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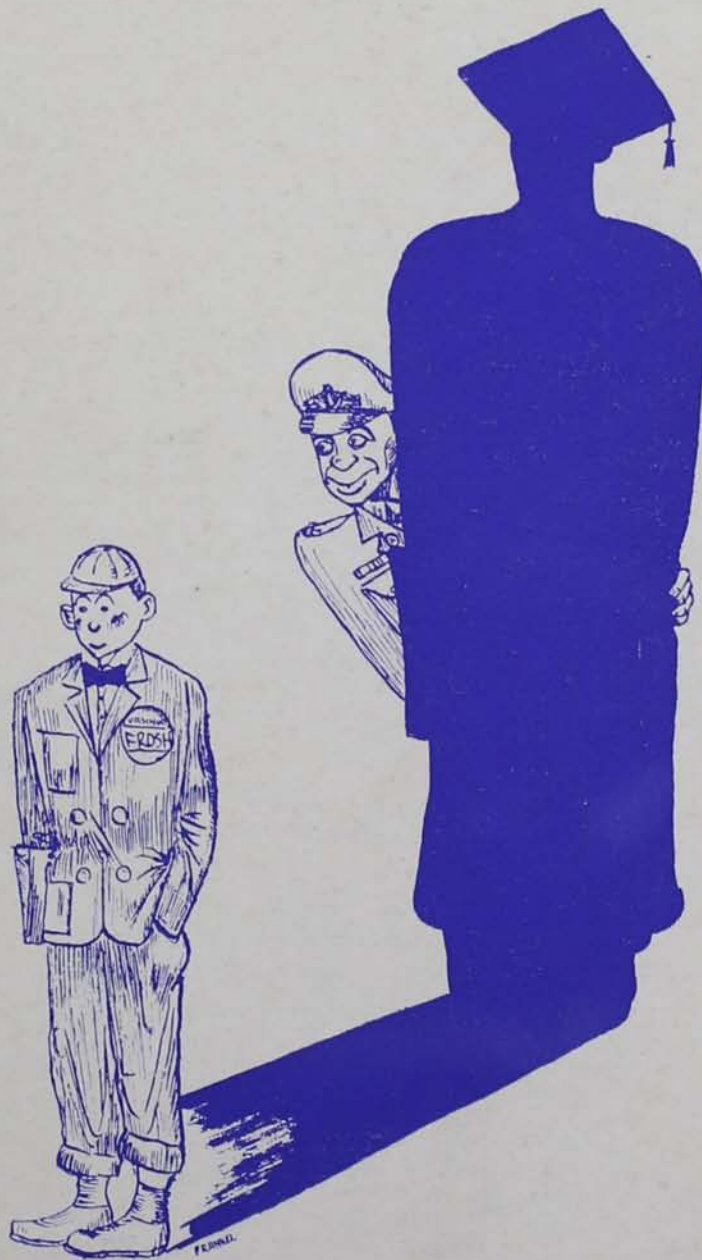
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The
LANTERN



COMMENCEMENT ISSUE, 1951

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THE LANTERN

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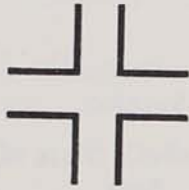
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THE TIME HAS COME

"'The time has come,' the walrus said, 'to speak of many things.'" For us the Seniors, the time has come to say goodbye, but just how does one say goodbye? Should we do as they do in fairy tales: "And so the prince had found his princess, and they lived happily ever after?" Perhaps the Hollywood ending: "Our héro turned, and with a backward glance, walked up the path slowly into the setting sun." Or the veddy, veddy sophisticated finale, "Not goodbye, dahling — au revoir." How does one bid farewell to four years at Ursinus? We love Ursinus — we say this unashamedly, without blushing, and with all sincerity; and we say this with the complete realization that someone will answer, "Oh, come now. How slushy." Or accuse us of "bucking for an A".

There is always someone who stands prepared with a sarcastic remark as his prime weapon. Military service has cultivated an age of gripers, who in turn have passed on their unfortunate trait to younger brothers and sisters. Ursinus, we regret to say, has its share of complainers. These few, this band of brothers, have a singular characteristic — they are Do-Nothings. They are only mediocre in their studies, wanting in their extra-curricular activities, and a debit socially. Yet they love to complain: they gripe about the food, the professors, the non-subsidization of athletics, the Y, the Curtain Club, the *Weekly*, *The Lantern*, they complain about nearly everything, yet never can they be heard to offer one iota of constructive criticism. They come to college for four years, and feel their world owes them something. The Do-Nothings, sitting sullenly on their haunches for four years till at last someone hands them a sheepskin and turns them out into the world. We leave, and take some of them with us. But to you who remain, be wary; to you who are leaders of organizations, strike them from your rolls—their malady is infectious; to you who teach, ignore them—they are not worth the breath expended to call their name; to you who see them, forget them—they do not merit a second glance.

So once again we try to say goodbye. We do not want to leave: we would love to stay and drain every drop of satisfaction and appreciation possible. However, we shall have to be content with our situation. Now we know—they weren't kidding when they dubbed these years "the best of our lives." They are!

"Flying," said Pa suddenly in a hushed voice, "is such a pleasure!"

"Who said anything about flying, Pa?" Gladys started to say, but she was squelched by a moist "Shh-h-h" from Pa, who was batting his forefinger against his lips. "Mama will hear," he cautioned.

He glanced around Gladys' shoulder to see if anyone was behind the door, and he added, "I meant that it's wonderful to get somewhere in five hours when by train it takes nineteen."

Gladys looked up from a bowl of raspberries she was picking over before she dropped them on her spoon, one at a time. "How'd you know, Pa? You've never flown."

Pa clutched the Sunday morning *Herald* tightly and leaned across the breakfast table. "And what makes you think I haven't flown?"

"Cause you promised Mama."

"And what makes you think that 'cause I promised Mama I would lay awake all night on a train and miss half a day with a customer in Chicago?"

Gladys popped a raspberry into her mouth and sloshed in a spoonful of sweet cream after it. "You mean," she said, "you mean you *flew* to Chicago last week?"

Pa appeared from behind the paper and wagged his head affirmatively. Then he vented another loud "Shh-h-h" and whispered furtively, "Mama, she mustn't know."

"Don't worry, Pa. Did I ever tell on you?"

A protracted groan came from the direction of Mama's bedroom. Pa's eyebrows jerked upward involuntarily and his glasses slid down his nose. Gladys finished currying the raspberry she was holding and popped it into her mouth. "I think Mama wants us," she said.

Another low moan issued from the bedroom, a little louder and more urgent than before. Pa and Gladys got up and hurried in the direction of the vocalization. Mama was sitting on the bathroom stool by a half-opened bureau drawer, her head tilted to one side and her eyes rolled up. She was leaning on the edge of the drawer for support.

"Should I get you a glass of water, Mama?"

Pa asked solicitously.

Mama revived. "I just had a vision," she said. "You know the way my father used to be able to tell when things happened at home? The time Anna got bitten in the leg by a dog, he called from his office an hour later and said he was feeling like something had happened. And he used to say that when Sadie fractured her head he was looking at his watch that minute and feeling funny."

"So?" Pa said.

"So I was just feeling that way too," Mama said in a strained voice.

"And what do you think made you feel that way?" Pa goaded, vaguely disturbed.

Mama sat upright and sent her piercing look right through him. "I felt that somebody *lied* to me!" she said emphatically.

There was a moment of uneasy silence. Pa crossed the Rubicon. "And who's been lying to you?" he asked.

"I have a feeling that someone *in this room* has deceived me!" Mama said, dropping her head back and eyeing Pa with a deadly gaze. "Did you or did you not," she articulated, "take an aeroplane from Chicago last week?"

Pa pointed his finger at his chest interrogatively. His eyeballs settled indignantly in the middle of an expanse of white cornea, and as he raised his eyebrows his glasses slipped again. "Gladys," he said, "do you hear your mother accuse me of lying?"

Mama protruded her jaw and breathed in sharply through stiffened lips. "I called the railroad the day you came in," she announced. "And they told me there was *no* train coming from Chicago at nine-ten like you said."

"No—train—at nine-ten?" Pa moistened his lips.

"So?" said Mama.

Pa pushed his glasses up by the bridge with his forefinger and forced himself to meet Mama's eyes. "So," he said, "I was *not* coming on a train from Chicago at nine-ten. So I was coming on an aeroplane from Chicago at eight o'clock. And who is to say what I should be coming on? And if that doesn't suit you. . . ."

Mama got up slowly and dropped her jaw a little more, protruding it rigidly. "Yes . . . and if it doesn't suit me—what?"

Pa retreated. "Just—just remember that it's my own life that I take with me on the aeroplane. And it's my own money I buy the seat with! That's all. If it doesn't suit you, just remember that everybody is entitled to live their own life with their own money . . ."

"His own life," Gladys prompted.

"Huh?"

"Everybody lives *his* own life."

"Oh," Pa acknowledged. He was deflating like a balloon with a slow leak.

"I don't care *whose* life you're leading," Mama foamed. "But I'll tell you one thing! I'm the one that suffers! I'm the one who takes care when people are sick, and I'm the one that runs around like crazy when something happens to you. And what happens to me when you crash in an aeroplane and get killed?"

"Pa's got insurance," Gladys offered.

"I'm asking you a question!" Mama's voice swelled to a sharp crescendo. "What happens to me when you get killed?"

"Don't get excited, Mama," Pa soothed. "You'll get a blood pressure attack."

"A blood pressure attack! A blood pressure attack! And who is it that's raising my blood



pressure? I'm asking you a question! Come here!"

Pa waddled back to the kitchen and took up his paper again. "Stop talking to be like a child," he muttered. "A man doesn't have to put up with his wife's yelling if he don't want to."

"You won't put up with it! Some day they'll drag you in dead from a crash, and then who'll be putting up with what?"

Pa was silent.

"You take that aeroplane once more," Mama boomed, "and you'll cook your own meals and wash your own dishes and take care of Gladys. You hear? I'll go away somewhere, that's what I'll do! You get in an aeroplane once more, and I leave!"

No answer from Pa.

Mama took the dirty dishes from the table. Each one banged significantly as it landed in the sink. "Did you ever hear," Mama went on, addressing herself to Gladys. "Did you ever hear—a plane from Chicago!" She stood in front of Gladys waving the empty raspberry dish. "A crash right on the front page of the *Herald* yesterday, and he takes a plane from Chicago!"

Gladys propped the funnies against the toaster and drank her milk with a glance now and then at Mama's moving mouth. Her attention was rooted elsewhere.

Finally Pa folded the newspaper and laid it neatly on the bread box. He took his topcoat from the closet and went out.

There was a vague uneasiness in the air when Pa didn't come home for dinner. Mama thought he might be down at the corner in Milton's drug store. "Let him see what it feels like not to have his dinner laid out for him. Let him have a sandwich for dinner at Milton's. Maybe he'll get a little sense."

By supper-time Mama was somewhat disturbed. And when Pa wasn't home at eight-thirty, she was visibly upset. "Gladys," she said, "go call Gra'ma."

"Wouldn't Pa have called if he was at Granma's?" suggested Gladys, who was engaged in a game of solitaire.

"Maybe he had dinner there. Maybe they gave him dinner."

Gladys picked up the receiver and dialed. A staccato trill came over the wire. "Hi Gra'ma . . . I'm fine . . . Yeh. Is Pa there? . . . No? Was he there this afternoon? . . . Oh, nothing. Mama just thought . . . Huh? Sure, we'll call you if anything's wrong . . . Y' don't have to do that. . . . No, Gra'ma, it's not necessary . . . Oh, all right." Gladys put down the receiver. "They're comin' over," she announced.

"Call Aunt Sadie," Mama said.

"Aw Mama, you'll have 'em all over here, and Pa isn't goin' to come home till he's good and ready."

"I said, 'call Aunt Sadie.' And if she isn't there, call Aunt Anna. You wouldn't care if he was run over, would you?" Mama repressed a sharp sob.

Grandma and Grandpa buzzed the doorbell at a quarter to nine. Aunt Sadie and Uncle Joe trailed in ten minutes later.

"Have you heard anything?" Aunt Sadie whispered in a mortuary tone.

Mama lifted her face to answer, and great tears swelled in her eyes and splashed her plump cheeks. "No!" she sobbed.

The buzzer chirped urgently and Mama jumped. "Open the door, Gladys," she said.

In walked Aunt Anna. "Did you get in touch with the police?" she asked.

"They said there weren't any accidents today. "Oh," Mama broke out in anguish, "why did I say it?"

"Say what?" Sadie queried.

"Y' want an apple Gra'ma?" Gladys called from the kitchen with her mouth full.

"I told him I'd leave if he got in an aeroplane again. And a few minutes later he just took his coat and walked out that door. He looked like a man that's made up his mind. Oh, oh, oh," she moaned. The tears fell unrestrained, and Mama took great, heaving sobs. She rubbed her eyes with her fists and sighed miserably.

(Continued on Page 14)

I've been thinking lately. I guess, actually, I've been thinking for a long time; but a sudden final depletion of finances has brought my thought processes to an alarming, wholly unexpected, impasse. With idiom illustrious, and a fine flourish of dramatic eloquence something says to me, "Well, that does it, you're flat broke." And something else — hunger I guess — thinking of that chocolate fudge sundae I didn't have (ah, that interim has long since passed into eternity — the while I stood indecisively before the counter at the "Drug" and with a tremendous surge of moral stamina said, "No, I will not buy a nickel coke!") says, "Yeah, I know it."

First let me explain the preliminaries to my sad situation. It isn't as if my dad is a wealthy Southern gentleman who has cut me off without a cent because he doesn't believe in higher education for women; he is neither wealthy nor a Southerner — but he is a gentleman of the old school whose folks once said: "Son, if you want something, work for it!" Now it just happens that Dad has a peculiar way of repeating old sayings.

Well, as I said before, I've been thinking. It's a well-known fact that a college education equips one for the higher things of life — even the higher financial brackets. With a college education anyone can make his way anywhere. Right? Right. Now that I'm inspired, I'll start contemplating devious ways and means of employing my initiative. I might consider writing an article for a magazine — perhaps a literate tome for the *Ladies Home Journal*. Let's see: would my college education enable me to discuss interior decorating? No. The art of floral arrangement? No. Sewing, self-taught? I've never thought too much of that particular domestic ability of mine. Tips for home-cooked meals? My family has never thought too much of that particular domestic ability of mine. But by all the laws of logic, I must be good for something, even if I am only a biology major — wonder if the *National Geographic* could use an article? —

"Mushrooms, bracket fungi, and puffballs decry botanical caste system! Object to classification of Homobasidiomycetae as parasites; point out symbiotic relationship with tree roots whereby nitrogen is made available to roots as evidence of good intent."

Wonder if that would sell? However, since such by-lines are usually prefixed by "Noted botanist says . . ." my chances for publication are rather limited. At this stage of the Biology-4 game, I'm rather inclined to believe there are two haploid nuclei in my mental mechanism that have forgotten to fuse. Perhaps.

But now summertime beckons, pregnant with promise. Eagerly, I press forward toward the greatest venture of all — this shall be the season of the "great American novel," and I will co-author it! Existing behind a facade of quietude, life, adventure, and a million new experiences tread the Ursinus campus. But my co-worker and I have already narrowed our field — around that wide arena of intrigue, the college kitchen, will revolve a tale of stirring drama. There will be crisis: "Will Cleon (of no seconds fame) be on time? There goes the breakfast bell and the milk pitchers still haven't been filled!" There will be humor: "Count, you counta for da steaks, every one pliz!" There will be tender, touching sacrificial love: "Davy, you can have my ice cream." "Sure you don't want it, thanks." There will be action: *Weekly* headline: "Two Student Waiters Mortally Wounded in Scuffle over Silver" (ware, that is!).

Finally, should all these efforts fail me, there is one last resort: work. Down to the Jersey shore I'll go — slinging hash; soliloquizing about the steaks and chops; philosophizing about the relative merits of buttered carrots and creamed corn; hustling about to the melodious clink of thin dimes and the comfortable clunk of solid quarters. With it all, I shall acquire the loveliest coat of tan, and inevitably upon my return home someone will say to me: "My dear, a vacation at the shore — how delightful!" Then saccharinely I will smile. "Yes, so relaxing, you know . . ."

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The usual pleasant day in May. The sky was blue, the sun shining, and the Roosevelt Junior High School had let classes out early—so everyone was happy, especially three rather important young men of the seventh grade, who were wandering slowly home, discussing the weighty events of the day.

Adrian, the runt of the litter, was a typical seventh grader — corduroy pants, leather jacket, and sailor hat, beneath which a curly strand of blonde hair hung limply over his forehead. Eddie, the monster, was dressed about the same way, but his clothes didn't fit him as well; for Eddie was a growing boy. Jerry, the leader of the trio, was medium in height with freckles and stubby red hair. It was his job to keep the conversational ball rolling.

"Ahl right, so Miss Rote does live next door to you. What about it?" he said, as he heaved a goony at a rotten tree stump. "Nawthin'," Eddie answered, "except I could git help in English, if I wanted."

"Ah, you're nawthin' but annapple polisher."

"Yam not."

"My sister's goin to have a baby," Adrian volunteered. He was the Chamberlain of his generation.

"So what!," Eddie answered. "You don't know where babies come from."

"I do so! They come from God—my mother told me so."

"They do not," Jerry stuck in. "Your mommy and daddy get them all by themselves. God doesn't have a thing to do with it — except mebbe to tell 'em when it's time to be born!"

"Ahh, you're fulla baloney," Eddie scoffed. "Babies come from Heaven and you know it. You're just trying to kid Ad."

"I am not," Jerry returned. "If you know so much about it, Smarty, suppose you prove to me that babies come from Heaven."

"Look, Jerr, my grandad's a doctor. He's got lots of medical books lying around the house. I read one of 'em once and it said in there that God made babies and that doctors don't know how He does it. Now, are you satisfied?"

"Maybe you skipped a few pages in between?"

"How dumb do ya think I am? I started on page 164 and the next page was 165 and that's the page I read the stuff on."

Well, your doctor book was full of baloney. My brother, Mike, says that Mom and Dad made me. And I think he's right."

"Maybe your brother was kiddin' you?"

"Nah, he wouldn't do that. He's a good guy."

There might have been a fight, if Adrian's house had been a little farther away. He gave

his book bag a couple of tosses in the air and said, "Here's my house. I'll see you guys tomorrow."

Making one last stab to clear up the subject and the air, Jerry said, "Look, Ed, you and I know where babies come from. But you keep on saying those things just to keep Ad from findin' out about it. You're shieldin' 'im."

Rubbing his left ear and looking at the ground, Eddie nodded his agreement. "Yeh, you're right, I guess."

"Ah, Ed," Adrian piped, "you don't have to keep those things from me. I'll find out anyway. I'm old enough to know. In a way, I'm glad you told me. I feel a lot older now." He grinned and entered the house, a little bit older —perhaps.

The other two boys continued together for another block. Then Eddie turned down a side street and Jerry continued alone. The entire journey was made in silence, each busy with his own thoughts.

As Eddie climbed up the stone steps leading into his house, he thought, "So that's where babies come from. I'm glad Jerr didn't find out that I didn't know either." He, too, entered his house, just a little bit older.

But, what of Jerry, the Myth Killer? Well, he just went on living his creed—Heroes Are Made and Not Born.



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As the middle-aged woman placed the package at the special delivery window, she said, "I hear your sister Jenny's getting married soon."

"Yes." Dorothy Graver set her lips in a tight line as she stamped and postmarked the package. But the woman was not ready to give up. She remarked hesitantly, "Well, Jenny's been engaged to Will for five years now."

Dorothy raised her head, and the other woman was confused by the expression of intense dislike on her sharp features. Abandoning her search for information, the woman mumbled a few meaningless words and hurriedly left the Post Office. The expression remained fixed as Dorothy bitterly contemplated the coming marriage of her sister to Will Bronson. She had never liked Will — he wasn't good enough for Jenny. For that matter, Dorothy thought that her other two sisters had made the same mistake, and she was sure that all three of them would find themselves in Reno very soon.

"Goodness knows, they've been well taken care of in the five years since Mother died and the ten years before that, when she was an invalid," thought Dorothy self-righteously as she stepped briskly along the walk to the old brick house at six-fifteen that evening. As she opened the front door her Persian cat Sultan dashed out, followed immediately by Pete, a little brown dog of no particular breed, who belonged to Jenny. Dorothy ran after both the animals, screaming at the dog in a high-pitched, agitated manner. Around the side of the house and into the neighbor's garden went Sultan, with Pete and Dorothy following close behind. Finally the cat climbed up to a low branch of an apple tree, and waited to be rescued by his mistress.

Dorothy stood there in the evening light, a tall and unpleasantly thin woman, holding Sultan in her arms and stroking him gently. "Poor Sultan, did the nasty old dog frighten you? Well, he won't be around MY house much longer, thank heavens!"

Just at this moment Walter Graver turned the corner at the end of the alley and came toward Dorothy, whistling "The Blue Belle of Scotland"—slightly off key. "Drinking again," said Dorothy half aloud, and her lips tightened into her ordinary disapproving look.

"Good evening, daughter," said Walter in a cheerful, half joking way, "has that he-witch cat of yours been chasing poor Pete again?" Dorothy chose to ignore her father's attempt at pleasantry.

"You've been down at Jones's again, haven't you?"

The happy look vanished from Walter's eyes, and he shuffled his feet uncomfortably. "Well,



now, just for a little while — just two or three. No harm in that."

"Just two or three — just a little while — that's what you always say!" Dorothy's voice became progressively more shrill as she grew excited. "Here I work my fingers to the bone keeping house for you, and slave all day in that awful Post Office just to keep this family going, and six out of seven nights a week you come home drunk!"

Walter turned and walked silently toward the house.

"That's right! Walk away! You know it's true. It just seems that no matter how much I do or how hard I work . . ." Dorothy followed her father up the path, her sharp features distorted with anger and her voice raising to a shriek.

Inside the cool kitchen Jenny laid aside the iron and walked to the screen door. She watched her father as he came toward her slowly, his shoulders bent and his eyes filled with patience and pain. "Poor old man," thought Jenny, "she's driven him to drinking now, and after I'm gone . . . I wonder if Will . . ." She turned from the door and started to put dinner on the table.

Dorothy was peevishly disapproving of the dinner, of Jenny, of life in general — or so it

seemed to Jenny when her every attempt to start a conversation was snapped off by Dorothy's sarcastic remarks. Finally, in desperation, Jenny turned to her father and asked, "How's the new type-setter coming along, Dad?"

Before Walter could do more than smile gratefully at Jenny, Dorothy seized the idea and resumed her attack. "New type-setter! That so-called newspaper of his doesn't need more than one person to put it out. Not that the EDITOR does anything — HE'S too busy making the rounds of all the bars in town. Oh yes, the new type-setter is very handy to have around — it gives the EDITOR so much more time for his social activities!"

"But Dot, Dad shouldn't have to work so hard all the time. A man's got a right to take things easy as he gets older."

"Just remember, Jenny, that this is my house," screamed Dorothy. "Mother left it to ME, and I won't stand for loafing around and living off me. And that goes for Dad AND you!"

Jenny stood up suddenly and faced her sister with a look of mingled rage, scorn, and pity. When she spoke, her voice was quiet and steady as always. "All right, Dot. I'll be gone in two weeks. And as soon as Will and I come back from our honeymoon Dad can come to live with us. Will won't mind; he's often said that he'd rather live with a wildcat than with you!"

Walter straightened his shoulders. He seemed almost a man again — his daughter Jenny understood — someone cared about him!

For the first time in her life Dorothy was speechless. All her worries would be over; there would be no one to prod, no one to manage, no one to nag. Instead of feeling relieved she felt lost. All during the two weeks before Jenny was married she was more quiet and less irritable than usual, and during the week while Jenny was gone on her honeymoon Dorothy was so considerate and mild-tempered that her father thought she was feeling ill!

When Walter had gone to live with Jenny, and Dorothy was alone in a silent and oppressively tidy house, she felt even more lost. All she had to do was work in the Post Office during the day, come home and tidy up the house (it was never very disorderly any more), eat a skimpy dinner (there was not much point in making a big meal for just one person), and spend the long, lonely evening reading or working on her needle-point until at last it was late enough to go to bed.

It was one of these lonely nights that Dorothy, looking hungrily at pictures of fireplaces and families in a copy of *Good Housekeeping*, decided that what she needed was COMPANIONSHIP — male, and legally sanc-

tioned! Thirty-six years of life in Grantville had proved conclusively to Dorothy that there was not a man in the town good enough for her, and so she decided to join the WACS — with a motive other than that of serving her country. Even when she was rejected very politely and tactfully because the induction board did not feel that Dorothy would be able to make a "satisfactory adjustment to military life", she did not give up the idea that the war effort should provide her with future "companionship". Dorothy started knitting sox for servicemen; she got to be so good at it that she turned out a pair and a half each week. And enclosed with each pair of sox went a friendly, "chatty" little note — with Dorothy's name and address.

For six months she knit sox and wrote notes without result. Then one morning Prince Charming stepped into her life — via Air Mail; Dorothy thought that it was only fair that after fifteen years she should get something out of the United States Postal Service! His name was Alan St. James (he said) of the Infantry. His letters were wonderful — rather a combination of Winston Churchill and Tyrone Power, Dorothy thought. Their mail-order friendship flourished rapidly, and as soon as St. James got a long enough furlough to travel from Maryland to Grantville he hastened to meet his lady of the charming letters", as he put it. Dorothy even persuaded her father to come home for the weekend just so it would be "proper"!

Alan St. James was good-looking in a heavy, rather common way; he had elaborately polite manners and an affected southern drawl, and he treated Dorothy as though she were young, beautiful, and completely fascinating. He spent long hours listening to her play the piano, and hardly winced at all when her heavy silver bracelets and rings scraped across the keys; they visited Dorothy's married sisters, who, however, were visibly unimpressed. "COMPANIONSHIP," thought Dorothy frequently, "is what I've needed all the time."

The night before he had to return to camp, St. James seemed to have something unpleasant on his mind. "Dorothy, my dear," he began, and sighed heavily, "in every man's life there is a woman far above him whom he worships, although he knows that she is much too good and wonderful for him. For me, YOU are that woman." Here a few manly tears trickled down St. James's round, pink cheeks. Dorothy sat with downcast eyes and tightly compressed lips. "So you understand, my dear." (another heavy sigh), "that it will be better for both of us to part forever, always keeping happy memories in our hearts." He kissed her lightly on the forehead and dramatically left the room.

(Continued on Page 17)

**IF Vachel Lindsay had known
"Fats" Waller:**

COMPOSER THOMAS WALLER
ENTERS INTO HEAVEN



(to be sung to any jazz theme with indicated instruments)

(Boogie bass on a tiny piano)

Fats went first wid his limp left hand—
(Honeysuckle Rose)

The Saints smiled gravely an' said, "He's
grand".

(Honeysuckle Rose)

Boogie-woogie blacks wid der plaid pegged
pants

"Swing it, Fats! Swing it, Fats!

Come on, ya angels an' grab yer cats".

The boppers ran an' hid der heads,

The purists hid beneath der beds.

(Honeysuckle Rose)

(Guitar with bass accompaniment)

Sisters, sisters, ya shoulda been dair,

When dat fat man wid da kinky hair

Took his seat at de heavenly Grand

An' started in on de Dixieland Band.

Oh brother, how I beat my shoes,

When he swung in on de Wabash Blues.

(Muted cornet)

He plays like a man dat was happy an' free.

He was playing fer you an' was playing fer me.

Black on black an' black on white—

Hallelu fer dis heavenly night—

An' jus' as Fats hit de final chord,

De angels parted an' in came De Lawd.

(Heavenly Sunshine)

(Grand finale—all instruments jammin')

Now, De Lawd, He knew dat Fats had come.

He heard de geetar an' he heard de drum.

He said, "I'm sorry, Fats, you came so soon,

But now you're here, com-on, give us a tune".

So, now, Fats' music is mighty sharp

With Gab on de trumpet an De Lawd on de
harp.

(Ain't Misbehaving!)



**IF Thomas Gray had known
Damon Runyon**

ELEGY IN TIMES SQUARE

The churchbell tolls the knell of parting day,
The human herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The bookie homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the Square to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering arcade from the
sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the subway wheels its droning flight
And off-beat saxes lull the limpid fold.

The Great White Way has put itself to bed.
The guys and dolls can rest their weary
bones.

The traffic light will blink its woeful red
As prostitutes and pimps walk we'rily home.

The shadows of the street are weird and course.
I see no more the lady with the limp;
No Nathan, Butch, or Julie, or the Horse—
I haven't even seen Madam La Gimp.

Sorrowful Jones has gone his lonely way,
As did the Princess and did Dancing Dan.
Their faces stand before me touched with gray;
They never will be seen by mortal man.
And now the door of Billingsley's is closed,
I feel again that endless question posed,
As Winchell wearily walks his willful way.
"Ah, Damon—Damon, why did you leave
today?"

We need your guiding hand to point the road—
And though we know you have lost your
speech—
Reach down from Heaven, everpeaceful 'bode
And show the way to us from Jacob's Beach.

I'll bet you're having fun up there right now—
Oh, Damon, how we miss you, now you're
gone—
You're teaching them new words like "jazz"
and "chow",
But well be up there with you 'fore too long.

Winter mornings in North Carolina are damp. I remember well the mysterious morning mists which would speak no word of the day to come. I remember walking through this chilly whiteness and feeling the warmth of the mess hall still clinging to my uniform and cigarette smoke whirling comfortably within my lungs. Always the pungent odor of soft coal soiled the air. As I walked the company street each barrack would, from grayness into grayness, creep past me. I heard doors swinging and soldier talk echoing its perpetual profanity across the camp.

Often flights bound for the mess hall would march by me. I remember — — — their hard studied beat as they would approach through the wavering fog, the gray swaying column as it grew near, the tiny pink faces and green fatigues where men took form within the ranks.

And they would sing, these bright morning flowers; they would roll back the fog with their noisy songs:

Behind the door
Her father kept a shotgun,
He kept it in the springtime
And in the month of May. Hey! Hey!

Thus they swung by, rank after rank of varied faces before my eyes. A wealth of noses — — — long, short, hook, snub and beak. Lips, young and old, churled, rolled, twisted about the howling vowels of their song. They were contented faces, not caring, not thinking — — — they were hungry and going to be fed. I saw in those faces the hall of our America. Here were the true sons of our democracy — — — individuals lost in a flood of equalness. Their separate souls, reflected but momentarily in the flutter of faces, vanished en masse into the fog of blind evolution.

But soon a dull glare would arise in the east. The pastel world of early morning would brighten into the cold hard shades of a winter day. The wind blew the mist into surrounding fields. Long rows of barracks would press in from all sides and I would be not glad to see the sight again.



TO SPRING

*Soft-cushion with warm air the roof where I lie;
Sift slowly the sleep sun into my eye
From the still, sleeping sky.*

*Let me look at lone trees fragile with lace,
Bending their branches with delicate grace
Half to earth, half to space.*

*Let lively a breeze below; let thin blossoms
shake;*

*Let my hair rustle back; let my dreams break;
Stir my eyes, startled, awake.*

*Bend to sky and earth both halves of my will;
Let me by living the middle space fill;
The earth is never still.*

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In varying degrees everybody cuts loose sooner or later. I don't care who he is. Maybe he only goes to the drug for a soda. Maybe he catches a movie on a Saturday night to wind up a solid week of work. Or maybe he goes farther than that and takes a few drinks. He has to flip his lid, take five, climb out of the rut, raise hell, break the monotony of daily existence.

We all by agreement jumped the track the same night—the night Dan turned 21.

Dan's folks called us up, said to meet them out back of the dorm after supper. So we did, and Mrs. Ross helped us carry the food and drink up to the room, a hundred sandwiches, big tins of potato chips and pretzels, pickles, a monstrous birthday cake, and — most attractive of all — a bottle of champagne burried in a container of cracked ice.

Somebody said, "What if Dan comes back?" But we didn't have to worry. His honey would see that he didn't, as she did seven nights a week. At least until seven-thirty.

Things were arranged in the room and more of Dan's friends wandered in. There were about twenty of us ranged about the room on chair, bunk, desk, windowsill, and on the floor. Plus Mr. Ross tending the nectar. He told us about the concavity in the base of the bottle and how to distinguish between domestic and imported champagne. Seven-thirty passed and we started to fidget, eager for a sip of the white wine.

"She's really got a grip on him tonight."

"Where the hell izze?" someone wondered.

"I got soc!"

"Forget it."

Fred went across the hall to look out a front window, came back to announce, "Here comes Rover." The lights were put out.

There were footsteps on the stairs and then in the hall approaching the door as we waited impatiently in the dark, and then Dan walked in, pulled the light-string, looked around, laughed idiotically because he didn't know what to say.

"What's this action?" he finally demanded. We replied by sourly wishing him a happy birthday in song. Then we attacked the food. Mr. Ross opened the bottle and spilled the contents tenderly into long-stemmed glasses. Each one took a glass except Paul, "the minister's son from Pottsville, Pa." After a couple of toasts were proposed, we sipped, wondering whether we liked the fuzzy quality of the wine, finishing it rapidly or slowly according to the intensity of our like or dislike for it. There were lees, so Ford and I took a second helping.

The little party died a slow death. As the food disappeared, so did the celebrants. Mr. Ross checked out. Soon there was only an empty bottle, melting ice, a cake plate full of

crumbs, a lonely egg-salad sandwich, and nine guys that couldn't force themselves back to the books.

It was generally agreed that this was a night for celebration, not study, so we retired to Sid's room for the second half. There was Sid, kopasetic, cool, far from four-cornered, addicted to Shearing and Getz, with a new saying every time you turned around. There was Doc, painfully shy, quiet, self-conscious, the antipode of Sid, his roommate. There was Fred, small, athletic, intense, drunk already on two sniffs of champagne. There was Dan, the loafer, the waster of time and starrer at walls, engaged. There was George, the old married man with the graying hair and expanding belly. There was Spider, long, lean, and laughing, member of college Who's Who. There was Tim, the "piny", short, reliable, a sergeant in the middle war, for whom every night was "loud night." There was Rick, an ex-marine with a young face and a craving after the culture of ballet and opera. And I was there, too.

Tim brought the fixings for Tom Collinses. We sat and drank, convivially, with door locked against possible interference, talking quietly of this and that.

"How come you got back so late, Dan?" asked Fred.

Dan just oh-ed suggestively.

"She let you hold her hand tonight?" "She was probably warning him not to get drunk or he'd get the ring back." "Don't you have to go down later so she can smell your breath?" "No." "Guess she's got some work for a change and doesn't want Rover around." And then Fred told about the night Dan had to take her home from a dance about nine and then go home himself. "And he crawled home like some dog and went to bed." Hence the name Rover.

And so it went. The gin bottle got emptier and we got fuller. The talk eddied around and about. The talk was of Doc's girl in Switzerland, and of another in Sewell, N. J., whose father had chased Doc out and down the road with a shotgun; George's acquisition of a paunch and his prediction for sacktime; Fred's expert job of shuttling between two girls and yet keeping both interested and unsuspecting; Dan's new way to waste time by meticulously arranging things in and on his desk; a certain young lady's designs on Spider; Sid's impending marriage, and the spaghetti and "dago red" to be had by all on the big day; Spider's weak kidneys; basketball, and the chances of repeating as interdorm champ.

The talk lost its serenity and coherence.

From somewhere, upon expiration of the gin bottle, was introduced a gallon of blackberry wine. And Rick brought down his carefully guarded fifth of Calvert.

Suddenly there was musical blasphemy on the radio and Sid quieted us. "Shut the hell up, else I turn this place into a lumber yard!" Always it was something new he was going to convert the dorm to.

He grabbed Doc "C'mon, man, let's go!" They tried to dance. Sid flung Doc out, but Doc kept on going and folded over the arm of a chair and into a corner. Tim helped him up while Sid stood in the center of the room, syn-copated, his head flung back to catch every inflection of the off-beat, off-color ululation of a bop sax. "Oh, man, that's the greatest! That's the end, man, the—end!"

When it was over we had to drink to his girl—again. We drank. Sid was the biggest one there. And then in turn we drank to everybody's girl, whether he had one or not.

The came a knock upon the door and a gruff, "What's going on in there?" Nine hearts leaped into nine throats and nine minds wondered how to break the news to the folks about being thrown out of school. I remember Dan trying to bury the wine bottle in the wastebasket, as if the room didn't already smell like a distillery. But it wasn't the dean when somebody unlocked the door. It was Bob from across the hall, with a grin. We offered him a drink but the scale-breaking beaver said he had to study.

Except for old, solid-and-steady George, sitting in his chair spectating, we were none of us feeling any pain. Dan was braced in one corner smiling his broad, idiotic smile, now and then drinking from his beer mug full of wine. Fred was scurrying around playing a hardrock private eye, with a low-crowned hat on the front of his head and a cigar stuffed in his face. Rick was quietly meditating on a girl named Molly. Tim was enjoying his liquor like a sponge. Spider and Sid were tangling over the respective merits of dixieland and progressive. Somebody, I forgot just who, had gone out for beer when supplies ran low, and Doc was pouting it down on top of the champagne, gin, and wine. He was awfully white, but no-

body noticed it until he subsided into a corner. Tim dragged him into his bedroom and gave him a wastebasket just in time. One down, eight to go.

Sid decided we should drink to Ann. Ann didn't know it, but she was the cause of many sore heads next day. And suddenly Sid called it a night. "Okay, man, that's all! Racktime!" He dropped out of sight. George wasn't around any more either.

Tim decided to leave. Said he had an "eight o'clock."

But Fred argued, "Just a damn minute here. Nobody leaves 'till I say so, see." He waved the cold cigar stub at us and leaned on the arm of a chair, still the rocky character.

Dan came to in the corner. "Hey, I'm thirsty." But there was nothing more to drink. "I'm going to the diner for coffee," he announced.

Fred got ahold of his throat and suggested Times Square for coffee. Dan was all for it.

But as I struggled up the stairs, which were narrower and steeper than usual, Tim and Spider were steering Fred and Dan into their room and helping them into bed. Fred was shouting at me to get him up for breakfast. Yea, I'd get him up for breakfast. Then Tim put Spider to bed and Rick put Tim to bed. I crawled in unassisted and lay there with the bed whirling something fierce, thinking what a dissipated nogoodnick I was.

THE CLIFF OF MORALITY

*I watched a man
Climb the cliff of Morality.
When he got to the top
And reached out to shake hands
With God — he fell.*

SAM CLOVER



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UP IN THE AIR

(Continued from Page 5)

"Hasn't he never stayed out this late before? Maybe he's down at the drug store or something," Uncle Joe hinted.

"Maybe he went to a bar and got drunk," Aunt Anna said helpfully.

Everybody sat down and there was a period of uncomfortable silence permeated with anxiety. Aunt Sadie crossed her plump arms on her bosom and stared ahead as if transfixed. Aunt Anna sat primly with her hands clasped, like the person who could be counted on to go stoically to identify the corpse. The room was getting warm. Uncle Joe squirmed and Granpa fidgeted restlessly. When the telephone rang at nine-thirty everybody jumped. Mama had her hand on the receiver before it purred a second time.

"Hello?" Her voice quavered. "Oh." She covered the receiver with her hand and called out to the room, "It's Mrs. Lasky." "No, we didn't hear yet. How did you know? . . . Oh . . . Yes, they got here about half an hour ago . . . Certainly. Certainly I'll let you know . . . Yes . . . No. Thank you for calling. Goodbye." She laid the receiver on the hook sadly. "She says she saw Eadie and Joe on the way up, so she called to find out if Pa's found yet. Sadie?"

Aunt Sadie unfolded her fat arms and jerked to attention.

"Should we go around to the bars, do you think?"

"Of course not. He's not a drinking man."

"But after what I said to him this morning. Do you—do you think he might have done something—rash?"

"Like what?" Aunt Sadie whispered frightened.

"I mean, if he isn't in by morning . . ." Mama's chest heaved with uncontrolled sobbing. "Should we have them drag the river?" Her last words were drowned.

"God!" said Aunt Sadie, lifting her bulk from the sofa with a great effort. "Why must you think of things like that when it isn't necessary?" She fell back with a resounding bounce.

Aunt Anna tightened her lips. "Well, you must be prepared for the worst. You can never tell, you know. You can never tell."

"I'll go down to the police station and hang around for news." Uncle Joe offered. Mama threw him a grateful look through her tears. He buttoned his collar and tugged at the bottom of his jacket. "I'll call if anything breaks," he said, and escaped from the room.

"We'll wait a little longer," Aunt Anna said, then there'd better be some action. It's almost ten o'clock."

"Yes," Mama echoed. "Then there'd better

be some action."

Another long silence. Gladys got a deck of cards from the smoking stand and unplugged the radio. "I'm taking it upstairs," she explained. "Fred Allen's on."

No one answered. Grandpa burst forth inopportunely with a loud snore. Grandma punched him with her elbow and the snoring ceased. There was only the sound of Mama's hoarse whimpering.

Suddenly there was a click in the front door, and a key turned in the lock. The door slammed, and Pa was standing in the room, his cheeks pink from the cool air. "Hello," he said.

There was mute amazement, as if Pa's chubby figure were not at all real. Aunt Anna looked as if she had identified the corpse.

"Where," Aunt Sadie demanded, "have you been?"

"What's going on here?" Pa said, pulling at his ear-lobe. "A party or something?"

Mama jumped up, wheezing. "A party?" she cried. "He goes away in the morning and stays out till all hours, and he expects you shouldn't get worried. 'A party!'" She sank down again, moaning.

"Hi, Pa." It was Gladys, coming through for another apple.

"Hi, Gladys," Pa answered cheerfully. He turned to Mama. "So you were worried?"

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"Tell me this minute where you were," Mama ordered. "I've been picturing you under a trolley car and drowned in the river for a whole day, and I think I deserve an explanation!"

"Yes," said Aunt Anna. "She certainly does."

Grandpa had opened his eyes when Pa came in, but they were closed again, and he was dozing quietly. The others were awaiting the forthcoming explanation.

"I," Pa announced, "was in the moving pikchurs." He took off his coat while everybody waited. "I met Olly and his wife and I had supper with them at the diner. We talked a while and then I came home. And that's all," he finished, after a shocked silence.

Grandma gasped. "You were in the movies? And you didn't even call your wife to say you wouldn't be home for dinner?"

Pa took a cigar out of his coat pocket before he hung it up. "Nope," he said.

Grandma gasped again.

"And what's more, if sometimes I don't want to come home for supper, I don't come home. And if my wife don't feel like fixing me something to eat when I come in, I'll eat out. And besides, if someone feels she can eavesdrop on my conversations with my daughter, I want to tell her now that it's just as bad as worrying somebody; and when someone says she's got visions when all she's got is information from the railway office, no one is going to accuse me of lying!"

The women gaped in amazement at this bald assertion of masculine independence. Grandpa opened one eye, and twinkled it approvingly.

Pa got out some matches and settled down on the sofa next to Grandma. "Yup," he said to her. "Everybody's got a right to run his own life. A man's gotta stand up for his rights. No woman is going to run me," he said, wagging his finger at Grandma. Grandpa opened both eyes and grinned.

AN EVENING DRIVE

*The driving of a new car
On an old river drive
Is the seeing at twilight
Of earth burned alive.*

*The wayside willows
That pass one by one
Are charcoal scorched dark
From a red setting sun.*

*The river-lapped islands
The waves pale and wan
Are ashes left after
The day flame is gone,*

*—Are ashes still smoking
Still misty and blue,
Quenched out of all flaming
By buckets of dew.*

*The turning on of new lights
Is the lighting of new flames
In an old river drive
To keep day alive.*

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*I saw her once before—standing in the nation's doorway,
Like a governess whose duty is to say the last good-by.
As we passed her in the twilight her great arm was raised in blessing,
And the nation lay behind her, looming up against the sky.*

*Now again I see her standing—in the harbor's misty morning,
Like a mother who is watching for her children to return.
As we move in, slowly toward her, her great arm is raised in welcome,
And we bow our heads in silence as we feel her great concern.*

*For we know that she has been there—through the years that we were absent,
Watching armies move to battle, counting effort, counting cost.
And, at last, when it is finished, like the Biblical Good Shepherd,
Turns her back upon the nation — seeking only those she lost.*

LOIS GLESSNER



BEGONE

*Here!
You little urchin,
Begone!*

*Your coarse laughter is older than your years.
Begone now!
Leave us alone.*

SAM CLOVER

LIMERICK WITH A LEER

*There once was a young girl named Sally
Who used to make love in the alley.
She got quite promiscu'us
Among the hibiscus.
So now she's the "high spot" of Bali.*

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*A gourmet with belly capacious
Said his living was what you'd call gracious.
After eating the bed
And the mattress he said,
"I'd no idea insides were so spacious!"*

*A farmer who hated things classic
Buried all his books Hom'ric and Sapphic.
When his wife asked, "Why hide
These good books?" he replied,
"Why, I thought they were all pornographic!"*

ROBERT JORDAN

IF AT FIRST

(Continued from Page 9)

In the morning Dorothy regretfully said goodby to Alan St. James and resumed the humdrum existence which he had briefly interrupted, except for one thing — she stopped knitting sox. Even the most curious busybodies of Grantville were unable to pry any information from her, and so they concluded that Dorothy was hiding a broken heart. The truth was that she had rationalized the whole affair to the point that she decided St. James had been right — he was not good enough for Dorothy Graver! Rather than discouraging her it had only made her more determined; after all, her thirty-seventh birthday was approaching rapidly.

Strangely enough, it was this imminent birthday which provided Dorothy with her next prospect. Henry Branch, a widower with two teen-age daughters, was a mail-clerk on one of the trains which ran regularly through Grantville. He often had long conversations with the Grantville mail-carrier, who was a garrulous old man with match-making tendencies. One night Henry was feeling particularly sorry for himself — his housekeeper had left, his daughters were being difficult, and all his shorts needed buttons sewn on. "Just think," he said mornfully, "on July twenty-ninth I'll be forty-five years old, and I've got so many troubles that I probably won't last until I'm fifty. Never realized a wife was so convenient 'til the gas stove blew up a year and a half ago."

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"Now ain't that an unusual coincidence! There's a girl works at the office whose birthday is July twenty-ninth too." The old mail-carrier looked furtively at Henry and, imagining that he saw signs of interest, continued, "She ain't too young, neither. 'Bout forty, I guess, and by the time a girl's that old she ain't too particular when it comes to gettin' married."

Now Henry was interested. The mail-carrier readily told him Dorothy's name, address, and other vital statistics. On July twenty-ninth a dozen red roses arrived at the Post Office for Dorothy along with a note in which Henry Branch said he hoped Miss Graver "will not think it too forward of me, but since by a happy coincidence our birthdays fall on the same date perhaps you will forgive the very respectful remembrance of it from a lonely man." Dorothy did not think it at all forward, and she decided that the only "proper" and friendly thing to do was to write a little "thank-you note" to Mr. Branch. And then Henry wrote to say that he was glad she had not been offended.

Eventually he arranged to spend his three days off in Grantville. He decided that Dorothy was not too attractive, but that she would probably make a better housekeeper and a stricter stepmother because of it. Henry did not care for the way she dressed either, but he thought to himself, "At least she won't spend a lot of money on clothes, and we won't go out much anyway." After the third time he had been in Grantville, Henry wrote to Dorothy and invited her to visit him and his family in New York over Labor Day weekend.

Especially for the occasion Dorothy bought a black cart-wheel hat and a bright yellow dress with a plunging neckline; she was a little hurt because Henry made no comment on her appearance when he met her in New York, but she thought, "Oh well, he's been married once before."

The Branch home was half of a two-family dwelling in a respectable but unattractive part of the city; however, Dorothy decided that this was unimportant when compared with the fact that Henry owned his half. Inside, the house was drab and colorless. Although the furniture and the rugs were badly worn, one could tell instinctively that the Branches had not spent much time at home recently. Dorothy felt sorry for Henry and very optimistic for herself; her long face became even longer, and she said softly, "You poor, poor man."

"You can't imagine how hard it is for a man and two children to struggle along without a wife and mother. It's been a year and a half now — I guess that's sort of soon to think about getting married again, but the girls need a woman around."

Dorothy made a few cooing, sympathetic sounds, and tenderly smoothed Henry's thinning hair. This affected him so much that he clumsily put his arm around her bony shoulders, swallowing painfully, and began in a faltering voice, "Oh Dorothy, if only you . . ."

"Dad, we're home!" Anne and Elaine were putting their tennis rackets in the hall closet. Henry withdrew his arm, and although Dorothy was eager to meet his daughters she could not help thinking that they might have stayed out just a little longer.

Dorothy was surprised (and slightly resentful) to see that they were both very attractive girls — they did not look a bit like Henry! Anne and Elaine were very cordial to Dorothy; they decided that she was harmless in a dull sort of way. And at sixteen and seventeen they were tired of assuming responsibility for the house when their father was working — they had too many other things to do.

By Sunday morning Dorothy felt so very much at home that when Henry mildly reproved the girls for staying out so late Saturday night she agreed that one-thirty was rather late. "This family needs a woman to manage things." She remarked with a smile. Elaine and Anne exchanged apprehensive glances, unnoticed by Dorothy, who was engrossed in her subject. "You see," she continued, "girls your age ought to have someone to tell them what is proper and to give them little hints about their appearances. Anne, dear, I know you won't mind my telling you that that shade of lipstick is too dark; a light pink is much more appropriate for a girl your age. But then, you couldn't be expected to know that without a mother to guide you."

Anne looked as though she did mind, but she politely refrained from answering. Before Dorothy could resume her lecture, the girls excused themselves and went into the kitchen to wash the dishes — and to talk things over. They could see by this time that Dorothy was not "harmless", and they decided that they would rather continue to keep house for their father than be "managed" by Dorothy. Because Elaine was older she assumed the task of telling their father how they felt, and, feeling that there was no time to lose, as soon as Dorothy went upstairs Elaine approached him.

"Daddy, Anne and I don't think it's very nice of Miss Graver to criticize us — it looks as though she doesn't think you and Mother brought us up very well."

Henry scratched his head thoughtfully. "Well," he said, "I guess she is a little bossy, but I thought you girls would like to have a woman around the house. It doesn't seem fair for you to have so much work and responsibility at your ages; you can't have much fun."

Elaine saw at once that this was a perfect opportunity. She put her arms around her father, laid her head on his shoulder, and said in a sweetly reproving manner, "Why Daddy, you know that Anne and I don't mind keeping house for you; after all, we're your DAUGHTERS. And besides, she'd nag at you too, and then none of us would have any fun any more."

Pleased at this display of daughterly affection, Henry smiled at Elaine and said comfortingly, "Don't worry, honey. I'll never marry a woman whom my little girls don't like." Elaine skillfully managed to conceal her feelings of triumph, and only said, "Thank you, Daddy — I'm SO glad that you love Anne and me best!"

During the remainder of her visit, Dorothy felt somehow that Henry's attitude had changed, although she could not understand why. She suspected that it might be because she had complained once or twice about his "smelly old pipe", but she thought, "I won't say any more about it now — I can always attend to that after we're married."

Henry was friendly but rather distant when he said goodbye at the railroad station, and the answer which he wrote to Dorothy's "thank-you note" was the same way. Dorothy began to worry slightly, so she invited Henry to come to Grantville for a weekend. This time she did not even receive an answer. Dorothy could not imagine what had happened — everything had been coming along so beautifully! She wondered if she should write to him again . . .

While she was still debating the idea, an event happened which enabled Dorothy to discard her plans for the recapture of Henry Branch. A traveling beer salesman kept coming into the Post Office every two weeks and asking Dorothy to go out with him. He was short, fat, and greasy, but he seemed to have a "nice personality", as Dorothy told herself. "If only he didn't sell BEER," she thought, "but maybe he would get another job if I were tactful about it."

And so Dorothy began mapping out strategy for her next campaign!

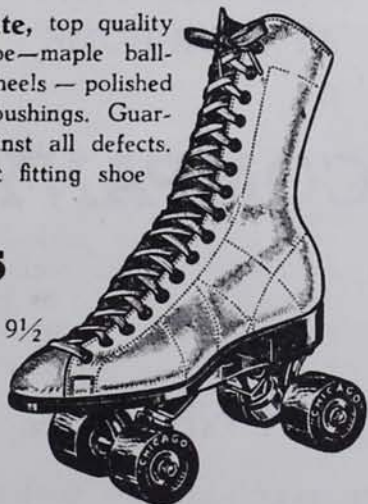
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