

*Perk
Williams*

Reality: Each Day I Escape It

Chester Perkins

I was dreaming. But the realness of my dream was frighteningly vivid and at the same time morbid, and as it progressed it took on nightmarish proportions.

I was walking down Main Street just for walking's sake, drinking in all the wonderful sights surrounding me and feeling fortunate to see and be a part of the scheme of life. With no particular route or destination in mind, I turned into a narrow side street with which I was unfamiliar and ventured forth hoping to see more evidences of the beauties of life. I should have stayed on Main Street.

Aside from dirty, unkempt buildings and streets, which one often sees in large cities, the first two or three blocks I walked were not unusual; but as I drew farther away from the main thoroughfare, I began to see things which shocked and horrified me.

Filth, ruin, and degradation were all about me. Buildings, disemboweled by searing, scorching flames, stood gaunt and ghostly against a smoggy sky, while hordes of looters scraped their ashes in search of objects of little value. Beautiful young girls became crippled, wrinkled old women before my eyes, and youthful and virile men became weak and useless under the weight of quickening years. Malformed babies became invalid morons, while others fell before an onslaught of the vermin plagues which swept down the narrow confines of the street.

At the next intersection two automobiles merged into a mighty, thunderous crash, and I could but stand by and watch as the decapitated remains of their passengers came hurtling through the air, to land with a sickening thud at my feet. The twisted, battered wreckage of the two cars made a grotesque sight which somehow did not seem out of place on this street.

Farther on, two filthy rats nibbled at refuse and garbage which littered the street, while starving dogs scampered to safety at the sight of them. From between two bricks an acorn had sprouted, striving valiantly to become a majestic oak, but it now stood like a stick, devoid of leaves, branches, and bark, typifying the barren lives of the people.

The next block was a battlefield of war, and I stood appalled in the midst of it. Bombed-out buildings were only smoking heaps of rubble and debris, and the parts of them which had withstood the barrage stood like jagged peaks, serving only to accentuate the utter destruction about them. Dead

bodies of soldiers were strewn everywhere, and when I seemed about to retch at the sight of one of them, I turned away only to find myself looking at another. I thought, "This can't be. This is a civilized world. How can God have permitted this sort of thing to exist?"

The end of the street yawned at my feet, a black abyss. I looked into it for a moment, pondering. I looked up, and as the edge crumbled beneath me, I caught sight of a street sign which read, "The Avenue Of All Things Unseen In One's Lifetime." The next instant, I was plunging through blackness.

I awakened with a convulsive start, and cold beads of perspiration stood on my hot, aching forehead. I was frightened. Was this reality? Could it be that life was like this? Then I looked out through my darkened windows and collapsed on my pillow, sobbing a sigh of relief, knowing that it was a dream, and that I would never have to see all those horrible things. To most people, those things are very real, but not to me. Each day I can escape them. You see, the darkened windows through which I was looking are my eyes. I am blind.

Very True Lesson Father's Day In Hollywood

Mary Jane White

It is Father's Day in Hollywood, especially in the gorgeous Beverly Hills home of the glamorous actress, Roberta Duprez Conley Enfield Morgan Stienfeld Stable Golightly Montjoy, the former Mamie Snitch. Her sons and daughters are clustered around a front window awaiting the arrival of their fathers.

Roberta, the most devoted mother in all filmdom—she spends as much as fifteen minutes a year with her children—is in the background gritting her teeth. She despises Father's Day.

She looks at her brood and says sweetly: "Now get this straight. No rat race like last year. You're all old enough to know your own fathers. Don't all of you go jumping on the first man that comes running up the walk." She looks dubiously at young Pierre. "Young Pierre," she says, "Who is your father?"

Young Pierre scratches his head for a moment and then says proudly: "My father is Mark Stable."

Roberta stamps her foot. "Mark Stable is not your father. He is little Louella's father."