panic amongst the occupants of the fleeing car. The gang leader screamed: "*Migawd! It's him again; the cop I killed!*" and fought desperately to claw his way from the enclosure *via* the thorax of his comrade-in-crime. The driver said nothing, attempted nothing. His cheeks turned the color of a mildewed diaper, his eyes rolled back in their sockets, and with quiet renunciation of all desires past and present, he went to sleep over the wheel.

The limousine hit the curb with an appalling wastage of rubber . . . tottered . . . swayed . . . and crashed over on its side. People came running. More people came running. St. Mulligan rose from the wreckage, feeling strangely buoyant in his hour of triumph. A wild exhilaration suffused him, his head swam, and he felt as if he towered head and shoulders above the men rushing to his assistance.

More than head and shoulders! It seemed to Mulligan he could look down upon these poor, scurrying mortals, seeing them as tiny, scuttling ants. . . .

A voice asked: "Window-cleaner, what's the commotion about? What's going on down there?"

Mulligan turned haughtily.

"Window-cleaner!" he retorted. "What do you mean— Oh, golly!"

For even as he spoke, the upturned, startled face of his questioner dwindled beneath him. He was eighteen

stories high beside the Empire State Building—and still rising!

THE flutter of wings sounded above him, and Mulligan glanced up anxiously, apprehensive of pigeons. To his relief a placid voice intoned: "Alleluja! Nice work, boss!"

St. Mulligan demanded nervously, "Cherub, what's goin' on *now*? What am I doin' 'way up here?"

"Why," explained the cherub, "levitating, of course. What kind of a saint are you? Don't you know your powers?"

"I—I'm afeared not," confessed Pat. "How do I get down again? I must've pushed the wrong button, or somethin', in the excitement—"

"I'm sure," said the cherub, "I don't know. ~~We have to use our wings. But since you have no wings—~~"

"Well, go find out!" yelled Pat in desperation. "Go ask Father O'Rourke. I'm passin' the thirty-third floor now. First thing you know, I'll be spotted by the Interceptor Command! Hurry up! Get goin'!"

"Alleluja!" said the cherub. "You're the boss." He turned to his companions. "Flight formation. Echelon right; by the flank—*fly!*" They disappeared in a flurry of trilled hosannahs.

Mulligan looked up. He was rapidly nearing the peak of Manhattan's highest structure. On the sightseers' gallery stood a lone figure. This figure cupped its hands and called to him.

"I say, there! Where are you going?"

Mulligan glowered.

"For my mornin' constitooshunul, ye consarned idiot! Stop askin' foolish questions an' lend me a hand here! Got a piece of rope in yon tower? If so, toss it over!"

The stranger smiled. A few seconds earlier, Mulligan had been a dozen

stories below him; now they were almost face to face. He was a dark-complected man of medium height, with a black, waxed mustache and a tiny goatee. He called: "Rope? What do you want with a rope? Just point your nose over this way and paddle with your hands . . . There! That's it! See?"

Pat said delightedly: "W-why . . . it works!"

"Of course it does. Pull in your stomach, Mulligan. Didn't you ever hear of streamlining? Now, grab my hand. In you come—" The stranger pulled and Pat paddled; in a trice Pat was standing firmly and securely on the tower platform—"How's that? Better?"

"Much better!" acknowledged Pat, and studied the man curiously. "Say—haven't I seen you somewhere before?"

"Possibly," admitted the dark man guardedly. "I get around. Spent a lot of time in Berlin and Tokyo lately—"

"No . . . I remember now. I was thinkin' of a guy I met this mornin'. He was shorter than you, though, an' he didn't have no whiskers. Chap named Addon."

THE stranger shook his head.

"My name's Zeebub," he said. "B. L. Zeebub, at your service."

"An' mine—" Pat stopped, puzzled. "Say! You already know my name! You called me by it a few minutes ago."

"Why, of course," smiled Mr. Zeebub. "It's my business to know the names of important personages. Particularly men with—well, you might say 'unusual abilities.' You see, my hobby is collecting unusual personalities—"

"Ah, show business!" said Pat.

"You might call it that. At any rate, my reputation is based on the

elaborateness of the spectacles I produce. I am proud to say that my establishment draws a far higher percentage of the public than does that of my—er—competitor. Yes, I've had my eye on you for some time, Mulligan. Meeting you is a great pleasure."

"Sure, now," beamed Mulligan, "an' it's very nice of you to say so. I might say the same, seein' as how everybody else I've met today has screamed an' run like they was scared out o' their wits. It's this bein' a saint that does it, you know. What with the levitatin', an' the cherubim an' seraphim yodelin' like a Major Bowes unit, an' this halo—"

He pointed to the halo apologetically. The stranger nodded understanding.

"Ah, yes. It must be very trying, Mulligan."

"All I ast for," complained Pat, "was a permotion."

"Of course. And a perfectly normal desire, too. It is a shame. I'm sorry I didn't meet you before this accident transpired. I'm sure I could have got you a promotion, Pat."

"You could?"

"Without a doubt. I have several old friends in the Police Department. A word to the right party, and it would be Sergeant Mulligan—perhaps even Lieutenant Mulligan, *Captain* Mulligan—who knows?"

"It would?" choked Pat raptly.

"But of course it's too late now," said the stranger regretfully. "It would hardly do for a haloed saint to be in harness blues."

Pat's house-of-cards collapsed. "No. I guess not," he agreed dully.

"Unless—" mused Mr. Zeebub, and stared at Mulligan speculatively—"unless you'd care to *dispose* of the halo and be a plain, everyday mortal again. In that case I might find a way of fix-

ing things up—"

"You might?" Pat's round face beamed with joy. The fact that the halo was again sparking and buzzing like a hive of parboiled bees did not even disturb him. "But—but *can* I dispose of the halo? I don't know how—"

"Why, certainly. It's very simple. All you have to do is sell it to me."

"Sell it? I've give it to you!"

"No, I couldn't think of letting you do that. After all, it has a certain value. I'll give you—well, let's say thirty dollars?"

"Done!" cried Pat, and glanced over his shoulder. A sound of distant singing emanated from an approaching bevy of winged faces. "They'll be su'prised, won't they, to find out I ain't their boss no more?"

"Naturally," said Mr. Zeebub smoothly, "this isn't a one-sided bargain. You must give me something to balance the deal . . ."

"Sure . . . sure!" agreed Pat. "I'll remember you after I get my stripes!"

The dark man smiled curiously. "I'll let you know," he said, "when the time comes for me to exact my due. But it won't be for another twenty years or so, Pat. And now—your payment. Thirty silver dollars; right? And the halo—"

"Here—" said Pat, and reached for it. And gasped. And swished his hand back and forth above his head for a hoop which was not there. And turned to Mr. Zeebub in alarm. "It ain't there! It's—"

He stopped abruptly. For Mr. Zeebub, too, was gone!

"**A** LLELUJA!" piped the cherubim. Alleluja . . . Here we are, boss. We got it!"

Mulligan glared at them petulantly. "Got what?"

"From Father O'Rourke. It will stop you levitating. Here—" The cherub spokesman tilted a tiny phial, allowed a few colorless drops to trickle upon Mulligan.

"*Ao-o-ooow!*" howled Mulligan. "Get that stuff off of me! What's the idea o' pourin' carbolic acid—?"

"Alleluja!" chanted the cherubim. "Allel—What did you say? Carbol—"

"You heard me. It ain't funny, pourin' red-hot acid all over a guy!"

The first cherub's smile faded suddenly. He glanced at his hushed companions, and in a troubled tone: "Let's go," he said. "We'd better get out of here!"

And away they whisked.

But even as Mulligan watched them disappear skyward, there came the scuff of many footsteps, ~~the sound of many~~ excited voices. The tower door opened, and Pat was engulfed by a tide of admirers. Civilians were there, and men in braided blue uniforms. Hands fought to shake that of Pat; more hands pounded his shoulders enthusiastically. A voice fraught with authority boomed loud congratulations.

"... a fine exhibition of loyalty and courage," cried this voice, "which will not go unrewarded. For capturing the most desperate band of criminals since the days of Dillinger, you are, Patrolman Mulligan, hereby promoted to the rank of a full lieutenant. And I venture to predict, sir, that this is but the beginning of a long and successful career..."

Lieutenant! Lieutenant Mulligan!

Pat's brain whirled. As in a dream he found himself answering queries, accepting the praise of his peers. He was scarcely able to bid his visitors farewell, hardly aware they were leaving, until at last he stood alone again, overflowing with joy, upon the pinnacle of the Empire State Building. On the peak of man's highest mountain, overlooking the world.

The world—at his feet! And Bridget?

Pat Mulligan, saint no longer, but a lieutenant with a great and glorious future before him, laughed aloud. There was pride in his laughter. Vanity and confidence. He had no need of Mr. Zeebub now. He had won success on his own merit. ~~Never again could~~ Bridget rail at him, deride him.

He rocked with carefree laughter, and a lock of hair tumbled before his eyes. He raised one hand to brush it back in place...

And faltered, his laughter ending on a harsh note of sudden horror. The base of his spine tingled, and a writhing something brushed coldly against his legs. As his right hand fingered his forehead, his other hand groped behind him. And in that moment, Patrick Mulligan belatedly and fearfully knew not only the price he must pay for success, but the true name of his benefactor.

For what he felt was:

Horns!

Horns—and the stump of a tail!

THE IRISH MIGRATION

THE presence of many descendants of Irish folk in this country is of great importance. Many of our great men were Irish or of Irish descent; still more are making history today. Yet one wonders how come so great a proportion of the Irish live here and not in Ireland. It is well known that Irish people began to come to America in great numbers around 1848, the question is why. It is said that the

main food in Ireland at that time was potatoes and at that time there was a dearth of them. How could it be that there were so few potatoes that year of 1848. It seems that a very tiny fungus known as potato blight was on the rampage, destroying all available potatoes. This terrible creature, so small and yet so mighty, is then the cause of our large Irish population.