

edges, the pain cut my eyes like a knife, and I feared the loss of my sight.

I forgot my coat, then, and prayed wordlessly I should not be stricken in this way; I argued with a malignant destiny that I was too young, and pointed to my life in the past. But when my eyes became clear and my clothes were brought to me, I did not feel grateful. For the sleeves of my coat had shrunk to the elbows, and the coat itself had shriveled up.

The lights in the bathhouse, dimmed by the stream, blurred. The people around me were like shadows whose mouths opened and shut ceaselessly. I put the ruined

coat on my bare shoulders and began madly to dance. This I continued for some time, feeling no shame, hampered by no restraint. The heart pounded with fierce unforgiveness against my ribs, and I felt my life burning itself out hopelessly.

I was again thrown into the senseless life I had known, and I felt an illness coming over me. I was not ill, however; nor did I wear my coat again. I understood at last why I had used the coat as a shield against a chaotic and needlessly brutal existence. It was a bitter moment when that realization came to me; but with that ended my childhood.

Medicine

By Oscar Saul, Alfred Hayes, and H. R. Hays

THE following excerpt is from the script of the forthcoming Living Newspaper production, *Medicine*, now in preparation by the Federal Theatre Project in New York City.—THE EDITORS.

(A drop represents an arcade. Six puny, wrinkled, baldish figures (before) support one side, the other is held up by the muscular man in the lion skin (after) familiar to readers of the pulp magazine. Mr. Green stands looking at the figures. Suddenly he is surrounded by a chorus of patent medicines costumed in well-known brands. They sing enticingly.)

CHORUS

Do you suffer from sterility,
Impotence or debility?
Are you losing your virility?
Don't despair!
You can still be sex-appealing,
You can lose that run-down feeling
And the dandruff that's revealing
Falling hair!
Falling hair!
Run, don't walk to the nearest store,
Buy a bottle of Squirk.
It doesn't matter what it's for,
It's always sure to work.
Take it when the weather's cold,
Take it when it's hot.
Take it if you're young or old
But always take a lot.
Then—
When the movies want a he-man
Or the government a G-man
Or the girls a Tarzan, tree-man,
You'll be there!
Don't despair,
You'll be there!

GREEN (*Hopefully*)

Can you make me big and muscular?

CHORUS

Red-blooded and corpuscular!

GREEN

Can you cure appendicitis?

CHORUS (*Very rapidly*)

Falling arches and neuritis
And arthritis
And bronchitis
And gastritis
And colitis
Dermatitis,
Tonsillitis,
Laryngitis,
All the ills that flesh is heir to,
Even some that are not there, too,
We can cure 'em all!

GREEN

That's fine,
Here's my dime.

CHORUS (*Indignant*)

A dime!

GREEN

Don't holler.

CHORUS

A dollar!
And lay it on the line!

GREEN

One minute!
What's in it?

CHORUS (*Sternly*)

Read the label
If you're able.

(Green studies it to no avail)

Don't stop to think,
Drink,
Drink,
Drink!

(He drinks. There is a terrific crash. He falls flat. Blackout)

LOUDSPEAKER

Is there a chemist here today?
What has the chemist got to say?

(Burst of smoke, chemist appears. He reads off, the

constituents of a number of patent medicines ending with Slimotto. Fanfare of music, enter a very fat man with a bottle of Slimotto.)*

REPRESENTATIVE OF SLIMOTTO CO.

I represent Slimotto
And I speak for its producer.
It's a guaranteed reducer.

CHEMIST

But it burns the tissues too, Sir.

REPRESENTATIVE OF SLIMOTTO CO.

(Puts the bottle down on the stage. It has a string attached which he holds in his hand)

Says who?

(Postman enters)

POSTMAN

By order of the postal board,
Seized for trying to defraud.
It's got to be withdrawn from sale.

REPRESENTATIVE OF SLIMOTTO CO.

(Yanks bottle away with string)

I won't send it through the mail.

POSTMAN

Out of my jurisdiction.

(He exits. Representative of Food and Drug Administration enters)

FOOD AND DRUG ADMN.

There's still protection for the nation.
The Food and Drug Administration.
We'll fine you, throw you in the jug.

(Grabs for bottle)

REPRESENTATIVE OF SLIMOTTO CO.

(Jerks bottle away)

Who says Slimotto is a drug?

FOOD AND DRUG ADMN.

Out of my jurisdiction.

(Exits as two representatives of the Federal Trade Commission enter)

REPRESENTATIVE OF SLIMOTTO CO.

Here come two more master minds.

F. T. C.

The Federal Trade Commission finds
Your blurbs and labels need revising.
You're guilty of false advertising.
(One takes the bottle and puts it in his pocket)

CHEMIST

Now, at last, Slimotto's caught.

REPRESENTATIVE OF SLIMOTTO CO.

Not me, I'll take the case to court.

(Supreme Court judge enters)

JUDGE

It's true the advertising's spurious.
It's also true the drug's injurious.
However . . . harmful advertising claims
Can do no wrong, the court affirms,
Unless they harm competing firms.

(He exits)

REPRESENTATIVE OF SLIMOTTO CO.

(Yanks bottle out of F. T. C.'s pocket with string)

As long as profits keep on growing,

We'll find a way to keep it going.

(Kisses bottle. A huge manuscript rolled up and tied with a ribbon lands on the stage with a thud)

CHEMIST

What's that?

REPRESENTATIVE OF SLIMOTTO CO.

My God, a bill!

(Blows a police whistle. Roll of drums. Representatives of drug companies, periodicals, a couple of senators rush on. They unroll the bill and examine it as they talk)

GROUP

A bill!

A bill!

A bill, my friends,

Would kill the till!

Aud bring the profits down to nil!

LOUDSPEAKER

The National Association of Radio Broadcasters.
The National Association of Periodical Publishers.
The National Editorial Association.
Assisted by Senator Bailey and Senator Vandenberg.

ALL

We all agree this bill of Mr. Tugwell's
Would make a fine addition to the laws,
Provided you pay heed to our suggestion,
And eliminate a simple little clause.
And eliminate a simple little clause!

(They tear out a piece of the bill)

While we feel that bottles shouldn't be mislabeled
And we read the section on this with applause,
Still we must remember we are all in business,
So—let's just eliminate that little clause.

ALL

So—let's just eliminate that little clause!

(They tear out another piece)

The restrictions that you put on advertising,
Though on the whole they're good, have certain flaws.
When they begin to hurt the advertiser,
Then we simply must eliminate that clause,
Yes, we simply must eliminate that clause!

(They tear the whole bill to pieces and throw the pieces up in the air with a whoop. The patent medicines come on and all sing while Representative of Slimotto Co. dances, holding up the bottle)

Run, don't walk, to the nearest store,

Buy a bottle of Squirk.

It doesn't matter what it's for,

It's always sure to work.

Take it when the weather's cold,

Take it when it's hot.

Take it if you're young or old,

But always take a lot.

Then—

When the movies want a he-man,

Or the government a G-man,

Or the girls a Tarzan tree-man,

You'll be there!

Don't despair,

You'll be there!

(Chorus swells to grand finale and blackout)

* The name of the patent medicine has been changed here for obvious reasons but will be revealed at the time of production.

A Tall, Dark Man

By Saul Levitt

"—and a tall dark man will enter your life—"

FOR this feeling now, this feeling of doublecrossers around him—a drink! To wipe the taste out of your mouth. He bought a paper at the stand. Chiang Kai-shek on horseback with drawn sword and the caption below: China will resist Japanese invasion of Manchuria.

A moocher at his elbow—"go to hell!"—that was what he said harshly, only to turn back and spin a dime through the air.

That speak off Third Avenue: the little flight of steps going down. He wanted a soft hour, he wanted to think about the words, the words heard tonight, today, the words with Stein, and then later at the club—words—and, yes, attitudes too, the voices—troubling.

A double rye and a beer chaser. The same old speak; he felt better. Of a sudden he dropped suspicions, thoughts, he took flight—faster than the coast plane to Miami. Down there with Min in the sun! The beach at Miami! White beach and that sun. God, the sun, that ocean. He returned. The trouble you could have with women, the way some situations can get balled up. He mused.

"A double rye," he mused darkly. And in the back, through the half-open backdoor of the speak, falling on a tin can—rain. Making a tinkle, a three-note tinkle, one, two, three, and down the scale again—tum, tum, tum—dee, dee, dee.

He listened, musing. Oh, Dixie!

Into the troubled thinking, that tall, dark man on the other side of him, talking. That voice. Listening to it, listening to himself being addressed, something new added. He found himself being addressed, and he hated it. He had been pulled out of his thoughts into listening, and the voice pointing gradually, pointing deeply, significantly, at him. Reasons for anger. He stared at that tall man, tall and thin and with a finely thin neck, the back of it thin as an eggshell. He felt he could crush it between thumb and forefinger.

"Just like I was telling you," said the man. "When I say that the West will come riding in I know what I'm talking about. They'll come riding in. They'll clean it up something sweet! They'll clean up the country."

The bartender put on the radio. Dance music.

And the voice through the dance music, with Heller's hands itching sadly for that neck.

"This town, it controls everything, this town. Heh! It stinks. Not fit for a man to live in. I wouldn't live here for a million. Can you imagine raising kids here," said the tall, thin man, lifting his head over the bar toward the bartender like a rooster crowing.

"You got customers," said Heller cynically at last, looking at the bartender.

"I certainly got 'em," said the bartender philo-

sophically. "Don't mind Mike. He's crazy. He lives around the corner downstairs. This stuff about the West. I've been hearing it for the last five years. Arizona and the Northwest. If it ain't one it's the other. He knows 'em backwards and forwards. He must read books, heh-heh."

The tall, thin man nodded. He looked at Heller, he pointed his finger, he smiled at Heller in a fixed, cold, little smile, the mouth thin. "I don't know," he said, "I don't know. When a man has a chance to pull his head back and pull that air in"—he breathed deeply and noisily—"when a man has a chance to breathe it in full of pine needles he's more fit. Well, that's why. You got air out there. Not a Jew in a carload out there," he said amiably, "except maybe a general store. I know if they—"

"Why, lissen now, Mike," cried the bartender fiercely, "we don't tolerate that stuff around here. We don't have any prejudice or any of that stuff around here!"

"Me, prejudiced!" cried the tall man honestly. He fell back. He looked at himself in the mirror back of the bar to make sure. "Me, prejudiced!"

"We don't tolerate that stuff around here!" said the bartender, looking at Heller.

The rain tinkled softly on the tin can outside the backdoor. Tum, tum, tum—dee, dee, dee. Over the short dark man's face there spread a faint glow. He fed his beer chaser with salt.

"I've got a right to my opinions," said the tall man. "Out in California now. California!" he said reverently. "They showed the Japs. They showed them whose country it was. They burned the orchards. They put them in their places. . . . We've got a right! They'll come riding in—"

"Can it," said Heller. "Close up." He hunched over the bar, considering the woodwork, tapping his fingers softly.

"There it is," said the tall man with conviction. "There it is!" He turned in a wide circle, gesturing to the empty speak. "Just what I mean! Interfering. Butting in. Mr. Buttinsky—ski—Levinski. You go riding on a train, you're hanging onto a strap when somebody comes up and hangs onto the strap with you or leaning all over you and you look down and it's a little peewee of a Jew. In your pockets one way or the other. In your pockets."

The beer foamed under the salt. He drank it down. "Same," he said. "And listen, George." Heller bent over the bar. He said softly, "Clean up this place some time, George. You know what I mean George. Use the flit. I'm gonna use the flit in a minute, George, if you don't. You know what I mean, George."

"Hah-hah," said the bartender with an effort, turning the radio higher.

The tall man's eyes twinkled kindly. "A guy gets