

THE FUGITIVE

BY HERMANN HAGEDORN

Lights, lights and faces, wheels, and faint, far stars!
Tumult and shouts and ever the surging crowds
Struggling, with shrieks of laughter and wild horns,
Rattles and rustle of impertinent plumes,
Whistles and calls and perfume like strong poison.
Lights! In the streets the glare, and in the sky
Orgies of tumbling and upsoaring blaze,
Magnificently tawdry. Everywhere,
White lights to keep the ghosts away; bright lights,
To dazzle maidens, blind exultant youths,
Stir sleeping demons, make the ducats dance!
Lights for the dead, white lights for the white dead!

She stood, she turned. Between the shuffling crowds
Unsteadily a minute, back and forth
She swayed, and laughed with impudent red mouth
At one man's whistle and another's plume,
At one man's banter, and another's kiss,
Elbowing right and left till she stood clear.
She caught her breath. Her hat hung by one pin
Loosely in her dishevelled, heavy hair.
She drew back, took it off, and looked about.
The crowd was just the crowd. The boy was gone.
A block back somewhere some lightheaded thing
Had knocked his hat off, and for all she knew
Carried him off with her. He was fair game;
And there were other men with rolls to spend,
She said; and chewed her hatpins like a bit,
Glad for the minute to stand still, and watch
The wild midwinter madness surge and toss;
Glad to be silent, to be free, to breathe,
To fix her hair and subjugate her hat.
Lights, lights and faces! Without end, the crowd
Shuffled and jostled past her, blowing horns

Like angels of derision, trumping doom.
She laughed to see how drunk most of them were.
The new year would grin down on many a Judge,
Rapping for order in distracted heads—
Hang-overs. Yes. And hers would be the worst,
Since underneath the laughter of the phrase
Something more real than stomach-penitence
Would stir and speak, refusing to be still.
She laughed for spite and blew her horn, and laughed;
Sending her eyes exploring for a purse
To buy her cakes and ale. Her eyes were dark,
Deep, purple, laughter-like, alluring eyes;
Torches of heaven yet unquenched, or quenched,
So far removed from earth that still their light
Beat through dark nights as from the living stars.
She saw dead eyes make answer; with a laugh,
Repelling, heaven knew why, the masks that came,
Gift-bearing for her favor: blank, dead eyes,
Gross lips that tooted horns.

And still the sea
In two strong currents swept the faces past.
She saw the boy press, searching, through the crowd,
And her heart opened. He was seeking her.
Her eyes spoke, but her lips were dumb. She stood,
Cold as a dead tree, rigid as a wall.
She saw his head a minute, clear and firm
Above the crowd, the clean and eager chin,
Tilted a little, seeking purer air—
The crowd surged on, the suitors swore and went.
The horns blew louder; whistles from the bay
Tooted harsh greeting to the infant year.
Ten thousand voices bellowed; then once more,
Horns, horns and whistles, rattles and horns, horns!
Midnight! New Year! A new life! Horns, horns, horns!

She shook herself and laughed, cold to the marrow:
Laughter ironic, cynical, amused,
At scruples, waking rather late, she thought;
And, late or soon, alien to such as she
Who looked to purses, not to cheeks and eyes.
She smiled, but through the smile's coarse mockery
Peered something deeper, softening the lines
And brightening lashes with a hint of tears.
The boy was clear and clean to look upon.
He could make even base and bartered love
Smell sweet an hour. Why had she let him go,

Pass into night and distance, fade like steam
Out of a liner's siren in the air,
Back to his own world, clean for a clean girl?
Why had she let such living eyes escape,
Such living lips, such laughter like buds blowing?
Only a little would her love have tarnished
The too bright gold; only a little edged
With ashy blight the rose's outer leaf.
Would he have missed the little gold she wanted?
Well, he was gone, sunk into night and time,
And God alone knew what perversity
Of indolence, or impulse gone awry
Had stayed her tongue, her feet. Well, he was gone.
Another purse would pay for her champagne.
She gasped, half sobbing; laughed, and wondered, whose?

Along Broadway the horns boomed to the moon.
Across Times Square the crowd swayed, struggled, surged.
Northward and southward flowed the turgid streams.
She chose the southward current, loud and gay,
Blowing her horn, making her rattle sound;
Conscious no horns were blowing in her heart,
No rattles beating madness through her veins,
Yet too much child of the hilarious glare
To walk with solemn eyes when Broadway laughed.
She played her part. About her blew the horns
In Herald Square, about her lurched the crowds;
About her beat with flapping of loose sails
The tragic chattering of helmless ships.
She drifted southward with bleak aimlessness,
Suddenly lonely and depressed and sick
Of noise and streets and drunken men. The lights
Suddenly seemed to drive into her bones
Like gusts around street-corners. She went on.
The crowd grew thin, the noise at last was mute,
Save at long intervals, faint, far away,
A broken blast, a harsh and drunken cry.
She walked, and scarcely knew she walked. A clock
Struck musically, and above, a globe
High over men and houses and bare boughs,
Flashed one and two. She neither heard nor saw.
A gust about the Flatiron caught her hat
That tugged, balloon-wise, fiercely at her hair.
She bent her head and beat into the wind,
Onward, and knew not whither and not why,
Impelled by something stronger than desire
Into the empty, wind-blown wilderness.

A Voice, within, said something.

She stopped dead,
And stood a minute with her eyes half closed
As one who listens for the fiery robes
Of spirits passing by. She knew that Voice,
That was so grave, and always questioned her.
This was not conscience. This was not a whip.
This was a friendly voice. It was a child's,
Sometimes, and now a girl's and now a woman's.
She heard it, cool and clear as bells at night.

Over her heart despair rolled in black waves.
Malicious tongues hooted, satiric mouths
Muttered, "Too late!" Derisive, leering lips
Shouted, "Remorse? What did you have to eat?"
She heard that friendly Someone questioning;
And venomously answering, the tongues
Malignantly with blow on bitter blow
Hurled defamation. Once it seemed to her
The Voice did more than question. Quietly,
Yet with assurance, as though every word
Bore heaven's great seal attesting God's assent,
It said absurd and wonderful, kind things
That were all lies, calling her true and pure
And of sweet promise—

And again despair
Swept her with wallowing, green, blinding seas
That left her shuddering; and again the Voice
Came and she hearkened, fighting to hear more.

The night was cold. In Union Square, the boughs
Crackled, ice-laden. Dark, deserted, bare,
Were streets and houses and the clouding heaven.
Far to the south, a car along cold rails
Clanked harshly, loneliness; a motor-horn
Honked on Fifth Avenue; somewhere, quick steps
Rang hollowly on pavement and were mute.
Fear of the bleak, unnatural emptiness
Woke in her soul. She ran. Her quick, short steps
Sounded like tumult of armed hosts in flight;
And frightened she stood still, lest at the sound
Indignantly the slumbering city wake.

Again the Voice, more searching and more near,
The questioning like true-love's hand-in-hand
Or eye-in-eye, tender beyond lip-speech.
She fled, despair at one ear, crying, "Damned!"

Derision at the other, crying, " Fooled! "
A wilderness of windows dimly lit
Lay stretched before her, sloping vaguely down.
She fled. Along the narrow, infinite hell,
Walled into darkness upward beyond sight,
Were faces, white things, orbs of soulless fire!
Between the files of icy eyes she fled.
Higher the walls rose, limitless in night
Above her; limitless in night before
The lights ran on to unilluminated chaos.
She fled. The friendly Voice rose to a cry
That shook her soul and broke against its walls
Into a thousand shards of mocking laughter.
Despair cried out, " Now are you satisfied? "
Derision jeered, " Now do you know yourself? "
She fled with stumbling steps and riotous heart.

Once more about her now were stars and trees,
A shining clock-face, towers; across the street,
A lighted restaurant, a sleepy maw,
Yawning behind the plate-glass door, a voice
Calling a paper shrilly out of space;
And shadowy, dim, among dim, shadowy trees
Hurrying shreds of night blown on the wind,
Figures of men. All these she saw or heard
Like people met in dreams; but still went on,
Suddenly conscious that the tongues were still,
That there was no more riot in her heart,
But one Voice only; and that roundabout
The pitiless walls had by some miracle
Been gloriously transmuted into spires,
Mysterious and holy. Like a nave
Broadway stretched out into the solemn dark.
Its silence was the silence of a church,
Merciful, beatific; and its lights
Were tapers, pure and calm as angel's eyes,
Watching the sacred tourney men call life.
She went, with lifted, eager, awestruck face.
Her heart was calm at last. Despair was dumb.
Shame, fear, derision had no arguments
Left to dismay her. With no thought of scorn
She let the Voice within her tell her tales
So strange, so full of wonder, that her feet
Forgot their heaviness and seemed as wings,
And nothing seemed behind her but the dark,
And nothing seemed before her but the day.

And now once more she stood amid bare trees.
A biting wind blew at her hat and skirt.
She did not mind the wind, she did not hear
Its whistle and low wail, nor at her feet
The swish and beat of broken harbor-waves
Against the Battery wall. She saw no waves,
No shadowy ships, no shadowy Liberty,
Guarding the great dream-town. She felt the dark
Slip like a host defeated from her soul;
She felt the tread of sullen steps; she heard
The tread of steps retreating; faint with joy,
She heard the black invader with blurred drums
Draw back forever from her tortured heart.
She gasped, for round her being there was light.
She sank upon a bench. Her head span round.
She seemed to drink the light in through her pores;
Along her veins she felt the glory rush;
And in a flash like lightning saw herself
Through God's eyes

Day arose and dimmed the stars,
And woke the towers from slumber, and the spires,
The boats, the wharves, the wagons, windows, streets.
With creak and whistle, rumble and sharp call
The City's gaunt machinery began
Slowly to turn its lesser wheels; the cogs
Met, groaning. Through the Narrows came
The new year sailing in a golden ship

HERMANN HAGEDORN.

SAUL OF TARSUS

BY ELLWOOD HENDRICK

THIS essay is not written for good churchmen, whether they be of one denomination or another. If you go to church with diligence, and like it, and believe in the organization as it is, I can see no profit for you in these comments, for they are likely either to make you angry or to make you pity my ignorance. If you insist upon reading it, I commend to you the latter alternative, because if you grow angry, while it may do me no harm, it is very likely to injure you. And it would be unchristian. This is written by one who has great reverence and love for the life and words of Jesus, but to whom Christian dogma, as presented in the so-called Apostles' Creed, or with all the particulars and specifications of the Athanasian Creed, is unbelievable. It is designed for the unelect by one of themselves, yet in the belief that, if the world were to follow the advice of Jesus, the Kingdom of God would be at hand.

We have heard and read many discussions about why one should go to church, whether he should go or not, what the trouble is with the churches, and why people stay away from them. One claims that the churches are too orthodox, while another holds that if rigid orthodoxy be maintained the whole world will in time become wise and enlightened, and we shall all become Christians of one sort or another.

In all of these discussions I think we have failed to determine the crux of orthodoxy, and I shall make bold to suggest that this is Saul of Tarsus whom we know as Paul. The orthodox are followers of Paul; the unorthodox are not. And I shall go further than this, and say that it is Paul who keeps us apart, and who is the author of what many earnest Christians are seeking to rid themselves to-day.

We must remember that Jesus preached a very simple gospel, which anyone can understand. The substance of