KATY sat in the park and watched the pigeons strutting pompously along the walk. There were pigeons in Dublin, too, she thought. When she half closed her eyes and shut out the sounds of the metropolis she could imagine herself back in Dublin again, in the little park across the street from her father's novelty shop. If she tried real hard she could feel the old Katy O'Brien, the Dublin Katy O'Brien, still stirring deep inside her. A cold April breeze made her start, and shiver; and she rose from the bench to go home.

It had now been a little over two weeks since Katy had arrived in New York to stay with her aunt and uncle. She had come on a visitor's visa, which gave her a year in the United States if she cared to take it. In the two weeks in America she had become conscious of her worn, outdated clothes. For the first time in her life she felt poor, underprivileged, dissatisfied. The smile had faded from her lips and the old cheerful love of life had disappeared. Where was the excitement and romance which she had always associated with the magic word "New York?" Among the pigeons in Central Park? Along the noisy unfriendly streets? The most exciting thing she had seen so far, she thought contemptuously was a real live uniformed maid walking two pink cheeked but homely children in the park.

She caught a bus at the corner and settled down in a seat near the back. One could ride busses in Dublin too, she thought. It was a short ride to the street upon which her aunt and uncle lived, and she stepped off the bus into a mob of dirty children who swept noisily past her up the littered street in a pathetic game of tag. Poor little devils, she thought, looking after them. So you find them in New York too! This was the land of plenty, the land of golden opportunity, and yet ... Shrugging her thin shoulders she began picking her way down the street, weaving between fruit carts and ragmen, trying not to brush against the sloppy women and greasy men who shuffled slowly along the sidewalk. She wrinkled up her nose against the smell of garlic and sour milk — every time she returned to the street she hated it more and regretted her coming. She reached the steep steps which belonged to her aunt's flat and rushed gratefully to shelter where the smell would not be so bad.

Inside, Bessie Sharkey sat by her parlor window and looked down upon the street. It was hot in the room, but she would not open the window—she still, after years in the little flat, hated the smell and the noise and the filth outside. She saw her niece come hurriedly from the corner, and she shook her head and clucked sympathetically to herself. Bessie felt ashamed before Katy, for now at last all the fanciful little lies and gilded facts she had written her brother in Dublin were known to her. Her brother—Bessie sighed, and thought how angry Shean would be when he found that he'd sent his beloved Kate into a home like this! She knew how Katy felt, she thought. It would teach the girl to get over all her silly romantic ideas and grow up—a child had to face reality someday. But the guilty feeling was still there. She got up and went to the door.

"Have a nice time, dearie?" she asked, trying not to notice how pale and unhappy the girl looked.
“Oh yes, lovely, Aunt Bessie,” Katy answered wearily. “I don’t feel too fine, though. I’ll go take a nap.”

“Do, do!” Bessie encouraged. “The big city’s hard on one that don’t be used to it. Why, I can remember just as plain as today the first look I had at the big city, and like the little frightened kitty that I was.”

Katy cut off the reminiscence by slamming the door to the flat’s one bedroom. Bessie stood still and stared at the closed door for an instant. Then she shook her head and clucked again and shuffled toward the kitchen to start supper.

Supper, when served, was a quiet meal. Old Dannie Sharkey never spoke when there was food on the table; he regarded table conversation as a hindrance to the providence of God which supplied the food. Indeed, providence it must have been that supplied food for the Sharkey table, for Dannie took care that his few dollars kept the devil of thirst from him. Bessie, as usual, scolded and prattled without seeming to realize that her conversation went unheard and unappreciated. Katy was silent and ate little of the greasy stew. Everything’s greasy or dirty or both, she thought darkly, watching the little shiny bubbles in the gravy.

She put down her fork and sat watching her uncle. Dannie sat hunched over his plate as though he feared someone were about to snatch it from under his nose. He ate noisily, messily. Katy forced herself to look at him, long and hard. This was the man, then, that she had been worshipping from afar for so many years. She could see herself as a child bragging to her playmates about her Aunt Bessie’s husband, who was a rich and important American. She could remember the wild excitement which had possessed her whenever she had found a letter from America among the bills and circulars in the morning mail. Something very like pity came over her as she compared her aunt Bessie’s accounts of their lives in the States with what Katy now saw them to be.

Dannie poured his hot tea into a chipped and dirty saucer and began to sip noisily from it. Katy felt a feeling of revulsion sweep over her—for the meal, the flat, the street, the city, but most of all for her aunt and uncle. She had the feeling for the first time since stepping off the boat that perhaps life need not be so tawdry. She saw Dannie’s bloodshot eyes, his face traced with a thousand tiny bloodvessels, his shaking hand. Is this, she asked herself, the face of a man who would ever get ahead anyplace—Dublin, New York, Timbucktoo? She turned toward her aunt, so good-hearted, so silly and childish. All at once her mind was clear. Those letters Bessie had written—those glowing, untrue letters—were only dreams which had never come true. Poor old Aunt Bessie, thought Katy. She must have come with head high and hopes up, only to be more disillusioned as the years dragged by. I’m a lot like her, she thought, only I have a chance yet. I have a chance to get out from this poverty and filth.

Bessie looked up startled when Katy rose and left the table without speaking.

“Dannie,” she said thoughtfully, “we must send Kate back to m’ brother.”

Dannie made no reply, but reached for another hunk of bread.

Bessie’s faded eyes filled with tears and she lay her gray head upon the table and wept silently. “It was you, Dan, that made me lie to her father about our place here,” she moaned. “Now she’ll go back to him and tell him how I’ve lived and he’ll be mad, mad as can be.”

“Old woman,” said Dannie Sharkey gruffly, “Kate’s got more sense than to go back blubbering to her pa. Kate’s got more
sense than the two of us. She'll make her way."

Katy stood silently in the darkened parlor and heard Dannie's words. She grinned a little—the ghost of the old Dublin grin, the first she'd grinned since stepping foot in New York. The rumble and smell of the city was outside, and inside was poverty and dirt. Someplace in the darkness, though, was hope and ambition. Katy knew it was there, felt it there. Katy knew old Dan was right. She'd make her way.

Carved In Stone

ROBERT HULCE

The small, green table stood in a corner of the makeshift dugout. A shaded lantern spread its dim light through the silent shadows, its small blades of dull shine reaching across the interior of the Command Post. Old cigarette butts and long-gray ashes claimed their place upon the sodden earth floor.

The first sergeant hunched calmly against the far wall in the darkness. The single glow of a cigarette arched back and forth as the dry sound of exhaled smoke made its play upon the stillness. Leaning across the table in the flickering light, phones clamped to his ears, the swift accurate fingers of the Blotting Board Corporal moved over his board making notations and adjustments.

Through gaping holes and tears in the canvas over their heads, the two silent men could see the bright luminous spray of flares which had found them—flares strung across the sky in street-lamp fashion. The solid, ominous drone of aircraft permeated the little stillness. Outside, the sharp voices of men at their stations cut through the silence—two hundred from the southeast unidentified. The night marauders had found their target.

Relentlessly the thundering boom of bombs vibrated along the ground like earthquakes. Everything shook with the onrush of sound. The shrill, unforgettable whine of the bomb's descent knifed the Broadway-lit scene. Times Square in Hell. This is it. I took a drag on my cigarette and smiled at Durham as we huddled together beneath the small, green table in the corner of the dugout in the middle of the night.

It was over. The fighting was over, but where was the complete exhilaration, the happy heady state of joy which was to follow this moment thirty-eight solid months ago. Nothing had happened. I sat down on a sandbag and looked out over a hazy, lazy valley, abundantly green, a wide stretch of water cutting through its center, a silver strand in the sunlight.

A reconnaissance plane followed the course of the stream in the immediate distance, the steady drone of its motor the only sound in all of that vastness. Everything else was shout out. My back was to the battery which seemed as it was not. The guns were still. Every man had stopped as if he were an image on a photograph, colorless and gray, yet ready to move in an instant if necessary. This still state lasted for no more than a part of a moment, yet it was of duration long enough to register every particle of that scene as if it were carved in stone forever.