

## MAGAZINE

# Prologue To Autobiography

ANNE HORNE

## PROLOGUE

The guests had arrived for the christening. A steady stream of admiring relatives and close friends filed past the ruffled bassinet wherein lay the object of all eyes—the baby. Last in that long line came the eighty year old great-grandmother, whose still clear eyes told of that indomitable spirit contained in her tiny form. With bated breath the rest of the family watched her stoop over the baby, catch her breath, and straighten up with an inscrutable smile on her rather thin lips.

"She's one o' the odd ones!" she cackled.

"Oh, Granny!" ejaculated the somewhat discomfited mother. "Just because every once in awhile a baby girl is born into this family who doesn't have the usual sandy complexion, you have to insist that she's going to be 'different'!"

There was a tradition in the family that every so often in the line of sandy complexioned children, there was a girl born with a look that set her apart from the rest. This was largely because of the big dark eyes and blonde hair which she invariably possessed. These girls were different! They had careers. They were leaders in whatever course they chose to pursue.

"Granny" herself had been one of these different ones. In the days when careers for women were somewhat awe-inspiring she had gallantly sallied forth to the Civil War as a nurse. There she fell in love with one of her patients, nursed him back to health, married him, and sent him back to war, where he was killed just ten days later. After the war she married one of the doctors and helped him build up his rapidly diminishing practice in a tiny pioneer town. It was "Granny" who was re-

sponsible for the growth of that town. It was she who was the leading spirit in all new movements. She set the styles, modes, patterns, and customs of the place. "Granny" was absolute dictator. Her children were a vast disappointment to her. All had the sandy complexions and mild dispositions of their sandy complexioned, mild tempered fore-fathers.

When, rather late in "Granny's" life, Marybe was born, "Granny's" prayers were answered! It has been told that when Marybe, at the age of three, screamed and kicked the plaster off the kitchen wall because she couldn't keep a snake she had brought home, "Granny" was heard to murmur in exultation; "Praise Lord! I've got one o' the odd ones!"

Marybe herself, an ardent follower of Carrie Nation, had nine children, all of whom bore the usual sandy hair and light complexions. This was a keen disappointment to Marybe, who vented her feelings in the blows she dealt the saloon windows.

Violet, sandy as the rest, had always looked on this tradition with scorn. How silly it was, after all, to expect one to be different just because one's hair and eyes were different. Her child wasn't going to be that way anyway. It was too bad that she had had to name her after "Granny". That will make her feel that she can dictate to me about her, she thought.

Walking over to where her mother and grandmother sat, she said, "Granny, you needn't expect my Rosemary to be any different. I've got her plans all made!"

"Granny" and Marybe looked at one another with the same expression on each of their faces. Then "Granny" cackled again.

"We'll see."

## EPILOGUE

It was for the celebration of Rosemary's eighteenth birthday that the family had assembled. "Granny", no longer clear visioned, was honor guest!

The birthday dinner had been eaten, the towering cake reduced to crumbs, and the ice-cream merely pinkish water, when the guests retired to the library and grouped themselves around the fire-place to watch Rosemary open her many gifts.

All gifts but one had been opened, admired, and the givers thanked, when Rosemary, her eyes misty, picked up the tiny blue ribboned box. Her hands fumbled as she untied the bow. All eyes were upon her as she drew forth an old-fashioned locket—Granny's most cherished possession! Inside were two pictures—Granny at eighteen, and her soldier-lover. The card attached read, "To Rosemary—who is most like me!"

Rosemary, running to Granny, threw her arms around her and cried, "Thank you for the most wonderful birthday I've ever had!"

Late that evening, after Rosemary had told Granny of her grand opportunity to go on the stage, the old woman looked at her grand-daughter.

"Well, Violet," she cackled, "didn't I tell you she was one o' the odd ones! She's a doer, that 'un."

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## *Shapes in The Night*

DAVE CRAYCRAFT

People are shapes, and things are shadows; places a blur, and faces a blank. All people sleep sometime, but cities never—and never all people at once. The city's roar is a decrescendo from midnight on, but it never dies down to silence. Most windows are dark; most lights are out, but never all. There is the unending business of giving and taking life; there are marriages to be consummated and violated; there are lives to be saved under surgeon's knives, and lives to be taken under automobile wheels; there is work for ambulances and

buses, for taxicabs and garbage wagons, and there are markets to be made ready and milk to be delivered; there is work for cops and waiters, for house-dicks and ladies of the evening; and, at the zero hour of dawn, play boys returning from play pass laborers going to work. Cities never sleep.

Cities never sleep and never die. Life must continue though the senses weary. Blinded eyes, ringing ears, flat taste, greasy touch, and suffocating lungs are the tortures of a city.

The few sleeping passengers on the tops of the double decked buses roaring by are unknowingly exposed to the evil tortures. By the many lights on the street they are blinded, and by the rattling elevated an unforgettable war is placed in their minds. On one side are factories; on the other side, business. Rancid smoke from the tall stacks chokes the lungs and escaping sewer gas deadens the taste. The screaming sirens on the ambulances, the clanging bells on the fire trucks, and the slithering of brakes on taxicabs all help to kill the senses of the human body.

Cities never sleep, never die, and never quit. All hours of the night convey shadows parading to work; to factories roaring and smoking, to lights of lunch counters and garages that give twenty-four hour service. The conveyors of life; buses, trains, and taxicabs, are always moving. Paper boys hoarsely yelling on the street, crooners bellowing from second story night clubs, and radio announcers rasping from every other window add to the many unrecognized tortures of life. The long strain and grind tear down the senses; but cities go on and on—they never sleep, die, nor quit.