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# LANTERN



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# THE LANTERN

IN THE SPRING OF 1957

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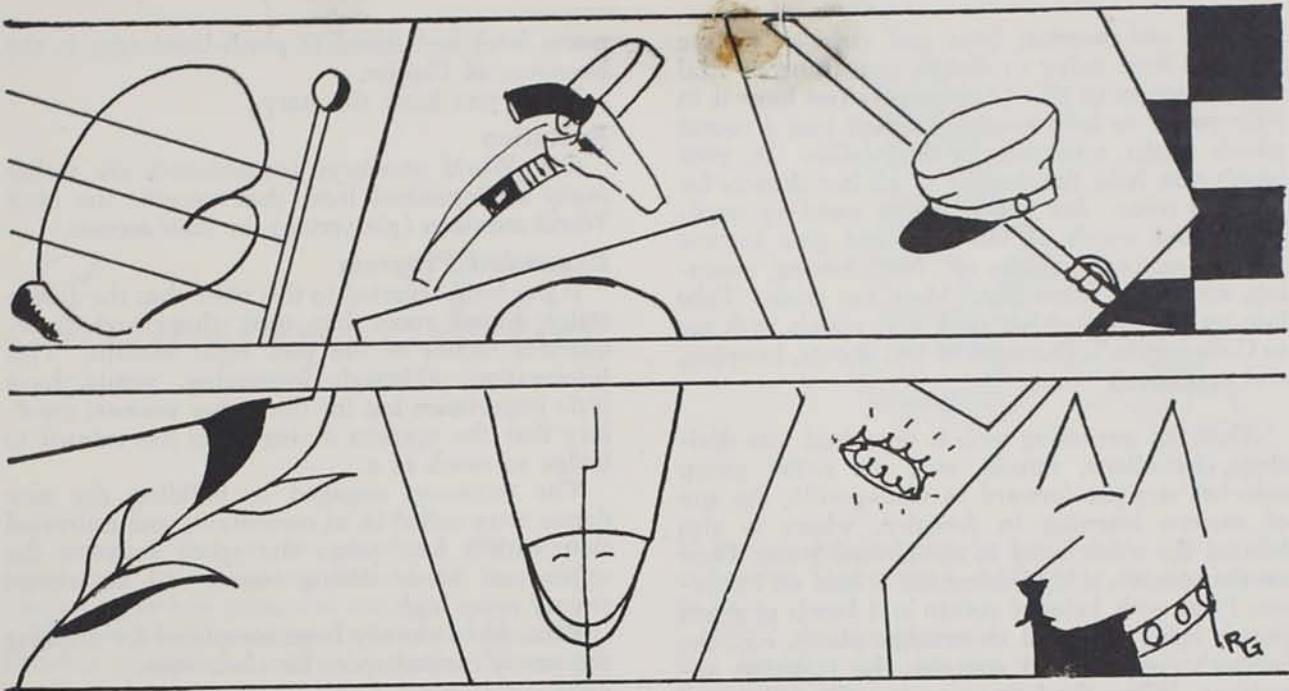
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### Please Find Herein Enclosed . . .

The Spring edition features a new story by an author, by now familiar to all of us, Ira Lederman, *Samarra Train*, our *Editor's Choice*, is a suspense packed tidbit worthy of any editor's plaudits. Working from an old Somerset Maugham theme, writer Lederman has whipped up about the best single piece of fiction to grace this sheet in several years and well deserves the meager laurels we have bestowed upon him.

Marking his 1957 debut, long time editorial board member Hal McWilliams brings us a poignant story of a frightened young lad embroiled in the bitter War Between the States. *Caleb*, a fictional recreation of one of the author's ancestors, focuses painfully on one tiny element of what was come to be known thereafter as our nation's greatest trial.

Having been vehemently called to task recently for neglecting to draw sufficiently from the untapped wealth about us, we licked our wounds and started digging around. To our delight, we were able to uncover a splendid piece of descriptive writing from an author hitherto unheard from in the *Lantern*. Tom Rosenborg's *Coup d'Etat* has within it the elements of humor and pathos (to use an old editorial phrase) so necessary to good reporting, and we are more than pleased to be able to offer it in this issue. In addition to this *find* we were able to secure the most recent work of a young fictionalist, who for the present shall remain unnamed, whose style and imagination have made us acutely aware of him. We are certain that time and a little more experience will temper his talent and produce for us a writer of genuine merit.

Bill Montgomery's *London* and bright little *Spot* serve to remind us again that the new editor of the *Weekly* is a man whose talent cannot be taken lightly.

The *Lantern's* poet laureate, Art King, has come

up with a delightful word sketch — *Medieval Portraits, Somewhat Diagrammatic*, and his first prose attempt for this magazine — *Poetry and College Poetry*. In the latter, Art succeeds in defending the right of an artist to create in the medium and style most familiar and comfortable to him. We are happy to present his challenging argument.

Closing the pages of our most recent attempt is the work of last semester's *Editor's Choice* winning author Barrie Ciliberti, whose *Big Mistake* (no pun intended) has the force and suspense of *Diamonds and Mushrooms* — nothing further need be said of it.

### TALK OF THE GOWN

#### Comparative Anatomy

For a long while it has been a puzzlement where the cats for comparative anatomy laboratory come from. It will be the endeavor of this column to explain how they are selected and procured.

Just as in our own society there are good and successful beings, and bad and unfortunate beings, so is it with cats. The bad and unfortunate ones are selected for scientific experimentation. Not only are they leaner and shabbier, they are also not very intelligent. (This selection of the poorer quality cats has been doing wonders for the index of living of the cat populace.) The cats do not hold a convention and wait until the biologists come along to select their animals. Oh, no! You must seek them out of every nook and cranny. You must search the alleys, gutters, garbage cans, SPCA's and animal husbandry centers, where there is always a large group milling around outside, hoping to be chosen, for these are the habitats of our cats.

When cats are rounded up, and their drunken skid row members are sober, then the idea is to talk intelligently to them (no matter what passers-by may say!), persuade them, saying to them thusly:

"Men and women, boys and girls -- we are gathered here today to discuss something of vital importance to us all. (Applause.) You have it in your power to help another student pass a course which might otherwise be impossible. In your hands you hold the destiny of all our doctors for years to come. Are you going to stand by negligently and watch all our boys and girls become History majors?" (Cries of "No," hissing, moaning, etc.) — "Then rise. Meet the crisis. Take fate by the nape of her neck and march with me to Collegeville." (Screams of joy, shouts, jumping, and applause.)

After the screaming mob is organized into divisions, battalions, squads, etc., the entire group marches straight forward to Collegeville, the site of eastern learning in America, where is also located the oldest hotel in the United States. Over on the campus, a big celebration is held on Patterson Field with bales of catnip and bowls of green punch being stationed in strategic places, e.g., the trainer's room, which contains the injection apparatus. When the feline orgy is really rolling, all the drunken and stuporous cats are herded into the training room where they are given grape jelly, which stains the veins, tomato juice which stains their arteries, scrambled eggs which stain their hepatic portal system, and strychnine which kills them deader than hell. They are then all pickled in 120-proof Southern Comfort (I can think of a

worse fate) and stored in plush-lined cans in the basement of Pfahler.

There you have the story.

### Evolution

Old World monkeys (catarrhine) are rather easily distinguished from their cousins the New World monkeys (platyrrine), by their accents.

### Expansion Program

It has been reported to this office that the downstairs dining room has sunk three and three-quarters inches in the past eight months. This information, although interesting, would have little importance but for the rather unusual corollary that the upstairs dining room has refused to budge so much as a

The engineers engaged in building the new dorms were called in as consultants and estimated that within four years the space between the upper and lower dining rooms will be almost twenty miles high.

Plans have already been completed for utilizing the newly created space for classrooms.

### Maintenance

From duPont we have news of a new chemical the properties of which are so dynamic that merely a small amount can completely destroy an asphalt road bed. Some of the chemical has been purchased by the College and spread on the stretch of road behind the boiler house to complete the job started several months ago.

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# Samarra Train



Kirschte smiled as he gazed at the passing countryside. The houses flashed by on multi-colored squares of grass and soil.

"Rather like pieces on a chessboard," he mused. Kirschte was pleased with the simile. He smiled gently at his own joke and (a little later), took out his traveling-chessboard and began moving the little pieces. His eyes, grey and sharp, moved over the board, missing nothing. If the pawn pushes up one square to control king bishop seven, then knight down to rook six — so — (he plugged a knight into the square incisively) pawn takes rook —and I can announce mate in four.

"No," he thought, "I really don't need the practice." His head, large, round, and smooth, like a huge bald egg, nodded on his chest. He removed his steel-rimmed spectacles, and, still smiling, fell asleep.

(The train clacked on.)

"Excuse me," the old man said, "but your chess set has spilled all over the floor."

Kirschte sat up with a jolt.

He began picking up the pieces, automatically, and he could not resist surveying the stranger as the old man fumbled with the pieces. Much to Kirschte's surprise, he proved to be no old man at all, but a rather remarkable old lady. He could not have told that the stranger was a woman but, rather from her dress. She was draped in a faded brown coat, her face half hidden by a bunch of flowers which drooped over a dusty hat. Her face seemed to sag under the burden. Kirschte was sure he had seen her before.

"You are Joseph Kirschte, aren't you? I saw your picture in Chess-Review. You will play me a game to pass the time?"

It sounded absurdly like a command, but Kirschte smiled, feeling flattered—as he always did when someone recognized him. It isn't every master, even a grandmaster, who is recognized on trains by total strangers. Besides, there was something about the woman that intrigued him—perhaps it was her annoyingly brusque speech, her peculiar garb—or the fact that she still seemed disturbingly familiar, like a friend whom one has not seen for many years. Kirschte was a little ruffled by this, but he sat down to play with the best grace he could.

"Very well," he smiled, "I'll 'spot' you a knight."

If he lost, he thought, he could blame it on the odds—but how absurd, really! He did not expect to lose.

"No," the woman said, "we will play even." She tossed a coin for the move. Kirschte called heads and lost.

The game began.

The woman opened by moving her king's pawn to the fourth square, and Kirschte replied by playing his to the third. Not many amateurs know the subtleties of the French Defense, he thought.

As the game moved into the last stages of the opening, Kirschte realized that he was up against a strong player—perhaps among the best he had ever played. A vicious king-side attack threatened to end the game shortly. Kirschte countered with the tactics that had made his name famous for over twenty years—a brilliant counter-attack in the center, putting relentless pressure on White's center pawns.

Kirschte broke out into a cold sweat as he realized that unless he found some way to stem the woman's attack, he would soon have a hopeless position. He spent a full half-hour on the next move, his mind tirelessly analyzing every variation—only one of which would actually be played. Finally he made his move.

Twenty moves and two hours later, the game had progressed into a difficult rook and pawn ending—as the train rapidly approached New York.

Kirschte sweated again as he realized that his next move was crucial, and he might not be able to save his game. His eyes were beginning to tire, his hands were shaking, and his mind was exhausted with the effort of visualizing hundreds and hundreds of possible positions for over three and a half hours.

He tried desperately to relax. How silly, he thought, to get excited over an unimportant little game. But chess exerts a strange power over those who play it incessantly—possibly because it gives them, as Joseph Cross has said, "the illusion of power over life."

Kirschte recalled grimly an article he had once read—by Kreymborg, he thought it was—that "to the ignorant outside world, two men over a chessboard look like a pair of dummies. And yet, inside the pale automata, dynamos pound incessantly. Here is nothing less than a silent duel between

two human engines using and abusing every faculty of the mind—the will, the imagination (logic, memory, caution, cunning, daring, foresight, unity, detail and courage—in an effort to outwit, corner and demolish the not-less-than hateful opponent. It is warfare in the most mysterious jungles of the human character.” Well, Kirschte thought, he would not succumb. He wrenched his mind fiercely back to the game.

An hour later, as the train pulled into New York, Kirschte resigned. He was shaken by this game with his strange opponent. For hours he had used all his brilliance, trickery, and almost perfect technique, only to be overcome by an unknown stranger. Kirschte and the woman moved out of the station.

As they walked along into the rapidly darkening streets, Kirschte realized that he had forgotten to ask her name.

Kirschte turned abruptly.

“Tell me, I forgot to ask the name—what is your name?”

The old woman looked very tall against the twilight. She smiled a little, and she said—“Death.”

Kirschte could not speak. He felt like laughing, or calling a policeman, or screaming obscenities—he was shocked. And then, for the first time, he saw her eyes—and Kirschte turned and ran. His heart pounded, and people turned to stare as they watched the little man race wildly through the streets, his tie streaming absurdly out behind his back.

He stopped, finally, and turned around. There was no one in sight. Kirschte felt a little sheepish. “I don’t know what got into me,” he thought. He walked slowly to his hotel apartment, and tried to forget the incident. He concentrated on the opening he would play the next day.

His nerves still a little on edge, he stopped at the hotel restaurant, had a glass of buttermilk and some rolls, and then walked up to his room. As he sat in the bright light of the room in a comfortable armchair, reading, the whole incident seemed fantastic. Kirschte relaxed. He felt fine. He went to sleep an hour later, and slept peacefully, dreamlessly.

He hailed a taxi at 9:00 next morning, and as he was driven to the tournament rooms, he whistled a little tune. He stepped out of the cab, paid the driver, tipped him more liberally than he usually did. He walked briskly to the hotel in which the tournament was being held.

Kirschte sat down at 10:17 to play his game. His opponent was a promising young master from the West, and he was also a little late. The time—clocks, however, were all started at the usual time, and Kirschte made his move, wrote it down, punched his clock and waited.

He must have dozed off, for when he looked up, his opponent was just making his first move.

Kirschte stared. He recognized his opponent—whom he had never seen before. A sense of peace came over him, as he looked up once more, smiled, and conceded the game.

IRA LEDERMAN

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# Caleb—

## a story of the Civil War

Evening—September 15, 1862

My dear wife Abbie,

I received your letter and daguerreotype dated the 7th. I was glad to hear you and the children are well. I am well and hope these lines will find you enjoying the same. This evening is the first that I have had time to do anything for 8 days as we have been marching all the time. We left Virginia the 7th—Sunday evening and traveled nearly all night. It went pretty hard with me as it was the first marching we had done. We are in Maryland. General Burnside routed the rebels two nights before we arrived. He captured some rebels. I do not know how many. The cannonading is still going on but we hear nothing from the battle yet. A large portion of the rebels left here last Wednesday. They supposed them to be going to Hagerstown. I think we will have them caged before long if they don't cage us. We have a tremendous force here. The road has been thronged all day with artillery and baggage wagons. The people in the town say they have Confederate scrip with them by the cart-load—they pay for all they buy with it. The citizens say it is not worth a cent to them. Our forces killed several rebels last night as they were retreating. I expect we will soon have a heavy battle. It may be tomorrow. I expect to do my duty if I come to fight for my country. If I should fall I hope the Lord will protect you and the children. Raise them up in the right way—give them a good common education but I still live in hopes of seeing you again. I will tell you a little about a soldier's life. I don't think you have any idea of the way we live. In the first place we have to steal a little or otherwise take it and never pay for it. We think it no harm to go into a cornfield or in a potato patch, hen roost, and so on—take what we want—and walk off. When we were encamped in Virginia, I went to an old farmer's barn where there was 15 fine cows. I would take three canteens and get them full of milk. I would take care to go about daylight before the darkies would get out to milk—in that way we lived pretty well. I think I am feeling better since I came to camp than I did before I left home as I don't eat so much strong victuals. I think the likeness you sent me of yourself is very good—not of the little ones though. I expect it was pretty hard to keep them quiet. I was glad to receive it. I must close my letter as we are going to move and it is just sundown. I expect to march tonight. I have a good bit more to tell you if I had time—excuse my dirty paper as it is impossible to keep it clean. Give my love to all the rest. Write soon—so good night and a kiss to you and the children.

Your sincere and loving husband,

Caleb



Caleb folded the piece of dirty paper, glanced at the bold red and blue letters—"The Union Forever"—and shoved it into his jacket pocket. He was a handsome boy with dark brown hair and practically no beard. His mouth was well-formed and full and, combined with a slightly weak chin, it gave his face an extremely young and sensitive appearance. He was twenty-five.

The thought came to him that perhaps he shouldn't have written that part about the battle and the dying, but he had thought about death so much lately that the words were written almost unconsciously. He smiled to himself as he thought how confidently he had written "... if I should fall..." He wondered if Abbie would see through his pretended confidence. He knew she wouldn't though. She was younger than he, and he had left her with two children and a small farm.

"Let's go Cal! We're a-marching!"

Caleb glanced up and nodded to Jonah Baldwin, who was readying his gear. Baldwin was a tall, bony man of thirty-five. His boniness concealed the great strength he had acquired in twenty-five years of farming. He had a full, light-brown beard which was stained dark brown at the corners of his mouth from a perpetual wad of tobacco. His eyes were big and lazy looking, a sharp contrast against his long straight nose. He and Caleb had become great friends while in Virginia, and Caleb prized his older friend's every bit of advice.

"How far do ya figure they'll push us tonight?" Cal asked while he rolled up the blanket he had been resting on.

Jonah spat a long, brown stream into the bushes. "Don't know, Cal; but I'll tell ya this—we're moving in on something big against those Rebs. In a couple of days, maybe one, you'll get your first crack at 'em."

"That's about what I figured—one or two days." Cal slung the pack over his shoulders and tightened the strap across his chest. One or two days—he felt his stomach jump just a little.

Jonah and Caleb fell into line with the others. The artillery wagons, and ambulances were already bumping along. The evening was balmy; and Cal thought of his farm, the big front porch, Abbie, and the children. Suddenly he wondered just why he was there marching along with hundreds of men. He hadn't been forced to join the army; he'd volunteered. He didn't especially like guns and uniforms; he never went hunting back on the farm. The whole affair seemed so crazy. He was marching across Maryland getting ready to fight and perhaps die for a political issue, or for the darkies, or for something. When he was a little boy, he had sometimes thought of being in a battle but that would be in some far off land—not Maryland.

"Why'd you join up, Jonah?" he asked.

Jonah snorted. "To put the Rebs in their place, that's why. Damn Southerners think they're kings; they want a country of their own, for God's sake!" He spat into the ditch.

Caleb frowned. "Don't you care about the slaves, or things like that? Pennsylvania is supposed to be strong against keeping slaves."

"Oh, I suppose so. I don't know though—a darkie's just a darkie to me," Jonah exclaimed, and spat again. "We used to have one work around the farm. He was lazy as sin."

"But we can't just kill a bunch of men because they need to be put in their place; it's not right. I don't hate the rebels."

Cal had never talked about the killing part of war with Jonah since they had met in camp, and he was surprised at his friend's lack of concern. "What I mean to say is—aren't you a Church man or whatever you call it? Don't you think it wrong—all this?"

Jonah tripped in a wagon furrow and cursed. "Listen Cal," he said, "if we don't stop the Rebs and stop 'em soon, they'll be clear up into Pennsylvania. That's where we live; that's where our folks live. I aim to stop as many of them as I can. Is that good enough for ya?"

"I see," Cal answered. But for the first time he really didn't understand at all. He had thought when he volunteered that he should protect his home, his family. Maybe the rebels didn't want his home; maybe they just wanted the South for their own, and he realized that he was afraid and that somewhere in Maryland there were men just as afraid as he was, and he was supposed to make their fears realized. He was supposed to kill them. He said nothing more to Jonah.

They marched on for what seemed like hours to the rest of the division until the command to halt was finally given; but Caleb hadn't even been aware of marching.

The men were roused early the next morning. Stonewall Jackson and Walker had joined Lee on the western side of the Antietam Creek near Sharpsburg. The Confederate forces had taken advantage of General McClellan's hesitancy and were pouring a sharp artillery attack across the river. General Hooker's men crossed the Antietam and engaged the forces of General Hood; and the divisions of Williams and Greene were called to come with all possible haste, to cross the Antietam that night, to bivouac a mile in Hooker's rear, and to support an all out attack on the 17th.

Caleb was a member of Burn's division, which was to advance shortly behind Greene's forces. By the time their division was marching the entire countryside was in a turmoil. Artillery and supply wagons and ambulances tore down the roads through swirling tunnels of dust. The roads were filling up with blue-uniformed infantry men, and



calvalry officers wheeled their horses from side to side shouting orders. Caleb marched along next to Jonah. He was completely awed by the clatter and roar of an army preparing for an attack. Despite his two children and twenty-five

years he suddenly felt like a little boy. He studied the faces of the other men marching near him to see if he could detect in their faces the emotion he felt, but they all presented blank expressions. He could hear the rumble of Confederate artillery in the distance.

"How many men are dying right now?" he wondered. "If only I were a veteran, or seasoned killer or something, this wouldn't be so bad, but I'm not. I'm . . ." He felt a terrible urge to run.

"How many cows do you have, Jonah?" he blurted out.

"Twelve—and I am to get me three more when I get back. Fifteen cows—Just like that old bird in Virginia."

"I have eight. I had nine, but I gave one to Pap. I sure hope Abbie can keep 'em all right."

"She will. Women are always good with cows. My Jane cares for 'em better than me." He spat and wiped his mouth.

"Cows," Cal thought, "talking about cows and marching off to fight men."

"Look out—outta the way!" a voice yelled. And the men moved off the road as a group of horses and cannons thundered by.

"Sure make a lotta dust, don't they?" Jonah said and smiled. He expelled the entire wad out of his mouth with little effort.

The artillery rolled on down the road and the din of the Confederate cannon could be heard again.

"Just keep yelling, Johnny Rebs," growled Jonah. "We'll be there soon."

They reached the Antietam by sundown and crossed in the darkness. While they were settling for the night some of Hooker's wounded passed by. Caleb watched in stunned fascination as the dirty, blood stained men shuffled by on their way to the hospital units. They were all young men. Their faces were filthy and tired-looking. Each had his own mark—a half-banded face, a shattered leg, a torn shoulder, a smashed hand. Some groaned, others cursed quietly.

Caleb saw one bunch of the dead carried by. In the back of one wagon he saw the face of one of the bodies. The eyes stared glassily up at the sky. The skin was very white, and the mouth was pulled back and slightly down in a grimace. Dried blood lined the corners of the mouth and the cracks between the teeth. Caleb felt sick. He went over to his blanket, sat down and pulled his Bible out of his pack.

"And what doth the Lord require of Thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

He closed the Book and put it back in the pack. He felt a terrific knot in his stomach. "God help me," he mumbled, "help me do the right thing. I'm afraid to kill or be killed."

He lay down on his blanket, pushed the corner of his handkerchief into his mouth and bit down hard. No matter how hard he tried he could not forget the ghastly expression on the dead boy's face.

Caleb had slept only a few hours when the Confederate artillery began again, and at dawn the men were ordered out. They were assembled

and began to march north. They marched for a few miles until they came to Greene's division, which was already engaging in the enemy. Cal found himself running through a small wooded area toward a large corn field.

The roar of the cannons was deafening. The balls ripped through the trees and tore into the ground, spraying the soft earth. At the other side of the long field Caleb could see the gray-uniformed rebel riflemen. They opened fire as Caleb and the others burst out of the woods. A ball whizzed past Caleb's ear and cut down a stalk of corn immediately on his left. Then he heard another and another. They sounded like bees singing past him.

The men knelt in the corn and returned the fire; then they got up, loaded and advanced again. A terrific gale of fire ripped into the right side of the Union forces; the advance was halted momentarily but began again immediately. They knelt and fired again into the rebels. This time the Confederates fell back toward the edge of the woods. The Northerners advanced with a shout.

Caleb's mouth was completely dry, and he trembled visibly. He knelt and raised his rifle to fire for the first time. A gray form appeared across the field over the end of the long barrel. His finger closed on the trigger and froze. He knelt, staring straight ahead, unable to fire. The men rose and advanced for the fourth time. Caleb staggered numbly along, stumbling over the furrowed ground.

Again the men halted and knelt to fire and again there was a terrible Confederate volley, but this time into the center of the Union forces. Caleb dropped flat on the ground and lay there sobbing with his face buried in the soft earth.

"Get up man; get up and fight!" Jonah screamed down at him. He reached down, grabbed Cal by the shoulder and pulled him to his feet. "What's the . . ." and two balls ripped into Jonah—one in the neck and the other in the head. He fell back and lay twisted over a bunch of fallen corn stalks. Trickle of blood slowly covered the tobacco stains.

Caleb uttered a little cry, turned, and fired across the cornfield into the blazing gray blur. He grabbed up Jonah's rifle and ran blindly toward the Confederate line. He stopped, fell on one knee, and sighted on a moving, gray figure.

"Damn you filthy Rebels," he hissed, and fired. The figure dropped; Caleb felt the warm tears in the corner of his mouth. "God forgive me," he whispered.

He reloaded and advanced with the others. This time the Confederate fire roared in from the left.

"Jackson, during the afternoon, had been ordered by Lee to turn out right and attack in flank and rear; but on reconnoitering for this purpose, he found our line extended nearly to the Potomac, and so strong defended with artillery that to carry it was impossible; so he declined to make the attempt."

"So closed, indecisively, the bloodiest day that America ever saw."

HAROLD McWILLIAMS

# PURSUED

Five Teutonic faces stare disconsolately down at the turbulent waters of the Atlantic. Hit-and-run tactics have been to no avail; the imminency of death is nearer than ever before. Under cover of darkness the *Bismarck*, with two great wounds in her side and bleeding oil, has been trying desperately to escape her pursuers, but her exhausted sailors know that it is only a matter of time before the fury of the *King George V* and her consorts will be unleashed against them.

Hans, the perpetual worrier of the group, is beyond anxiety; his face is a mask of terror, illuminated by moonlight. Beyond him lies the monstrous hulk of the world's most powerful battleship, with her main and after batteries as yet unscathed. Despite this imposing array of firepower, Hans cannot subdue the sickening feeling in his stomach which arises from his instinct that all is inevitably lost. Fritz wears a sardonic smile on his face, for he discounts the possibility of certain destruction, as well he might, in view of the superlative qualities of the *Bismarck* compared with other naval units. He claps his hand on his companion's shoulder to reassure him and glances askance at Friedrich. Doubt reigns in Friedrich's mind; a frown creases his already weather-beaten face as he mutely prays for deliverance. Immobile and apparently unaware of Fritz's piercing glance, Friedrich nervously crushes out the stub of his cigarette against the railing. A sneer curls around Rudolph's lips and he laughs inwardly, thinking of the impotency of the *Hood* which blew up with little provocation. There is a strange gleam in his eye, a gleam composed half of fear and half of hatred for the enemy. Uttering an oath to dispel any contemptuous feeling of sympathy for the enemy, he strides angrily away from the starboard side and gazes proudly at the cold, gleaming fifteen-inch guns and the huge mainmast rising majestically above him. Karl, alone at the stern, weeps quietly, envisioning certain death. He struggles to control himself, but the thought of his wife and children becoming fatherless is too much for him to bear. The dive bombing of the innocents, the slaughter of the Belgian Army, the unmerciful air attacks on England—what else is it but cold-blooded murder? Helplessly enraged, he screams out at the butchery and senselessness of the war and lapses once more into silence. Five bleary-eyed men stare disconsolately into the darkness, for with the arrival of dawn the fate of the *Bismarck* will be sealed.

NORMAN R. COLE

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# "Coup d'Etat"

I was standing the four to eight morning watch on the bridge of the Swedish Orient Line cargo vessel M/S *Svea*. The day was clear and the rich green coastline of Brazil was clearly visible, framed between the cloudless sky and the deep blue of the South Atlantic. We had left Rio Grande do Sul some days earlier and I was eagerly anticipating a return to the more cosmopolitan atmosphere of Rio de Janeiro. I gazed with some satisfaction at a speck of white on a distant mountaintop. Adjusting my binoculars, I saw that this speck was the Corcovado, the massive white cement statue of Christ that stands guard over the city of Rio de Janeiro.

An hour or so after sighting the Corcovado, we were boarded by a pilot, some customs men, and a number of marine police. The pilot was a small man of middle age wearing an ill-fitting suit and sporting the inevitable Brazilian moustache. As he climbed the ladder to the bridge, he spoke in a rapid animated Portuguese from which I could discern little except the words "Revolucion" and "Presidente Vargas."

On the deck below, the marine police and customs men were milling about with their brief cases asking in broken English, "Cigaretten, wheesky, nylons, raadios-for beesniss?" One ferret-like customs man was wearing so much gold braid that I thought he would sink like a stone were he to fall overboard. Having spent three months on the South American coast, I was no longer surprised at the idea of customs men so corrupt that they purchased those items on which they were supposed to impose duties.

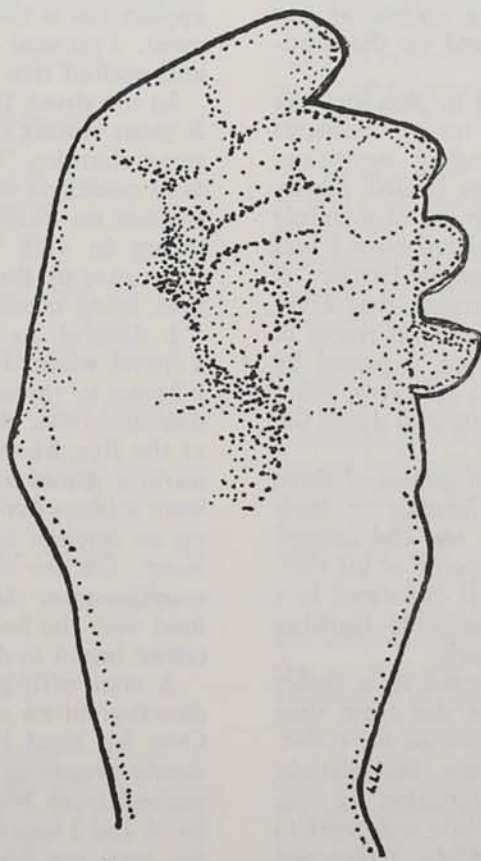
After some delay, the customs men returned to their launch (now with bulging brief cases) and we were once again underway. The pilot carried on an endless monologue in Portuguese which no one understood but which was evidently related to "Vargas." I turned a deaf ear and gazed with curiosity at the familiar landmarks we passed on our way into the port. At a reduced speed, we passed two Brazilian Lloyd vessels and swung into

the main anchorage between a Moore-McCormack ship and what appeared at first to be a garbage scow, but upon closer scrutiny turned out to be a Liberty ship belonging to the Delta Lines of New Orleans. At an order from the pilot our anchor chain rumbled out.

Immediately after being relieved, I went to the mess to get a cup of coffee. A small number of the crew, who had gathered there were speaking in extremely excited voices. To my great disappointment, I heard that we were not to have any shore leave because there was trouble brewing in the city. Getulio Vargas, the president, had either committed suicide or been shot. My imagination contemplated the thought of a revolution with considerable interest. Realizing I could do or see nothing while aboard ship I returned to my cabin to write a letter. I was interrupted by the captain's messenger who told me to report to the captain's cabin at once.

With a great deal of curiosity and not a little apprehension, I went aft. My knock was answered by the correct, business-like, "Yes?" that one reads about in novels. I opened the door and was confronted by the grim figure of Captain Anderson, S.R.N.R., sitting behind his massive oak desk that was probably once the pride of the Victorian era. I saluted and stood waiting for him to speak. I had that annoying feeling of self-consciousness that I always feel when confronting an officer of superior rank. I was only vaguely aware of the cabin, lined with its book shelves and dominated by that enormous desk which served as a centerpiece. After what is often referred to as the pregnant pause, the captain waved towards an armchair. He told me that because of the unrest in Rio, the shipping

agent was unable to come out to the ship. I was therefore to proceed (in the Swedish Merchant Navy, as in the United States Navy, one never goes anywhere; one always proceeds), to the shipping office to deliver some papers and pick up the ship's post. I had evidently been chosen for this



task on the rather dubious assumption that, as I spoke English and French as well as Swedish, Portuguese would not be a formidable barrier to me. Captain Anderson then launched a long tirade against all Latin Americans, muttering that they were all lazy, incompetent and corrupt. In addition, they had now had the inexplicable gall to have one of their absurd *coup d'etats* at a time calculated to hold up his record run to New York. This was a personal affront. He had, he exclaimed, no intention of being detained by a group of revolting Latins. I had no time to inquire whether the pun was intended. He handed me a portfolio of papers and then, as if by an afterthought, he reached with considerable flourish, characteristic of his tendency for the dramatic, into a drawer of his desk and handed me a Webley service revolver. Successfully quelling an impulse to laugh, I checked it elaborately and stuck it into my pocket. I returned to my cabin, changed my uniform for one with more gold braid (calculated to impress the Brazilian "uniform-mindedness") and set out to see what a *coup d'etat* was like.

The company launch wended its way between the ships in the anchorage and headed for a pier near the Praca Maua. We passed merchant vessels of every conceivable type that had been forced to anchor as a result of the dock tie-up. We even passed some ships of the Brazilian navy that have been aptly described by another author as not being afloat at all but fast aground on the accumulation of their daily refuse.

Once on the pier, I was forced to pick my way around an enormous heap of rotting bananas discarded during some past loading operation. Flies of varying shades of green circled dizzily over the festering mass. With the aid of a couple packs of cigarettes and a hundred cruzeiros I was permitted to pass through the customs barrier. It was with considerable disappointment that I arrived in the Praca Maua and found no traces of any great battle having taken place. I passed by the familiar Florida Bar (known to every sailor that has ever visited Rio) and continued down the Avenida Rio Branco.

Here and there soldiers stood in groups of three or four smoking cigarettes and leaning on their rifles. One of these soldiers saw me and crossed the street, challenging me at the point of his rifle.

"Americano!?" he half asked and exclaimed in a voice that expressed such indescribable loathing that I was momentarily taken aback.

"No. Marina Sueco." I answered in a feeble attempt to imitate Portuguese, at the same time pointing to the three crowns insignia on my collar.

"Ahh!" he exclaimed, becoming immediately more gracious. He gave an imitation of the American Air Force fly catcher salute and tried to look as much like a soldier as possible. I returned the gesture and continued on my way.

When I arrived at the offices of the Agencia Maritima Laurits Lachmann, S/A, I found it was closed. There was no door (few offices in Brazil have anything resembling doors) but the jalousies were firmly secured. With considerable irritation I pounded on the corrugated steel shutter. I was about to do so again when the soldier who had

challenged me came up and asked what the trouble was. I indicated by sign language and a mixture of French and English that I wished to gain entrance. The soldier finally understood and with a smile of profound glee began pounding the shutter with the butt of his rifle until I thought that the building would surely come down. In an instant, a small and frightened clerk rolled up the shutter and peered out at us. The soldier shouted in Portuguese too fast for me to catch and the clerk cowered, looking to me for support. I thanked the soldier with a nod and a pack of cigarettes and preceded the clerk into the offices. He was still quite disturbed and seemed somewhat awestruck. In Brazil the men tend to be short and they look upon anyone more than six feet tall as something of a giant. I told him that I had come to pick up the ship's post. He looked at me and said in fairly good English that it was not sorted yet, but perhaps by the next day . . . No sooner had he finished than he realized that a definite difference of opinion existed in regard to this matter. I told him that the post would have to be sorted that day and that I would return in two hours time to pick it up. I tossed several one hundred cruzeiro notes on the table at the same time as I transferred my revolver from one pocket to another. As I turned to go I thought with some amusement of this practical (if overdone) application of the doctrine of rewards and punishment. I glanced at my watch as I left the building and noticed that it was already three o'clock.

In the street, the scene had changed completely. A great throng of people was parading down the street chanting "O Getulio!" Large pictures of the dead president were in evidence everywhere. The soldiers no longer stood in idle groups but were trying in vain to re-establish order. Some of them gave up the cause and joined the demonstration, firing occasional shots into the air.

I decided to kill the two hours by visiting a friend whom I had met several trips before and I began to thread my way against the current of demonstrators. An hour and a half later, I arrived at the Rua Mexico. An uncontrollable mob stood hurling stones at the American Embassy. There were soldiers here as well. A volley of stones broke up an attempt to form a cordon around the Embassy. On the steps stood a Hotchkiss .50 calibre machine-gun. It was not until some rounds were fired over the heads of the demonstrators that the crowd began to disperse.

A man with a florid face came running in my direction in an attempt to escape the hail of fire. Over his head he held a stone and he was evidently preparing to throw this at me when he was pushed from behind. I had my revolver in my hand and I was determined to defend myself. Had the man not been pushed from behind, I would doubtless have dropped him where he stood.

The demonstration around the Embassy seemed to stop as soon as it had begun. Surprisingly, I found that most of the demonstrators were not dashing patriots or enraged citizens but merely a mob made up primarily of the curious. This is that undefinable group that seems to spring from

(Continued on Page 22)



## MEDIEVAL PORTRAITS, SOMEWHAT DIAGRAMMATIC

### I. THE BLACK KNIGHT

Armored with muscles, handicapped in steel mail,  
a rude lover and yet a ruder hater,  
with a mind not even big enow for prejudice,  
he takes the left fork i' the road for no other reason  
save that an ignis-fatuuus gleamed through the  
swamp  
and seemed to point the way.

No dragons here,  
he is himself the dragon and the hero.  
Let the fair maiden beware! and let the churl  
(the beef-complexioned churl, alas, he who  
ogles the princess as she rides past the village)  
I says, let the churl beware of the black knight's boot!

This knight has need of a bath; he is, in point  
of brutal verity, filthy. See how's eyes  
peer through the pig-bristles of a ten-months'  
stubble!

God A'Mighty might come to deny the clay  
warped into such a pot, methinks; and yet  
'tis not cowardice tautens the heavy lips.

In truth, he holds death greatly in contempt  
in that his life's itself contemptible.  
No man seeks pity from that gangling form  
miscreated in image of th' Diety;  
and, with all that, his sword's double edge is sharp!

"I'll send that lying rogue, Le Rorque, to Hell  
in that he cheated me of half my booty.  
"Next time I go for pillage, 'twill be lone-wolf . . .  
the devil take Le Rorque if I'm not there first!

### II. THE ALCHEMIST

An that the crucible bubbled, he foresaw  
blood-soluble myrrh preserving human life  
even unto immortality; but that his beard  
itched from a lack o' washing, he reviled  
the genii that plagued him with such lack of  
purpose.

His eyes, myopic, traced out the fuzzy lines  
of crude retorts and test tubes, seeing there  
magic that should have been less black with fraud.  
Foul odors were, of a necessity, virtuous.  
Many-hued smokes presaged more mysteries  
than Childe Hassam's daubings since have dreamed  
of . . .  
(though he was no mean dauber).

Garbed like a koala,  
clumsy, with hair on's ears, wearing a thick robe,  
thicker with spilled greases, and rimed with dirt,  
"without a visible tail"—our alchemist  
slowly vegetated in the midst of fancies:  
mysticism, palpable; the philosopher's stone,  
a phrase to conjure cobolds; elixer of life,  
an obscene fungus feeding in the dark  
while health and joyousness ran out o' doors.

Oh, he was quaint! all studied archaisms  
such as buffoonery of solitude devised  
he wore like an amulet, dreaming morbid dreams.  
His nose was that of a hawk; lean fare, no doubt,  
shriveled his jowls and pinched his sunken cheeks.  
(Lacklustre eyes! of what might ye be dreaming?)

He was a vivisectionist of self,  
this ancient modern. Past existentialism  
he groped and stumbled upwards toward the light.  
Though lacking faith in universals, he  
swore mightily by universal solvents.  
'Twas jest of the craft that nothing now was certain  
except that nothing was certain; for the rest,  
he trusted to unflagging curiosity,  
to the properties within things, and to God.  
**The middle ages of intelligence**  
that are to come: but this man was a prophet,  
and thus he prayed before he went to bed,  
with godly fervour:

"Grant me but sanitation,  
God o' my unborn children, and good food  
in right proportions; other desire have I none.  
"My sins be on my head to all eternity,  
but wizardry be triple-cursed! Amen.

ART KING

## London — 1951

April touched London softly, and the crocuses peeped hesitantly through brown, decaying leaves. Hyde Park was a field of green, and couples walked slowly by the Pond, watching the first sailboats skim over water that reflected the blue known only to an English sky. Soft, cotton-wool clouds seemed close enough to touch, and birds soared high, playing their games of spring. The fogs of winter were forgotten, and even Albert seemed to smile beneath his baroque stone canopy. The chimes of Big Ben could be heard from Hampstead to Richmond Hill if you listened carefully.

London seemed young again, the noble grey of her buildings having been softened by the sun. Pub doors stood open, and hearths that had glowed all winter lay dark and forgotten (several in Stepney, as is the custom among the Cockneys, were already filled with ferns and flowers). The swans at Hampton Court bobbed for bits of bread, and children scampered through the Maize that they knew so well. The lions at Trafalgar Square seemed to purr as the fountains sent jets of silver high into the air, and busy starlings kept lonely Nelson company.

The Thames, alone, flowed undisturbed through the city. She had, days before, reflected the green fields of Berkshire, Surrey and Middlesex. Primroses and marguerites had been at her side while children had waded in her sun-warmed waters. Thus, the Thames moved onward past St. Paul's, glistening in the sun, and the bleak Tower, softened by the spring light. She seemed to hurry as she left Greenwich, as if eager to carry the warmth and joy of England to the stormy Channel.

## London — 1952

England had lost her king, and for a week the English sky wept. London waited for the body of her lord, and the trip from Sandringham was long and slow. London waited as the sand was spread on the roads to Paddington. The gates of Marble Arch were opened (the last time had been for his coronation), and the people of London went to Westminster Hall. They saw the royal standard draped over the coffin, reflecting the soft glow of candles.

I felt the sorrow of those around me as I stood by Park Lane that last grey morning. When the bells of St. Paul's and Westminster began to toll at ten o'clock, the sandy road to Paddington held half of London at its side. A black cloth, draped across the grey facade of the Dorchester, flapped silently in the February wind, and the cold, winter sun shone through the thinning clouds.

Soon troop after troop of soldiers came marching in that cadence known only to mourning. Their greatcoats swung, and the sand crunched loud beneath their feet. A young girl sat on her father's shoulder, her blue eyes dancing with excitement as she saw the king's soldiers pass. Her father held her tightly with one hand. A young boy (his red and shining cheeks seemed blasphemous to the black around him) sat drinking tea on the curb.

After the soldiers and their charge had gone the bells lay quiet in their steeples, and the gates of Marble Arch were closed. The people walked slowly home as rain fell on the scattered sand of Park Lane, and the road to Windsor was dark.

W. W. MONTGOMERY

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LEGAL and COMMERCIAL PRINTING

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Bridgeport, Pa.

# **SPOT** *a tale of the sea*

Tom was the second mate. Everyone on the tanker liked him. He was a good officer, but didn't always tell you about it like some guys I know. He would, time and again, do everything he could for a sailor that had gotten into some kind of trouble. Best of all, he would try to keep men out of difficulty. For instance, take the time ol' Gerry came back from town drunk, with a pair of roller skates. We were loading, and when Tom (the officer on duty) saw him having a merry time skating around the tank tops on the forward deck, he calmly took the skates, dropped them over the side, and sent Gerry back to the foc'sle. The next day he gave a short lecture to the crew on the dangers of sparks on the open deck. He didn't mention Gerry, but, on a ship, news travels faster than a pregnant woman's knitting needles, and we all knew the reason for the speech.

I was cleaning the passageway one morning and heard Tom talking in his cabin. He sounded angry at something. For Tom to get mad was quite an event, so I listened for another voice (hoping to have a little gossip for the Mess), but heard none. After a while Tom came out alone. He had left his cabin door open, so I looked in. It was empty. I thought that it must have been the radio that I had heard, although I could have sworn it was Tom's voice.

Gerry asked me a few days later if I hadn't noticed that Tom was acting queerly. I immediately thought of the day I had been outside his cabin, but I didn't say anything. Gerry said that he had seen Tom patting the deck and looking behind himself at frequent intervals when he walked on deck. While we were standing there we heard a whistle, and, looking around, we saw Tom standing amidships looking our way. We started up the catwalk toward him. When we got about half-way there, Tom crouched and then grabbed what seemed to be an armful of air. Then he turned and went into the passageway. We caught up with him and asked him what he wanted.

Surprised, he looked at us and said, "Nothing."

"We thought you whistled for us," I said, looking at his still-cradled arms.

"I was just calling for Spot," he laughed.

"Spot?" we said in unison.

"Yes. He was playing near the side, and I didn't want him to fall over." He stooped down and released his arms, giving the air a sharp smack.

We felt relieved. Tom had found himself a dog. That wasn't too extraordinary. All of us, at one time or another — especially on long trips — had gotten an imaginary pet, and a dog named Spot wasn't as bad as the homing pigeon that Mike had had at one time. No one could open a porthole or door for two weeks because Mike was afraid the pigeon would fly away. We all told him to make a cage for it, but he liked to watch it fly around. It was hard on us, because we were

never sure where the damned bird was, and I nearly let it out once. So, Tom's dog wasn't bad at all.

Tom and Spot taking an evening stroll became a familiar sight on deck. The chief cook saved all the bones for him, and we all entered into the spirit of things. Gerry even took Spot up to the boat deck on Sunday afternoons when he took a sunbath. Tom's watch really livened up. He would bring Spot onto the bridge, and the time would really go by, especially after he had taught the dog a few tricks. I remember the time that Spot "rolled-over-and-played-dead." Tom was so pleased he bought us all a Coke.

We were three days out of Santos when it happened. The sea had become rough, and the captain, a mild-mannered Norwegian, stayed on the bridge most of the time because he was not familiar with the coastal waters of Brazil. He had, of course, seen Tom and Spot around, and had even, on occasion, joined in our game, slyly giving Spot tidbits in the saloon. But the captain changed with the weather, and we tried to keep out of his way when his storm warnings went up. And they were up three days out of Santos.

He was pacing up and down the bridge when Tom came on watch with Spot. The ship was rolling considerably, and the waves, crashing over the bow, slammed against the ports, making visibility poor. We were near some shoals, and the Captain was looking for the warning lights. Spot had been in one of his ornery moods that day, and Tom was busy scolding him. It seems that Spot, enjoying the roll of the ship, had become overly excited and had peed on Tom's bed. Tom had smacked him, and, in retaliation, Spot had chewed up the log book. We were all grinning with one eye on the captain. The captain didn't seem to think it was very funny. "Stop that chatter," he said, still pacing up and down.

Tom paid no attention to the captain and went right on giving Spot hell.

"Get that dog off the bridge!" the captain roared.

Tom heard that time. He looked up and said, "It's O.K., Capt'n; he'll be good." Tom turned back to Spot and talked real low.

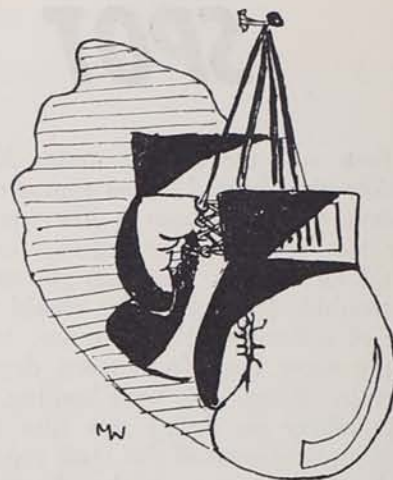
"Damn it, Second, I said get him out of here!" the captain yelled.

Tom really should have taken Spot below then, because the captain became so mad when Tom didn't move that he made one grab toward the corner, opened the door, and threw Spot over the side.

We all felt bad, but it really hit Tom hard. He became sullen, and never talked to anyone. The captain apologized. It didn't do any good, and when we got back to the States Tom left the ship without saying goodbye to any of us. Anyway, it taught us a lesson. Now we keep our pets locked in the foc'sle when the storm-warning goes up.

W. W. MONTGOMERY

## THE BIG MISTAKE



Alex Cunka stared out of the dirty window of the basement poolroom, but he did not really look at the drab neighborhood outside. His complete attention was focused on one very disconcerting fact: Alex Cunka was broke. Without turning from the window, he spoke to a man slouched over the pool table.

"Now look, don't gimme a hard time, will ya. You an' me were old cronies all the time. Two bits ain't heavy enough for anything but to burn a hole in your pocket! But it'll keep me alive the rest of the day. I gotta have a cigarette, I can't play the horses; I can't even afford to eat anymore. At least let me—"

"Alex, you been leechin' me for a month, ever since you lost your shirttails to the local bookies. Your luck's so bad that if you stuck a quarter in the machine you probably wouldn't get anything. Here, try it just for laughs."

Alex hurried to the machine and inserted the quarter, which fell musically somewhere in the innards of the mechanism. Gears turned and the machine spat a fresh pack of cigarettes into his hands. Alex fumbled for a pack of matches and dropped them. As he stooped to retrieve them, his glance fell upon the mirror attached to the machine. He stood there, shocked at his own disarray, surprised at the yellowed shirt, the spotted, unpressed pants, the torn, undersized jacket, the dirt and the growth of beard.

In an effort to forget himself, he crammed a cigarette between his lips and picked up the sports section of the city daily. He turned, as usual, to the racing tables and began to engross himself in fantasies in which his favorites were winning against tremendous odds. Reality intruded in the form of bald little Hooty, who limped into the room, using his broom as a makeshift crutch.

"Lift your feet, there."

Hooty usually went silently about his chores, apparently unmindful of the unpleasant jibes at his state of mind made by some of the more hardened customers. But now he leaned thoughtfully on his broom before Alex and whined, "Whatsa trouble, Alex? Pick one, didja, an' fergit to play it?"

"Forget to play it, my foot! I'm as low and broke and flat as the heels on my shoes."

"Here, Alex, take this fiver an' go git yaself some chow."

"No, Hooty, keep it. I don't wanna get more in debt than I gotta."

"That ain't now loan, Alex; it's kinda more like a— a present, ya know."

That was enough for Alex, and he eagerly took to the five dollars. But this was almost the first time in a month that he had been given as much money at one time, and he was curious.

"Hooty, how is it you can afford a five spot? You don't rake in as a broom jockey and damn straight ya don't get no tips! Ya sure ya didn't life this from somebody?"

"No, Alex, that stuff's clean, I swear. I wanna help ya but 'at's all. You're the only in dis place that talks to me decent like; you don't kid me about my short leg or nothin'. Ya treat me like a regular person an' that's why I guess I wanna help you."

"Thanks, pal, but you ain't much better off'n I am."

"Uh-uh. No, boss! No sir! I got loot, plenty. Ya think I let these two-bit pnuks know? Once I picked 'em a winner in a prize fight. Wasn't no favorite but he wins. Dey asks me how comes I knows, so's I tells 'em den that me ol' dead brother told me. So dey all laughs an' calls me nuts. From den on I tells nobody nothin!"

Alex gazed at Hooty with as much pity as he felt he could dispense with. Hooty perceived his disbelief.

"Ya think I'm crazy, don't ya?"

"Don't get me wrong, pal. It's just that you shook me up a little. A guy does need a little proof on a deal this big. You have a tip I could try out?"

"Ah, Alex, ya do believe me! I'm glad yer lettin' me help out. Sure, I gotta tip. My brother says in the eighth at Pimlico Soakin' Wet couldn't miss."

"Okay, Hoot old boy. I'll take your brother's word for it. But be a buddy — how about an advance of ten if this nag's a sure shot?"

\* \* \*

Alex Cunka stared out through the spacious big window overlooking the formal gardens of the estate, but he was not impressed by the beauty. His complete attention was focused on his problem. Alex Cunka was wealthy. Without turning from the window, he spoke to the tall,

heavy man slouched over the bar at the end of the room.

"Look, if I tell you he's gonna win, he's gonna win."

"Alex, since you've joined us some months ago, the entire syndicate has tripled its income. In fact, you had made out rather well yourself—I have seen to that—so I am sure that you are not sorry now that we used a bit of persuasion to convince you that you would be much healthier if you joined us. Naturally, I did not expect to be disappointed. I watched your lucky streak for some time before deciding that it was more than luck. Of course, we have been very tactful since and have lost a number of times to avoid arousing suspicion.

"However, we're dubious about this latest prediction of yours concerning the outcome of the heavyweight fight. This Bouvet is supposed to be a three-to-one underdog at fight time. You realize that? And to boot, this punk is an inexperienced kid. What possible chance does he have against Hoodcastle who has a string of K.O.'s long enough to stretch the length of Clancey's bar?

"Alex, whether you know it or not, we're betting our shirts on this fight. This is the big killing. I hope for your sake that your right."

Alex was worried. To be sure, Hooty's "brother" hadn't been wrong before.

"Besides," Alex reassured himself, "I've always kicked in well to Hooty, so he'd have no reason to double-cross me in a tight spot like this."

Nevertheless, the seriousness of the situation could not be easily dismissed.

Alex followed the massive syndicate kingpin to the book upholstered lounge, and faced a huge television set which was already in operation. Two brutes, who rather looked like pugs themselves were waiting impatiently for the opening round.

At ten twenty-five the bell sounded the start of the fight. Everyone relaxed at first, while the butler refilled the glasses from the bar as quickly as they were emptied. One of the brutes called, "It's in the bag."

By the eighth round, it was evident that if Bouvet were going to win it would have to be by a knockout. The favorite hammered him unabatedly from the beginning of the round to the end, but was jeered mightily by his continued low blows.

Finally, with the fight one minute into the ninth round, Hoodcastle landed a mighty right to what the referee thought was the midsection, and followed through with a jaw-shattering uppercut. Bouvet crumpled into a heap, and remained there until the attendants scooped him up, three minutes after the cry "ten."

Alex felt his mouth go dry and watched his arms drop limp from the arms of his easychair. The boss rose deliberately and nodded to his hunting hounds as he passed their chairs. Turning off the television, he made his exit. The silence seemed almost to scream.

Almost as in the misty haze of a dream, Alex watched as the two torpedoes approached him resolutely for opposite sides. He sprang to his feet and turned to run. A hairy paw seized his shoulder and brought him to a crashing halt.

"No! No! Lemme go! Lemme go!"

The animal shot his fist into Alex's face, and Alex reeled in agony. The floor, the walls, the evil grimaces on the leering faces swirled into a galaxy of movement.

\* \* \*

Late that afternoon, two small boys, whose insatiable urge to romp had taken them from their usual route home from school to a vacant lot on the outskirts of Queens, stumbled onto the badly beaten remains of Alex Cunka.

The police were notified by the parents of the terrified children.

Two officers arrived to collect the corpse, and after several minutes of questioning the children headed for the morgue.

"That's an ugly mess, Walt" said the driver as he gestured toward the rear of the wagon.

"Yea, that it is, but don't try to change the subject, you still owe me fifteen bucks."

"I don't understand it," replied the driver, "how could they do something like that?"

"It's simple," Walt explained, "Look, Bouvet was being fouled all night. It was proved to the Boxing Commission when they saw the fight films. That punch that doubled him up in the ninth was two inches below the belt. So the N.B.C. disqualifies Hoodcastle and gives Bouvet the fight."

BARRIE CILIBERTI

For Christmas Gifts  
for the entire family

## Blocks

NORRISTOWN, JENKINTOWN  
AND POTTSTOWN

# An Essay

## POETRY AND COLLEGE POETRY

Shelly says somewhere that the function of the poet is "to delight, not pose." Granted; but supposing that the poet is expected to delight and pose at the same time? It seems to me that herein lies a large part of the problem faced by the poet in this, the twentieth century. It is good for him to have to compete with the great poets of the past and with his contemporaries. It is not good for him nor for anyone else that he is generally met by a dwindling audience with esoteric and erudite tastes, and by the unassailable indifference of a general public wooed to less strenuous, less rewarding mental pastimes. Maybe those who prefer always to be amused innocuously could never be persuaded to read poetry anyway; the fact remains that the poet cannot write for the people because the people do not cultivate poetry. Two wide choices remain. The poet can fall in line with the trend to obscurantism, or he can try to restore the supremacy of meaning over symbolism. He might also become simply a writer of verses, but that would be an act of self-damnation.

If a poet in the next room is ridiculous, a poet in history has surely become less than sublime. History does in fact record the neglect of many fine poets, both during and after their lifetimes, together with the elevation of other poets who in the highest sense hardly merit the name. It is unfortunate that the loftiest values of poetry have so often been ignored, that the poet has so often been regarded as a person who has nothing to say and says it in a kind of tinkle of word-music, rhymed or unrhymed. Perhaps the poets themselves have consistently feared to sing their highest vision; perhaps the poets of our times have needlessly exaggerated their own isolation. The idea of "greatness" is itself a stumbling-block; its head-on collision with the idea of modesty has doubtless brought about the early demise of many a fine poetic faculty. Only the future can gauge the impact of poetic thought upon society; let the poet be content with the approval or disapproval of his fellows. Whether or not they like what he has to say is beside the point; he must have something important to say and trust that he will find his audience. At present, it seems to me, the poet's concern centers mostly about the fact that democratic ideals are founded upon the concept of an enlightened citizenry. The question which the poets have been asking in recent years is this: How will a society which, by and large, cannot appreciate poetry be capable of sustaining such ideals? Discussion of such subject cannot be restricted to the world of poetry.

Only consider this question apart from the audacity of its conceit; the plight of our society will not appear nearly so overwhelming as will the pique of an enthusiast. If poetry is to have any vitality, it must be more than the arrange-

ment of words into pretty phrases; it must be concerned with ideas, not words; it must be literally a cross-examination of life. It must pulse with the ancient verities or breathe in the social or intellectual atmosphere of its own times. Fortunately, we have the poets of the past to help us fill this very large order; our society appreciates great poetry more than a casual glance might reveal. The Bible, even as altered by the Revised Standard Edition, is great prose-poetry; and a great many people read the Bible. There has seldom been a worthy writer of prose who was incapable of poetic insight. Without imagination, of the very essence of poetry, science itself would have died miserably in its infancy. This may seem a weak and farfetched link—but is not the entire theory of physics on the fundamental nature of matter as poetic as the Biblical story of the Creation? I have heard the higher mathematics referred to as the poetry of numbers. It is delightful to find the biologist's explanation of the characteristics of Cro-Magnon man in effect supporting Rousseau's badly discredited idea of the "noble savage." And how else can the social sciences escape from their mountains of ever-changing statistics except by acts of poetic judgment?—Finally, the philosophical concept of synthetic knowledge is not exempt; Bergson's intuitive method requires a muse. For poetry involves an overleaping of artificial and impermanent barriers; its authority, extending beyond the sphere of its most self-conscious expression, penetrates the entire world of thought. The license of fancy gives the poet a potent weapon toward constantly revitalizing within a narrow range the great heritage of the past and sending new currents surging through the stream of the world's consciousness. The poet's share in the overall work of mankind may be a minute one, but to consider poetry without realizing its *necessity* is to reduce it to rubbish.

The claim for philosophical poetry, for poetry as a catalyst of idea, may seem fantastic to those accustomed to thinking of poetry in terms of its more traditional role, that of portraying the emotions. But certainly the dramatic power reaches the zenith of a Shakespeare only through its fusion with a rare poetic ability which combines philosophical and emotional insight in the same person. We do not live in Elizabethan England. It appears that every age is not to be greeted with the emergence of the profoundest dramatic power; consequently, an age must sometimes learn to find in fragmentary form that expression and elucidation of its passions and motives, that dramatization of itself, which genius alone can present whole. Our century has produced a superabundance of very good poets ideally suited for such a chore. Bold departures from old forms have led to both sterility and strength; experimentation has not been stifled, despite a

tendency to obsession with futility and despair. Profuse evidence of frustration may at least indicate that some of our poets are not telling "too many lies." The poetry of the emotions seeks to become the mirror of its age; the usual fierce subjectivity of the poets amply attest their susceptibility to all the usual human frailties. And the poetry of entertainment, employing the well-turned phrase to say nothing more than that which is not quite worth thinking seriously about, also has its counterpart and justification in the world of practical reality.

Since college students are among the most alert and inquisitive groups in any society, it is among them, if anywhere, that the poetic expression of our times ought to be able to find free scope and sympathetic audience. Brevity and condensation of thought, among the virtues of poetry, should especially recommend themselves to this test—and time-conscious group. Reading good poetry has surely a part in the securing of a liberal education. In an environment already fraught with ideas and facts, even the demands of a T. S. Eliot should hardly prove too great a challenge. The college poet himself will not, in his own writings, expect to match the weight of Mr. Eliot's immense erudition. Is the college poet capable of writing poetry that is worth reading at all? By comparing his efforts with those of acknowledged masters, we should be able to learn the answer to that question.

Among the most important goals of true education is the evolving of the free citizen who is not only able but eager to think for himself. There are courses in the college curriculum designed to aid in achieving that end; and with strong motivation on the part of the student it is certain that they will not fail to help him realize a philosophy of living. Such philosophy can never prove itself infallible. The student at any given point in his college career may not be qualified to pass judgment on any significant aspect of the world in which he lives; but it may be doubted that anyone has ever been so qualified. Furthermore, our actions have the effect of a judgment even where no formal judgment has been made. If we were to postpone critical thought on any subject, however important, until our mastery of it approached omniscience, it is very likely that we should never begin thinking about the particular matter at all. Thought must rush in where angels fear to tread, because to avoid doing so would eventually compel action to enter the same region blindfolded. Perhaps angels are not held accountable for their actions; men often are, even when they do not know it. It is unthinkable that college poets should deliberately and with open eyes renege a modest share in a fundamental phase of their own education, completely abandoning it for the desire to entertain. There are scores and hundreds of commercial agencies already exclusively devoted to the proposition that people's minds need to be amused without being agitated or even awakened. With such belief the poets can only, at best or at worst, compromise.

ART KING

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## Coup d' Etat

(Continued from Page 14)

the ground at any time that there is trouble. I have seen their type before at automobile accidents or fires. They feel the excitement well up and explode with it.

To avoid embarrassing questions and possible detention, I made my way back to the Avenida Rio Branco. Demonstrators were still milling about but, on the whole, the situation was under control. I returned to the shipping office and found that by some miracle the post had been sorted. I was also given assurance that the agent would try and get us space at the pier as quickly as possible. He pointed out that our captain might be able to speed up the process for a nominal financial consideration to an official known only as Luis. I jotted this down in my book and returned to the *Svea*.

As my water taxi passed under the stern of one of the Brazilian ships at anchor, I noticed that the flag was now on half mast in honor of the deceased president.

In my cabin once again I found the letter that I had started before going to the city. I threw this away, picked up some blank stationery and went to the officers' mess. I poured myself a gin and began to write.

TOM O. ROSENBERG

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