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V. 12 No 5

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MAY, 1938

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Vol. 12 No. 5

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Rollins College

Winter Park, Florida

Joe DiMaggio

HAS SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT HOW DIFFERENT CIGARETTES CAN BE!

"How about it, Joe, do you find that Camels are different from other cigarettes?"

"Any all-cigarettes-are-alike talk doesn't jibe with my experience. There's a big difference. Camels have a lot extra. I've smoked Camels steadily for 5 years, and found that Camel is the cigarette that agrees with me in a lot of ways. Good taste. Mildness. Easy on the throat. Camels don't give me the feeling of having jumpy nerves."




WHEN BILL GRAHAM saw Joe DiMaggio pull out his Camels, he thought it was a good time to get Joe's opinion on smoking. Joe came straight to the point: "There's a big difference between Camels and the others." Like Joe DiMaggio, you, too, will find in Camels a matchless blend of finer, more expensive tobaccos—Turkish and Domestic.



JOE LIKES to go down to the wharf, where he used to work helping his father, and keep his hands in mending nets. DiMaggio is husky—stands 6 feet tall—weighs around 185 pounds. His nerves are h-e-a-l-t-h-y!

DURING THE WINTER, Joe's pretty busy at his restaurant. When he's tired he says: "I get a lift with a Camel. That's another way I can spot a difference between Camels and other cigarettes."

JOE OFTEN dons the chef's hat himself. He has a double reason to be interested in good digestion—as a chef and as a ball player. On this score he says: "I smoke Camels 'for digestion's sake.'"

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Camels are a matchless blend of finer, MORE EXPENSIVE TOBACCOS ... Turkish and Domestic

PEOPLE DO APPRECIATE THE COSTLIER TOBACCOS IN CAMELS

THEY ARE THE LARGEST-SELLING CIGARETTE IN AMERICA


JOE'S GRIP. "Ball players go for Camels in a big way," he says. "I stick to Camels. They don't irritate my throat."

ONE SMOKER TELLS ANOTHER "Camels agree with me"




"We know tobacco because we grow it..."


"When Camel says 'costlier tobaccos' I know it's right," says Mr. Edward Estes, capable young planter, who knows tobacco from the ground up. "Take my last crop, for instance. Camel bought all the best parts—paid me the most I've ever gotten. The men who grow tobacco know what to smoke—Camels!"




"Last year I had the dandiest crop ever," says Mr. Roy Jones, another experienced planter who prefers Camels. "The Camel people paid more to get my choice lots. I smoke Camels because I know they use finer, costlier tobaccos in 'em. It's not surprising that Camel's the leading cigarette with us planters."



Mr. Harold Craig, too, is a successful grower who gives the planter's slant on the subject of the quality of leaf tobacco used for Camels. "I'm the fellow who gets the check—so I know that Camels use more expensive tobaccos. Camel got the best of my last crop. That holds true with most planters I know, too. You bet I smoke Camels. I know that those costlier tobaccos in Camels do make a difference."



Last year, Mr. Walter Devine's tobacco brought the highest price in his market. "Camel paid top prices for my best lots," he says. "And I noticed at the auction other planters got top prices from the Camel buyers too when their tobacco was extra-choice grade. Being in the tobacco growing business, I'm partial to Camels. Most of the other big growers here feel the same way."



"We smoke Camels because we know tobacco"

TOBACCO PLANTERS SAY

THE FLAMINGO

Vol. XII

MAY, 1938

No. 5

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Linoleum cut by Patricia Guppy

The Water Child and the Gulls

The Water Child and the Gulls

SUZANNE MACPHERSON

SILVER GREEN is my liquid world, where no wind comes. It deepens darkly all around, away and away, but always green. Here where I float it is crystal green, over my milky body, down in the shadowy sand. And above me the sky is a wavering window of light seen through a liquid glass. Around me the world is cool. Into my ears it glides and sings a deep song. Then I raise my beautiful arms like a little child in a dream. Slowly I move them upward, for they are heavy and dim. Then a thousand tinkling bubbles fall from my lovely arms and shatter the humming song. The glistening bells flash upward, shaking the window of light with sound. Slowly the dim green settles. Once more it comes murmuring into my ears with a "lull-lull-lull." I float, I float in my cooling darkling stillness while the gleaming fish glide round. With hardly a tinkle of bells I move in their school, and we float together like brothers, far off in our water world.

"Oliver, boy! What's the matter with you? Now stop staring and attend to business!" Slowly the one addressed picked up his heavy fork. Slowly he blinked the great blue bubbles that were his eyes. With an effort he squinted his face so that it was more pinched than ever, and focused his watery gaze on the Father who had spoken. There he sat, at the head of the long table, gaunt and dark and towering. High on the bony forehead lay a pile of thin black hair, looking as though a hand had drawn it up on end, then let it collapse in a lifeless heap. His white linen suit hung slack and cold from his shoulders, and his little dark eyes had frozen the warmth of summer in the room. Wonderingly Oliver looked up

at the chill white man. Then he shivered and turned away. But still he could not bend to his plate. They had piled the food so high, as though they thought he had all the emptiness of their great long bodies within him.

"Obey your Father, Oleever," snapped Mademoiselle in her crackling voice, and thrust her large red beak of a nose across the table. She only spoke in English to him when she wanted particularly to impress a reprimand upon him. But now he could only drop his watery gaze and stare at the mounds and mounds of suffocating food before him. He knew without looking that the governess was trying to pierce him with her beady gaze. And he knew that her mouth had grown lipless, so that there was nothing but a line like a thin short whip.

"No wonder you're such a skinny little thing!" croaked Aunt Abigail from the wheelchair at the end of the table. Her large, useless body sat slumped in overlapping folds. A shapeless white garment clung about her and the putty face was moist. Nothing about her ever moved except her little darting hands and eyes, and they were never still. Like tiny yellow claws her fingers would run about, snatching, jerking, tapping, until as if in exhaustion they would twine trembling together. Now the little black eyes began to dart rapidly over Oliver, and the querulous voice was shrill. "Little bony thing! Why, the head is bigger than the body!" There came a laugh like a cockatoo, cut short by the Father's command. But Oliver only shrank lower in his massive chair, blinking weakly all the while.

Then in a low, almost gentle tone, the Father spoke. "Oliver lad, you *must* clean your plate. If you don't," and the words fell

cold once more like so many dropping stones, "there will be no bathing this afternoon." Oliver looked up, startled. Then his eyes began to blur more than ever so that he could scarcely see. All that came before him were three great white birds and one high mound of food. He felt himself grow weak and hot as he chewed and gulped. He made innumerable little jabs into the impassive pile, but it would not diminish. It would not! With every mouthful he struggled against the suffocation that rose overpoweringly in his throat. He choked it down like terror. But it was nothing compared to the terror of the Father's words. And all the while that little battle continued, the three hovered over him, watching. "*It is cool and green in my watery world,*" quavered a small, small voice from far away. "*It is cool and green,*" came the tiny echo. "*Cool and green . . . cool, cool . . .*" The nauseous suffocation rose unconquerably. And suddenly, opening his mute, terrified eyes wide, while Aunt Abigail screamed, Oliver vomited thoroughly.

It was not until a week after this disgraceful affair that Oliver was permitted to go bathing. Aunt Abigail still clenched her yellow claws and screeched, "Disgusting little thing!" whenever she saw him. But he hardly noticed her now. The Father he saw almost never. That great cold man was more distant than ever, shut up in the dark fastness of his "summer office." After the awful scene in the dining room he had left the punishment in Mademoiselle's capable hands, and had retired completely to his business, even dining alone in his rooms. "See what you have done to your Father!" Mademoiselle would hiss in her crackling French. But it really didn't matter at all now, for Oliver would soon be coming back to his world once more. During the week of punishment he had been like a little dying creature, but now, in a moment, he would come alive. Down the long hot hill he would run, hopping along the narrow path

beneath the still elms, farther and farther away from the great house until he would see the lake below. There it would be, beckoning, breathing in the sun. And all the while he ran he would fasten his eyes on his sparkling world until he had splashed down, down, into its tinkling green depths.

Now Mademoiselle had settled herself on the rocky shore, spreading her wings in a sloping, canvas chair. When the day was particularly warm she would throw back her long cloak so that it hung down about her like two dead-white, drooping wings. And whenever Oliver glanced for a moment at the shore, blinking the water from his eyes, he would see the spread pinions, gleaming dull and cold in the sun. He saw her now as he came bobbing up for a breath. There she sat, like a great thin white bird, bending her head so that the long red nose hung poised over her book. From time to time she would raise her pallid face, blinking beadily in the glare of her wings as she gazed out over the water at her charge. "Ugh! Little water rat!" she would say to herself as she watched his great-eyed little face bobbing about.

Then all at once he had disappeared in a wriggling surface dive, and was gone for a long time. Indifferently Mademoiselle waited for the emergence, but when he still did not appear she began to hold her own shallow breathing, and suddenly sprang up angrily from her chair. But at that moment the little head bobbed into sight once more and shook itself with a splutter. Then as it prepared to disappear again, there came a sharp cry from Mademoiselle.

"C'en est assez, Oleever! I say it is enough! Come in now!" Without a sound the dripping head was gone again, and the still, oily-bright water rippled over him. But presently, while Mademoiselle continued to shout, Oliver appeared, and with heavy resignation began slowly splashing to the shore. When he was close enough, Madem-

oiselle reached out a long arm and jerked him to her. Angrily she scolded at him while he stood, blinking and shivering in his long, dripping suit. Then as she began pulling him along up the steep hill, scolding all the way, Oliver suddenly began to speak. His teeth were clacking with every step and his voice was no more than a timid squeak, but it came so rarely that Mademoiselle turned and peered down at him in amazement. "Qu' est-ce que vous dites?" He was smiling queerly as he stumbled along, looking back over his shoulder from time to time, down at the still lake. The blue bubbles of his eyes were luminous, and he seemed really to be talking to himself.

"They let me touch them," he whispered, "they looked at me, and I touched them, and they didn't go away!"

"Qu' avez-vous dit?" cried Mademoiselle, and her voice was like a scream. But Oliver was far away. It was just that he had to speak the miracle aloud, no matter if there was anyone to hear or not. It was a miracle! They were brothers! And oh, he was loved; he was loved.

Once before, Mademoiselle reflected in her agitation, this strangeness had come over the little creature. She had caught him that time in the study, talking to himself, and upon questioning him thoroughly he had told her some queerness about a playmate who came every day to see him. Of course that was grossly untrue; there were no children for miles. And so he had been punished soundly for telling such a lie. It had put a stop to *that* unhealthiness! But what was this new nonsense of his? En effet! It was too much to be asked to take care of a little thing that wasn't quite bright. She would have made her departure long ago, except that the Father . . . eh bien! Poor man; it was a wonder that he kept *his* sanity. She drew a rasping sigh and jerked Oliver after her with renewed vigor, resolving that the "poor man"

should hear and put a stop once and for all to the little creature's wickedness.

But as the great white house came gradually in sight above the hill, beyond the elms, a small, small voice was singing a joyous song. "*They are my brothers, my beautiful silver brothers,*" went the lulling song. And then, "*my brothers . . . brothers,*" came the tiny echo.

The morning following Oliver's miracle, Mademoiselle and the Father held a long consultation together which lasted from after breakfast until Oliver's study hour. He had waited for some time at the big desk where Mademoiselle piled her French tomes, before there came any sign that the lesson was to be held as usual. Then Mademoiselle and the Father had come walking slowly into the room, speaking French together in low tones. Oliver had ceased long ago to think it strange that the Father only conversed with the governess in her language. He always spoke haltingly but with a strange determination. Now they stood together, looking taller and more thin than ever. The Father was even paler than usual, running a bony hand constantly through his limp pile of hair. Then suddenly, without even a glance at Oliver, he turned and left the room. Mademoiselle stood for a long moment, slowly rubbing her great red nose. And then she noticed Oliver. Her mouth became a whip.

"Allons!" came the sharp report of her voice, and he followed wonderingly, fearfully, out into the dark hall. When they reached the long porch from which the lake could be seen, glittering in the morning sun, Aunt Abigail came wheeling silently up behind them. Oliver turned with a start as he heard the little bird-like clucking she made with her tongue. Her heavy folds hung slack and motionless in the chair, but the darting claws ran about more rapidly than ever. The little black eyes winked nervously, and then all at once she began to laugh. She laughed

and laughed without a sound, while Mademoiselle glared and jerked Oliver down the steps. But as they started rapidly along the path beneath the elms, Oliver heard the Aunt's mocking cry.

"Going for a bathe, little bony thing?" came the piercing call. "Going to turn into a slimy little fish?" But Oliver only went faster down the hill, for once keeping pace with Mademoiselle's long strides. With every step an unbearable excitement came welling up within him until it seemed he would burst. Never had the deadly routine of his day been broken so abruptly. And never had he been allowed to walk along the shore in the morning! Oh, this was even more wonderful than the afternoons. The little lake was a million flashing jewels—so bright, so bright! But all at once, as they came slipping and sliding down the rocky shore, Mademoiselle stopped short and peered back up the hill. There was a long moment of indecision. Then with a curt command she was climbing swiftly up the path, her white wings billowing. Dumbly Oliver followed. What did it mean? Was it perhaps . . . ? Oh no! That couldn't be true! She couldn't possibly be letting him take his bathe in the morning! And yet, what had Aunt Abigail said? Faint with excitement Oliver struggled along after Mademoiselle, faster and faster. But then as quickly as his heart had leaped up, so swiftly did it die once more. Things like that never happened. It was something else, something . . .

And then his thin voice began to question, breathlessly. But Mademoiselle only strode faster, pretending not to hear. Where were they going? Why wouldn't she tell him? Tripping and stumbling he chased her up the rocky hill, but she was almost running now. Still he continued to call to her, and all at once she turned on him with an angry babble of French. Helplessly he cried out, "Je ne comprends pas!" But it was no use; his voice was no more than a whisper. She would not

stop, she would not hear! "Je ne comprends pas! Je ne compre-n-n-ds!" he wailed. And with a final desperate little leap he threw out his arms and clutched the great vanishing wings. He clung and dragged, screaming at her. Furiously she stopped at last and shrieked to him in English.

"We're leaving! We're going away, back to the city. Your Father has sold the house and the lake. He is poor, *poor!* Do you hear? POOR!" With every word she shook Oliver wildly, trying to free herself from his grasp, until at last she flung him to the ground and sprang away up the path.

For a long time after she had gone Oliver lay very still beside the crooked path where the first elms began. All in a heap he lay, as though stunned. Then slowly, slowly the blood began to beat back aching into his head. Slowly life returned to the numb body. With a struggling effort he sat up and blinked his watery eyes, dazedly like one emerging from a confused dream. Stupidly the disconnected words began to glimmer in his mind, dimly at first, then more and more vividly until they burst out screaming so piercingly that Oliver fell into a violent trembling. Far below, the world that was no longer his, was still glistening, breathing, beckoning—as it would forever. But he would not even be able to remember; no, not even in dreams, for there would never be dreams again. Then, from far, far away, Oliver thought that he heard a voice sobbing. He listened and listened, but instead of dying to a slender echo, the cry welled, shrilled into a piercing call. It seemed to come pulsing from the lake, growing all the while. Oliver gazed and blinked until he could see nothing down the hill but a vast brilliant blur. And still he listened—horried now—to the hoarse screaming, broken by beating splashes, then hissing again, soaring to one deafening shriek. All at once he sprang to his feet and was rushing down

the long ragged path. As he reached the shore he fell down hard, sprawling along the sharp stones. For a moment he lay still, panting and sobbing, feeling nothing at all. But beyond, far out over the water, the screams had reached a crescendo, cut short only by a swift, silent splash, then renewed again in a very frenzy of exultant sound. Yes, surely that sound was out upon the lake, and yet now there seemed to be a cry from the hill too, a shrill call that came from beyond the first elms, from the summit out of sight.

But the lake, the lake! He must get there quickly. Oh quickly, before another triumphant cry could rise! Staggering and slipping Oliver splashed out into the water. At once it closed lovingly around his heavy feet and legs, clinging, dragging, as he began to wade. But he plunged on and still the shrieking was beyond. And still it was behind him too, sweeping down the hill, along the shore. It was the cry of his name, with the hateful, piercing "ee" sound as only Mademoiselle could shrill it. In a moment it would envelop him, lift him up and out forever. Already he could hear a splashing coming close behind him. "Oleever, Oleever!" came the cry, mingling with the ones around him. He pushed out, deeper and deeper until his clothes billowed and dragged. He must be nearly there; if only he could see! The screams were deafening now. His heavy feet no longer found the bottom, and as he began to swim he thought he felt the brushing of wings about his head. Then came the swift, deadly moment of the silent splash. Oliver felt himself seized, jerked up and aloft in a grip of terrible strength. Up rose the screaming gull cries once more. They wheeled and soared, mocking in a very paroxysm of triumph. For Oliver was held fast in the relentless grasp of Mademoiselle.

She had him tight about the neck, so that

he was choking. He knew that she would never let him go, although her great billowed wings already were pulling her under. The long red nose was purple, and the little eyes had popped out like two pendulous black drops. Now they rolled back wildly as Oliver began to kick, beating at the lean, wet face, and tugging the streaming, drowning hair with all his strength. They struggled wildly, in vain reaching for the firm sand far below. And still Oliver continued to kick, sending the water into a great froth. But she had him still in a vise of death. He beat and pulled, clawing the gasping, chalk-white face until blood mingled with the churning water. She began to choke with deep convulsive rasps, and something rattled down in the gasping throat. Then Oliver went down, dragging his terrible burden under. With a last effort he found the bottom while the green world roared in his ears. He found it and pushed upward with all his remaining strength, up so that his head drove hard against the chin of the dragging, deadly weight. Its neck snapped back. There was a long, low gurgle and slowly, slowly the vise relaxed.

Silver green is my liquid world where no wind comes. It deepens darkly all around, away and away but always green. Cool, cool it murmurs deep, dragging me down to its shadowy breast with gentle, tugging arms. Down I drift where it murmurs round. Now it smothers me with caresses, with caresses, with liquid kisses it drowns me. Then slowly my garments drift away with hardly a tinkle of sound. Slowly my green world settles and sings with a "lull-lull-lull!" Then I raise my beautiful arms like a little child in a dream. Slowly I move them upward, for they are heavy and dim. I float, I float while the gleaming fish glide near. Now I stroke their rippling bodies and we ride together as brothers, forever and ever as brothers. For I am loved, I am loved, here in my water world.



Vision

Linoleum cut by Rob Rae

Vision

ROBINHOOD RAE

Time: About 1100

HUDDLED together like sheep, the Christians watched the dark walls. A howling wind tore at their rags. Torrents of rain rushed down from the black sky above and spattered on their faces. But they did not notice the wind or the rain; they stared at the dim outline of the wall.

For a long time they gazed and nothing happened. Some began to relax a little and shift their eyes. But then, over the roar of the storm, from beyond the wall, a hubbub began and grew. It was the frenzied shouts of hundreds of men. When the watchers heard it they froze where they stood. The shouting outside rose. They began to tremble.

A bent old man looked up to the black sky and mumbled, "Three days ago we captured this city of Antioch from the infidels in your honor, O Lord. Since then nothing but ill has befallen us. Our numbers were greatly decreased in the battle and even then a plague came upon us and took away many more, including all our real churchmen. The Turkish dogs, whom we defeated, returned with great numbers and are even now making ready to attack us." His cracked voice rose. "What have we done, O Lord, that thou should punish us so?" He stood there looking up with wrinkled, questioning old eyes.

A fresh torrent of rain burst forth from the clouds and the old man bent his head and covered his forehead with his hand. The clamor outside increased. The Christians clung together.

In a little while a man in a monk's habit came up through the rain to the group. He was stout, and middle-sized, with a round face and blue eyes.

"I've been sleeping," he smiled. "I didn't know it was such a terrible night."

He glanced up at the clouds. "I think I should have gone on sleeping."

A young man in the group found his voice. "This is no time for your jesting, Friar Peter. Don't you know that the infidels are outside ready to scale the walls and slaughter us? How can you talk of the weather? How can you sleep?" He began to yell. "You should be praying, not sleeping. You should be asking God for mercy; not jesting! You will stop jesting soon enough when the Turkish pigs cut your throat!"

"But not till then," answered Friar Peter. Then he clapped his hands together. "Come! Come! Being sad and long-faced does not overcome the Turks. Let us at least make an attempt to meet them."

The crowd grumbled.

The old man groaned, "Nothing but a miracle could save us now. And God is angry with us, so there is no hope."

Friar Peter looked at the old man. He said nothing for a while; but stood there rubbing his chin. Then he said, very softly, "A miracle." He shrugged his shoulders and a faint smile flickered over his face.

For a moment the storm died down so that the shouting of the enemy sounded louder than before. Friar Peter turned and listened.

"Does anyone know how many Tuhks there are, out there?" he asked, over his shoulder.

No one answered his question. He gave the crowd a brief look, and walked past them, over to the huge wooden gate. He slid back a little block of wood which covered a slit and looked out. The people watched him, still rooted to the earth, sodden with despair.

Friar Peter, his eye to the slit, mumbled to himself. "Lucky they have fires going, couldn't see a thing if they did not . . . Quite a number . . . Must be celebrating their coming victory . . . Feasting and drinking as they are. Some sort of rite, I imagine. Well..."

He closed the slit and walked back to the crowd.

"They are not as many as they sound," he said, "We might have a chance even yet."

The crowd would not share his hopefulness.

"Do not try to encourage us, Friar Peter. We know that there is nothing but death awaiting us."

Friar Peter smiled. "I think I'll . . ." He paused, gazed around the group, then finished quickly, "Go get some more sleep."

He walked off, through the wind and rain.

An hour later the frightened crowd in the city crept away from their place by the walls. They could watch no longer. Their fear of immediate attack had given them a frantic desire to pray to God before the end came. They headed toward the church, stumbling through the muddy streets. Stragglers in the rear gave quick looks behind them, then pressed closer to their companions. There was a scramble at the doorway of the stone church as everyone tried to get in first. Some fell down in the mud and were trampled by the rest. Some tried to climb over their companion's shoulders. At last almost all were inside. The church was dimly lighted by candles on the altar. Every so often one of these hissed and went out as water dripped down on it from the arched ceiling above.

Confusion still prevailed; there was nobody to lead the prayer. A few prayed by themselves, but most of the crowd cried for someone to lead them.

A voice asked where Friar Peter was. Another answered bitterly that Friar Peter would not lead them. At last the old man, Dickon, walked shakily up to the altar and began to lead the prayer. The voices of the Christians

were tense and trembling. In this their last moment, they prayed for divine forgiveness for all their sins on earth. They prayed that the world would crown them as martyrs to the great cause. They prayed that their end would come swiftly and not by torture. In the pause between the prayers there was no noise in the dim old church except for low, spasmodic sobbing and mumbling. So in these pauses they could hear faintly, through the beating of the Turks beyond the walls. Each prayer was more fervent than the last. They prayed for the destruction of the infidels who were about to destroy them. They prayed that the Turks should burn in hell for eternity.

Finally the old man ended by saying that they would await their death where they were, in the House of God.

So they sat, rigid and silent, waiting. The few remaining candles on the altar flickered; one more hissed and went out as water dropped on it from the ceiling. After a while another was put out. The church was hardly lit at all then. It was still and dark. Time passed. Finally, only one candle-flame remained. Its faint illumination fell on the faces of the people nearest it—strained masks, every muscle taut. Their eyes were opened wide, staring into space at nothing.

Then the last candle hissed, flickered, and went out. The church was left in complete darkness. Suddenly a hoarse scream split the silence.

"Oh, God, waiting to die, waiting to be slit open by the swords of the Turkish dogs. God, I can't go on waiting!" The scream rose higher. "I won't! No! I won't! I'll open the gates! I'll open the gates and let the fiends in!"

Gradually the screaming grew fainter as the hysterical man rushed out of the church and down the black street toward the gate. As he slipped and stumbled through the rain and mud, he yelled, "I'll open the gates . . . I'll

open the gates." But as he passed through the square someone rushed out in front of him and tripped him. He fell into mud and before he could resist the other man had dragged him over to an open doorway, pushed him down into a cellar, and locked the door. That done, the other turned quickly and ran toward the church. It was hard going, and when he arrived at the church he was out of breath. In spite of that he rushed in and up the aisle to the altar. There he searched for a moment, found the tinder box, and lit several candles. The crowd in the church stared.

"Friar Peter," one whispered, as the candles caught and flared up.

Friar Peter, his face, hands, and robe covered with mud, faced them.

"I know this will be hard for you to believe," he said, pausing for a moment to catch his breath. "I know you won't think that this would happen to me. But sometimes the jesters are favored. Sometimes a message passes through their minds more easily than through the minds of wiser people—which are complex and full of many different things. I do not ask you to believe this until it is proven." He paused again. Then looking into their faces, he went on. "I have had a . . . a vision. I am not sure what . . . what meaning it carries; that will be decided. In the vision it was revealed to me that in this city, buried near the well, is the spear which pierced the Savior's side!"

There was silence in the church. A low mumbling swelled among the crowd. Peter watched them closely from the altar. Dickon spoke. "Friar Peter is not the one who would see visions. He is not a holy man." Many voiced their agreement.

Another spoke, "This is but one of Friar Peter's untimely jests."

"It is blasphemy!"

"A curse on him for his joking with us, now when we are about to die!"

Wildly the Christians took up the cry against Friar Peter. But then a young man raised his voice, above the noise, shouting, "Wait! Wait! Is not this—our darkest hour—the time when our Lord would reveal himself to us? Let us not condemn Friar Peter until we know. Who will come with me to the well in the square and see if Peter is telling the truth?"

At first only one or two voices responded, but then their enthusiasm caught and spread. Friar Peter smiled and sighed as he saw them pushing through the doorway, out into the rain again. He followed on behind them as they made their way toward the square. When they arrived they immediately set to digging with their hands, sticks, or anything else they could find.

"Now I am glad it has rained so much," panted one, "it makes the ground easy to dig."

Friar Peter watched from the edge of the square. Presently there was a shout . . . "Here it is! The spear that pierced our Savior's side!"

"The spear that pierced the Savior's side," the crowd repeated in a tremendous, frenzied cry.

The din of their shouting rose. Each one shrieked and gesticulated in hysterical ecstasy. "A message from God!"

"Let the infidels come on!"

"Attack, Turkish dogs! We'll fight to the end."

A young man lifted the spear in the air.

"God is with us!" he shouted, "Destroy the infidels!"

He turned and ran toward the gate, the spear held high in front of him. The crowd rushed to gather swords and clubs, and followed the man with the spear. The roar of their cries grew even greater as the big gates were swung open and they rushed out to attack the Turks.

Friar Peter ran to the gate and stood in the opening. In the light of the fires he could see the battle.

"Very good," he smiled to himself, "completely surprised by the attack . . . and such a vigorous one! There go their tents up in flames. Well . . ."

He turned and walked back toward the

square. As he approached it he went into a little shed, groped around for a moment, found what he wanted and went out with it. It was the club end of a flail. He patted it.

"Sorry," he said, "you were the first thing I could find. I'll make you a new handle tomorrow. Right now I'm going to get some sleep."

CONSOLATION

ELIZABETH SCHOENING

Locked in an element denser than air, who has heard
Your voice, and counted it more than the note of a bird?

Many a sea-bird with bright, despairing wings,
Shattered and flung to earth, cries piteously,
While the sparrow, molded for weather, climbs and sings.
And are you not one of these, whose flight was free,
Dipping and soaring over a silvered wave
Turned suddenly black, whose course was angrily broken
But never such peace as the water's curling blue
By tempest, whose body twists in a landlocked grave?
You will have peace when your final cry is spoken;
Or the wide, white wastes of the sky. Oh, none will pass,
Be certain of that, to pity or rescue you,
To lift your body from sharp, concealing grass.

Many a sea-bird has lain in a lonelier spot
And called, and the wood-sparrows, singing, heard it not.

TO SHAKESPEARE

PATRICIA GUPPY

Lord Shakespeare, I must lift a writer's prayer
To your great spirit round my Universe.
No more than any suppliant do I dare
Behold your face uncovered, but disperse
My thoughts to yours through this encircling air,
Grasping the part but not the mighty whole.
Perhaps, with other minds in pious fear,
I doubt within the chasms of my soul
Whether this glory is my deity's,
Or is the glow of many holy dues
Paid by a million million ecstasies;
Still when your lofty organ rolls I lose
My sense of criticism and of choice,
And feel the earth vibrating to your voice.

Rose in Hand

A Play in One Act

ELIZABETH SCHOENING

Characters

LEANDER—He is a poet. He has the sensitive mouth and dreaming eyes of a poet, and his hair needs cutting.

VALENTINE—She is the poet's wife. She is beautiful in a very feminine, inobvious way, and you feel that she is used to taking care of people.

SHERRY—Their child. She is perhaps ten years old; a very small child with ragged hair and a pointed, elfin face.

OBERON—He is an artist. He is a round little man with a solemn face and large, expressive eyes.

MICHAEL—He has pointed ears. He is a myth, but he is a beautiful myth and his ears are pointed.

HERMIONE—She is a goldfish, and a very plump, self-satisfied goldfish she is, too. She has no speaking parts, but she splashes beautifully.

Scene

(The poet, because he is a poet, lives in a garret. It is a fairly large garret. The walls are hung with unframed paintings; their impressionistic splashes of color war with the prim white curtains, ruffled and starched, on the window at the left. A great deal of light comes through this window, and in the distance, far and blue, the shadows of tall buildings can be seen.)

Directly beneath the window stands a bookcase stacked with brightly bound books and magazines. These are not placed in orderly rows, but heaped on the shelves. Some of them even run over onto the floor. On top of this book-case sits a fuzzy pink rabbit with one ear, next to a milk bottle filled with hyacinths. The floor is a confusion of papers,

toys, books, and cheerful rag rugs—brave but out-numbered.

There is very little furniture. One small couch, a straight chair, a rocking chair, a little red chair, and a rickety table comprise the setting. There is a door at the right, on which hangs a calendar. It is a large calendar and its page is turned to April. It is hung very crookedly by a pink thumb-tack.

Toward the front of the stage, at the right, stands a huge round goldfish bowl on a marble pedestal. In this bowl swims HERMIONE, the most prosperous looking character in the room. There is a coral castle in the bowl and a rainbow sprinkling of colored pebbles. There are streamers of seaweed festooned through the castle.

The whole atmosphere of the room reflects the people who live in it. Everywhere is a mixture of disorder and attempts at order, intellect and childishness, art and extravagant poverty. Above all it is gay. It has no evidence of sordidness.

When the curtain rises, LEANDER is seated on the side of the table, writing with a stubby pencil on sheets of yellow paper. There is a wastepaper basket near him, and the floor around him is strewn with yellow sheets. He is wearing a white shirt with a Byronic collar; a flowing blue tie is knotted below the collar. His coat is loose and threadbare, his trousers badly in need of pressing, but he has an air of grandeur; of genius in rags, of beauty which cannot be hidden by poverty. Even in the throes of writing, there is a suggestion of conscious drama in all of his postures.

VALENTINE, who sits in her rocking chair on the other side of the table, is a con-

trast to Leander. Her flowered print dress, slightly faded, is very neat. It is neither too large nor too small, but it fits her well, and the childish air of its full skirt and pointed collar becomes her. She sits facing Hermione, her back toward Leander, and she is darning socks. At her side is a small, embroidered darning bag; she wears a silver thimble on her finger, and she takes small, precise stitches. She embodies the rag rugs and the white frilled curtains and the chintz covered pillows scattered here and there. There is nothing studied in her pose; she sits on one foot like a happy obedient child and sews. When she begins to speak, she puts her work carefully into the little bag.)

VALENTINE: Leander—

LEANDER (*absently, as he scribbles*): Yes, dear.

VALENTINE: Leander, there isn't a thing in the house to eat.

LEANDER (*tearing up his first sheet of paper and taking a second*): Yes, dear.

VALENTINE (*Her voice is a little sad*): There really *should* be something to eat, Leander. There really should. If only—oh, Leander, if only you could be just a little more practical.

LEANDER (*crumpling the second sheet, he takes a third*): Yes, dear.

VALENTINE: I think we have half a jar of peanut butter and some dry angel food cake. But no butter, Leander. Sherry took the last of the butter because she wanted to carve a statue from it. And the hyacinths you bought when I asked you to buy bread are all wilting now. Why *will* you buy hyacinths, Leander?

LEANDER (*triumphantly taking the second sheet of paper from the waste paper basket, unfolding it, and adding another line*): Yes, dear.

(*Valentine turns to look at him, and when she speaks her voice is very sad indeed.*)

VALENTINE: Leander! Oh, Leander, you

haven't been listening at all. (*She shakes her head with a little gesture of despair.*)

LEANDER (*He turns toward her, and a bright, proud smile illumines his face*). Valentine! Darling Valentine! (*His gesture seems to embrace the whole world.*) I have written a poem.

VALENTINE (*She may try but she cannot possibly be cross with him when he is like this. So she smiles, but it is a diffident smile and her voice is cool*): Did you, Leander? Is it a good poem?

LEANDER (*Still exultant, he does not notice her coolness.*) Good? Of course it's good! (*Solemnly*) Valentine, this sonnet—it is a sonnet, you know—this sonnet is one of my very best.

VALENTINE: But Leander, I wanted to tell you—

LEANDER (*He does not really interrupt; rather, he continues, oblivious*): It's a love sonnet. My editor will snatch at it. It's good, I tell you; really good. I knew it was time I got off social problems and began dealing with human emotion again. That's what gets them every time, Valentine, (*solemnly he says this, shaking his finger*) Simple human emotion!

(*Valentine does not answer. There is a little silence, wherein Leander scribbles largely and elaborately on his sheet of paper, and Valentine looks unhappy. Finally he becomes more restless; then he cannot bear it any longer, so he speaks.*)

LEANDER (*wounded*): Well, aren't you going to ask me to read it?

VALENTINE (*politely, but not looking up*): Of course, Leander. I'd like very much to hear it.

(*Immediately Leander's face brightens and he makes elaborate preparations. First he straightens his tie. Then he brushes a strand of hair from his forehead. Then he clears his throat loudly.*)

LEANDER: Ahem. (*Slight pause*) Ahem.

(He lifts the crumpled manuscript and stands, leaning gracefully against the table in a beautiful, Byronic pose): I think I told you it's a sonnet. (He smooths the manuscript. Then, clearing his throat once more, he begins to read):

Your voice is like a little silver bell
Which rings a lilting thread of melody,
But in your cool eyes waits the magic
spell

Which has enticed my wondering heart
from me.

The sun is there, the moon, and all the—
(Throughout his reading, Valentine has looked more and more satisfied. Now she curls up in her chair like a purring kitten, and when she speaks, her voice is very soft.)

VALENTINE: Is it about me, Leander?

LEANDER (startled out of his pose):
What?

VALENTINE (still softly): The poem, I
mean. It is about me, isn't it?

LEANDER (haltingly): Well—why—not
exactly. No, it isn't exactly about you.

(The kitten remains a kitten, but a small sorrowful kitten which suddenly ceases to purr.)

VALENTINE (slowly): Not about me?

You've written a sonnet and it isn't about
me? Oh Leander, how could you?

LEANDER (He runs his fingers through
his hair. You can see that he is very disturbed): But Valentine, I had no idea. I
wrote it about a very beautiful woman you
see, and—(He holds the manuscript out to
her.) You see, the title is "To Diavelen".

VALENTINE (opening her eyes widely):
Diavelen?

LEANDER (more at ease): Why, yes.
Diavelen. She's a model, a very beautiful
model indeed. She loves my soul. She
often talks about my soul, Valentine. Why
haven't you ever told me I have such a
remarkable soul?

VALENTINE (There is anguish in her

voice): Diavelen! Oh, Leander, she sounds
tall and thin and dark.

LEANDER (nodding smugly): And so she is.

VALENTINE (as if she were afraid to ask):
And this Diavelen, do you—do you—
Leander, love her?

LEANDER: Well—

VALENTINE (She reads the answer in his
tone): You do! Oh dear! (She buries her
face in her hands. There is another brief
silence. Leander twirls his pencil between
his hands and unfolds his manuscript.)

LEANDER (coughing gently): Val—(per-
suasively, since she does not answer) Val-
entine, shall I finish the poem?

VALENTINE (in a small but decided
voice): No.

LEANDER (slightly dashed): Oh. (He sits
down) Oh, very well.

VALENTINE (in a muffled voice): What
shall I do?

LEANDER (leaning forward eagerly):
What?

VALENTINE (looking up): What?

LEANDER (impatiently): I said what.
What did you say?

VALENTINE (raising her voice): I said
what shall I do. And I meant it, Leander.
I did. You won't bring home food. You
buy silly flowers instead of bread. You
will spend money on toys for Sherry, and
you won't wear respectable clothes. And
now (she is almost weeping) you go and
fall in love with a creature named Diavelen
and write poems to her instead of to
me-e-e!

LEANDER (pleading): But Val, it isn't that
I don't love you. It's just that—well, she's
so beautiful, and—you can't think how
beautiful she is! And how very, very much
she appreciates me.

VALENTINE (outraged): But I'm beauti-
ful too!

LEANDER (highly superior): Pooh. (Then
hastily) Of course you are very pretty, but

—(He looks at her carefully) What makes
you think you are beautiful?

VALENTINE (hesitating): Well, people
say so.

LEANDER (challenging): What people?

VALENTINE: Why—men.

LEANDER (His astonishment is not flatter-
ing): Men? What men?

VALENTINE (She is pinned down): Well
Michael. (More certain) Yes, Michael
says so.

LEANDER (suddenly alive with interest):
Michael? I never heard of Michael. Who
is he?

VALENTINE (just possibly she is stalling
for time): You've never heard of Michael?
Michael? (With a little laugh.) Oh, of
course, how stupid of me. I've never told
you about him. (Pause) Well, he's—
a man.

LEANDER (gently but firmly): Yes, but
what sort of man? What does he do?
Where did you meet him? Please tell me,
Valentine. After all, I have a right to
know.

(Valentine, at this point, changes her posi-
tion. She sits facing Hermione, her back
partly toward Leander. She does not look
at him, but stares into space as if she were
dreaming.)

VALENTINE: He's—he's a banker's son,
Leander. A rising young banker's son. He
has pointed ears.

LEANDER (interested): Really?

VALENTINE (Now she is more sure of
herself): Oh, yes, indeed, Leander. Ex-
ceedingly pointed ears. He is very beauti-
ful. His suits are always pressed and his
hair is always combed and his eyes are very,
very blue.

LEANDER (diffidently): Tell me, does he
love you, Valentine?

(Valentine says nothing at all for a mo-
ment. Then, determinedly, she nods in
the direction of Hermione.)

LEANDER (still more diffidently): What
does he say?

VALENTINE (surprised): Say?

LEANDER: Yes. When he talks to you, I
mean.

VALENTINE: Why, he says—oh, he says
lovely things, Leander.

LEANDER (more insistent): But what are
they, I mean?

VALENTINE: Oh-h, he says—he says—
"My dear, you are the most beautiful wo-
man in the world." He often says I'm
beautiful, Leander. He says: "Your hair
is golden with sun, and your eyes hold sil-
ver laughter deep within them." "Your
voice is music, Valentine," he says, "and
there is the shadow of music in your smile."

(As she begins to speak, Leander takes his
stubby pencil again, and scrawls feverishly on
sheets of yellow paper. But Valentine, whose
face holds a dream, is so preoccupied that she
does not notice him. She stops, and Leander
looks up expectantly.)

LEANDER (gently prodding): Does he say
anything else?

VALENTINE: Oh, millions of things. He
is a remarkable fellow, Leander. He says
my face is like the ghost of a white rose in
a pool of stars. He says my chin is pointed
like a heart. He wants me to go away with
him.

LEANDER (eagerly, his pencil poised):
Yes, go on—

VALENTINE: He says, "Valentine, we will
go away together. We will go to a small
house far away somewhere. There will be
latticed windows and roses around the door,
and an oak tree, and a garden." And there
—(she speaks this last part joyously, her
head tilted up) we will have carpets on the
floor and we will have a white kitchen and
always enough to eat. And there will be a
fireplace, and a clean angora cat—a soft
angora kitten stretched in front of the fire.

LEANDER (scribbling furiously): Yes?

VALENTINE: All the days will be bright with sun and soft with shadow. And he will love me forever and ever, because I am Valentine and because I am beautiful. And —(She turns slightly and pauses, as if to see Leander's reaction. The pencil has not stopped; she sees it at the height of its speed.) Leander! What are you writing?

LEANDER (He adds one more word before he looks up, and the joy of his expression is comparable to hers): I'm writing what you said.

VALENTINE: What I said? For evidence? (She sounds pleased) Why Leander, surely you aren't jealous.

LEANDER (amazed): Jealous? (Then indignantly) Certainly not! Haven't I told you my theories? I believe that marriage is merely a bond of convention, and intelligent people should be free to live their own lives, and not let bourgeois conventionality dictate to the emotion. You know I think love is—(There is an ominous oratorical look about his sweeping gestures, and we feel he might go on like this for a long, long time.)

VALENTINE (interrupting in a small, puzzled voice): Yes, but why did you write it then?

LEANDER: What? Oh. Oh yes. Valentine, (this he says portentously) I've been meaning to tell you. I am writing a novel.

VALENTINE (still puzzled): But I don't see—

LEANDER: Don't you understand? You see in the plot—I'm sure you'll agree it's a remarkable plot—there is a man who falls in love with a married woman. Don't you think it's an original idea, Valentine?

VALENTINE (politely): It's very original, I'm sure. But—

LEANDER: Well, I have the rest of it all planned beautifully, but do you know, I hadn't the slightest idea what a man would

say if he loved a married woman? Not the slightest! And then you—

VALENTINE (completely astonished): Me?

LEANDER: Why, yes. I just wrote what you said, you see, and it fits in beautifully. Beautifully! (Solemnly) Valentine, you have aided materially in the writing of the greatest contemporary novel since Proust. Isn't that a staggering thought?

VALENTINE (incredulous): And you wrote it all down? The little house and everything? And you didn't even care? You took it all for your old novel, and you didn't care at all?

LEANDER (wounded): It isn't an old novel. It isn't even written yet. And I should think you'd be flattered to be in it at all. I tell you, it isn't every woman who—

VALENTINE (ominously): Leander, I am annoyed.

LEANDER (surprised): What!

VALENTINE: I am annoyed. I really mean it. (She stamps her foot, and it is quite possible to believe that she really does.)

LEANDER (immediately placating): Now, Valentine—

VALENTINE: You're a brute. You're impractical and you're silly and you're a brute. And you haven't any more human emotion than a—a—tin whistle!

LEANDER: Well, I like that!

VALENTINE: I don't care whether you like it or not. You are. I mean you haven't. And quite possibly, if you don't mend your ways, I may run away with Michael.

LEANDER (He states it as a simple fact): You wouldn't.

VALENTINE: Oh, wouldn't I! You'd better be careful what you do, Leander. And Sherry, too.

LEANDER (striking a pose): I won't have

Sherry's name brought into this. She's a lovely, elfin child, and I won't have her maligned.

VALENTINE: Oh, pooh.

LEANDER: Pooh nothing. Sherry is a very intelligent child.

VALENTINE: She's a brat.

LEANDER (cut to the quick): Brat indeed! A fine mother you are.

VALENTINE: Well, she is.

LEANDER: Sherry? Lovely Sherry who likes to walk in the park? Sweet Sherry who talks to the balloon man and believes in goblins and cries for the moon and blows bubbles? Not Sherry!

(Suddenly a voice is heard offstage, a little girl's voice calling "Mummy! Mummy!" There is a clatter in the hall and SHERRY enters. She wears a very short dress and a jacket which she throws down on the floor when she enters. The dirt on her face cannot hide her engaging smile.)

SHERRY: Mummy, Mummy, I'm hungry. I want something to eat.

VALENTINE: Sherry, don't call me mummy.

SHERRY (her voice tinged with sugar): Mother dear, I'm hungry. Please, may I have something to eat?

VALENTINE: But there isn't anything to eat, Sherry. Nothing but peanut butter and dry angel-food cake.

SHERRY (impatiently): But I don't want any peanut butter. I want some bread and butter and jelly. Please, may I have some bread and butter and jelly?

VALENTINE (very patiently): Sherry dear, I've told you there isn't any. There isn't any bread and there isn't any butter and there isn't any jelly. And goodness knows what we will have for supper.

SHERRY (wailing): But I want some. I WANT some! I'm hungry and I want some bread-and-butter-and-jelly.

VALENTINE: Sherry! Hush! (To Lean-

der) Oh Leander, why did you buy those hyacinths?

SHERRY (Her wail has not subsided, but slowly it turns to a chant): Bread and butter and jelly! Bread and butter and jelly! Why can't I have some, mummy? Why? (Valentine looks helplessly at Leander, who has remained in the background. He steps forward reluctantly)

LEANDER: Hush, Sherry! Hush, dear. Daddy will go out and buy you all the bread and butter and jelly you can eat. (Sherry stops for a moment. Leander searches frantically in his pockets. In one of them he finds three cents, in another he finds one cent. The money jingles forlornly in his hands; he turns to Valentine.) Val, you haven't—

VALENTINE (shaking her head): I'm sorry, Leander. The milkman had to be paid.

SHERRY: (opening her mouth very wide): I want—

LEANDER (in alarm): Shhhhh! Darling wouldn't you like a nice piece of angel-food cake? It can't be so very dry. It's only a week old.

SHERRY (Closing her eyes very tightly she stamps her foot): No! No! No! I want—(suddenly her wails stop completely. She stands for a moment lost in thought, looking toward the goldfish bowl) Mummy! Daddy! Isn't there anything to eat? Isn't there anything at all?

VALENTINE (grimly): No dear, nothing at all.

SHERRY: You mean we hafta starve?

LEANDER: (hastily): Well, not exactly starve—

(But Sherry does not listen. Her face is alive with excitement, and there is a gleam in her eyes. She steps forward and raises her hand in a dramatic gesture.)

SHERRY: Mummy! Daddy! I know what we can do. (There is an effective pause, and

the last words ring out.) Let's eat Hermione!

VALENTINE (*stunned*): Hermione!

LEANDER (*his imagination fired*): Hermione! (*Dreamily*) Goldfish, fried to a delicate brown and garnished with water-
cress . . . food for a poet! Served with Chablis, perhaps; Chablis, cold as a mountain spring with sunlight hiding in its heart, and—

VALENTINE (*whose expression has been growing more and more horrified*): Leander, stop it! Stop it, I say!

LEANDER (*in sheer astonishment*): Why, Valentine, what—

VALENTINE (*Running forward she kneels beside the marble stand and flings her arms protectively around the goldfish bowl*): Oh, Hermione darling, I'll protect you! They shan't eat you, poor Hermione, beautiful Hermione. Don't be afraid.

LEANDER (*approaching her*): But Valentine—

VALENTINE: Go 'way! Don't you touch her. (*She begins to weep*) Oh, you are cruel, cruel! Both of you.

SHERRY (*insistent*): But mummy, if we're starving—and she's a very large goldfish.

VALENTINE: You keep still.

LEANDER (*stung*): Valentine! Don't speak to her like that.

VALENTINE: And you keep still too. Hermione is mine. She's my very own. You won't eat her.

LEANDER: It's high time she was eaten. And a good thing too.

SHERRY: Daddy, I want to eat Hermoine. Daddy, please let's eat her.

LEANDER: Now Valentine, be reasonable. Don't you see—

VALENTINE: Oh! OH! OH! Very well, that settles it. That settles it.

LEANDER (*impatiently*): What settles what?

VALENTINE: I'm going to run away. I'm

going to run away with Michael this very day. You'll be sorry.

LEANDER: Indeed!

VALENTINE: Yes, I will. Just you wait and see.

SHERRY: But Hermione—

VALENTINE: And you'll be sorry too.

LEANDER (*yawning delicately*): Come, Sherry. Come, Sherry-my-love. Let's go out into the warm spring air. We can walk in the park, where the carrousel plays and the laughter of children is like the singing of birds. Oh come, little Sherry, and perhaps my editor will buy my poem, and then we can buy balloons from the old balloon man, and pink popcorn, and ice cream.

SHERRY (*radiant*): Hurry daddy! Let's hurry! I want a balloon.

(*With a little skip, she picks up her jacket and joins him, and they go out, left, together. At the door they pause and look uncertainly at Valentine, still kneeling beside the marble stand.*)

LEANDER (*magnanimously*): Goodbye, Valentine dear.

SHERRY (*Sweetly*): Goodbye, mother dear.

VALENTINE (*weakly*): You wait and see— (*They go. Valentine's head droops and her shoulders shake with sobs. She is a pathetic little figure, alone there in the center of the stage. There is a knock on the door. Then a louder knock. Valentine does not move. The door at the right opens, and OBERON enters. He wears a paint-streaked smock over his suit, and his pockets bristle with brushes.*)

OBERON (*calling*): Leander! Valentine! Val—(*He stops short, seeing Valentine. He approaches her tentatively and stands beside her. His eyebrows quirk sadly, and his expression is troubled. He looks at her for a moment, then leans over and touches her shoulder gently*) Valen-tine—

VALENTINE (*looking up with a little gasp*): Oberon! (*She searches in the pock-*

et of her dress.) Oh, I haven't any— (*He gives her a large white handkerchief. She takes it gratefully and wipes her eyes.*)

VALENTINE: Thank you so much.

OBERON: What's the matter, little Valentine? Is Hermione ill?

VALENTINE: No, Oberon, she's quite well, but—oh dear, I'm so unhappy!

OBERON (*genuinely disturbed*): Unhappy? Unhappy in April? Poor Valentine. (*He pats her shoulder comfortingly*) Tell me all about it.

VALENTINE (*almost weeping*): H-he—oh. Oberon, he never brings home anything to eat and then he wrote the poem and it wasn't to me at all and her name is Diavelen and she has green eyes! And then he wrote the little yellow house down for his novel, and he doesn't care what I do, and they—they wanted to eat Hermione! (*Now she is really crying.*) And oh dear, I want to run away with Michael!

OBERON (*Perplexed but sympathetic, he pats her shoulder*): There, there, Valentine. There, there.

VALENTINE (*between sobs*): You're so kind, Oberon.

OBERON: But—but who is Michael?

VALENTINE (*She looks up, and for a moment she is almost happy*): Michael? Oh, he's wonderful. He's a banker's son, and he has pointed ears, really they are pointed—and he loves me dearly and he thinks I am the most beautiful woman in the world. (*Then she is desolate again*) But, o-oh Oberon! There isn't any Michael.

OBERON (*Now he is really bewildered*): No Michael?

VALENTINE: No-ooo! I made him all up, and he was so lovely, and Leander didn't care at all.

OBERON (*Slowly he begins to see*): Ahhh! You made him all up?

VALENTINE (*nodding despondently*): Yes! I thought, you see—and then I said I

would run away with him, and nobody thinks I will, and now I can't. And he does think I'm beautiful, Michael does. And there isn't anybody else.

OBERON (*absently*): I do, Valentine. I think you're beautiful.

VALENTINE (*and she smiles again*): You do Oberon? You do really?

OBERON: Really I do. And I think (*firmly*) I know what you can do.

VALENTINE: You mean about Leander?

OBERON (*nodding*): About Leander. See here, Valentine, why don't you run away with Michael?

VALENTINE (*sadly*): But I told you, there isn't any Michael. There isn't any little house, there isn't any anything. Just Leander and Sherry and hyacinths on the book-case and guppys in the bathtub. (*There is utter desolation in her voice.*)

OBERON (*persistent and very serious*): No, but there could be. You could leave a note, and you could go somewhere, and they'd be sure to miss you. And then you could come back again when—

VALENTINE (*her face has been brightening*): When Leander missed me!

OBERON: Yes, and when he promised to reform—

VALENTINE (*eagerly*): And forget Diavelen—

OBERON: And not eat Hermione—

VALENTINE: And be (practical—oh, yes, Oberon! It's a beautiful idea.

OBERON: You could just stay in my studio and I could pretend to find you.

VALENTINE: It's a beautiful idea! Wait, Oberon, I'll pack my bag and—oh let's hurry, before they come back!

(*She goes into the bedroom and emerges with a small suitcase and an armful of assorted clothing which she puts into the bag. She has a coat, too, which she puts on, and a little hat which she jams on the back of her head.*)

VALENTINE (*packing*): And do you think he'll really miss me?

OBERON (*He tries inefficiently to help her close the suitcase*): Certainly he will!

VALENTINE (*doubtfully*): Enough to reform?

OBERON: Of course! Here, Valentine, how do you work this catch?

(*She closes the suitcase quickly and then stands looking about.*)

VALENTINE: I guess you're—oh no! The note.

OBERON: Yes, you mustn't forget the note.

VALENTINE (*Taking one of the sheets of yellow paper, she stands for a moment lost in thought, biting her pencil*): Let's see—Dear Leander:—No. Dearest Leander—yes, that's it. (*She writes rapidly.*) Now where shall I put it?

OBERON: Can't you leave it on the desk, or on the sofa maybe?

VALENTINE: No-o-o. (*Then suddenly.*) I know! The pincushion! I must leave it on the pincushion, Oberon. They always do. Leander would be terribly disappointed if I didn't leave it on the pincushion.

(*She runs into the bedroom again, then out, closing the door carefully. She looks for a moment at the room; then resolutely, takes Oberon's arm and they go out together. Then Valentine's voice is heard offstage calling "Oh! Hermione!" She runs in again, goes to the marble stand, lifts the goldfish bowl and carries it out.*)

(*For a moment the stage is empty. Then, from the right entrance, steps are heard, and voices calling "Valentine! Valentine!" Leander and Sherry enter. Both are eating chocolate ice cream cones and Sherry carries a huge balloon. They run in, dishevelled and breathless, laughing.*)

LEANDER: Valentine! Val! I've sold my poem. And the editor said—(*He stops suddenly, looks about and says in an incredulous voice*) Valentine! Where—(*then*

his eyes rest on the empty pedestal and he stares at it dumbly. At last he points and says): Look!

SHERRY (*also staring*): Daddy! Hermione's runned away!

LEANDER: But where—

SHERRY: I don't know. Maybe she went out for a walk.

LEANDER (*annoyed*): Don't be silly. Goldfish can't walk. They haven't any feet.

SHERRY: Well, maybe she flew then. Maybe she flew out the window and away, away, away to Never-Never Land. Maybe she flew to the Bronx.

LEANDER (*He is not listening to Sherry; he speaks in a low, amazed voice as if he were talking to himself*): But she's gone. She isn't there, so she must be gone. She couldn't just go away. Not Hermione. But she must have, because she did.

SHERRY (*tugging at his coat*): I know, daddy! I bet I know. I bet somebody stole her.

LEANDER (*almost sharply*): Nonsense. Nobody would steal Hermione.

SHERRY: Well, she's a goldfish, isn't she? People steal gold, don't they? Why shouldn't they steal goldfish then, daddy? Why wouldn't they?

LEANDER (*annoyed and preoccupied*): Well, they just wouldn't, that's all.

SHERRY: I bet she's in the bedroom. Or maybe in the sink. I'm going to look. (*She goes into the bedroom. While she is out, Leander circles the marble stand, staring at it.*)

LEANDER: And Valentine. Where could Valentine be? It's a mystery, that's what it is. (*His tone is aggrieved.*)

(*Sherry runs in again, waving the pincushion. It is a red tomato pincushion. From it flutters a piece of yellow paper, neatly folded.*)

SHERRY: Daddy, mummy wasn't there and Hermione wasn't there and everything's all upset and this—look!—this was on the

middle of the floor, and this (*she waves the note at him*) was on it, and daddy, let's read it right away.

LEANDER (*He staggers back, his hand over his forehead. This is the very essence of the dramatic*): A note! And on the pincushion! (*He is at a loss for words; he can only stare at it.*)

SHERRY (*holding it out to him*): Read it, daddy.

LEANDER (*He reaches out as if to take it, and draws back*): No, you read it. I—I can't.

SHERRY (*She sounds frightened*): No you, daddy. It has your name on it.

(*With a sigh, Leander takes the pincushion. Slowly, very slowly, he unpins the note and unfolds it. Then he looks at it, reluctantly, and a cry of despair escapes his lips. At this moment, we cannot help feeling very sorry for him.*)

LEANDER (*reading*): "Dearest Leander: I have—" oh! "I have run away with Michael. I said I would, and so I did." With Michael! Think of it! And she says—she says—"Don't forget to put the milk-bottle out before you go to bed, and please remember to open the window from the top or you will have bronchitis again." Sherry, she's gone! She's left us!

SHERRY: Did she take Hermione?

LEANDER: She must have. Ah, Valentine, how could you leave us? How can we fill the hollow days, how build again our lives upon the shattered wreckage you have left? How—

SHERRY: Daddy, the sink is full of dirty dishes.

LEANDER (*startled*): Dishes?

SHERRY: Yes. Mummy forgot to wash them before she went away. What shall we do with them?

LEANDER (*meditative*): Why—ah—wash them, I suppose. Yes, wash them.

SHERRY: How do you wash dishes?

LEANDER: Why—let's see—first you rub soap on them. And then you—you put them away. No, first you dry them with a towel.

SHERRY: It sounds awful hard. Daddy, I know what let's do. Let's break them. Let's throw them all out of the window and break them, and we can eat from chips of wood, like goblins. Shall we, daddy?

LEANDER: Certainly not. I never heard of such a thing.

SHERRY: Well, we could. Why couldn't we?

LEANDER: Run along and play, Sherry. I said we can't, so we can't. Now run along and play.

SHERRY (*screwing up her face*): But I don't wa-ant to run along and play. I only want you to answer me. Why don't you answer me, daddy?

LEANDER (*exasperated*): I said run along and play. And for heaven's sake don't start crying.

SHERRY (*Her mouth is open very wide, and she stamps her foot*): You're mean! You don't let me do anything I want to do. You're a mean, bad, ugly—

LEANDER (*Now he is really angry*): Sherry! You keep still!

SHERRY: I will not keep still! I don't like you! (*She begins to wail; Leander is contrite and terrified.*)

LEANDER (*in alarm*): Hush, Sherry! Sssssh. Oh, if only Valentine were here.

SHERRY (*her wails increasing*): I wa-ant mummy! I want my mummy!

LEANDER: Hush! Come Sherry, don't cry. Think of—think of all the goblins in the world dancing around a toadstool. Think of a balloon as big as the moon. Think of Hermione in her coral castle; think of little rainbows in the water, and colored bubbles in the sunlight. Think of Hermione, swishing through a wonder

world of seaweed, there on her pedestal—
(*Inadvertently he gestures.*)

(*For a little while, Sherry's wails have ceased. Now they begin with new energy.*)

SHERRY: I wa-ant Hermione! Nice Hermione, I want her to come home. Oooooh! I want to see the little bubbles.

LEANDER (*his patience gone*): For goodness sake, Sherry, stop that noise or I will give you a good hard spanking.

SHERRY (*She glances at him warily from the corner of her eye and edges away, still wailing*): I wa-ant Hermione!

(*Leander reaches out as if to catch her. She darts away, behind the table. Leander overturns a chair in his haste to reach her. Woe-fully he sinks down on the floor beside the chair, rubbing his shins.*)

LEANDER (*very, very sadly*): I want Valentine!

(*At this point, Oberon enters. He enters from the left, and Sherry sees him first. Her tears stop, and she leaves her vantage point to fling her arms around him.*)

SHERRY: Oberon! Mummy and Hermione have gone away and we don't know where, and daddy sold his poem, and Oberon, he said I ought to have a spanking.

OBERON (*with exaggerated innocence*): Valentine? Gone? But where in the world—

(*LEANDER has regained his dignity; he is standing tragically at Oberon's elbow. When Oberon turns, Leander holds out the note.*)

LEANDER: Read it.

(*Oberon reads. He seems ill at ease.*)

OBERON (*looking up*): Michael? Well, Michael indeed. Well, well.

LEANDER (*reproachfully*): Well, well? Is that all you can say to a broken hearted family whose mainstay has cruelly deserted them? Oh, Oberon!

OBERON (*very ill at ease*): I mean well,

well that's too bad. That certainly is too bad. It certainly is.

LEANDER (*more satisfied*): That's better. And this child—(*He gestures.*) This child will be my death! Yes, Oberon, my death.

OBERON, (*without conviction*): Oh, no, Leander.

LEANDER (*vehemently*): Oh yes! Why, she—why, Oberon, this child is a brat! (*Sherry, who has been standing decorously on the other side of Oberon, glances up obliquely and makes a face.*)

OBERON: If there were something I could do—

LEANDER (*excited*): Do? Do? What could anyone do? I tell you I'm going to give her a sound spanking and put her to bed, that's what I'm going to do.

OBERON (*hastily*): I mean about Valentine. About getting her back. Maybe I could find her.

LEANDER: You?

OBERON: Well, yes. You see, I know a man—I mean, I have a plan—I mean, well, maybe they're in the Harvard Club—I mean the Grand Central Station. Do you see what I mean?

LEANDER: You say you can find her? Then find her, Oberon! At once! (*His voice is commanding. Oberon cringes, but he stands his ground.*)

OBERON: Well, you see it may not be so easy as all that. She probably had some reason for going, didn't she? And this Michael might be a pretty nice fellow, and she might—

LEANDER (*airily*): Pouf! She wouldn't want to stay away from us.

OBERON (*warningly*): Are you sure?

LEANDER: Well—why yes, certainly. (*He sounds uncertain.*)

SHERRY: Maybe if we just promised not to eat Hermione—

OBERON (*shocked and reproving*): Why,

you wouldn't want to eat lovely Hermione, would you?

SHERRY (*reluctantly*): N—o—o. (*Then decidedly.*) Certainly we wouldn't. We wouldn't want to eat lovely Hermione with all her pebbles, would we, daddy?

LEANDER (*stiffly*): Why I never heard of such a thing.

OBERON (*encouraged*): And was that all?

LEANDER (*in deep thought*): Let me see, it seems to me there was something—

OBERON (*helpfully*): Not Diavelen?

LEANDER: That's it! Diavelen.

OBERON: But if you love Diavelen—

LEANDER: Love her? (*Indignantly*) Certainly not! Why she can't even mend socks. She can't even wash shirts. Besides, she's too tall. Think of loving Diavelen when there's Valentine—beautiful Valentine.

SHERRY: And there wasn't any bread in the house either, daddy.

LEANDER: Ah-h, yes. I knew there was something else. But Oberon, she wants me to be practical. How can I possibly be practical when I'm a poet? It isn't fair.

OBERON: And if she doesn't come back, then you can be as impractical as you like.

LEANDER (*brightening*): Of course! (*Then he looks at Sherry, whose ragged hair stands up in points like horns, and his tone is doubtful.*) Of co-ourse . . . But I'll change, Oberon. I can feel myself changing! Ye walls bear witness, from this time on, your master is a—a very practical man. Ah, Valentine, what would I not do for your sake!

OBERON: Then when I—that is, if I found her, could I tell her all these things?

LEANDER (*His own virtue has moved him to ecstasy*): All of them, Oberon! Tell her we love her. Tell her we cannot live without her. The hours drag past, and time moves on leaden wings—(*He pauses, preoccupied*) on leaden wings; time moves

on leaden wings. I must remember to write that down. That's good.

SHERRY: And tell her please not to forget Hermione.

LEANDER: Yes, by all means tell her that. Now fly, Oberon!

(*He propels Oberon to the door, left, and shakes his hand fervently.*)

LEANDER: Find her, and I shall be grateful forever.

OBERON: Goodbye, Leander, Goodbye, Sherry.

SHERRY: And bring me back a present! (*He goes, and Leander sits at his desk morosely. Sherry takes her plush rabbit from the book-case, upsetting the hyacinths. Leander springs to his feet.*)

LEANDER: Can't you be quiet? Can't you let me work?

SHERRY (*whining*): Well, I couldn't help it, could I? I couldn't, could I?

(*Leander sinks down in Valentine's chair, his head in his hands. Sherry stands near, watching him intently. At last he looks up.*)

LEANDER (*very earnestly*): Sherry, would you consider me a handsome man?

SHERRY (*inspecting him carefully*): Daddy, I think you're beautiful!

LEANDER (*nodding satisfied*): Many people have said so. Still sometimes I can't help wondering—tell me, Sherry, are my—my ears aren't pointed, are they?

(*He feels them meditatively.*)

SHERRY (*Looking, then shaking her head sadly*): Nope.

LEANDER (*hopefully*): Not even the least little bit pointed? Look very carefully.

SHERRY (*Looking again, and again shaking her head*): Not even the least little bit.

LEANDER (*morosely*): I thought not. You know, there's something very attractive about pointed ears. Say what you like, there is.

SHERRY (*encouraging*): Well, you're very attractive, daddy.

LEANDER: Yes, I know, but—this Michael fellow; you don't think he could be more attractive?

SHERRY: Well—no. *(There is a tinge of doubt in her tone.)*

LEANDER: I was just wondering. Suppose, Sherry—not really, you know, just suppose—he should be more attractive.

SHERRY: He has pointed ears—

LEANDER: Yes, and just suppose—of course it's ridiculous, but suppose Valentine should like him better than—well, us, for instance. *(Hastily)* Oh, I know it isn't likely, but what if she wouldn't want to come back?

SHERRY *(wailing)*: Oooooooh!

LEANDER: Sssh! What will the neighbors think? Daddy was only pretending, darling. She'll come back.

SHERRY *(through her tears)*: Will she?

LEANDER: Certainly she will! Dear Valentine with her eyes the color of ocean and her strange little three-cornered smile—why, she couldn't leave us! She'll come home and she'll bring Hermione and we'll all be happy again.

SHERRY *(contented)*: She couldn't leave us.

LEANDER *(soothing)*: Of course she couldn't. *(Then, more softly.)* But what if—just what if she could?

(Oberon enters, left. Leander springs to his feet and stares at him wordlessly. Sherry stares too.)

LEANDER *(hoarsely)*: Then she wouldn't—

OBERON: Wait. Just wait a minute. I found her, and she said—

LEANDER *(tensely)*: She said—?

OBERON: She said yes, she will come back if—

LEANDER: She will! She will! Sherry, she will come back!

(They join hands and dance in a circle, chanting the words.)

OBERON *(loudly)*: If! I said if! Stop a minute! I said if!

(They stop at last, breathless.)

OBERON: Now listen a minute. She said she would come back, yes. If you will promise not to eat Hermione—

SHERRY *(shocked)*: Eat Hermione? Certainly not!

OBERON: And if you will promise not to write sonnets to Diavelen—

LEANDER *(genuinely surprised for a moment)*: Diavelen? Oh, Diavelen. Why, I wouldn't think of writing a single sonnet to her.

OBERON: And if you will promise to be practical.

LEANDER *(solemnly)*: I give you my word, Oberon, I am changed. Changed completely. I can feel my new character eating away the old like acid.

OBERON: Then she's coming. She'll be here any minute.

LEANDER: Coming? Coming? Then I must—*(He searches his pockets in vain)* Oberon, could you possibly—the editor only gave me a small advance, you see.

OBERON *(handing him a dollar)*: If you could get some bread and butter, maybe—

LEANDER *(excitedly)*: I'll be back. I'll be back in a moment. *(He runs out the door, right, waving the money in his hand.)*

OBERON *(to Sherry, in an attempt to make conversation)*: If you'll come over to my house, Sherry, I'll show you my big black cat.

SHERRY: Is it a very big cat?

OBERON *(nodding)*: Enormous.

SHERRY: What does it eat?

OBERON: Oh—milk and fish.

SHERRY *(alive with interest)*: Fish? Would it eat Hermione?

OBERON: Oh, we wouldn't let it do that.

SHERRY *(virtuously)*: No, indeed. But—I was just thinking, if it ever did then we

could have a cat and Hermione all in one. *(Oberon is startled, but before he can protest, Sherry leaps to her feet.)*

SHERRY: I know what! Let's play like you're a fish and I'm a cat, and then I can eat you.

(She looks as if she really might, and Oberon backs away.)

OBERON: Come now, Sherry, let me tell you a nice story about a —

(Valentine has entered from the left, and she stands looking at them. Suddenly Oberon turns and sees her.)

OBERON: Valentine!

SHERRY: Mummy! Hermione! *(She runs toward Valentine, embracing her energetically. Then she snatches the goldfish bowl and, tilting it precariously, replaces it on its pedestal. Valentine puts*

her suitcase down and tosses her hat on a chair. She has come home.)

VALENTINE *(bewildered)*: But where is Leander?

OBERON: Valentine, Leander is changed. Completely changed. *(Earnestly)* I have never seen anyone change so completely in one afternoon.

SHERRY: Mummy, daddy was so glad you said you'd come that he went out to buy a surprise.

OBERON: That's it. A surprise.

SHERRY: I think I know what it is, but it's a secret. *(She makes the words into a little chant.)* Bread-and-butter-and-jelly!

OBERON: You see? He's a changed man.

SHERRY: We're all a changed man.

(There is a sound offstage, right. Leander is whistling.)

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WA-A-Y DOWN UP-ON THE SUWANNEE RIVER—FA-AR, FAR—FA-AR, FAR—AWAY—

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50 pipefuls of fragrant tobacco in every 2-oz. tin of Prince Albert

OBERON: He's coming!
(Sherry moves up beside Valentine, but Oberon takes her hand and gently draws her back. They stand together near the back of the stage, while Valentine advances, smiling, to meet Leander. He enters, carrying a brown paper parcel carefully. There is a sort of glory about them when they meet. Leander is in ecstasy, extracting every possible ounce of drama from the situation.)

LEANDER *(taking her hand)*: Valentine!
 VALENTINE *(and there is sheer happiness in her voice)*: Leander!

LEANDER *(With his free hand he takes the covering from the parcel)*: Look! They're yours!

(And as he removes the covering, we see that he has brought an armful of red roses. For an instant, Oberon steps forward protectively and Valentine draws back with a dismayed

little "Oh!" Leander also steps back, the roses drooping from his hand, his attitude one of hurt bewilderment.)

LEANDER *(and his disappointment is evident)*: But don't you like them?

(Valentine hesitates for a moment. There is a strained silence. Then, slowly she comes forward and reaches out her arms toward the roses.)

VALENTINE *(determined and only a little sad)*: Thank you so much, Leander. I love them.

(Leander has the air of a small boy suddenly freed from school as, with a relieved sigh, he puts the roses in her hands and raises his arms in a declamatory gesture.)

LEANDER *(his happiness complete)*: And I've composed a sonnet—

CURTAIN

EDITORIAL NOTE

With our last issue a word of summary may be given concerning the *Flamingo's* year for 1937-38.

Honors obtained by *Flamingo* contributions include First Prize in the Allied Arts of Winter Park short story contest for Elizabeth Schoening's story *Three Sides to a Triangle*, which appeared in the January issue, and Honorable Mention in the same contest to Patricia Guppy's *All Saints and All Souls*, from the February issue. During this year stories by these two writers were submitted to the *Story Magazine* College short story contest (*Grasshopper* by Elizabeth Schoening and *Nice Women* by Patricia Guppy from the April issue) and both placed on the Honor Roll for that competition, earning personal letters from Whit Burnett with encouragement to submit further work to *Story*. Poetry by Elizabeth Schoening and Walter Royall which has appeared in the *Flamingo* this year was published in *College Verse*.

Interesting letters of praise and criticism of the *Flamingo* have been received this year from Arthur Guiterman, Dr. Richard Burton, Josephine Daskam Bacon, John Palmer Gavitt, and

Thomas Dreier. The praise was encouraging and the criticism has been most valuable. Only lack of space has prevented us from publishing these letters in full.

SEEK NOT THE STARS

PATRICIA GUPPY

The stars are only kind to happiness.
 From heatless void their bright impartial gaze
 Gleams on all happy lovers; so these bless
 The watchers of the night who neither praise
 Nor blame their ecstasy, but make it one
 With the wild soundless singing of the spheres.
 But to all hopelessness when day is done,
 Lifting the restless eyes burnt dim with tears,
 The stars do not look down. Their icy fire
 Flashes remotely as a childhood dream,
 And they are flaming specks an aeon higher
 In universal time—though they may seem
 Warmer than this dead earth,—almost as cold.
 Seek not the stars for warmth as life grows old.

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