



## Marital Attitudes

ONE of the standard movie devices for indicating that a girl is madly in love with a man is to make it clear that she thinks he's awful, that she can't stand him, and wouldn't marry him if he were the last man on earth. In *Love with the Proper Stranger*, this device is carried even further by Arnold Schulman, the screenwriter, Robert Mulligan, the director, and Natalie Wood and Steve McQueen, who play the lovers. Not only does Miss Wood, as an Italian girl of proper family, regard Mr. McQueen, a free-lance jazz musician, with some loathing, but it turns out she has had a one-night fling with him at a summer resort, is pregnant by him when the film opens, and is anxious for him to arrange an abortion for her. On so bleak a note does the renewal of their romance begin that Mr. Schulman has almost turned the cold cliché inside out and made it fresh again.

The concern of the audience is directed for the entire picture to the problem of getting these two basically nice people married, and it isn't easy, no matter how many reasons exist for their taking the step. McQueen is a guy who wouldn't like to be tied down. Miss Wood isn't going to marry anyone who'll regard her as a ball and chain, and she goes so far as to imply that she'll bring up her child without benefit of clergy or legal father, this after a degrading visit to an abortionist, a filthy creature who frightens her into preserving her pregnancy. Another nice young man (played by Tom Bosley) is willing to marry her and accept the child as his, but at the last Steve McQueen parades up and down in front of Macy's with a sign and a banjo, convincing Natalie that he's sincere about her.

It's not much of a tale for believability, but Mr. Mulligan has kept it sprightly and given it a reasonable amount of realism of background. It's helped out no end by Mr. McQueen, who has developed, lately, into just about the best actor Hollywood has on hand. He always seems to believe in what he's doing and saying, manages humor and emotion without evidence of perceptible strain, and for modesty, offhandedness, and all-around ability could probably offer Marlon Brando a few lessons. Attention, as they say, should be paid to Mr. McQueen. Natalie Wood has the difficult job of behaving like an ordinary, average Italian girl (if there is such a thing), even though she has more the look of someone who has lived very

SR's BEST FOR 1963, selected by Hollis Alpert and Arthur Knight:

1. *Tom Jones*
2. *8½*
3. *America America*
4. *Hud*
5. *This Sporting Life*
6. *Knife in the Water*
7. *Sound of Trumpets*
8. *Lilies of the Field*
9. *Four Days of Naples*
10. *The Great Escape*

pleasantly in Hollywood since babyhood. She manages quite well, and so do Tom Bosley and Herschel Bernardi; the latter plays her brother with remarkable sympathy.

The newest Doris Day comedy, *Move Over, Darling*, is based on an old film, *My Favorite Wife*, was first revamped for the late Marilyn Monroe as *Something's Got to Give*, and now emerges as a brightly colored mess in which Miss Day and Polly Bergen compete for the same husband, each displaying her version of ersatz sex. The ancient plot has Miss Day popping up, after five years of being missing at sea and presumed dead, on the very day her husband has taken unto himself a new wife. James Garner plays the husband and has the problem of staying out of bed (for some unexplained reason) with both, until the matter can be resolved.

Unfortunately, the ately is lost, because it v ceivable in the Hollywood things to have the country office star lose her husband Bergen (who was unranked in exhibitor's poll) and, besides, Bergen is made to play such a harsh-voiced, domineering wretch that almost anyone, including a long-lost wife, would be preferable. What might be called countersuspense is injected when we find that Miss Day is also to be reunited with two adorable kids as soon as she can get up the nerve to tell them she is their mother. This takes—as does the disposing of Polly Bergen—the entire picture. Those with weak stomachs should leave before the scene in which Doris Day and the children admit they belong to each other.

The title of a new Italian comedy, *To Bed . . . Or Not to Bed*, might better have been applied to the film described just above. But don't be put off. Alberto Sardi is seen as a married businessman on a trip to Sweden. He has heard about Swedish women and their attitudes toward love-making, and he tries his best to adapt himself to their unusual morality. While the girls are plentiful, Sweden turns out to be no amorous Paradise, at least for an Italian who is conventional in morality and his love-making approach. Gian Luigi Polidoro took his camera to Sweden to give us intriguing glimpses of both its folkways and its less obvious tourist attractions. He has also kept his film continuously amusing and surprisingly thought-provoking. Sordi, who must contrast Latin obviousness with Swedish feminine subtlety, performs with great skill and believability. It's a movie that demonstrates again that the best comedies these days are being turned out in Italy.

—HOLLIS ALPERT.

## Ode

### After Reading Too Much Didactic Poetry

By George Cuomo

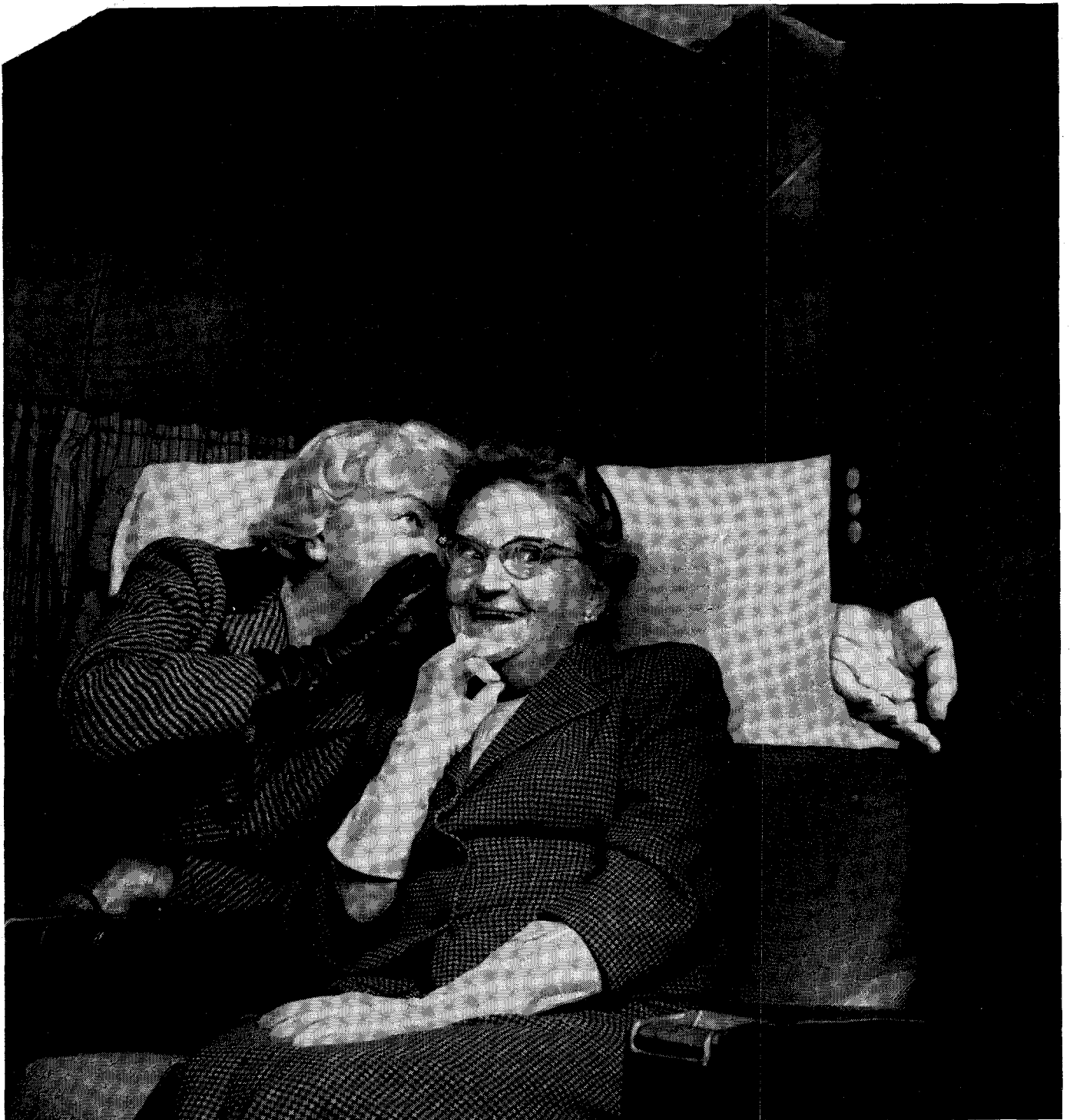
IT's such a simple rule  
You'd think they all would know it:  
The poem should speak  
And not the poet.

## Later Ode

### After Reading Too Much Imagistic Poetry

By George Cuomo

IT's awful hard to catch a ball  
If no one's there to throw it:  
If the poem doesn't speak  
Neither does the poet.



## "Sylvia, that man winked at me!"

The steward? You're kidding!

Maybe it's the atmosphere, that Italian charm or whatever. But whatever it is, people's eyes just seem to be a little brighter, their smiles a little wider, aboard Alitalia Airlines.

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But then again . . . maybe he did!

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