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The Lantern Vol. 26, No. 1, December 1957

Walter W. Montgomery
Ursinus College

Samuel C. Miller
Ursinus College

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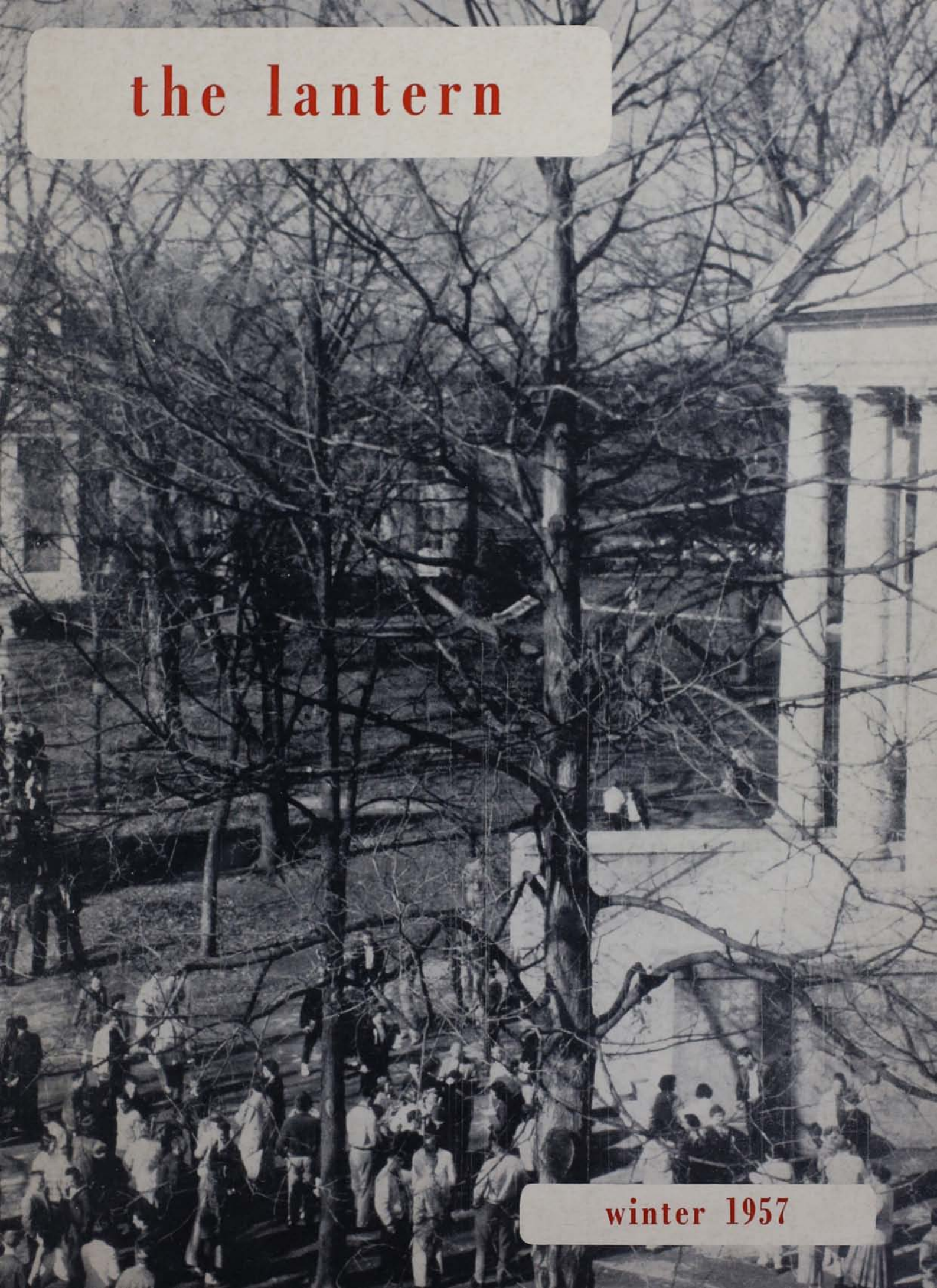
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Walter W. Montgomery, Samuel C. Miller, Philip Sterling Rowe, Carl Fontain, Tomas McCabe, Ann Leger, Jerry Crossley, and Laura Loney



the lantern

winter 1957



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THE LANTERN

WINTER 1957

URSINUS COLLEGE

VOL. XXVI, No. 1

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The Quill

Frosh

It should be said that there have been slightly dulier years at old UC than this one. We enjoyed the way freshman customs and elections erupted into a series of gratifyingly violent mob scenes and hope that classes yet to enter here will show the same vitality. In some previous years, the freshman-sophomore hostilities have seemed slightly anesthetized, but this time the underworld element was well represented, and kidnapings, roadblocks, and highly-spirited free-for-alls were standard procedure. We think it was a pretty good show.

Letters

Dear Editor:

You've been reading Nietzsche again.

Sincerely,

We have also received a number of letters from the State Civil Service Commission addressed to "City Editor, *The Lantern*," announcing competitive examinations for positions in state retail beverage outlets. We don't know just what such an examination might involve, but we invite all social chemistry majors to apply.

Interview

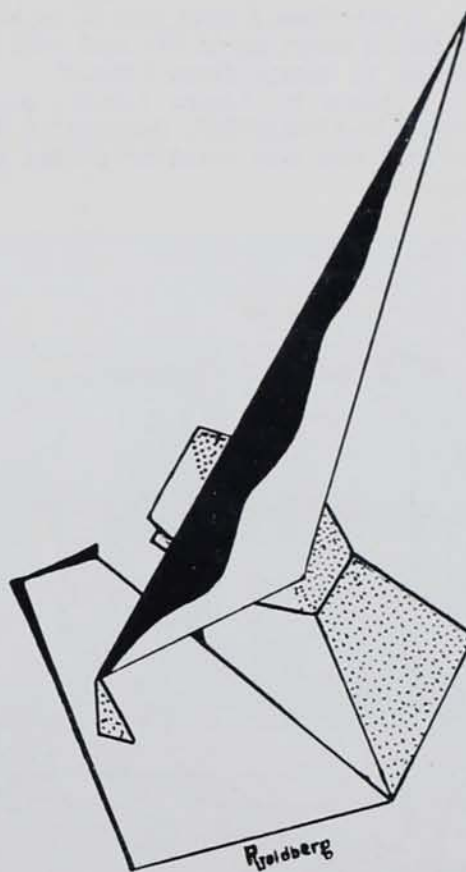
Recently we had a chat with a typical Ursinus co-ed. A phys-ed major, she was looking forward to her tour of duty with Snell's Belles. With hockey stick in hand, she told us that she maintained a pretty high average, although she had a close call in coaching and officiating. An extremely amiable girl, she has been known to buy her own beer. (Beer is an alcoholic beverage made from malt and hops.)

Dateline Collegeville

Prediction: Bowing to pressure from the stratosphere, the College Drug, local intellectual gathering place, will remove from its shelves all copies of *Love Without Fear*. This will be done to protect young minds from the influence of real life.

In This Issue

Jerry Crossley's *Grey Purple* is an unusual and thought-provoking work. Written in stream-of-consciousness, it takes the reader through a world of moods and colors. The chances are that you will either like or dislike *Grey Purple* strongly; this uncommon type of writing does not leave much room for a middle ground. We think you will be impressed.



Ann Leger, in *Christmas at Ursinus*, relates the stories behind the traditional ways Christmas is celebrated on our campus. In this interesting and timely article, she describes for us how carol singing, the Senior Ball, and other customs came to be.

Phil Rowe is the author of several articles in this issue. He has written two poems, *A Woodland Idyll* and *Four Trees*, both of which are outstanding. His short story, *The Power*, deals with a man who was suddenly gifted with powers usually withheld from mortals. *The House on the Edge of the World*, an allegory, contains much food for thought.

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star is the result of an exhaustive or at least exhausting scientific investigation conducted by Carl Fontain and Tom McCabe. Valuable data concerning the fuel mixture of the Russian satellite rocket are expounded, together with a penetrating analysis of the significance of Sputnik. Newspapers can only tell you so much; here we have the real lowdown, the inside dope, the story behind the story, and all that.

Motion in Retrospect, by Samuel C. Miller, is good descriptive writing. Moods, pictures, and cross sections of life are brought together in this description of a night journey in a modern streamliner.

A Brazilian Dirge is the work of Walter Montgomery. A study in character disinte-

gration, it describes a man who is no longer able to find a meaning in life and who tries desperately to escape from himself.

Life, a poem by Laura Loney, is both meaningful and beautifully descriptive. Read it once and you will want to reread it, as did we.



Sequel: "Dinner is served!"

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A Brazilian Dirge

WALTER W. MONTGOMERY

She yelled at him, and I hated her when she did that. He sat quietly drinking. I walked outside to the veranda knowing that he would leave soon, and she would forget him for a week. Then she would go to the Chinaman's, and the circle would be complete, but restless—eager to start another revolution.

"Cripple!" I heard her scream. "Drunk all the time. What can you be made of?"

He never said anything. And soon I heard his uneven step going away from the house, alternately crunching and dragging on the gravel path. I waited until she came out of the house. Her face was calm. She sat in the chair and turned to look out to the sea, giving no sign of the verbal outrage that she had just committed. I said nothing.

* * *

I had met them at a cocktail party a few weeks before. When I walked into the room I saw Emilie standing by the phonograph listening to Brahms. I watched the restrained tapping of her fingers as she mentally cued the surging, romantic violins. She was a large-boned woman with short, black hair that lay in Medusa-like curls on her head. I thought her attractive, and since the room was filled with aggravating youth I went to her.

"You missed your cue," I said, realizing the inanity of the remark. She smiled and turned the phonograph down.

"It is most impolite of me to have it so loud," she remarked. "You are an American?"

"Yes. I am spending a few weeks with an English friend of mine who lives here. I met him during the war, and we are attempting to recapture the adventure of those young years."

"Do memories mean so much?" she questioned.

"Not really, but they help so when the years seem to be speeding by so fast."

"How old are you?"

"Thirty-eight."

"A mere child," she laughed. "My son, Hans, looks older than you," she said, pointing behind her. I looked and saw him sitting alone. He was drunk, and was watching the young Brazilian girls with his heavy-lidded eyes. He stroked the arm of the chair softly, as if it were a cat. He did look older than I. Before I could ask she told me he was twenty.

"He was handsome when he was young," she mused. "But his foot—" Then she stopped, and a look of quiet desperation entered and left her face in a moment. "Will you get me a drink?" I did, and when I returned Hans was gone, and she was sitting in the chair.

We talked a great deal that night. She told me



about herself, much of which I had learned in the two weeks I had spent in Fortaleza.

Emilie Baer was German, and after the war she, with Hans, had come to Brazil where many former Nazis had found asylum. She was a doctor, but the Brazilian authorities did not let her practice, and her time was spent writing and listening to her fabulous record collection that she had managed to bring with her from Germany. The people of Fortaleza only tolerated her, but had nothing whatever to do with Hans. My host had told me about him. He often visited the houses on the waterfront, and Emilie was frequently seen in her car waiting for him to come out. It was said that he had fallen in love with an Indian girl from the mountains behind Fortaleza, but her family had needed money, and they had sent her away. Some said that she was working in Rio; others said that she worked in Castellano at the Chinaman's, but her hair was bleached, and her face had been scarred by a drunkard's knife.

"When are you leaving Fortaleza?" she questioned.

"In a week or so," I said, my thoughts returning to the room.

"You must come to see me. Here is my card. It has my address." Later, when she left, I knew that I must see her again.

The next day I visited her, and again the day after. At the end of the week I accepted her invitation to finish my stay at "Valhalla," her home. I extended my stay twice, not being able to leave.

I talked with Hans only once for any length of time. Emilie had gone shopping, and we sat on

(Continued on page 22)

Motion in Retrospect

SAMUEL C. MILLER

It is a very cold night up on the deserted platform. The biting wind whistles across the tracks of the upper level. Down the long platform the lights are all in straight lines that would seem to come together if only they went far enough. Beyond that is only an eerie blackness of night and out in the city the noise of rushing traffic. Along the tracks there is a discolored dirty remnant of a snowstorm. Everything is very still. Occasionally the wind whisks a bit of paper down the platform and eventually drops it down to the cold ribbons of steel that go unbroken into the damp, shivering night.

* * *

Many miles beyond the city station the track follows a narrow rushing river through the mountains and occasionally jumps across the water to the other side. Against the stone bridge piers the swift water splashes and swirls noisily. Snow is falling ever so silently and gently on an already covered landscape. It has been a wet snow, the kind that clings to whatever it touches. The top-side of every tree branch, to the smallest twig, is covered to give a most pleasing wintry effect. Only occasionally does a breeze blow and make the thin tree branches crackle and cause wisps of snow to shift quietly along the ground.

At the far end of the short bridge there stands a signal tower and by the greenish reflection it casts on the snow we know that everything is ready and safe for the Limited. Now, echoing against frozen mountain walls we hear a faint horn . . . then a soft but very quick throbbing of great Diesel engines. As the train approaches, the rails begin to take up the heavy vibration of many wheels. Then a long beam of light appears, cutting into the night as it sweeps around a curve; the noise of screaming engines is deafening now. Into another curve and over the bridge the train rushes, a new metallic note added to the din. The engines thunder by, but the sound of many wheels still keeps up as the train is whisked over the rushing water. Light from the big windows floods the snow and is reflected back on the silver cars that seem to dart by as one. Then the rounded end comes, goes, and red marker lights disappear almost too quickly into another curve. The sound dies rapidly and soon all is quiet but the splashing, rushing river. Across the bridge the signal tower, with snow shaken from it, casts a red glow on the white blanket below it.

* * *

In the warm waiting room of the huge station there are many people bundled in heavy clothing

(Continued on page 24)

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A Woodland Idyll

Philip Sterling Rowe

The night was a night of mystery;
Enchantment flowed from every tree
While the wind performed a symphony,
 Performed a magic symphony
 Composed of tragic melody,
 for the pleasure of a spectre moon;

The forest dark and sombre seemed
Except through where the moon's light streamed,
And here the lover lay and dreamed,
 Here where he'd lost his way, he dreamed,
 Here where he'd gone astray, he dreamed,
 oblivious to the night time tune;

The night grew denser while he slept,
Dense with the wet of tears unwept
And thus concealed, the phantoms crept,
 The phantom figures lightly crept
 Into the clearing where he slept
 unknowing, 'neath a cryptic oak;

Softly, innumerable they came
Marking forever their fatal claim,
To trace their circle in living flame,
 Enclosing him in their fatal claim,
 Making him part of their deathless game,
 'til finally the lover awoke;

And near him in the forest glade,
A lovely vision, magic made,
He saw her standing unafraid,
 A goddess standing unafraid,
 A goddess who so lithely swayed
 in rhythm to the tuneless dance;

The shadows kissed her shining hair,
The moon placed specks of gold dust there,
And sorcery was in the air,
 And sorcery was everywhere;
 The lover's every worldly care
 vanished in one consuming glance;

Her beauty through the night mist gleamed;
(How perfect had the schemers schemed!)
She too had lost her way, it seemed;
 She too had gone astray, it seemed;
 Through wide awake the lover dreamed,
 while slowly she drew near;

Enraptured by her loving glance
He took her hand, and in a trance
Began her pantamorphic dance,
 Joined in her mellifluent dance,
 The world, the night were all romance,
 and love secure from fear;



Some star fire talismantic fell,
A music filled the mystic dell,
And spirit-born it cast its spell,
 Upon the lovers cast its spell;
 They couldn't know it was their knell,
 that soon their time was done;

A lifetime filled with loneliness,
A lifetime's search for happiness,
Fulfilled in one divine caress,
 The lovers' dancing soft caress,
 The lover's kiss of tenderness;
 together, they were one;

But all was not within love's power:
Scarce had they kissed—the witching hour
Was o'er, and fear possessed their bower,
 Possessed their love-enchanted bower;
 The gods had looked from heaven's tower,
 had looked, had seen, taken away;

For necromantically foretold
Now, suddenly, the night was old;
She fled, a shadow crowned with gold,
 Fled, while the wind their parting tolled,
 Fled, while a leafed cadence rolled,
 fled from the dawning day;

Vain was his frenzied, helpless cry,
Vain was his anguished, hopeless—"Why?"
Futile his search, she had said goodbye,
 She and the night had said good-bye,
 For magic love is doomed to die,
 and he who tastes of it must pay;

He paid—a living human pawn
Discarded by a forest faun
In a lost gamble with the dawn,
 The circle's magic fire was gone,
 its formless ashes blown away;

That night was a night of mystery;
Enchantment flowed from every tree,
While the wind performed a symphony,
 Performed a magic symphony
 Composed a tragic melody,
 for the pleasure of a spectre moon;

He never saw his magic glen,
This living cenotaph of men;
He never went astray again;
 He never **found** his way again;
 He ne'er regained what might have been
 on a night that had ended too soon.

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THE POWER

PHILIP STERLING ROWE

Sam Morris knew he had THE POWER. That is, it isn't something there's much doubt about. Either you have it or you don't. If you do, you know it; and if you don't, it makes no difference anyway—but Sam had it.

To those who aren't familiar with what THE POWER actually is, it should be said that Sam wasn't sure either. He didn't know exactly when it hit him, but all at once, whether satanic or angelic, he had it. And it was fun at first:

"Cease raining," he commanded. The shower passed, and the wind came up and blew the clouds away; the sun shone down upon the world, and Sam was happy.

"Cease shining," he ordered. Somewhere on Earth sunrise was hours early, but where Sam was it grew dark and became night.

Sam was enjoying himself. A wonderful feeling it is to hold the world in your hand. There is nothing else quite like it. It was in fact so wonderful that Sam was inspired. A sense of supremacy inflated and lifted him to a state of magnanimous bliss. He swelled with benevolence. "I won't abuse my POWER," he thought. "Aside from my personal wishes, I'll do good things. I'll make the world a better place." Thus justified, he set about having some more fun.

But, despite all his commendable intentions, Sam was doomed to failure. For careful though the Fates may be in screening their candidates for THE POWER, mistakes are made. Sam was one of the worst.

"I want a new car," he said. And there it was—bright, shiny, and very beautiful. Its irate owner though, wasn't so attractive.

"Thief!" he screamed at Sam. "Come back with my car! Police!"

"Get lost," Sam shouted. And in the middle of his own neighborhood, the owner did—not so the policeman and crowd attracted by the noise.

"What's this all about?" the cop began. He would have continued, but Sam did a foolish thing. He lost his temper.

"Go to Hell!" he snapped. And Satan was quite pleasantly surprised.

Sam felt guilty as he drove away. Nothing seemed to be working out right. Of course he should have specified an unattached car. Nothing much had come of it, but nonetheless it pained



him to inflict harm on people. In a sudden burst of enthusiastic kindness, Sam thought of his promise. "I'll do something good to make up for all the trouble," he vowed. "I'll abolish death."

"But in the meantime," that well known gleam crept into his eye, "in the meantime, when I get home I want waiting for me the most beautiful woman in the world." And there she was, waiting for him, the most beautiful woman in the world—along with her husband and police investigators.

"Complications," Sam moaned after he'd disposed of them, "nothing but complications, no matter what I try." He didn't sleep very well that night.

At breakfast, the next day, he picked up the morning paper:

**WORLD IN STRIFE!
RIOTS EVERYWHERE!
FAMINE! PANIC! REVOLUTION!
WAR LOOMING NEAR!
MYSTERIOUS OVERPOPULATION DUE
TO INCREASE IN DEATHS IS KEY TO
PUZZLE.**

"Damn THE POWER!" Sam groaned. "Damn it and everything connected with it."

It was—and he also.

Satan decided that if one more person came through his gates unannounced, he'd have to undergo a drastic expansion program. Come to think of it, he might as well do so anyway; now that he had THE POWER; things would be going his way for a while.

In an agony of burning torment Sam wished he'd never heard of THE POWER.

With this wish, throughout the next few centuries, the world would heartily concur.

Four Trees

PHILIP STERLING ROWE

Somewhere four trees stand side by side,
Each by the same soil fed;
One is a shade tree, one is a fruit tree,
One is a tall tree, and one is dead.

1

The first is a maple, a beautiful maple,
A maple of secretive murmurs and musing;
Through Spring it's a fountain of crystalline nectar,
And always a place for reality losing.
It spreads wide its amply-leaved welcoming arms
To those who by Life's burning sun have been
bruised,
Hospitality shading its exiles from harm,
And none who sought refuge were ever
refused.

2

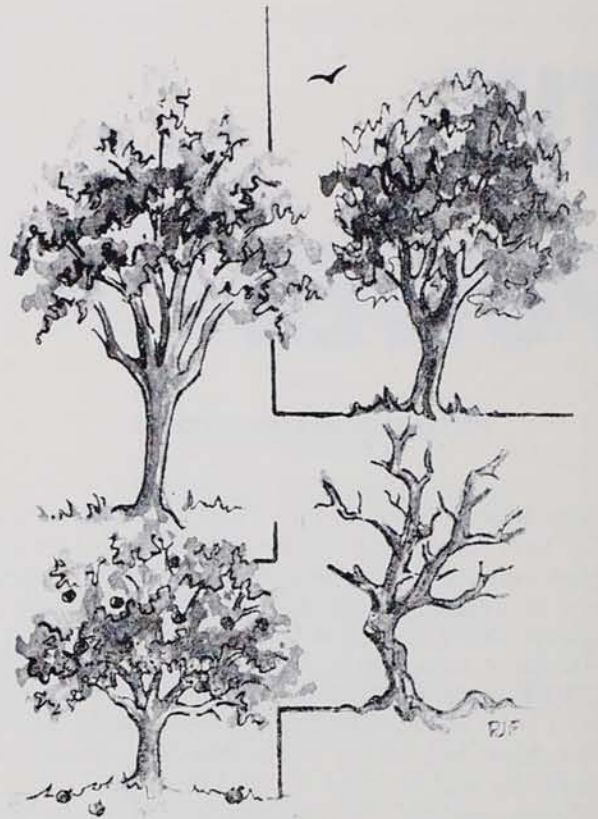
The second is an apple tree,
A pretty dainty apple tree,
With blossoms, pink and red and white,
And bees who seem too close to know
What from a realistic height
Is only but encrimsoned snow.
Its fruit defies mere mortal praise,
Olympian gods should feast so well
As those who, mid crisp autumn days,
Took time to catch when apples fell.
An apple tree has many things
To justify its air of joy:
Its branches are just right for swings
And climbings of some daring boy.
The world is lovely near the tree,
And you can rest awhile and dream,
And later to be fully free
Wade barefoot in the nearby stream.

3

Awesome, majestic, surveying its realm
In dignified splendor, reposes the elm;
Symmetrically beautiful, monarch of all,
None other so graceful, none other so tall,
Its limbs sweep the sky where but angels have trod,
Condescending to speak to none lesser than God;
The virginal charm of this rare silhouette
Is a picture a man will not ever forget;
For an elm lifts the soul to its loftiest height,
Refreshing, inspiring, a poet's delight.

4

The fourth is a shell from which all Life has fled;
What matter that this mass of vascular gall,
What matter that once it was grandest of all,
What matter—for now **it is dead, it is dead!**



Somewhere four trees stand side by side,
Each from the same earth bred;
A maple, an apple, a beautiful elm tree,
These three, and another that's dead.

Somewhere four trees (or was it men?)
Each by the same Life led;
One born for service, one born for pleasure,
One born for beauty, one born to be dead.

Somewhere four men (or was it trees?)
Strive toward their ultimate goal;
In each a spark of divinity burns,
In each the form of a soul.

The soul sometimes struggles, and sometimes its
falters,
Sometimes it triumphs instead;
One soul is Love, and one soul is Joy,
One soul is Artistry, one soul is dead.

Each seed was similar, each looked alike;
And now as they leaf toward the sky,
Four brothers, each different, one brother dead;
And what man can understand why?

Somewhere four trees together stand,
Together, as when they began;
Existence exacted its nominal fee,
Scarred all, while the pattern that is destiny
Made each by a separate plan.

Thus somewhere four trees stand side by side,
Working ceaselessly through every day
Fulfilling their role by improving the world
Each in its different way.

The House on the Edge of the World

Philip Sterling Rowe

In the beginning there was God and nothingness, immeasurable infinite nothingness, an empty void above Him, about Him, eventually within Him. And He was lonely, so terribly abysmally lonely. His genius stifled by the opiating atmosphere, God searched for a means of self-expression. At last, "I shall create a universe," he thought, "to replace the void inside of me — a universe with stars to make it beautiful, and in it a globe which shall be Earth." And so it was. But God was lonely.

He looked upon the world and saw that it was good. And then, to satisfy that nameless feeling deep within, He thought "I'll create Life."

He took a group of chemicals and breathed Life into them. He set them forth upon the Earth to live and grow and multiply. And so they did. Yet God was still alone.

So God invented a system which He named evolution. He planned and set up each phase with meticulous and loving care. The years passed quickly and the world changed with them. Impatiently, God quickened the pace. Climatic and geological conditions were altered to speed up the process. For His goal was now within sight. The culmination was near and it was called MAN. God would no longer be alone.

But God was certainly not going to stop now. In addition to the partially developed brain, God endowed him with Imagination, a Conscience, and a Soul.

He had produced MAN, the climax to His work, through endless experimentation. He soon discovered that He had another problem, that once again improvement could and must be made. For it seemed MAN's brain circuit was incompatible. The Soul was diametrically opposed to the Brain; the Conscience diabolically opposed to both. And when Imagination was—well, the result of an overload is a short circuit, total disorganization.

So, at length, God decided upon the sound principle of the fuse box. Continuing His empirical experiments, He determined to create an entity to whom these problems could be diverted, a pure mentality, unfettered by physical needs, able to absorb all of MAN's mental clashes. Thereafter this entity would handle the overloads and short circuits, and MAN would be free to take his place beside God.

Thus was Mr. Philip O'Sophy born.

"Remember," God admonished him, "I want you to think. You are to think and correlate and conclude. I don't want you participating in Life at all. You are a bystander, an observer. That's the way it shall be."

And that's the way it was. Mr. O'Sophy (affectionately known as Phil), built a house on the edge of the world. For lack of a better name, and

because to a pure mentality it seemed appropriate to begin logically, he called it Collegium. He proceeded to think.

* * *

Cain had a problem, a very real and trying problem. He had put it aside for weeks hoping for an answer, an explanation, anything at all to resolve the conflict within his mind. His parents were no help; his brother was the source of the trouble. And God—well, it seemed that God had only aggravated the whole situation.

"You are my last hope," he confided to Mr. O'Sophy. "In desperation I'm turning to you. I have no one else."

"You see, I know logically what I should do. My brain keeps telling me how much better off I'll be if—but somehow, I don't want to do it. Somehow I feel that it's not right to—to kill. My soul, I guess, or conscience—anyway, there's a conflict. You must give me the answer! Please—is killing wrong? I—I have to know."

Mr. Philip O'Sophy looked up impatiently from his manuscripts.

"I'm surprised at you, Cain," he grumbled. "Not only do you interrupt my cosmogony research, but you do it with morals yet. Beside THE CREATION your problems certainly appear in their rightful petty perspective. Morals! Look, son, I have important things to do. I've been entrusted with explaining the 'causes of all phenomena.' What time do I have to spend on morals? Maybe I'll get to them someday, but even then I can't take part in Life. You ought to know that. Killing indeed! I don't know where this younger generation is going. Such nice parents, too." He stifled a curse.

"I'm sure I can't imagine what will be next. Idolatry, I suppose, or stealing!" He snorted petulantly and returned to his manuscripts.

Whitefaced, Cain stood there a moment, his hand clenched tightly at his side. That apparently was it. No help was to be found there. Angry, disillusioned, he stormed from the house on the edge of the world and started home.

"It's up to me," he thought bitterly, "it's—" Suddenly he stopped. He was almost sure he'd heard footsteps on the path ahead. Yes, he recognized them. In an instant his mind was resolved. Right or wrong, good or bad, he was taking action. He glanced briefly about him and found what he was looking for. Slowly, deliberately, he picked up the rock.

* * *

Years passed and were replaced by centuries. Races, nations, empires appeared and suffocated under the avalanche of Time. The saga of Mankind continued, though in rather hackneyed form. At least so thought Mr. O'Sophy. Yes, the world was considerably changed and MAN was still inconsiderately the same. Deluge, exodus, what did it matter over an eternity?

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Somehow, too, the word had gotten around to avoid the house on the edge of the world. At first it had been only a whisper that Mr. O'Sophy was always behind the times. Then it had gained some; men began to say that he was no help at all. Now it was the popular thing to denounce Collegium and its occupant entirely.

Still (Mr. O'Sophy smiled with satisfaction), still, as with every maligned cause, he had his cult of worshipers. Many there were who had sworn their undying devotion to him, even adopted a corruption of his name. And one (he often thought of this; it never failed to buoy his spirits), one had even drunk the hemlock cup in preference to renouncing him. Yes, extremely satisfying.

But the last few decades had been lonely ones, and visitors quite rare. It was with understandable pleasure, then, that he heard the demanding knock on his door.

* * *

"But you don't understand," the stranger was saying. "It's not a question of archaic Rhadamanthine Jewish law. I know the law. It's my business. By it this prisoner of mine will die. Yet he is innocent. I'd swear it to the gods themselves. Everything about him speaks only for goodness, and kindness, and love. And what good am I when I start judging by appearance?"

He threw up his arms in disgust and angrily stalked about the room.

Mr. Philip O'Sophy leaned back comfortably in his chair, folded his hands before him, and serenely studied his agitated visitor.

"This is very interesting," observed Mr. O'Sophy. "I'm glad you came to me because I think I can help you. It just so happens that I have recently finished writing a set of instructions which I know will greatly benefit Mankind. Let's see . . ." his desk, muttering as he searched. "H-m-m-m He leafed hurriedly through a bunch of papers on . . . Thou shalt hold no other gods . . . Love thy . . . h-m-m-m . . . h-m-m-m . . . yes, here it is, number six—"Thou shalt not kill." There, that ought to help."

Speechless, the visitor stared at the scrap of paper before him.

"You mean . . ." he began. He shut his mouth, then opened it again . . . "you mean all your years of research and thinking have produced this? You mean they were right about your always being a step behind Humanity?" Visibly stricken, he collapsed into the nearest chair.

"Then you have failed again," he murmured. "Because I need more than what you have given me. My prisoner is innocent and my job depends upon his execution. If you don't tell me what to do . . ."

"I'm sorry," Mr. O'Sophy broke in irritably. "Now you are asking me to enter into Life. I can't participate, and to give you an opinion on that—well, I'm not allowed. Anyway, I've told you all you need to know. Beyond that, I can do nothing."

"In that case," replied Pilate, "I shall do the same."

He hurried out the door and washed his hands of the whole affair.

* * *

And now God was disgusted with the whole mess. What matter that He'd ever bothered in the first place? He was still alone. Only now He had an additional sense of regret. How it tortured the artist within Him to see His perfect and beautiful creations twisted, distorted by the very gifts which should have made them God-like. Despite His safeguards, Body and Soul were still

(Continued on page 26)

LIN AND EL'S

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LAURA LONEY

Life



When I was a child of seven,
Looked up, in the sparkling spring,
To a heaven
Of ethereal azure,
And conjured in my mind and soul
A storm of whipping, windy force
Tumbling to earth in its frightful course,
Tearing the writhing willow tree,
Rending its branches,
And making them free.
I saw through the curtain of my mind
The raindrops falling, falling,
Furtively, then fearlessly,
Their number increasing, unceasing,
Until they formed colonies of themselves,
Running together,
Becoming pools of rivulets of gray-silver
Where swam, I knew, the shy Rain-elves.
The maple in front of my house,
So stable and stately,
Bowed backwards in respect
To the great King Wind
As he strode down valleys and streets and lanes
While the raindrops began their knocking games,
And hammered and struck on my window panes.
I stared through the wet and dripping leaves,
Stared through the long green willow sheaves,
And tried and tried to visualize
The kindly gleam of God's blue eyes,
The God who gave me candy and such,
A home to live in and dolls to touch.
I looked again to a sky of gray,
Then brushed my curtained dreams away,
Saw the blueness all around,
And listened for the wind
And never heard a sound.

Now I am a girl of nineteen years.
My mind is filled with youth's dim fears,
As I walk at the edge of the green-black sea
Furious as the clouds foretold it would be,
Furious because of the great wind storm
Which rolls in from the north-northeast.
The whirls of sand which I kick up,
As I walk along the sandy shore,
Are small;
But the spirals of sand which the wind whips up
Are great as they circle and circle
Into the waves,
And there dissolve in their green-sea graves.
Into heaven I look, much afraid,
But all I see is a great parade
Of all the people I know and will know,
My grandmother is there among the rest,
Marching through mists above and below;
Holding a child close to her breast.
My mother's form, three decades ago,
Sitting in mists, above and below.
My father is there, asleep in a chair;

And the boy next door, with sister of four.
Others are there in ebon shapes
With different forms and hopes and faiths.

I thank God for the friends he has given me,
For their patience and kindness in accepting me.
I think how miserable I would be
If I lived alone as a lonely tree
Which raises its brown and withered hands
Over a place of barren lands;
And I know that behind the clouds of the earth
There lies a fair sky, waiting for birth.
One day I will be old;
And will have walked through the pathways of life;
Will have walked through the beauty of earth,
The sunniness of joy and mirth,
Will have seen and experienced human love,
A feeling and tenderness which rises above
The clouds and storms of envy and hate,
Love, an emotion which brushes away
The beating rain
Of human pain,
The gusty air
Of human despair,
The dark clouds
Of death's shrouds.
When I am old,
I will look to the skies,
And see my God reigning there,
A constant Being, everywhere,
A formless Form
Of all-colored white
An immeasurable Man
With a humanless span
Of understanding and love,
With omniscient kindness
And a wisdom mindless
This God I will see,
And will thank
For His Goodness to me
And to all my friends,
For a gentleness which never ends.

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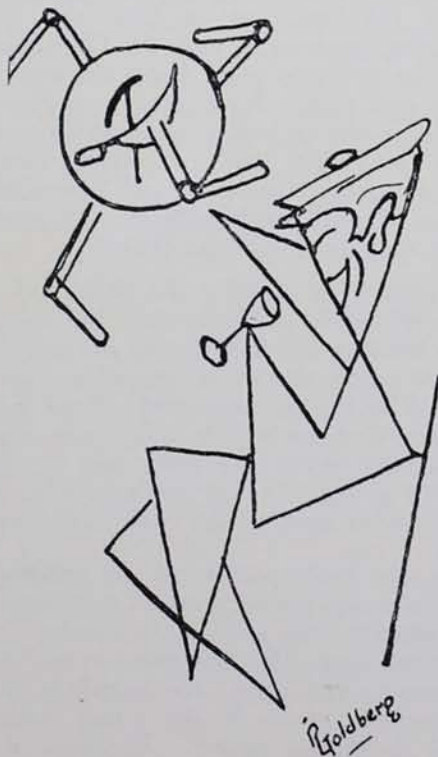
PHILADELPHIA 6

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

The Russians have done it again. Not only have they invented the radio (Marconivich—1899) and the aeroplane (the Rightski Brothers, Ivan and Hoe—1891), but now they have combined these two marvels of the modern scientific world and have come up with something that is out of this world. And we do mean out. Fondly referred to as Sputnik, after the father of the vodka industry, Beleb Sputnik von Schlitz, this contraption has got higher on pure distilled vodka than anything since the time of Rasputen. And hangover, man, the joint chiefs of staff have a headache now that just won't quit.

To thicken the plot even more, the launching of the second Sputnik, called Kintups (Sputnik spelled backwards), has stirred up the already muddy waters. It is not bad enough that the national debt continues to grow, that our wives are again knitting "little things," and that our hair is thinning and our waistlines are thickening, but now we even have more stars to count. Is there no justice?

To ease the minds of our reading public, *The Lantern* has spent lavishly so that its two top-notch investigators could investigate this matter. Discounting such headlines as "Asian Flu really Sputnik Flu," "Sputniks Control Russia, Not Vice-versa," "Sputnik Really Invader from Outer Space," and "Sputnik Big Bomb with Short Fuse," appearing daily all over the world, this outstanding scientific team was able to get to the bottom of this problem using the same approach employed by the Russians.



Carl Fontain
and
Tom McCabe

Since it has become obvious that pure distilled and oh-so-tasty vodka is being employed as the major propellant, a full and complete test on this line was run with amazing results not to be disclosed at this time. It will be well enough to state that we were able to attain a high level (about even with the first Sputnik) upon which we were able to apply pure scientific reasoning, away from the cares and troubles of the everyday world.



The answer to Sputnik is so simple that it has been overlooked by most rational minds. Think back to the Communist theory of "to each as he deserves." We could cite examples to prove our point, but newsprint is expensive so we will limit ourselves thusly. To the good little comrades of Lenin go the good jobs, even if only temporarily, and to the bad—SIBERIA. (Siberia—that is sort of like Arizona under a Republican administration).

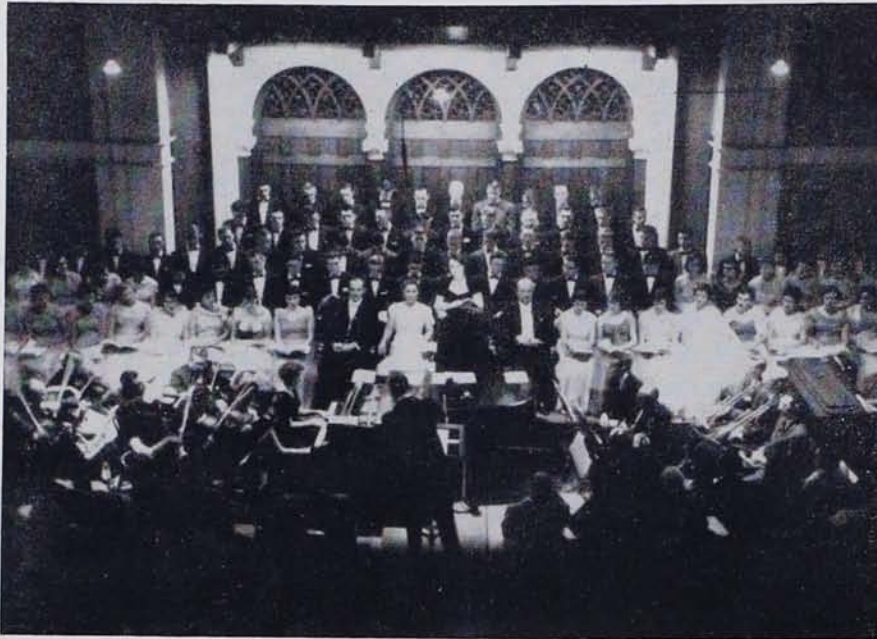
Thus has been the practice of the Russian Government for just forty years. But now Siberia has reached the saturation point, and can absorb no more political prisoners. And if not Siberia, where then? Ah—the light is beginning to dawn. The only place left is—you're right—up.

Now you will have to note the time factor involved. V. S. Molotov dropped from favor and was sent as representative to Outer Mongolia. Little was heard from him, but since the launching of the first Sputnik, nothing has been heard from him. Just tune your receiver to 20.005 mc and you will pick up the following sound: "Nyet-Nyet-Nyet-Nyet . . ."

And now the second Sputnik or Kintups, if you please, has been sent aloft. Nobody, but nobody, will be able to dispute the coincidence that Marshal Zhukov came down from power just as the Kintups went up. No one can say that his political star is still not rising.

Say, Carl, I wonder if he gets overseas pay . . .

Christmas at Ursinus



Ann Leger

Christmas at Ursinus means many things to us—the beauty and solemnity of the Messiah, the glittering holiday spirit of the Senior Ball, the junior and senior women's party held at the home of Dr. and Mrs. McClure, the banquets, the semi-formal dance in the Thompson-Gay gymnasium with a visit from Santa Claus and a carol sing around the tree, the informal caroling by the men students, the all-night dorm parties, and the quiet candlelight communion service which ends the Christmas activities. These festivities, imbued with some of the seasonal spirit found everywhere at Christmas time, have a

long tradition, many of them dating back to the early part of the century.

One of the widest known of the Yule events is the *Messiah* chorus, which is to be presented for the twentieth consecutive time this year. For many years, until 1936, the college choir had presented an extensive musical program in Bomberger Chapel at the traditional dawn service, which itself dated back to at least 1920. It was decided to change this musical program which varied every year, and Dr. William F. Philip, who had come to Ursinus in 1935, was instrumental in the initiation of the *Messiah* tradition. Sung for the first time in 1938, the *Messiah* presentation consisted of only the Christmas section for the first two years. From the start, however, the four soloists have come from New York and some of the orchestra members from Philadelphia. The chorus itself has always numbered at least a hundred students, and from 1940 on, the entire *Messiah*, with only the accepted cuts, has been sung in Bomberger chapel.

The tradition of caroling also dates back many years, to the early 1920's at least, but for a long time the caroling was held during the early morning hours before the dawn chapel service. The practice of having the organized college choirs go from dorm to dorm ended some years ago, and since then the carols have been sung at night by impromptu groups of men students, who receive refreshments at each of the girls' dormitories.

During the early portion of the century most of the Christmas parties seem to have been held by the separate halls and by the literary societies and organizations. The first mention of a Christmas reception was during the festivities of 1918, when one was given by the senior women in honor of the junior women. The idea of a re-

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ception appears to have continued in various forms throughout the succeeding years. For a number of years, the YWCA, then independent from the YMCA, held a Christmas party, often at the home of the college president and his wife. Gradually, this event seems to have developed into the annual junior and senior women's party.

The women's banquet was started by the preceptresses, who have continued to be responsible for the organization of this dinner. Previously each hall had held a separate banquet and party, and the 1925 women's banquet was announced in the Ursinus Weekly as being the first joint one held in the college dining room. This banquet, replete with Yule decorations, prizes, and entertainment, formed the basis for what soon became an anticipated event of the Christmas season. For a number of years the entertainment, usually based around a central theme, played an important part in the program. Various methods of presenting the entertainment were used including in 1926 a pageant, which was so arranged as to have one event for each course of the banquet. The Christmas season of 1927 marked the change from dormitory competition to class competition both for the best school song and the best table decorations. The present method of judging table decorations was established in 1932, and the four points which are considered include beauty, originality, appropriateness of theme and effort put into the decorations, each item being assigned twenty-five points. The men held their first banquet in the downstairs dining room in 1928, and their program since then has generally included singing and various sorts of entertainment.

The Christmas season of 1929 was the first one in which a party was held in the Thompson-Gay gymnasium after the banquets. Sponsored by the Board of Control, this first party included entertainment, a carol sing, a visit from Santa Claus, and a dance. From then on, this feature has continued, and since the days of World War II another tradition has been associated with the

dance: Approximately twenty years ago a boy by the name of David Monjar was a student at Ursinus and he portrayed the role of Santa Claus at the Christmas dance. David left Ursinus before graduation to join the service, and on the way back to his base after a visit home he was killed in an automobile accident. His mother had liked the students and the campus, and wanting the traditions of the dance to continue, she offered, the first year after his death, to provide the tree, the greens, the lights, and the Santa Claus suit. Mrs. Monjar has continued to contribute these items each Christmas, and she has been invited back to this Christmas festivity at Ursinus every year.

The most solemn of the Christmas activities, the candlelight communion service in Bomberger chapel, also started in 1929 under the joint sponsorship of the YMCA and the YWCA; this first service was conducted by the Reverend Mr. Lentz, the chaplain of the college, and Dean Kline. Continued throughout the succeeding years, the service was later sponsored by such religious groups on campus as the Brotherhood of Saint Paul in association with the "Y," and in recent years the sponsorship has been taken over by Chi Alpha.

The gala social event of the Christmas season, the Senior Ball, has also been a tradition for quite a few years, but previously the Student Council sponsored a Saturday Christmas dance in the field cage. The Senior Ball originated during the latter part of the 1920's from the "shines" which had included the two big dances of the year, and this Senior dance was usually held around Christmas time in the Thompson-Gay gymnasium. An interesting innovation occurred in 1943 when a complete breakfast was held at eleven o'clock at night in the Ursinus dining hall. The custom of having the Senior Ball at Sunnysbrook ballroom started only a decade ago, and nine hundred students and guests attended the first Christmas dance there. Even more recent is the custom of having special decorations in the ballroom, and in 1949 the class decorated the ballroom for the first time, using a Christmas and starlight motif.

These Christmas customs are an integral part of the tradition of Ursinus, and as we celebrate the Christmas of 1957, Ursinus style, we are really carrying on the festivities which have brought many happy memories to thousands of former Ursinus students.

COLLEGEVILLE LAUNDRY

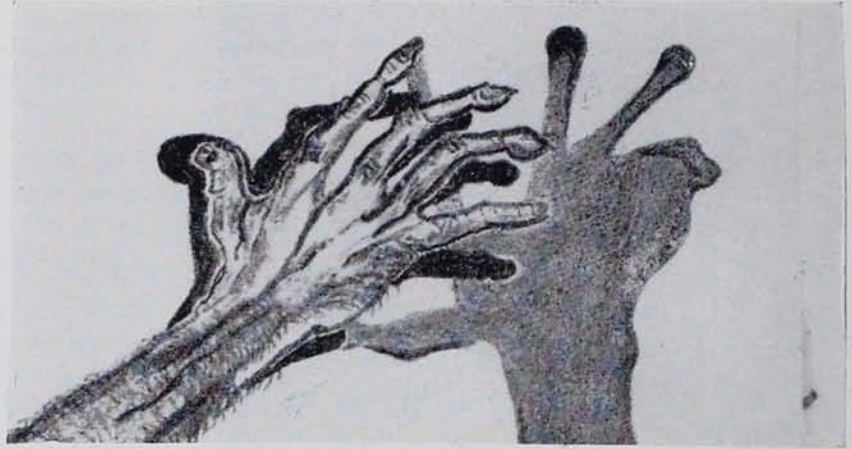
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... *Early!* Early in the morning ... And I awake with a gasp for breath and a petulant cry. My day is beginning—at this very moment. I guess I have to live it; I have no other choice ...

... Morning bellows disdainfully *Welcome Ephemera!!!*

... *Darkness.* Engulfing me. I am not yet oriented. I try to rise but fall backwards. It takes me a little while to get my bearings. But I am gradually becoming aware of myself — *self-conscious*.

... *Discontent.* I feel *grim*. This is not at all what I want. What do I want? I really wish I knew ... knew ... *new!* Everything: new, strange, unlikeable. Look at that sky — cold, unresponsive, colored grey purple. Remote ceiling. I loathe that color for its unfriendliness and it makes everything it shades appear unfriendly ...

... Well, this day will soon be over ... over ... Done. No more. Nothing. *Decisive.* Should I be sad? Happy? I don't know. I can't grasp the significance. It's hard to believe, at the outset of a day, that it will ever end. It's a trial which lies before me ... It cannot be rushed.

... I don't like the bleakness of this day. What do I like? What do I want? This unfulfilled, insatiable *want* inside of me won't go away ... go away! ... up high ... in the ... sky! That dismal roof of the world rises almost perpendicularly before me. Odd, how much like an apparition that sky is.

... Color of dishwater. May drown me at any moment. The sky scares me and poisons everything around me. Everything reflects the gloom of grey purple. *Anguish.* When I observe nature's deathly pallor, I am intensely aware of an estrangement between myself and the rest of creation. *Alien.* My world excludes me. It's hostile. I'm *lonely* ...

... I gag. And a nauseous lump rises in my throat. I look around to forget my *sickness*. But sickness is all around me. I see it in the splinter-like trees stuck indifferently into a barren earth, see it in the motionless animals, in the mute and quiescent birds. I see it, feel it, even in myself. *Helpless.*

... *Despondently*, yet almost without thinking, I watch the dead life, under the awful shroud of the sky. And am I dead? Is all of life but a dying process? But today I have no answers.

... And today is all there is ... My thoughts are blanked. *Strange.* How I can find the questions but not the answers. What kind of animal am I?

My mind is jarred by the paralyzing blows of the tragedy oppressing me ... *punchy* ... *punchy* and ...

... *Dazed*, I gaze hollowly with half-interest at the grey purple of the sky. Motionless clouds, jammed together like an ice floe, compose a glossy mosaic ... *shudder.* The whole composite weirdly reminds me of a tombstone's marble surface. And my mood of *despair* deepens. One cannot escape tragedy, no matter where he goes or in what direction he looks.

Fragrance! A slight odor. Thrilling *vibration*. Something is happening to me and to everything around me. My mood vacillates between despair and anticipation. *Waver* ... becomes tremor ... of ... *anticipation!* Something is here. What? Keep it. What bright beauty has succeeded in piercing the blackish ugliness? *Warmth. Heartbeat. Chill. Goosebumps. Electrified.*

In the sky the ice-jammed clouds begin to melt and break apart. In the icy recesses of my mind my frozen thoughts melt and begin to flow. They are warm, gentle, alive like the tiny beginnings of the vivacious stream which comes to life in the first thaw.

What must I *worship*? What does this? I want to kiss something, to shake the hand of something, to kneel in gratitude before *something*. But what ... what ... what ... what what what ...

Seeking the something to thank, I find only more reasons to be thankful. And my imprisoned feeling of *appreciation* and indebtedness is filling my heart, a heart now aching with bursting emotion ...

Look at the trees. They seem to drink new life. They move living limbs, rhythmically dance, pirouette in a Breeze which ardently caresses everything—Breeze. Yes! Breeze. Source of my happiness. Keep. Capture. How? Must. How? I've got to.

An alluring perfume diffuses through the air, and slowly a bright yellow penetrates grey purple, emblazoning the sky ... A triumph of light over darkness ... I sway in the Breeze with the birds and the trees and hunger for Her freshness.

God, my appetites are big! Grasp Her, for my Self desires Her, and without Her — day is gray purple.

Elusively She escapes my touch. Shadow-like. The object of my desire is a shadow, for even as shadows disappear scornfully into the darkness spread all around me, so too does the object of my desire. Vanishes. *Damn it!* I can't stop chasing shadows. My Self is my master. And I am Its errand boy. . . . "Your every wish is my desire." I serve but one master. "No man can serve two." . . . Who could? One's bad enough . . .

The Breeze is a phantom, a shadow. Try to catch one and another will appear, fleeting before you, to taunt . . . taunt. Daunt, damn . . . *Damn!*

So does the Breeze taunt me. Yet I love Her and pursue Her . . . She turns and brushes my lips with a parting kiss. *Stay!* I breathe harder. *Stay-sta-sta-st-s-s-h-he* swirls from my body and my world. *Gasp*ing. Breath sucked out. *Stay.*

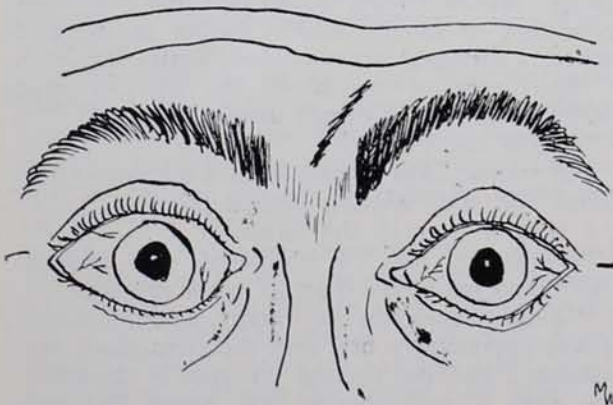
But with a low, rustling sound, Happiness goes . . . going . . . gone. So near. Almost. Between my fingers. If only . . . only . . . only . . . But . . .

Almost imperceptibly the sky's color begins to change. A soft pink imbues the bright yellow and the air becomes chill.

Dismayed. Disheartened by my failure to seize and keep forever the glow of my noontide, I limply stand, absorbed by the change of color. My mood changes with the color and the color, with my mood. And my mood colors everything.

Inexorably a blue mist settles on the cooling land to permeate autumn pink. Twilight bids my day farewell. Night, rolling in without relent, must come . . . Soon to engulf and claim me . . . why? Why it must come and I must go are riddles that I'll never know.

. . . *Gone.* The intangible, unattainable object of my desire. Now why can't my desire go? Why must it remain, perpetual and agitating?



Self-pity . . . My own fool . . . fool of something . . . white mouse in a maze . . . shock him, hurt him, and then watch his tiny tears torrent down his trembling body. Take away his food . . . Puzzle and confuse him . . .

. . . Tears, and my face nearly . . . pours . . . away . . . *whimpering.*

Soon the dense blue infuses with the pink and the colors intermingle. The sky and all under it returns to the grey purple that freezes life and leaves only the *self* alive. Indeed I am most keenly conscious of myself — my *self*.

Funny. I'm *tormented*. But I can't stop dancing, dancing, always dancing to the interminable rhythms of my own heart beat: "Go on, go on, go on and on." Why can't it just stop? My *self* is the hard taskmaster. I live in a hell. Where's there salvation from this???

. . . Keenly conscious of *self*. Everything else *dead*. I, even I, am losing my life . . . losing my life . . . ? . . . "He who loses his life shall save it." He who loses his life by forgetting *self*, by losing *self* in something of value . . .

How can you forget *self*? *Asinine!* What ass said that? He should've been nailed to a . . .

. . . Funny. Lifeless trees, arms outstretched. Hung between heaven and earth.

. . . Motionless animals, birds mute and . . .

The silence shrieks through the terrible night. *Deafened. Hurt. Frightened. Forsaken. Sobbing.* . . . *Grim. Dark. Hostile. Metallic. Cold. Steel. Grey. Purple.*

And with a gasp for breath and a pathetic cry,

I
go
to
sleep.

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A BRAZILIAN DIRGE

the veranda. He was a thin, aesthetic boy with brown eyes that lay behind half-closed eyes. His hair was black, and cut high on the temples. His scalp looked blue where his head was shaved.

Hans began to speak, never looking at me. He directed his words toward the ocean, and they came with a fluidity that surprised me.

"There was one time in my life that I knew happiness. It was when I first came to Brazil. I met a girl and she loved me. We were to be married, and the afternoon before the wedding I sat here on the veranda.

"The world seemed alive and wild with the adventure that I had believed lost forever. The sandpipers were playing tag with the incoming waves, screeching with delight as they avoided the tentacles of water reaching for their thin legs. I watched their game with fascination, and the air, clean and sharp with salt, cleared my head. The white sand stretching before me hurt my eyes, but I could not squint and close out the world that I had found again. The sun lightened my personal night, and I felt warm. The coldness that my body had taken from its heart slowly disappeared, and I forgot the hate that had piled itself into barriers within me. My anguish tumbled into nothingness, like the walls of sand built by children.

"I sat for many hours," he continued. "I waited until the sandpipers had tired of their game, and until the sea gull's scream was heard no more. I felt a peace unknown to me before.

"But while I sat here they took her away—back to the hills from where she had come. I tried to find her, but soon gave up. That was three years ago, and Mother bought me a cockatoo. The bird died two weeks later."

"Darling," she said, still looking out at the sea, "Shall we go to the Rodriguez's for supper?"

"It's all right with me. Do you feel like it?"

"Not really, but we should go. Maria is going to announce her engagement."

My friends were not at Senor Rodriguez's. I was relieved. They had been shocked at my going to "Valhalla," and I had not heard from them since. None of the English colony were at the party, except Colonel Careysford, and he, as usual, was three martinis ahead of the others. When he saw me his red-blotched face grinned, and he came striding over to me. Emilie had gone to the circle of women that sat sipping Coca-Cola. She hated Brazilian parties where the women and men were separated, but in this one custom she conformed.

"Well, old man, haven't seen much of you lately," Careysford blustered. "How are the gods at Valhalla?" I ignored him as he muffed his way along, relating with relish the gossip that had accompanied my departure to Emilie's. "You Americans have the right idea. Eat, drink and be merry and all that. By the way, how's Hans?"

"Okay," I said, trying to catch Emilie's eye.

"You better tell him to stay away from the Chinaman's. The gendarmes are planning a raid—real trouble on the way. Just yesterday I heard . . ."

I let him talk. He irritated me, and, for some reason or another, I was furious at him for giving me advice about Hans. I looked over at Emilie sitting with the women. Her red dress, cut too low, shouted at the white and black around her. She appeared to be listening to their chatter, but I knew her thoughts were miles away. She kept a small smile on her lips, and that seemed to convince the others that she was with them, for I noticed they included her in their circle of gossip. Senora Michel leaned over and whispered something to Emilie. Emilie looked at me and smiled, I shrugged my shoulders, indicating, with a slight turn of my head, the still babbling Careysford. She motioned to me.

"Excuse me, Colonel."

"Of course. Don't forget what I told you about Hans," he said, starting toward the bar.

I walked over to the circle.

"It's getting late," I whispered. She nodded, and joined me at the door in a few minutes.

We drove home on the bumpy, cobbled streets. It was oppressively hot, and the trees stood motionless. I had not noticed the heat at the party, but then I remembered that Senor Rodriguez had the only air-conditioning unit in Fortaleza. I told Emilie what Careysford had said. She didn't say anything until we reached "Valhalla." I got out of the car, and she moved over to the wheel.

"I'll go and get him," she sighed.

"Do you want me to go with you?"

"No."

I went into the house, and made myself a gin

and tonic. Picking an album at random I turned on the phonograph and sat waiting for their return.

I could never understand the relationship between Emilie and Hans. When Hans was around the revulsion for him seemed to scream through her every vein. She never talked to me about him. I thought of Tooley, a cat I had when I was at school. In a litter of kittens she had had there was a black one. She refused to nurse it, and one day when I went to the garage it lay dead, its throat torn. I bent down to pick it up, and Tooley came out of the shadows. She rubbed, purring, against my legs. I put the dead kitten in front of her, but she didn't notice it. I thought a long time about Tooley and Emilie.

I must have dozed off, because I was startled to hear Emilie calling me from outside. I went out to the drive, and she was standing beside the car.

"Help me carry him upstairs. He passed out on the way home."

I carried Hans to his room. His face was grey, and his breath, coming in short gasps, smelled sickly sweet. Emilie prepared an injection for him, and he groaned as the needle entered his arm. Soon his breathing became quieter and more regular. Emilie left the room. I undressed Hans, and went back downstairs. I turned off the phonograph and the lights. When I crossed the hall outside my room I saw a package lying on the floor. Some white powder spilled out of it when I picked it up. I realized that it must have slipped from Hans' pocket. I lay in bed unable to sleep, and I could hear Emilie sobbing in the next room. I did not go in to her.

The next day I awoke late. I put on my dressing gown, and when I opened the door I could hear them arguing downstairs.

"For the last time, Hans, don't go back to Castellano."

"Why? What harm could it possible do a — a cripple?"

"Don't say that word."

"You do," he spat, "And I'm the cripple. Why should you worry now; you never have. Go upstairs to your American and worry about him!"

"Hans!"

"Well, what is he here for? We all know, Mother. Everyone knows. There have been others, I'm not blind. Let's see, there was the Frenchman, and that English bank clerk. And wasn't Careysford the first? I believe he came to solace you when I went after Maria."

"You dirty-minded cripple!" she screamed. "How dare you speak to me like that. If it hadn't been for you I wouldn't be here rotting in this hole. Even after the war I could have found someone. You've ruined my life, and I hate you."

"By being a cripple I've ruined your life?"

"I was to have babies—pure Aryan babies. You were the first, and the last."

"What are you saying," he whispered.

"Your father was a young lieutenant. I didn't know his name, and he left the next morning. After you were born they made certain that I wouldn't have any more."

"He wasn't killed during the war?"

"I don't know—I hope so."

"Why did you keep me? To watch me suffer?" he yelled.

"Yes," she cried, "Now go back to your slant-eyed harlot. That's all you'll ever get."

I heard a slap and a crash. I rushed down the stairs, and saw her lying on the floor. The front door was open, and I ran out to catch Hans. Just as I got to the drive the car roared away. I went back into the house. Emilie was standing by the phonograph, and she turned to me and smiled.

"You heard?", she said.

"Yes."

Then the music came, and she seemed lost in the rhythm, cueing in, as was her custom, the various sections of the orchestra. She seemed unaware of my presence. I walked out to the veranda, and down to the beach. The sea closed out the music, and I sat on the sand. Below me, just out of reach of the waves, a derelict craft lay, its rotting, sun-bleached ribs alone giving pattern to the heap. The beach made an unwanted grave, and the breakers seemed to have purpose: they stretched with unsuccessful hands to carry back what was rightfully theirs. I looked at the skeleton craft holding sand instead of unmeasured fathoms beneath its keel, and thought of Hans. I knew what he was going to do.

That afternoon they brought his body to the house. They had found him floating in the surf near Castellano. His limp body was light as I carried him to his room, and Emilie stayed in the living room. The music from the phonograph thundered through the house, meeting the roar of the surf in Hans' room.

I left that evening. Emilie did not say goodbye, and when I walked down the drive I heard her playing Brahms. The sun was gone, and the sky was readying itself for night. A lonely star shone, and its light seemed to flicker like a candle sputtering in a breeze. I stopped for a few moments, and waited for it to go out.

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MOTION IN RETROSPECT

and there is a pervasive atmosphere of tension throughout the milling crowd. Only the floor sweeper seems to be able to afford to take it easy.

Somewhere a train causes faint vibration in the building; a loudspeaker announces it, and some people rush to a certain escalator. Again it is quiet as only a city station is quiet. On the upper level some men are throwing luggage and mail bags on carts and moving them into place. A signal down at the end shows green that is reflected along the rails. A freight elevator rumbles up, opens, and more baggage is rolled up to the other carts. Then the heavily dressed men cease working and go into the elevator. The wind has stopped blowing but it is still cold. On the platform across the way a light bulb has just burned out. Out in the yard a lone electric engine clatters across switchwork . . . slows . . . and stops. In the enclosed building where the escalator comes up, a wall clock goes tick . . . tock . . . tick . . . tock . . . tick . . .

* * *

At a small country station a lone, worried stationmaster puts more coal into a glowing pot-bellied stove and returns to his chattering telegraph set. A moment later he again rises from his chair and listens. The long slow-swinging pendulum seems to spell something ominous, something unknown — and minutes slowly swing on. The stationmaster carries out a sagging mailbag. Outside the storm is at its height. Small clinging flakes fall thick and fast. He quickly fastens the mailbag to the post and comes back wet and snow-covered.

* * *

Down in the city waiting room the crowd mills around, taking definite direction only when a loudspeaker announces a certain gate. The room is cavernous; long windows stretch up past hanging light fixtures almost to where the ceiling meets the walls high above the people. Long corridors lined with shops go from the room in every direction and at one end a wide flight of steps comes from the street level. People gather in small knots, some talking in low voices and others saying nothing. Still others stand alone. At their seats, a small boy passes an open magazine to his mother; she smiles at a frivolous cartoon and passes it back, assuming again her anxious expression. The loudspeaker blasts again; more people move to one of the gates where a waiting commuter train prepares to leave. Its air pumps are throbbing with haste but then are silent. With a groan it starts slowly out of the great terminal. Outside the sound of city traffic has decreased somewhat.

* * *

Back at the country station the platform is empty. Strange long shadows fall on fresh snow where the light from the windows is obstructed by snow collecting at the lower part of each pane of glass. In the distance one can see the greenish light cast to the ground by a signal but the whole

scene is broken by many falling, wet flakes. Now the chime horn is heard dimly, the door opens and the stationmaster emerges quickly, all bundled up but without a hat. His feet crunch in the snow as he moves quickly to the mail post. Again the rails begin the heavy vibration, and as the train approaches its headlight stabs into the night and the huge engines thunder by, creating a great draft of cold wind. Then the quick "whack" as the baggage arm hooks and the mailbag goes up, up into the night. Another bag rolls down the platform, gathering snow as it goes. The long silver cars roll by fast and soon the red taillights mix for a moment with the red on the signal tower and then move quickly beyond it as the noise drops to nothing again. He takes the bag inside, removes his coat, sits down. The telegraph ceases to chatter, and the clock goes tick . . . tock . . . tick . . . tock . . .

* * *

In the high, dimly lighted cab of the great rushing engine two worried men sit, peer into the night and watch flakes cluster quickly on the windows only to be swept away by the hissing wipers and then gather again. There is a quiet throbbing from the huge motors and often the feeling is exhilarating when one thinks of the great speed at which such powerful and heavy engines pound along the rails pulling a long, sleek, flexing train behind. One can recall all the motion of couplers and wheels that transmit and absorb terrific pounding—all the springs flexing and straining under ever-changing weight and then marvel that it all can work without error.

A heavy door from behind opens and the noise rises to a deafening degree; the door slams and a man in dirty clothing tosses a report sheet on a small desk, glances at his watch, and sits down. The engineer gives a blast on the horn, a green light creeps up and goes quickly by, and the headlight beam swings as they speed into a curve.

* * *

Up on the station platform all is quiet and cold. Everything around suggests cold: the shiny steel rails that stretch into the blackness reflecting nearby lights, the dirty snow between them; even the glow of the city seems strangely forbidding tonight. Now the mailmen begin to appear again, bringing out more things, their hands and faces red and raw from chill. Soon a few people with luggage go by the slowly ticking clock at the escalator and stop. Then more come up, shiver and wait. A loudspeaker barks again—more come—

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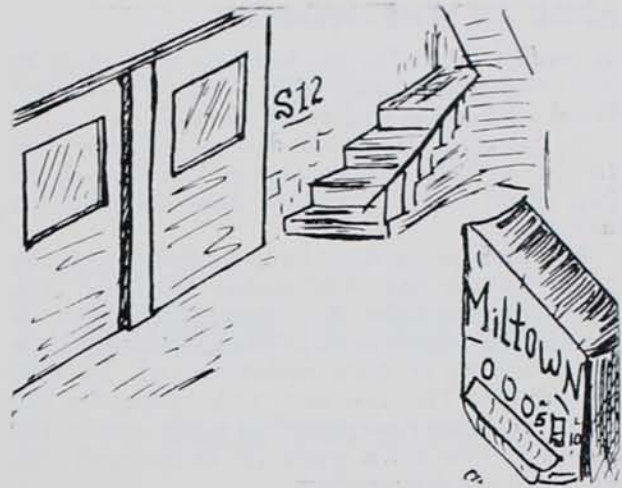
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and soon they are everywhere. As the speaker drones on, the rails begin the heavy thud, thud, thud. The station quivers. Up at the end great growling engines approach, the headlight is dimmed and the engines come upon us: one—two—three—four trembling units pound past, open-doored baggage cars slide by while underneath brakes squeal, air hisses—more cars slide by as the pounding slows its tempo, light from big windows and open doors moves past, more slowly . . . slower . . . and finally it stops ever so gently.

The conductors step out and the people follow. There are all sorts of people; from every door they stream forth under the weight of traveling bags. Some smile and others do not, some go fast and others go slow, some push, some get pushed and there are always some who do neither. There is nothing unusual about this crowd; it's just a crowd with shuffling feet. Every day while they are never the same they are never different. They never notice the men who rush with flashlight and hammer to every wheel to check the bearings. On the other side of the same platform a small electric train rushes in, screeches to a stop, pauses only for a moment during the fush of exchange, and then rolls on. Up front the baggage is exchanged but these men never rush; always they manage to take three times longer than they should. But eventually all is finished and the last new passenger is aboard hunting for a seat or a room. The whole platform is alive with movement. Conductors and brakemen pass the "go ahead" signal up to the front and in a few moments the big engines cease to idle. Under a fresh crew the big train makes an almost imperceptible start and from the inside you never notice unless you are looking. As it moves forward doors slam on the cold night and wheels begin to pound faster and faster. A dining car, with flowers on the tables, glides by—more coaches—private rooms—more quickly now—and then the end. Red taillights move out into the night and the long train—all lit up—moves around a curve giving a beautiful view of its going into the distance. Somewhere in the night a lone trolley clatters down the street and a few fine flakes of snow begin to flit past the lights.

* * *

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EDGE OF THE WORLD

in conflict. Since He was infallible there could be but one possible reason—Mr. Philip O'Sophy had failed. What was God to do about it?

As an artist He could destroy whatever had turned out badly. He could wipe Mankind off the face of the Earth. He could even obliterate the universe.

But the Supreme Artist had a magnificent quality which forbade this. The quality was Love. Yes, illogical as it may be, poor though they frequently seemed, He loved these children, perhaps all the more because of their pathetic knack for self-degradation. He loved them with compassion and regret, realizing how close they really were to His goal, and how much might yet be salvaged. No, He could not destroy them.

Well, God decided, anyway, He'd gone so far that there was no point in stopping now. At this rate, in another few years MAN would evolve the last tool needed to become God-like. When the new power came into his hands, he could either fulfil his predestiny with it or destroy himself by it. One or the other, it would be MAN's own choice. For God had created, guided, interceded long enough. The pattern was now established and MAN must fend for himself. If he were worthy of existence he would exist; if he were not, he would save God the trouble of cleaning the slate, preparatory to beginning again. It was hard to say. One good thing had to be observed, though. It was becoming more accepted every century that Collegium *did* hold the eventual salvation of MAN. This was a step in the right direction. As long as there were men to turn away from ignorance there was yet hope.

* * *

The years seemed slower now, more filled with Life, anticipating perhaps the climax to this great drama. And this was only the just right of they who had played such a multitude of roles. They had changed the cast a billion times; through them the plot had vacillated. Even the setting was unfamiliar and strangely staged.

Yet in the house on the edge of the world, Life managed to resist Time. And change was only relative.

Those walls which had echoed the deathless words of Voltaire and Locke, which had whispered back the ravings of an Engels, now reverberated to the inspired ranting of a modern irate college student.

"Rousseau? A damned fool!" the student was screaming. "Man is born free. Ha! He's dragged unwilling from his mother's womb, still bearing the chains of ignorance and barbarism. And all you have to do is look at the world today. Oh, I know. You don't have to sell me. Why else would I be here? I know you well, Phil O'Sophy. Since I've been old enough to think, I've realized that in you lies our only hope. My primer was *Common Sense*, my boyhood ideal—Socrates. *Das Kapital* forced me out of my hometown library club. No, there's no need to convince me. All my life I've followed your illustrious career. While the other kids played cops and robbers, I tore Hume apart. At one time I even dedicated my life

to the service of Kant—frustrating enough in this world of realism, I agree. But you—you who had always been my preoccupation, when I reached college you became my passion. The heroic clouds which shrouded you when I was younger have disappeared. In my hunger to find you, Narcissus, I began to know you.

"Yes, I know your history. I know your accomplishments and your failures. I've observed your high points and the low; I've even graphed them. I know that you have never fulfilled the promise of your birth. I realize that you have always been behind Man and that thus you have always failed him.

"Yet knowing this, with all the knowledge which I have amassed, I realize that, blind though I might have been, I was always right. However unsatisfactory you may be, however much you leave to be desired, you are our only hope, our single final chance for survival. Mind you—not salvation—I said survival.

"So I've come to this cenotaph with the world toppling round about me, with two great armed camps, split by a distortion of your original purpose, glaring, daring, waiting to destroy each other. Each has possession of the ultimate weapon; each is eager to try it out. As of this morning an ultimatum had been sent. Mankind is on the edge of oblivion. And only you can save it."

"But what would you have me do?" muttered Mr. O'Sophy uneasily. "If you've studied that much you must know that I'm not permitted to enter into Life."

"Yes," shrieked the student, "I know this. I also know for what purpose you were created. I'm not asking for technicalities. I'm not after the excuses you've been hiding under. God made you to help us, to give us what guidance we've needed most. And I tell you now we need it most. Can't you see it? This is your chance as well as ours. Your chance for—for—fulfillment. You've always failed. Will you do so again and abandon us?"

A sudden surge of resolve swept through Mr. Philip O'Sophy. "No, by God!" (he permitted himself the mild blasphemy), "I, too, am sick of being tied! I want to help. What's more, I think I can. Just this once I'll enter into Life. I'll enter by giving you the fruits of my eternal labors."

Excitedly, he picked from the massive pile the top-most manuscript.

"Here is amassed the sum total of my life. Here is your answer."

Adjusting his glasses, he began sonorously:

"All men are created equal. They receive, as one, the blessings of certain inviolable rights. And among these must be included the Four Freedoms:

Freedom from fear
Freedom from want
Freedom . . ."

The student shook his head incredulously. Then he began to laugh. He laughed while Mr. Philip O'Sophy read on in offended dignity. He laughed though Mankind's single final chance ceased speaking. Peal upon peal of unrestrained, hysterical, humorless laughter sounded through the musty corners of the house on the edge of the world.

He was still laughing when the bombers came.

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