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Summer Issue

'49

URSINUS COLLEGE



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THE LANTERN

SUMMER ISSUE, 1949

Vol. XVII, No. 3

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*I spoke a word
And no one heard;
I wrote a word,
And no one cared
Or seemed to heed;
But after half a score of years
It blossomed in a fragrant deed.
Preachers and teachers all are we,*

*Sowers of seed unconsciously.
Our hearers are beyond our ken,
Yet all we give may come again
With usury of joy or pain.
We never know
To what one little word may grow.
See to it, then, that all your seeds
Be such as bring forth noble deeds.*

JOHN OXENHAM

CONTENTS

PROSE—

All the Silver in Taxco.....	3
The Fall	4
Parlor Games	6
Something There Is	7
Friday Night	7

POETRY—

Evening	5
Checker-Board Country	6
A Noise	8
Expected Up In Heaven Today.....	8
When Time Has Torn My Youth.....	9
Impression of Death	9

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Editorial

SPRING flows along in its listless fashion and Summer will soon be with us once again. One might say that Spring dies and Summer is born anew. Thus the inevitable pattern of the seasons unfolds and our lives, in a like manner, change with them. Many of us will this year move on from a sheltered and sequestered college existence to a life that is, questionably, a better one. Perhaps never again will our friendships number so many, our tears be so few. Yet, we shall find that ours is a better life, for we will know how to look between the narrow crevices of our destiny to grasp and partake of the finer things.

It is easy to be cynical about this new life, as many of us have been. A generation well schooled in all that is bitter, we have seen too much of the strange barbarism of the human race in our impressionable youth. But our path ahead lies clear—the familiar one that others have trod. In a few years life will be more serene as we mellow with the passing of time and look back fondly on these better days. We shall look back, and remember, and say . . . thank you. That was good.

DALE C. WHITE,
Editor-in-Chief

ALL THE SILVER IN TAXCO

NORMAN B. REED

RICARDO HERNANDEZ MURILLO, leaning there on the stone wall by the cobbled path along the side of the mountain, let his gaze wander out over the broad valley before him. Dark pools of shadows were forming as evening drew near, and the colors of the landscape were fading into a uniform gray. Directly below him was Taxco, one of the oldest of Mexican mining towns, looking much as it must have looked over two centuries ago. That was when Jose de la Borda's mule had stumbled into a rich silver deposit there and the French miner had founded a town on the site. A cluster of red tile roofs and white walls nestling close to the cathedral of San Sebastian, it clung desperately to the mountainside. The twin towers of the church, rising high above the low outline of the rooftops, caught the last rays of the sun on their peaks and glowed like torches in the red light. From his station above the town, Ricardo could see the dark figures of men wearily making their way into town from the mines and the lights flickering on as they reached their homes. A soft murmur of children's voices, animal noises and the chatter of the women as they filled their pails at the public fountains drifted up to him as he stood there, but Ricardo was only vaguely aware of these things.

As the panorama before him mellowed in the twilight, he thought of the sunsets he had seen in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, of the four happy years he had spent there as a student at the State School of Mines, and of the pleasant evenings he had spent in Denver with his North American fellow students and their vivacious girl friends. In some ways Denver was like Mexico City, he mused. The climate at certain times of the year, the altitude and the terrain—all of these things were similar, but there were fewer extremes of wealth and poverty in Denver. Best of all he had liked the friendly, democratic spirit of the people there. Even a foreigner like himself, without money, had been made to feel welcome. The North American girls had fascinated him with their independence, their frankness and their fair complexions, but they seemed to admire him, too, for some reason, and called him "tall, dark and handsome." All of this mutual admiration had not at any time led to anything serious, though, for his first love had always been engineering.

He knocked the ashes from his pipe and turned back to the path leading down into town. He remembered that his mother would be ready with his supper about this time and that he shouldn't keep her waiting. She had promised him *tortillas* with chicken and rice this evening. Such a meal was enough to tempt any man—even one who had eaten North American food for four years.

His reflective mood was brought to a sudden end as he began the steep descent to the town below. A vaguely familiar figure was hurrying up the path toward him. It was Dolores Rivera, the spritely daughter of one of Taxco's silversmiths.

"*Hola*, Ricardo, you are late," she called. "have you been working at the mines so long?"

"*Ay*, nothing as serious as that," Ricardo assured her, "I have only stopped to watch the sunset—it is much like those in Colorado."

"I have just come from your mother's house, Ricardo. She is waiting for you—your supper will be cold if you do not hurry."

He smiled at the young girl and tried to appear casual, but he was thinking of the change that four years had made in her. When he had gone north on his scholarship, he had left Dolores a plump little *pollita* of fourteen, with a tousled mop of black hair, an impish round face and a mischievous smile. He had treated her as just one of the crowd of younger *muchachos* and *muchachas* in the town. If he felt like having them around he would draw pictures in the sand to amuse them, and if he wanted to be alone with his books he shooed them away by giving them enough pennies for a Coca-Cola.

Now, as he looked at the young *senorita* before him, he felt slightly embarrassed, for he was now no longer a smalltown boy—and she was no longer a child. As she came up beside him he noticed the new grace of her body and the way she wore her hair swept up from her forehead, adorned at the side with a red rose. Two braids fell either side of her neck, resting on her high, full bosom. She was wearing a frilly white waist printed with bright flowers and a dark, flaring skirt that swished about her as she walked. Her smile was as mischievous as ever, but it held a new air of mystery. He thought he detected a touch of lipstick on her lips—they had never seemed so red before, and her dark eyes seemed to have a greater depth and meaning. But he had been away so long—perhaps his imagination was working overtime.

"Ricardo," the girl said, "you are so quiet—you should not think so much about the United States. Are you not happy to be back home in Taxco again?"

"Oh—I suppose so," he replied, "It is just a case of getting adjusted to the old familiar things again. The trouble is that Taxco has remained tied to the past, while I have learned in the United States to believe in progress."

"*Ay*, you do not talk to your mama this way, I hope. She loves Taxco, and she would be very sad if she knew that you were not content here."

"Yes, that is true. Mother has spent her whole life in this town, and her world is bounded by it. I have tried to tell her about life in the United States, but it is beyond her comprehension. She only listens to be polite."

"Perhaps she has seen too many North American *turistas*, Ricardo."

"You may be right. I know that she suspects them of evil intentions when they enter the church. She does not understand their language, and she thinks they make too much noise."

(Continued on Page 10)

THE alarm clock that jangled so persistently in Fred Leninger's ear was particularly irritating that morning. Not that he woke up trembling and instantly alert as he had those first few months after his release from service, but there was something—he wasn't aware of what as yet—that he knew he would dread today. This vague feeling of discomfort finally crystallized into reality. Yes, today was the day before Christmas, the day his office, the Futurity Insurance Company, gave their annual pre-Christmas party. "God," he thought to himself, "how am I going to get through that?" So he lay there beside his wife, Carolyn, in the soft warmth of their bed, half asleep, half awake, trying not to think about it.

"Freddy," she murmured drowsily, "Freddy, it's 7 o'clock."

He said nothing and pretended to be asleep.

"Let's go, Freddy boy, time to get up," she continued amused. Still no response.

"If she'd only leave me alone today. If she'd just evaporate. Let me stay in bed twenty-four hours. If I can only get by this day, I know I'll be all right."

"Freddy, get up now!" She sat upright in bed with a quick movement and began tugging at the blankets around him. "Let's go, Sleeping Beauty," she spoke sharply, "you can't lie there all day, you know."

"For God's sake, Carol, can't you let me be?" he snapped angrily. He was up now, hunting speculatively with his big toe for his slippers. He heard the water splashing and Carol's vigorous washing in the bathroom. "Don't take all day, I've got to shave," he muttered.

"In a minute, Honey," she chirped back.

"She's always so damned cheerful in the morning," he thought to himself as he unlatched the front door of their three and a half-room apartment. He picked up the milk, a few Christmas cards, and the *Times*. He squinted as he tried to read the headlines in the gray morning light of the foyer:

VISHINSKY DENOUNCES U. S. IMPERIAL AIMS.

CHINESE REDS NEAR NANKING.

ISRAELI ARMY BATTERS ARABS IN NEGEV DESERT FIGHTING.

MAYOR VOWS FIGHT TO KEEP RACING TAX.

These things did not register in his consciousness. He fixed his attention dully on a feature article headed:

EUROPE TO SEE BEST CHRISTMAS SINCE WAR.

"There is more to buy in England though life is still austere. France, though inflated, is bountiful. Italy is recovering from its depression. Germany is bleak, but better off than last Christmas." He thought with bitterness about

the Christmas times he had spent in Europe—the festive C rations, the mud-bedecked fox holes outside of Monte Cassino, the jolly first sergeant who picked the recon patrols that went caroling the Germans, the Christmas presents his buddies had received, Bill Fischer's trench foot, the shrapnel Lou Schwartz raught in his lungs, and the slug Tommy Ross got on Christmas Eve. Then there was the big Christmas party C Company staged—the memory of all that butchery made the palms of his hands sweat.

He thought about last Christmas, the first Christmas he'd spent married to Carol. On this he mused with shame. He'd been a drunken fool then. It was the first of many times that he had mortified her by his drinking. "Well, that's over and done with, I hope." Seven weeks now and he had managed to keep under control. "I've got her pretty well convinced. . . ."

He left the paper and the mail on the foyer table and shuffled into the kitchen with the milk. He listened as he heard Carol leave the bedroom. He liked the way her slippers flopped against her feet as she walked. It was a hollow, comfortable sound. It symbolized a certain security. He loved Carol very much—why must he always hurt her so.

She clattered brightly into the kitchen and flipped the light on. She looked at him apprehensively for a moment, then said with mock seriousness, "I trust it is permissible to speak to your Lordship now." She then pecked him affectionately on the cheek. He patted her playfully as he went to shave. "Scrambled eggs, Dear?" she called after him. He grunted assent.

He stared at his face a minute in the bathroom mirror. "God, I look awful," he thought as he rubbed the stubble on his chin. The toothpaste tube lay neatly rolled in the green plastic cup used for washing the mouth. The sweet smelling soap still wet but not sudsy was in the soap dish. Everything was in order, ready for him. The sight of these things, their very ordinariness, gave him a feeling of warmth and well being. He rubbed the Barbasol carefully into his moist beard with one hand, as he attempted to change blades with the other. He worked quickly and efficiently. Only when he rinsed his mouth out with the sweet-sharp Astring-O-Sol did he stop to think about his drinking and the attempt he had been making to taper off. He thought about all the people he knew who drank. It was easy for them. Two or three slow amiable glasses and that ended it. But then it meant more to him than it did to them. It was his religion sort of. It was the one belief that he held that he could rely upon. He would take

(Continued on Next Page)

(Continued from Page 4)

the first drink and know that after he had had a few more, things would achieve a balance. He'd be able to face them again. He would still have the knowledge of their contempt for his weakness, but then it wouldn't matter so much. "Well, some people worship Cadillacs and mink coats. What the hell, the Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, doesn't it? You think you're pretty dam clever, don't you? No harm is there? Only make sure she suffers for it. Well, maybe today it will be different."

When he sat down at the table, Carol was already drinking her coffee and opening the mail.

"Who are the cards from?"

"There's a cute one here from Bill and Lynn, and oh yes, Dear, Mr. Brotherton, our lovable old landlord, sent one.

"What do you think we should give him this year?"

"I guess five is plenty." Last year they had given him \$20 as a sort of a bribe to restore the good will Fred's drinking had destroyed.

"You won't forget to pick up a tree on your way home, will you, dear? Norway spruce smells the nicest and the needles don't fall off so quickly either."

"I might be a little late tonight—that damn office party. I've got to stay a little while anyway. It's expected of me, you know. Old McLennon likes to have the staff fawn on him after he hands out the bonuses." For a second her eyes darted from his—just time enough for him to notice.

"Don't worry. I won't touch a drop. I'm like a camel—I've stored my liquid from the last trip." The jocularly in his tone was uneasy, and she was not fooled. They finished eating in self-conscious silence.

Luckily that morning Fred had some unfinished business to occupy himself with, and the pressure was not as bad as it might have been had he been left alone to think. While waiting for the elevator on his way to lunch, he was trapped by the office comedian, Barry Leamen, whose breath smelled. He slapped Fred heartily on the back and asked him to have a drink. "Just a wee doch 'n dorris, Kiddo. A little shot-sky to tone up the ol' gastric juices." Fred turned and studied him for a minute. The dandruff on his collar, his ill-made tie, his fat lips twisted in a repugnant leer. "Get the hell away from me, stupid, before you ruin my appetite." He was satisfied as he watched Leamen's grin fade and his eyes become hard.

"Okay, Freddy kid, don't get sore. It's not like you to get sore."

Later that afternoon, when the female half of the office staff began kissing the male half under the mistletoe, which was a sign that the party was well under way, Mr. McLennon called Fred into his office. He lit a cigarette and offered one to Fred. He tapped one end

thoughtfully against his thumbnail. "Sit down, Boy. I just wanted to know how you and Carol have been getting along." Fred crossed his legs nervously in the soft leather arm chair.

"Everything's fine, Sir, just fine. The usual disagreements, of course, but nothing serious."

"Well that's fine, Son. You know I expect a lot from you. I've noticed your work since you have been with us. Yes sir, as they say in the Army, you're 'on the ball.' Heh, heh. Accounting is going to lose a good man when you move on to better things." McLennon was adopting the intimate, paternal routine. He walked over to the cellarette where he kept his liquor supply. He took out two shot glasses and a bottle of twelve-year-old Scotch, which was reserved for special accounts and special occasions. "Have a little drink with me, Son?"

"I don't think . . . Please, God, don't let me take it. Don't let me start again." A thin line of perspiration beaded around his lips and his forehead, as he watched McLennon fill the two glasses. He started to protest and then stood immobile. He's the boss; I can't refuse the boss. I'm starting to rationalize. Let me stop. Let me stop!

"Here's to your health, my boy, and your future with Futurity." McLennon looked at him quizzically. "Aren't you drinking?—What's the matter?"

"Yes, sir, thank you, sir." Fred drained his glass and silently cursed McLennon.

After that the rest came easy. It reached a point where he found himself apologizing to Leamen. "Sorry I was rude, Barry. No hard feelings—Okay? Awful sorry. No hard feelings."

"Sure, sure, Freddy boy—no hard feelings." Then he told Fred the one about the gambler and the nun—and Fred laughed.

As he left the office building, the late afternoon sun knifed his eyes, dilated from drinking. Blinking, he hated the fierce sun. Until he hit the light, he'd been at just the right stage, but he knew how margins were—you always lost the balance reaching for the horizon. He couldn't thread thoughts together now, but he knew what he must do. "Tree, gotta get a tree."

Twenty minutes later two cops helped Fred Leninger out of the wreckage of his shiny, new Pontiac. Stunned and shaken he was jailed for drunken driving. Ten minutes later he hanged himself in the cell.

EVENING

*Purple, faded from the blue, then grey—
Children's voices dimmed, then still—
Traffic droning into sleepy silence.
No footfall on the blistered pavement—
No call or raucous shout—
No trace of day's annoyance.
Silence ushers in the evening.*

HELEN SOUTHALL

PARLOR GAMES

MURRAY E. GROVE

IN THE exclusive set through which I sometimes move, I am known as a "heel" in this matter of parlor games. I will drink with the ladies, wrassle with them and, now and then, leer at them, but when they bring out pencils and little pads of pink paper and start putting down all the nouns they can think of beginning with "Z", or enumerating each other's bad qualities on a scale of 25 (no hard feeling results—you know—just life long dislike), I tip-toe noisily out of the room and say, "The hell with you."

For this little reason, I am not usually included in any little games that may be planned in advance. If they feel an evening of "Twenty Questions" coming over them, they whisper "Get Grove out of the room. Give him a book to read, or a deck of cards to play with—anything to get him out of the way." For, I forgot to tell you, not only am I usually a non-participant in parlor games, but I am a very active non-participant. I heckle from the sidelines. I tell answers and sometimes play the radio very loud, distracting the attention of the players. Hence the nickname: "Sweet Old Buzz," or usually just the initials.

The chief reason for my hatred of parlor games stems from the charming little games we used to play at birthday parties. One of these clever games was "Post Office," in which a young lady goes out of the room and amid many giggles and blushes, tells another young lady the name of the young man she wishes to join her in the back room. Naturally the young man joins her and they peck at each other's lips. Then the young man calls the name of another young lady. This keeps up all night. Everyone always enjoyed this simple party pastime; that is, everyone except me. The reason was not that I never "got a letter," but that I got too many of them from the wrong person. I usually got stuck with somebody's out-of-town cousin, who looked like the "Bride of Frankenstein" and had a figure like a sofa pillow with a string tied around the middle. Not only were these girls fat and ugly, but they wore too much lip-stick and believed that the best way to make an impression was to smear the fellow up with the stuff or else to crush him to death with a big hug and break his two front teeth at the same time. No matter what we played, I either got the cousin or else was awarded the job of "Postmaster," "Spotter," or the guy with the empty chair in "Wink-em." Naturally, all this warped my mind against all forms of parlor games. I got so that when I went to a "necking party," I brought an extra flashlight and four or five fuses, just so I could spoil the game of "Spotlight" or else I hid all the bottles and pie-pans in sight, which usually spoiled any other

games the gang tried to play. When it became obvious that I hated parlor games, I hardly ever received an invitation to a party.

When I reached high school age, our thoughts toward parties changed. We liked to dance and play "Charades" and "Who Am I?" At first, I began to lose my hatred, because I liked to act out the titles, but then Fate, as usual, took a hand and soon my dislike doubled. If we were acting out song titles, instead of getting an easy one like "One Dozen Roses," I would get "Who Paid the Rent for Mrs. Rip Van Winkle, When Rip Van Winkle Was Away?" to act out in ninety seconds. If we did movies, I would get *Mutiny on the Bounty*. If we did books, I would get *The Kinsey Report*. The same thing was true in "Twenty Questions." Things got so bad that no one wanted me on their side. They would take me, though, if they got a ten-point handicap. Whenever these games would start, I would run out the kitchen and drink up all the punch in revenge.

(Continued on Page 14)

CHECKER-BOARD COUNTRY

*Checker-board country off to the east,
Black castle, red castle, here in the west.
Down moves the queen or a bishop at least,
Whichever is there to make the play best.*

*Let the mattress unfurl,
Atop the flag staff.
It's a maddening world,
And it's split in half.*

*Red trees here, and white ones there,
Thick like a jungle, humid and moist,
Cool as a maiden with rich black hair,
Weak as a structure without a joist!*

*Going on madly, the images spin,
I'm locked in a chamber the door is tight,
But I'm really out and can't get in
And the fever is burning me through the night.*

*I'm not going mad, it's not that at all,
It must be the sickness that fogs me so,
I'm climbing up high, but still I fall,
A thousand miles and land in snow!*

*Oh Lord, will I ever see straight again,
Or must I stay in this weird state,
Let me go back to the world of men,
Where I'll know what I'm doing, at any rate!*

MIKE

SOMETHING THERE IS . . .

BERNICE HARRIS

THERE are good walls and bad walls just as surely as there are good sardines and bad sardines. But one thing is most certain . . . always there are walls. They may be freshly whitened picket fences in Bedford, Indiana, barbed wire stretching between poles in Nevada, barberry bushes in Olde Boston Towne, or row houses in Chicago, but the walls are always there. Sometimes they are invisible ones as in the Georgian "Jim Crow" buses, the reserved tables of Club '21, class-rooms of Ursinus College, or Ellis Island immigration lines. Invisible boundaries, however, are often most strong and most indestructible ones!

Undoubtedly, it was the dimmest age of antiquity that within man's breast arose the desire to keep for himself his own fields, his animals, his children and his wife. For the protection of these things he first built barriers, walls—intangible, perhaps—but strong enough to grow within himself, his family and his tribe and finally to become the codes and mores of a people and of a world. They were good walls, these morals and restraints, and it was the self-control and will-power thus developed which led to a progressing civilization and a clean secure way of living.

But gradually the walls became greater and more powerful than man himself. They created a part of a society which forced Socrates to drink from the hemlock; a society which some two thousand years ago sent a humble carpenter's son to death on a certain hill called

Golgotha; a society which ninety years ago was touched by the fact that Topsy "just grew," but was still willing to buy black bodies at the slave market in the next town; and finally a society which stands today watching Wall Street brokers nonchalantly computing the economic stability of a nation!

These are the great walls of history and of the world, but there are small boundaries, too, such as the old stones in my grandfather's garden which separate his roses from the Clinton's chrysanthemums. So often he felt the stones should be taken away, but they are standing there still. Robert Frost, however, believes that they are being removed:

*"Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast."*

Yes, someday my grandfather must tear down his wall and perhaps Nature, herself will help with the task by sending "the frozen-ground-swell under it." But how then is my little cousin to help in the building of other good walls? I hope that my grandfather will explain to him that certain walls are necessary if his horses are to be kept from the Clinton's cauliflower and rhubarb. But suppose the boy does not learn and cannot understand about these good walls; what then must happen to the civilization of the world? What then must happen?

FRIDAY NIGHT

IN THE far corner of the saloon the ragtime piano player was chunking out coarse harmonies on an ancient upright piano. A cloud of blue smoke drifted lazily through the single stream of light which emanated from a bulb that hung seemingly without support over his head.

A hushed coterie of fresh faced college kids stood breathlessly around the battered music and its maker. They listened breathlessly and awed, for here was their new idol, a once great Negro jazz-man resurrected from a Louisiana rice field, playing the type of music which was momentarily "the thing," and they adored him as one adores a little puppy.

One composition of this type of music, a tune called, "Rose Leaf Rag" came to a conclusion. The semi-circle of grey flannels, tweed skirts, lipstick, and liquor solemnly voiced its approval to one another with knowing nods.

"Hey, Buck, how about playing 'Mamie's Blues'?"

"Yeah, Buck, some more of that fine blues."

"Just one more, Buck."

Buck, the big black piano player from New Orleans, skidded his fingers hesitantly across the keys, which had come to look like yellow teeth.

"No, cain't do it. You done kep' me here an hour after closin' time already."

He stopped his fingers from further rambling, closed the piano with decision, and turned to face the disappointed group.

"No use to ask me now—I'se goin' home," then more kindly, "You all come back tomorrow, hear? and I'll play some more for you."

They knew he meant it this time. In groups of two, boy and girl, arms around waists, they went slowly out into the fresh night air. Now they were interested only in each other, and that which lay directly ahead.

Buck watched them leave till the last ones had gone. Then, as the two weary waiters began to stack the wicker chairs atop the tables, he turned slowly and thoughtfully back to the piano. He lit a cigarette and began to play. Now it was good and it was clean. It was not like before.

ANONYMOUS

ONE STREA

A NOISE

The forest is still,
Not quite.
There is a faint stirring
In the darkness of the night.

It might be a bear, a wolf, a lynx,
It might be a rover searching the dark
Or it might be a rabbit
Out on a lark.

It might be a wood-mouse
Making a call.
Or it might be nothing.
Nothing at all.

CHARLES WETZEL

EXPECTED UP IN HEAVEN TODAY

Ah got a feelin' in mah heart today;
Ah got a feelin' ah could hear de Lawd say;
He said tuh me—this is what He say,
"Ya're expected up in Heaben today."

Now ah'm sure de Lawd is knowin'
That jes de same ah don' feel like goin';
So "Lawd, won' ya please le' me stay,
'N don' expect me up in Heaben today?"

Ah made this prayer on a dark battlefield;
Ah made this prayer, while bowd 'n kneeled,
Tuh le' me live, 'n also I pray,
That da Lawd don' expect me up in Heaben
today.

As de bullets whizzed by ah could hear 'em say,
"We come tuh fetch ya—tuh take ya away";
But de one fer me He guided astray,
'N ah'm no' expected up in Heaben today!

HAL GOLD

These are my blos
One streak of mor
Accept them; But
The buds of song

< OF MORN

IMPRESSION OF DEATH

The air hangs still and heavy.
Oppressive is the fragrance of flowers.
The women murmur in groups,
Like wasps, annoyed or angry.
Sobbing undertones, too many
People gathered in the dark room,
And the father soothing the child,
"She is not dead. She only sleeps."

HELEN SOUTHALL




WHEN TIME HAS TORN MY YOUTH

When time has torn my youth, my life, away
And left but shreds of simple memory,
I'll pass my days with sweeter thoughts of you
Than I may know with love too near to me.

For in its nearness I can find no joy.
It is too cloying, much too close to feel.
That mystic sense of oneness I desire.
That distance which can only make it real.

It is a thing much better seen afar,
As distant mountains, valley hidden streams,
Beside you, sweet, it is a dream no more,
And love is not the beauty that it seems.

DALE C. WHITE


If they wear
evening's glow,
more fair
ever blow.

HOLMES



ALL THE SILVER IN TAXCO

(Continued from Page 3)

"Your mama is very faithful in caring for the church."

"Yes, she has helped to clean the church now for nine years—ever since father was killed at the mine. I have tried to get her to stop now that I am back from school and working, but she will not listen. The church is as dear to her as her home, and the images are like real people to her."

"You must remember that she is much older than you are, Ricardo, and she cannot change her habits so easily."

"Perhaps you are right. I must be patient with her, but she is living so much in the past that it is becoming more and more difficult."

They had by this time reached the plaza in front of the church, and Ricardo made his charming companion *buenas noches* as he left her at the door of her father's silver shop. Then he continued on across the square and down to his mother's house, not far from the church.

"*Hola, mamacita!*" he called as he entered the open doorway, "I am ready to pay my compliments to your fine *tortillas* and chicken."

"Ah, Ricardo, you have come at last—I have been anxious for you. You have done well at the mines today?" His mother leaned forward eagerly to catch his answer.

"*Si, mama.* I think perhaps I am a mining engineer at last."

"So, your long years at the school have been well spent, my boy. I would not have let you stay away so long if it did not help you with a good safe job. I could not bear to lose you as I did your father."

"There have been some improvements in the mines, mama, but the men are slow to take advantage of them. They would rather do their work as their fathers and grandfathers have done it. It is hard to get them to adopt the modern ways."

As he uttered these words, the expression on his mother's lined face changed. In place of her usual gentle smile he noticed a tensing of the muscles around her mouth as she frowned slightly and said:

"Ricardo, you must not think we can solve all our problems by being modern. We must have faith, just as Jose la Borda did when he found silver here where his church now stands. San Sebastian and Santa Prisca will watch over us if we trust in them."

"Ah, mama," Ricardo smiled, seeking to give the subject a lighter turn, "your saints watch over us perhaps, but they can never take the credit from you for these *tortillas* and this chicken."

And seating himself at the table, he became so absorbed in enjoying his food that the conversation was ended.

While his mother busied herself in clearing away the dishes after the meal, Ricardo relaxed in one of his home-made chairs in the living room, enjoying his pipe and trying to read a newspaper by the light of the single electric light bulb. After straining his eyes for half an hour he gave it up and decided to go out. He thought he might take a walk around town or perhaps go to the moving pictures at the community hall.

So throwing a light jacket over his shoulders, he stepped out into the mild, clear air of an early evening.

As he sauntered beneath the green canopy formed by the trees of the plaza he saw many figures that seemed strangely out of place in the ancient setting. They were the North American *turistas*, who had been coming to gawk at the "picturesque" town ever since the government had put the new highway from Mexico City through Taxco to Acapulco. It had always amused him to see them poking into all the odd corners of the town and exclaiming at the "unspoiled beauty" of some neglected alley or the "quaintness" of some gathering of town loafers. He had never seen anything unusual about poverty or anything to admire in customs outmoded by the passage of time. He found himself wondering why these prosperous North Americans ever took the time to travel to this backward old hamlet stuck here on the side of Mount Atachi. Their own country was far more interesting to see, and much more comfortable in which to travel.

He continued across the plaza to investigate the entertainment possibilities of the community hall. There he discovered the picture to be "Laughing at Danger," a Hollywood B-product he dimly remembered seeing in Denver three years ago. Well, he told himself, that avenue of escape from boredom was closed. Resuming his walk, and passing up one of the narrow streets, he heard the familiar ring of pure silver as the metalsmiths worked in the small shops nearby. Perhaps Dolores' father, Senor Rivera, was still open. Since he had nothing to do, he would drop in and amuse himself watching Dolores sell trinkets to the wide-eyed North Americans. But as he turned the corner, he almost collided with a big *turista*.

"Why Ricardo Hernandez!" the North American exclaimed, "What are you doing out so late at night?"

Startled at the mention of his name by this stranger, Ricardo hesitated. Then he looked closely at the grinning face under the big sombrero and a gleam of recognition came to his eyes.

"*No puede ser*, but it is—Bill Joyce. *Hombre!* How do I happen to find you here in Taxco?"

"Vacation, Ricky, ole' boy. They give you time off for good behavior where I'm working." The big fellow beamed.

"Ah, you do not know how good it is to see someone from the North again. You must tell me about everything. I have not seen you since you graduated from the college—over a year ago."

"Sure thing, Rick, but let's duck into one of the local pubs and talk—to talk over old times you should talk over some old wine, I always say."

They made their way to a second-story cafe nearby, seated themselves at a table in the loggia overlooking the plaza, and ordered two bottles of *vino de Oporto*.

Ricardo could not help observing the extraordinary appearance of his old friend. He had not changed much physically—still tall and ungainly, with a face that was pink and boyish except for the laugh wrinkles around the eyes. But what was the word for this costume he was wearing? His sandy hair was partly hidden by the big black sombrero on the back of his head—a sombrero that few Mexicans could have afforded, trimmed with silver tracery around the edge of the brim and a band of Indian beads around the

(Continued on Next Page)

crown. He was wearing a bright *vaquero* shirt with elaborate embroidery around the collar and pockets, while over the shoulder he had slung a hand-woven sarape with a geometric design in many colors. His belt was of hand-tooled leather, with a large silver buckle into which his initials had been freshly cut. Encircling his wrist was a solid silver identification bracelet, and on a finger of his other hand he had a large silver ring, bearing an impression of the Aztec calendar stone. His generously proportioned feet, projecting from under the table, were resting comfortably in a pair of handmade riding boots. All in all, Ricardo concluded, this fellow had been a good patron of the souvenir vendors, the silversmiths and the "native clothing" shops. Only the plain gray trousers he wore seemed to have come with him.

"Well Rick," the big fellow remarked, fitting a cigarette into a silver holder and lighting it with a silver lighter of Mexican design, "this is a great little town you've got here. Never seen anything like it. No neon signs shining in your face at night, no dirty factories or trains, no pushing crowds, no noisy streetcars or trucks—only the mountains, the warm sunshine and the tinkle of silver."

"Yes, it is all right if you like a small town, I suppose," Ricardo admitted half-heartedly, "but tell me about yourself. What have you been doing to look so prosperous?"

"Oh, I'm up in Montana, working for an outfit in and around Butte. They dig a lot of copper around there, you know—some silver, too. The company I'm with controls most of the mining in the state."

"I suppose they use the latest methods if they operate on such a large scale?" Ricardo guessed.

"Oh, they're a forward-looking bunch all right, and always on the lookout for new talent. They hired me a year ago when I had very little experience and I made enough in a year to buy me a new car. Thought I'd take a drive down this way and break it in."

Ricardo's polite interest turned to eager attention.

"You say you found a job like that almost as soon as you finished school? *Ay*, if I had known of such an opportunity I would have been tempted not to return to Taxco at all."

"But Ricky, I thought you were glad to get back to your home town."

"Well, perhaps I had better explain. I was born in Taxco and grew up here. As long as I did not know of anything else I was content, but then came the scholarship and the chance to study north of the border. I saw that the United States was the place of opportunity for young people. Your tradition is one of progress and the greatest good of the greatest number of people. In Mexico we are still bound to the past, with all its injustice and misery. As in the days of the *conquistadores*, the aristocracy of the country cares little about the welfare of the people. I am afraid it will not change in our generation."

"But your family and friends are all down here, aren't they?"

"My four years at school have changed me so that my friends who remained here seem like strangers. I do not feel as much at ease with them as with you. It was mainly because of my mother that I returned here. She worked hard to give me a better chance

than my father had, but now I find that she has woven her life around the very traditions that I consider most outmoded."

Bill ground out his cigarette thoughtfully. "What are you thinking of doing?" he asked.

"If I could get work in the United States, I would leave Mexico for good, send my mother a nice check each month and avoid any serious quarrels with her, which will probably come sooner or later if I stay here."

"Well, my company could use you if you decide to come north. You were one of the best students at school. With your record and a few recommendations from the faculty, I could introduce you to our chief engineer. No doubt but that he would take you on."

"That's a deal!" Ricardo exclaimed, "When are you heading back to Montana?"

Taken rather unawares by his friend's enthusiasm, Bill thought it over. "Well," he said, "I thought I'd drive over to Acapulco for two or three days. I could pick you up on the way back—you're sure you want to go through with this?"

"I am certain of it. You will find me ready when you return."

They finished their wine and arose to go. To make certain that his friend would not get lost in the maze of crooked streets, Ricardo guided him back to his hotel, plying him with questions on the way about the latest technical advances in their field. Then, still filled with enthusiasm, he headed back to the small house in the shadow of the cathedral.

He slept very little that night, but reported to work as usual the next day. As soon as he found time, he sought out the company representative and told him of his decision to leave Taxco, asking the man's indulgence for the short notice he was giving. Fortunately his superior was understanding, wishing him good luck and assuring him that he was always welcome to come back.

The real problem in Ricardo's mind was how to break the news to his mother. He knew she would be unprepared for such a revelation and he couldn't think of any way to soften the blow.

Returning earlier than usual that day to the little house that looked so insignificant beside the great church, Ricardo looked into the kitchen, but she was not there. She must be still working in the church, he thought. Then, glancing through the open doorway, he spied her in the small adobe-walled patio in the rear. She was bending over one of the tiny flower gardens there, her attention taken up with her orchids. At the sound of his footsteps on the tile pavement, however, she turned quickly and looked up at him in surprise.

"Ricardo," she exclaimed, "But you are early. It is only an hour since siesta time. You have not lost your job?"

"Not exactly, mama," he answered, trying to keep his voice even, "I have resigned to take a better one—in a larger town."

"Another job? Another town? But you have been doing well here in Taxco—and your home is here. How is this that you want to go away again?"

(Continued on Next Page)

"I'll have a better opportunity to get ahead, learn more about mining—and I think there will be more money. I can send you a check every month and you won't have to work so hard."

"Where is this—this big opportunity, my boy. You are going to Guanajuato, perhaps?"

"No, mama, a little farther than that. An old friend from the college is going to get me a job in Montana, in the United States."

He glanced quickly at his mother's face to get her reaction, but she lowered her head and sank slowly to a sitting position on a wooden stool before a bed of her favorite orchids. Her hair, partly covered with a blue and white *rebozo*, seemed whiter than ever in the bright sunlight. When she again looked up at him, her eyes were sad, but she managed a faint smile and said,

"Are these flowers not lovely, Ricardo? The soil of their native land has been good to them, and they smile back in appreciation. Has Mexico done nothing for you, my boy, that you are so discontented here?"

"It's not that, mama. It's just that I feel cramped here. I want to do bigger things—to get somewhere in the world."

"Ah yes, my boy. You are still young and ambitious and I can not hold you here against your will. The saints will watch over you wherever you go, I am sure of that. In a dream only a few nights ago, Santa Prisca appeared to me and I asked her if you would ever leave Mexico again. She took me by the hand and led me to the top of Mount Atachi, high above our town. The sun was then rising and she said to me that as the sun returns to Taxco every day, so will my son always return, though he travel all of the way around the world."

The old woman's face radiated her faith as she spoke, and Ricardo could see that to her the dream had been a supernatural revelation. He bent down, laying his hand on her arm, and said,

"You must not take this so seriously, mama. Of course I'll try and get back for a visit now and then. I do not expect to be gone forever."

"Yes, Ricardo, I feel that you will not be gone long." She sighed, and her eyes still glowed with the mysticism she had expressed.

The next day was full of the usual preparations for a long trip. Ricardo was anxious to get his things packed as soon as possible, for Bill would be returning from Acapulco sometime that evening—hoping to reach Mexico City before midnight. Ricardo knew these *turistas*. They dashed from one town to another, anxious to see everything but never staying long to look at anything. He hurriedly packed the last of his socks and shirts and then made the rounds of the few old friends to whom he wanted to say *adios*. He waited until the end of the day to pay his respects to Senor Rivera and Dolores, since they were his mother's best friends.

He walked up the winding street to the door of Senor Rivera's shop and as he had hoped, there were no *turistas* there, since it was barely past the supper hour. Senor Rivera was seated in his usual place at his workbench, cutting a design into a silver bowl. He was a man of about middle age, above average size, with gray hair and a small gray mustache. Ricardo had heard that he was a descendent of one of the

first silversmiths to come over from Spain after the Conquest. Although he was first of all a skilled artisan, he had a certain air of quiet confidence which, together with his fine features and noble bearing, might have allowed him to pass in Mexico City for a Spanish grandee.

He nodded pleasantly to Ricardo as he entered the shop, but he must have known beforehand of the younger man's plan to leave town, for he showed no surprise at the news. Without looking up from his work, he listened as Ricardo outlined his plans for the future. Finally, still seemingly more interested in what he was doing than in what he heard, he held the bowl at arm's length, regarded it contemplatively for a few moments and then turned it around several times before he spoke.

"You do not feel that there is enough opportunity here for a young man, do you?" he asked.

"That is the root of the trouble, Senor," Ricardo answered, and warming up to the subject he went on. "Our ways of doing things here are hundreds of years behind the times. The people are so ignorant and so deep in the ruts of tradition that they do not want to accept modern ways of life. Meanwhile the *turistas* come in and exclaim about the quaintness of it all, which only encourages the people to continue their wornout customs."

Senor Rivera set down the bowl carefully, laid his cutting tool beside it and leaned back in his chair. Regarding the younger man gravely, he replied,

"Ricardo, you have learned a lot about modern technology in the North, but you have not learned the greatest lessons of all—to be satisfied with what you have and to be unselfish. The United States is a great country and they have a very high standard of living, but we also have advantages—a pleasant climate, a rich tradition, and a country rich in natural resources."

"Ah, but Senor, those advantages will do us little good as long as our people remain in their present state of ignorance," Ricardo put in glumly.

"Yes, that is true. Our people are perhaps not as advanced as they should be, but they are not enlightened. The government is doing all it can to provide education, but it is a big job. It needs men like you, Ricardo—intelligent, educated young men for the rest of the people to look up to and follow. My boy, one outstanding citizen is worth more to this country than all the silver in Taxco, and you could be that kind of a citizen."

"That all sounds very noble, Senor, but I am afraid you are too optimistic about leading these people out of their ignorance. What makes you think they will ever change?"

"Faith, my boy. We must have faith in the future."

"Ah, faith. How often have I heard that word. My mother has more faith than anyone I know, but what has it done for her?"

Senor Rivera looked graver than ever.

"Your mother is a very good woman," he said, "True, her religious devotion may seem like superstition to you, but that strong belief she has in something higher than herself has helped her to carry on when everything else has failed. It was her faith that helped her to keep her grip on life when your father was killed and she was left alone with you."

(Continued on Next Page)

Ricardo could not think of an answer to this point, so he returned to himself.

"But a man with a scientific education can't believe in the things she believes in," he said. "It's too fantastic. I can't believe in miracles and wonder-working images."

"Perhaps not, but can you believe there is nothing more to life than being born, struggling to make a pile of money and then dying? It may be that each of us was put here on earth for a purpose. I don't know, but the people I know who do believe that appear to be happy and well adjusted to life. On the other hand, look around you at some of the members of the intellectual colony here in Taxco. They are like you, Ricardo—intelligent and educated, but they do not believe in anything. They are perhaps the unhappiest people in this little town."

"I believe in myself, Senor Rivera," the younger man retorted impatiently, "that is the only faith I can rely on. Let others believe what they may."

"Ah yes, you still have the confidence of youth. But perhaps you will see life in a different light some day. We must all learn for ourselves, I suppose." And Senor Rivera turned back to his bench. For him the argument was over. There was a stiff silence for a few moments.

"I thought I might say *adios* to Dolores if she were here," Ricardo said at last.

Senor Rivera looked up, a faint smile on his face.

"She has gone to get me a Coca-Cola," he said. "I believe I hear her coming now."

A quick step sounded on the cobblestones outside and Dolores burst into the room. Her face was flushed from hurrying as she set the bottle of soft drink on Senor Rivera's bench. Turning to Ricardo then with a show of casualness in her manner, she said,

"Ah, it is you, Ricardo. I heard from your mama that you would stop here tonight. Is it true—are you really going away again?"

"Yes, that is so. I have decided that my best opportunity is in the North."

"Papa and I will both miss you. We did not expect you to go running away again."

"Well, I do not want anyone to feel badly about this. It is the best thing for me, you know. A man should go where he can do the most for himself."

"Oh, I do wish you the best in life, Ricardo, but we were just getting to know you again, and now—must you go this very evening?"

"Yes, I am afraid so. You see, Senor Joyce will be passing through Taxco tonight and only stopping for a minute. You know these North Americans, Dolores—always in a hurry."

"And will you wait here in the shop for him?"

"No, I have promised to be at the autobus station. I really must be going now—he may be early, and I do not want to keep him waiting."

Ricardo was moving toward the door as he said this, glancing at his watch and trying to be brisk without being abrupt. He picked up his two suitcases, which he had left outside the door, and swung around to bid his friends *adios*. Dolores stood in the open doorway, her hands and her dark head pressed against the doorframe, and looked wistfully at the

young man as he turned to go. Senor Rivera stood not far behind, doing his best to appear amiable, but the look in his eyes was one of doubt.

"Ricardo!"

He had only gone a few steps, and at the sound of his name he stopped and half turned toward the shop. Before he realized what had happened, Dolores had rushed up, thrown her arms around his neck and was kissing him.

"Oh Ricardo, I'll always be thinking of you," she whispered as she clung to him.

He was so confused that he dropped one of his suitcases, almost causing it to spill open. Then, recovering his composure, he patted her shoulder. "And I will not soon forget so charming a *senorita*, either," he assured her.

As he bent down to recover his suitcase, the girl backed away, and as he once more began the climb to the autobus station, she stood watching, her arm raised in front of her, partly in farewell and partly as if in a futile gesture to call him back, until he disappeared around a corner of the winding street.

The autobus station was closed and the courtyard deserted when Ricardo finally reached it. Realizing that he might have to wait a while for his friend, he settled down for a smoke on a bench by a wall covered with purple bougainvillea. The evening was pleasant as usual in Taxco—a faint breeze from the valley full of the scent of flowers, moon bathing the baroque towers of the church in a silver glow, lights twinkling through the trees down in the plaza, and some troubadores somewhere playing their guitars and singing for the *turistas*.

But in spite of the agreeable atmosphere and the soothing fragrance of the tobacco, Ricardo soon became restless. Where was this *hombre* who was always in such a hurry? After a man made up his mind to go somewhere he didn't want to sit and think about it, he wanted to go! Such were the thoughts that ran through his mind. He tried to enjoy the music of the troubadores. What was that they were playing—*La Paloma*—wasn't that Dolores' favorite song? A sweet girl, Dolores, always building him up and making him feel like a man of the world. If only she wouldn't have kissed him. He didn't like to admit it, but that had disturbed him. It would be so much easier to concentrate on the fortune he was going to make in Montana if such a thing had not happened.

He strained his eyes toward the dim outline of the Acapulco road beyond the limits of the town. No sign of automobile headlights there yet. If he wanted to, there would be time to walk around and take a final look at the town. No sense sitting here with only a bench for company, he said to himself. So, leaving his bags at the station, he strolled leisurely back toward the plaza.

Without quite realizing why or how he had come back to it, he found himself in front of Senor Rivera's shop again. Perhaps he unconsciously expected to see Dolores once more through the open doorway, but now the heavy door was closed tightly. Strange, he mused, for the Senor to be closed so early in the evening, and no familiar ring of silver coming from his workbench.

(Continued on Next Page)

But a less cheerful sound now reached his ears through the latticed window in the front of the shop. It was the sound of a woman crying, Dolores! It was the first time he had ever heard her cry, and he could find no one to blame for it but himself.

Walking slowly back to the autobus station, he tried to think of the future—of the money to be made in Montana, the bright efficiency of North America, and the boisterous good humor of *hombres* like Bill Joyce, but the thought of Dolores' tears crowded those other thoughts from his mind. By the time he reached the station, he realized that no matter how successful he would be in the North, he would always be haunted by the experiences of this last night in Taxco.

A tiny gleam of light far out on the Acapulco road grew until it became a pair of automobile headlights. That must be Bill coming at last, Ricardo guessed, and as he watched he knew he would have to tell Bill he had changed his plans, that he was not returning to North America with him. He wondered if he could make his friend understand how he felt, that he was richer here in Taxco than he could ever be anywhere else in the world. He knew, suddenly, the wealth of happiness that comes with understanding.

PARLOR GAMES

(Continued from Page 6)

Even in college, my dislike multiplied. At Dorm Parties, instead of pinning the tail on the donkey, I would pin it on the "house mother." This increased my popularity immensely, as you can easily understand.

Now you can see my plight. How can you blame me for hating parlor games? When I go to a party now, I make sure either that they are not going to play such games or else there will be someone there who feels as I do. You know, there must be some way to stop parlor games. I would work on it now, but I have to leave. It's my turn to act out a charade for my team.

"Let's see now. What song title do I have to act out? Oh! 'My Darling Clementine.' You see what I mean? There's no justice."

By I. M. HOPELESS

QUESTIONS

- A Diverse in prominence, yet alike in taste,
On each an apostle his name has placed.
- B Enclosed by two comparatives of "mellow"
Unscramble "chum", here underlined in yellow.
- C Where the Amazon and rubber meet you locate me,
Hood, McKinley or Rainier completes my picture, see?

Answers and names of winners will be available at magazine office. Winners will be notified by mail.

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5. Contest closes midnight, one week after this issue's publication date.
6. All answers become the property of Chesterfield.
7. Decision of judges will be final.

LAST MONTH'S ANSWERS & WINNERS

- A The word **THREE** is composed of five letters and they're all found in **CHESTERFIELD**.
 - B Chesterfields in the pack, 3 E's in Chesterfield, $3 \times 3 = 9$. One E in **REALITY**.
 - C Biscuit = muffin; Change M to R and you get Ruffin, the home of Van W. Daniel.
- WINNERS...**

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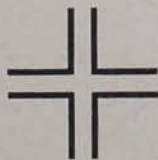
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