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THE MITRE, TRINITY, 1959, SIX
EXCURSIONS INTO THE ART
OF PLAY WRITING, PROSE AND
POETRY, PLUS CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM ALUMNI AND A SECTION
FROM A FORTHCOMING NOVEL

You had your chance.

Dear those who like to read,

This letter might possibly interest anybody who picks up the Mitre upon noticing a piece of paper placed uncarefully inside so that it will fall out when this great literary work is opened. However, it will be of more interest to those who write, and it is for these people that this letter is intended.

We wish to publish four editions of the Mitre next year, but this can be done only if the first edition is published shortly after the start of the term. Would those who are returning please bring back any great achievements they wish to be considered for publication (or allowed as the case may be) or would they contact me during the summer.

If the graduates are not lacking in inspiration. and if contributions come from this mass body of intellect, a section will be devoted to their work. Would they please address their contributions to the university care of the Mitre.

Thank you,

Bill Hambly-Editor

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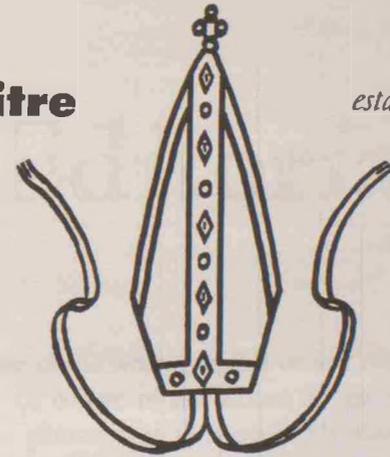
Dedication

To Everyman

May he continue to shout "Excelsior!"

the mitre

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Editorial

Probably none of the writing in this or any other *Mitre* aspires to any greatness. One or two of the writers in this issue (not including the editor), show glimmerings of having this elusive and rare talent which marks the writer of note from the merely imitative word merchant. Possibly, the writings of us semi-hacks is largely a justification of our ego. "Hemingway is a writer, so am I; my writing is not nearly as good as his, of course, but the fact I am also writing allows for some identification with the great man." It is a hope to express thoughts in a way communicable to others. To communicate, one must have something to say. Very few have anything to say, hardly anyone has anything which has not already been said in the past. So far, this editorial sounds as if the act of writing should be reserved for the very few who are capable of expressing something original.

However, to see one's ideas or feelings in print serves the useful function of bringing them into the light of day. Comfortable illusions, held in the foggy recesses of the mind, often become shallow apologies in print. The act of creation spurs the mind onto new thoughts and feelings. In that alone, writing is justified as it enables one to know himself better. As well, the sensation of seeing one's work in print is a pleasant one. On another level, a good story, even if it cannot be called a work of great talent, always communicates something. Any piece of writing which spurs the processes of mind and soul in another is not wasted. Only by writing can one find out if he possesses the spark of talent or not.

SIX STUDIES IN DRAMA

The Protagonists

Andrew Webster Iain MacLean

Mary Hall Tony Vintcent

John Whitman Brian Jones

FORWARD

Arthur Motyer

Two years ago the *Mitre* published excerpts from a group of plays written in connection with a course in contemporary drama given then for the first time by myself. Now the *Mitre* is publishing different excerpts from plays written by a new group of students taking the same course. As then, so now: each of the writers has coped with all the problems involved in his or her own way, evolving approaches and attitudes distinctive and characteristic.

The fascination of writing for the stage cannot be defined in a sentence: at least, not by me. But perhaps more than anything else it is the challenge of saying what one has to say, encompassing thought and feeling, within a framework of limited time; entertaining a group of people who will sit in the dark and listen and be prepared for more than idle entertainment if more can be attractively offered; doing all this with characters created especially for the purpose, characters who must live and act and talk without benefit of such outside comment as the novelist allows himself, characters who must appear autonomous without actually being so; and finally, writing with an awareness that the stage has been used by some of the greatest minds and largest hearts and brightest spirits known to mankind, an awareness which

both encourages and humbles the would-be dramatist. All this is not to mention the sheer work and discipline involved, writing and writing and writing, not always because one is inspired or feels like it, but because plays do not write themselves.

The excerpts offered here are, of necessity, unsatisfactory samplings: a few pages of dialogue can never represent the real nature of a whole play. But they will at least show what is distinctive in each approach. Andrew Webster focusses on a tightly knit moral problem wherein all the members of the decaying Rawson family sharply affect each other: there is obviously a great deal of tenderness and compassion beneath much of the surface toughness. Mary Hall, with an eye for eccentric characters, and a delightfully off-beat sense of humour, pokes good-natured fun at gullible mankind. John Whitman writes boldly about an extremely complex psychological situation involving homosexuality, a subject no longer considered taboo by well-informed society or beyond the province of serious playwrights. Iain MacLean develops his own style as he writes a literary spoof on the beatnik generation, a style which changes like a chameleon according to the context in which his chief character finds himself. Tony Vintcent writes about his characters with an intensity and sharpness of observation which quite withers the society he is at pains to expose. And finally, Brian Jones creates a very gay, very light, sophisticated piece of nonsense which is meant to entertain and does. In all of these there is a wide choice for readers of the *Mitre*.

ANDREW WEBSTER

THIS HOUSE CAME TUMBLING DOWN

SYNOPSIS: As the action has unfolded in this unhappy story of family misfortune, we find that Mrs. Rawson and her son, Carter, have become further and further enmeshed in the shadowy world of alcoholic degeneration. Mrs. Rawson is drawn down because she is mostly and quite naturally rotten, and because she is unable to cope with the problems involved in rearing a college-aged son and a school-aged daughter after her husband has died.

Her son Carter is drawn down because he is unwilling, and therefore, unable to make the transition to a steady job and the city atmosphere from the more idyllic college life he had become accustomed to enjoy. He also feels quite naturally bad about having been thrown out of college.

Morton Spiller, in Mrs. Rawson's eyes, is the long sought for saviour, a peculiar man with money, rather fat and unattractive with a curious mixture of pomposity, awkwardness and jollity. He too throws down his drinks one after another, with frightening regularity.

Morton has a strange attraction towards Flora, the daughter of the woman to whom he already has proposed. Flora is a bright intelligent girl, a sane contrast to the three dissipates already mentioned. She is in her last year of high school, and is genuinely concerned with the steady downward plunge that her family seems to have been unalterably headed for.

Zack, an old school buddy of Carters and a generally level-headed type, provides a counterbalance to the downward plunge. He is a definite factor in keeping Flora's head above water, and in their relationship, we find the beginnings of something which could develop into a tender and intimate affair.

Presented here are the second and third climactic scenes from act three.

SCENE: Briefly, the audience is looking in from the back lawn into an old and very worn looking living room that no doubt has seen better days.

One other important thing that the reader must visualize is a stairway which creaks badly even with the thin wine-coloured carpet that covers it. The stairway is on the right so that we can see almost all the way up it to the next landing.

The stairway is not important just because it is a stairway, but because it is the well-beaten path to unrighteousness; because it is the bridge between the world we normally see to the world where the weaknesses and desires of the flesh are consummated.

Normally a stairway wouldn't be like this. It is really the world down-stairs which we can see that makes it so.

The events of the night before, sometimes referred to in scene 2, revealed the marriage plans of Mrs. Rawson and Morton Spiller. This was staged by having Mrs. Rawson and Morton both stagger shakily into the house in tremendously high spirits after a night of ribald partying. Mrs. Rawson is so enthusiastic that she drunkenly roots Carter and Flora out of bed and tells them of her plans. They both react with stony silence, a factor which causes Mrs. Rawson, already endowed with a shaky constitution, to completely break down and condemn the children for being "ungrateful." She goes on, in the same breath and in a characteristically tactless manner, to explain that by her marriage with Morton all the acute financial problems of the household will be solved. Morton is naturally shaken by this revelation, but is probably too inebriated to remember the following day.

Scene 2: The time is 7.00 p.m. of a dreary February day.

When the curtain opens nobody is visibly present, but appropriate noises from the kitchen can be heard as Flora is preparing dinner. From the radio in the living room flows some sweet relaxing music: probably Rossini.

Footsteps trod heavily to the door, which is opened slowly by Morton. He makes a rather timid entrance, and calls cautiously in a low voice: of the night before, and calls cautiously in a low voice:

Morton: Lillian. (a trifle louder after short pause) Lillian?

Flora: (entering hall from kitchen. She has a way — in a kind of outwardly naive manner — of smoothing over a difficult situation) Oh, it's you, Mr. Spiller. Won't you come and sit down.

Morton: (Moving into living room with Flora) Thank you, my dear.

Flora: I'm sorry mother isn't in just now; neither is Carter. I got back from school about 4:30 and Carter wasn't in and mother wouldn't tell me where he'd gone. Anyway, I don't suppose you're terribly interested in Carter at the moment. You'd just like to see mother.

Morton: (sitting down, made braver by Flora's enthusiasm) I have the boy's best interests at heart, just as I do yours; but I would rather see your mother at the moment. I don't believe she was expecting me. I thought I'd surprise her.

Flora: (brightly) She just went to the drugstore, but she should be back soon.

Morton: Well, that's just fine. Now I can sit down and get to know you a little better. After all I may, in the near future, become your . . . uh . . . step-father.

Flora: (face clouding up) But I'm just making the supper, Mr. Spiller . . . (pause) And mother may be back any minute.

Morton: Nonsense, my child. There's always plenty of time to talk.

Flora: (With pained expression) But . . .

Morton: Now don't argue, my girl. Nip over to the cabinet there and pour me a nice drink, will you.

Flora obeys quietly. Morton eyes her movements, and his lips part slightly.

Morton: You know how I like it, don't you?

Flora: (obediently) Yes. (She mixes the drink while Morton continues to watch her in the same manner, then she walks over and hands him the drink. There is a queer look of satisfaction in Morton's eyes.)

Morton: Thank you. Now sit down on the sofa here beside me. (Flora does). Now about your brother: I wonder where he could have gone.

Flora: (slight note of bitterness) That's not hard to figure out.

Morton: Why, what do you mean? Do you think he's out inhabiting some more darkly-lit bars.

Flora: I'm afraid so.

Morton: Well, we'll have to put a stop to that, won't we.

Flora: How?

Morton: By shipping him off to college again. Don't you think he'd like that?

Flora: It's not as simple as that, Mr. Spiller. He needs something else.

Morton: Perhaps some shock treatment would help.

Flora: He'd had enough shocks already, thank you.

Morton: Yes, but a good kind of shock — like a vacation in the country somewhere.

Flora: (brightening up a little) That might help, Mr. Spiller. But who's going to send him there?

Morton: How old are you, Flora?

Flora: I'm seventeen.

Morton: And in your last year of school, I gather. Well, you needn't call me "Mr. Spiller." After all, I will be one of the family in the not too far distant future. You can simply call me "Morton." I'm a very liberal man about these things you know, and we must try and establish an air of friendly family congeniality.

Flora: Are you really planning to marry mother?

Morton: Why, of course; don't you think it would be a good idea? After all, your mother is a fine woman. (awkward pause) Isn't she?

Flora: (frankly) I have my doubts.

Morton (ignoring this statement) And with a fine daughter like you . . . and Carter who only needs a little rehabilitation — I think we'd make a fine family. Now don't you agree?

Flora: You have it all planned, don't you, Mr. Spiller. (note of hostility entering her voice) What about last night?

Morton: Why, I can't, for the life of me, figure out what you're talking about, child: what about last night?

Flora: Mother and you.

Morton: Your mother and I had a very pleasant time.

Flora: Does drink make you forget, Mr. Spiller?

Morton: I wish you'd call me by my first name.

Flora: (persisting) Does it?

Flora: (persisting) Does it?

Morton: Why of course not, my dear; it just gives you a nice warm cozy feeling, and lets you talk a little more smoothly.

Flora: But what about the morning?

Morton: Well, Flora; sometimes we have to pay a little for our sins. Usually I just pop down two aspirins and have a wopping big breakfast.

Flora: Mentally, though.

Morton: (putting on an amusing front) My goodness! It sounds as though I'm up before the jury. Now stop these foolish questions, child. Let's talk about you. Like, for instance, what are you doing in school these days.

Flora: We've been dissecting rats in the lab.

Morton: Oh, have you. Now that sounds very interesting . . . and what else.

Flora: (cooly) The dinner will burn, Mr. Spiller. (She gets up and starts to leave).

Morton speedily rises, takes three paces and catches her arm.

Flora: No, I . . .

He turns her around to face him as she attempts to struggle free. His usually dull eyes have taken on a bright new radiance.

Flora: The dinner! I must . . . (with definite note of terror) No!

Morton now has both arms around her and begins to draw her in, slowly, relentlessly. He is a sordid and unhealthy contrast to her youthfulness and freshness.

Flora: No, Mr. Spiller!!

Morton grips her body closely and kisses her violently on the mouth. Flora's eyes are wild with terror. Desire wells up in Morton's flashing eyes.

The doorbell rings but Morton doesn't seem to hear. Flora does, and struggles violently to extricate herself.

Flora cries out and the doorbell rings loudly now. Morton still has not heard. Grasping her tightly, he looks at her, desire welling up in his eyes. His mouth is stupidly agape. The doorbell rings steadily now and Flora screams again.

Finally Morton returns to consciousness and relaxes his grasp just as the door pounds open. Enter Zack as Flora wrenches herself free and runs to the other side of the room in a hysterical state. Morton sits stupidly on the sofa, fear coming to his eyes and his mouth open wide. Zack stops short at the entrance to the living room, confusedly observing the scene.

Zack: Flora! I heard you scream!

Flora: (sobbing) That madman over there!

Zack: (as Morton stares stupidly at him. Imploringly) What has he done?
Flora: Oh, Zack; he tried to . . . to
Zack: Tried to what? (His tone is becoming more ominous).
Flora: (Points an accusing finger) He tried to rape me! (then breaks down in more wild sobs).
Zack: (eyeing Morton with an outraged expression) You tried to
Morton: (fearfully) No! . . . No! I didn't touch her . . . She's my daughter.
Zack approaches him with fists clenched) I . . . I wasn't doing anything . . . just talking . . . that's all!
Flora: (still sobbing) Lies!!
Zack: You'd better leave, Mr. Spiller!
Morton: (rising as if to obey) No . . . I tell you I . . .
Zack: (eyeing him repugnantly) You'd better leave and not come back . . . ever!
Morton: I . . . I'm afraid you don't understand . . . I
Flora: (Recovered slightly, but still wild-eyed . . . she raises herself from the chair) What sort of family do you think we'll make, Mr. Spiller! I won't have you for my father!!!
Morton: I think I'd best leave. (he timidly slinks towards hall).
Flora: SCUM!!
Zack: Let him go, Flora.
Flora: We'd rather all rot than take your money! (Morton grabs his coat cautiously and heads to door.) Your filthy liquor:— that's what's wrong with this house! You can take it with you.
She practically runs to liquor cabinet, takes out four bottles and rushes toward Morton. In the process one of them drops and crashes on the floor.
Flora: Here, Zack. Help me carry these. (She thrusts one bottle into his hands and then hurls the other two into Morton's arms).
Zack: (alarmed) Take it easy, Flora.
Flora: (grabs the other bottle from Zack and thrusts it at Morton, who is so struck and bewildered that the bottle falls on the floor, spreading its contents all over the hall). There! We should have done this long ago! You should know by this that you're no longer welcome here. Come back and I'll break one of those bottles over your head, you filthy little man!
Morton: (completely dazed) But Flora . . . I did it because I love you . . . as I would my own daughter. I . . . I . . . was carried away. I didn't know what I was doing. Flora . . .
Flora: Get out!
Footsteps up front walk. Door opens and Mrs. R. walks in and is immediately struck by the chaotic scene.
Morton: (ridden with guilt) Lillian . . . I
Mrs. R: My God! . . . What's happened here, Morton!
Morton: It was nothing . . . I . . . I have to leave now.

Flora: You're not even good enough for my mother. And she won't marry you now, you rotting hulk! !
Zack: Flora, please!
Flora: Look at the man you were going to marry, Mother! Take a good look at him, because he won't dare to show his face around here again.
Mrs. R: Why, whatever could have happened? (With a sense of urgency) What is it, Morton. What have you done?
Flora: (voice breaking, cracking under the strain of her flooding emotion) He tried to . . . tried to . . . (she breaks down sobbing, and falls into Zack's arms).
Mrs. R: (frightened) Tried to what, Morton? What did you try to do with Flora?
Morton: (voice becomes high-pitched) I can't explain . . . I have to go . . . I won't be back for a while, Lillian.
Mrs. R: (becoming hysterical) No! Don't go, Morton. You must stay. We'll be married soon! Last night you promised me! . . . (She begins to clutch at him as he heads toward the door) No! No! I have the ring you gave me!
Morton: (his voice is high-pitched, rapid and frightened) You'll have to find somebody else! I can't go on here. Your daughter wouldn't have me. I . . . Please, Lillian, let me go. (He tries to struggle free).
Mrs. R: You can't walk out on me now . . . You musn't go . . . It will ruin everything . . . all the plans I've had for us, the family. You can't do it . . . It's your duty to stay.
Morton struggles free and pushes out the door. Mrs. R. follows, imploring him to stay, in a hysterical, frightened voice. Their voices gradually fade out, and we are left with Zack, holding sobbing Flora tightly in his arms. In Zack's face we see tenderness and compassion for the girl and the electric current is beginning to flow strongly.
Zack: (pushing her slowly away and leading towards the chesterfield) It'd be best if you'd lie down, Flora. (She does and Zack sits down in a chair beside her).
Flora: Don't leave me, Zack.
Zack: No . . . No, I won't leave you, Flora . . . I'll never leave you!
Flora: (taking his hand) You've been very kind to me.
Zack: Don't talk . . . you need to rest.
Flora: (meekly) It was an awful experience.
Zack: Yes, it must have been.
Flora: How would you like to have a father like that?
Zack: Not very much.
Flora: (distressed) Zack, whatever will happen to us . . . I mean the family. Mother won't be married now . . . and everything's so . . . so bloody rotten and messed up. I feel so sorry for Carter and I feel we should help him somehow . . . It's not his fault that he's taken to drink . . . It's . . . It's the fault of that Mr. Spiller who's brought all

that liquor into the house. And then Mother:— she's no good any more either. How can people be like that . . . so cruel and weak and stupid! Why can't they just live normally and get a job or go to college . . . or do something useful that isn't wrecked by alcohol. (pause) I don't think I'll touch a drop of alcohol as long as I live . . . It's a horrible thing, and all it does is make people bad and unfit to do anything, and God . . . I don't know what's going . . .

Zack: Hush, Flora . . . We'll think of something.

Slow Curtain

Scene 3: One hour later. Mrs. Rawson is sitting in the living room. She is in a state of deep shock. Her forehead is drawn up in wrinkles and her lips move slowly and intermittently. She sits forward in her chair and stares out into nothingness.

Flora is occupied clearing away the broken glass from the bottle in the hallway.

Zack yells from the kitchen.

Zack: (offstage) Do you think your mother'll have anything to eat?

Flora: I don't think so . . . she doesn't look too well.

Zack: Would you like yours rare or well-done.

Flora: I like it rare, thanks.

Zack: (entering hall from kitchen wearing apron and holding fork. He looks cheerful and Flora responds with a smile) I wonder if Carter will be home for supper.

Flora: I wouldn't count on it. If I could get Mother to talk, maybe we'd find out.

Zack: Let's try. (He walks into livingroom).

Flora: I don't think we'd better.

Zack: Maybe we'd better get a doctor.

Flora: No . . . She'll pull out of it.

Zack: She doesn't have any more booze to drink.

Flora: That's why she'll pull out of it.

Zack: Yeah . . . I suppose so. (He goes back into kitchen).

Flora: (staring after him, softly) I hope so.

Zack: You know, Flora . . . I cook a great steak.

Flora: (gaily) Don't be boastful, now.

Zack: Come on in here, and I'll show you.

Flora: (sweeps up last remnants of glass, then goes in to kitchen) O.K.

Flora and Zack talk quietly in kitchen. Carter comes quietly through the front door. He is as drunk as normal. He walks noiselessly into living-room and observes his mother. No sign of recognition from mother. He walks slowly over to her, takes a liquor bottle out of his pocket, unscrews the cap, and waves it in front of her face. She responds only slightly with a slight twinge of the nostrils and a frightened look on her face. But she keeps staring straight ahead, oblivious of everything. Carter screws the top back on the bottle — voices still coming from kitchen —, then looks at his mother more closely.

Carter: (in a very low voice) Mother? (a little louder) Mother?

With great swiftness, Carter winds up with his arm and strikes her with the back of his hand, hard across the face. He repeats the motion twice and then screams:

Carter: MOTHER !!

Flora and Zack run in from kitchen. Carter stands stupidly by his mother, watching her with deep hate in his eyes.

Zack: (surprised tone) Carter!

Flora: Carter . . . what have you done!

Mrs. R. has responded only with a more frightened look. She still stares out into nothingness and a small trickle of blood runs down out of the corner of her mouth.

Carter: The bitch is still in a stupor.

Flora: Carter, for God's sake . . .

Zack: What did you do to her?

Carter: I hit her. She deserves it . . . she didn't welcome me when I came in.

Flora: Oh, Carter . . . My dear, dear brother! Whatever is wrong with you?

Carter: I'm drunk. That's what's wrong with me.

Zack: You're mean drunk!

Carter: What the hell's wrong with her, anyway?

Zack: What the hell's wrong with you is more to the point! You can't walk into the house and do things like that.

Carter: Who says I can't . . . It's my house just as much as it's hers . . . And what do you mean criticising me in my own house! !

Flora: Carter! Don't talk that way to Zack. He's your friend.

Carter's harsh facial features melt, and his face becomes grey and downcast.

Zack: (taking Carter's arm) Come on, Carter . . . Come on into the kitchen and I'll make you some coffee.

They walk slowly into the kitchen. Flora bends down by her mother's side, takes a handkerchief from her pocket, and wipes the blood from her face.

Flora: (softly, with emotion) Mother! . . . Mother . . . I'm so sorry about everything. (Mrs. R. stares straight ahead) Carter didn't mean it. He was drunk. Can't you see that, Mother. You'll have to forgive him . . . he didn't know what he was doing. Everything's going to be alright now. We'll get along by ourselves without Mr. Spiller . . . without his wicked liquor. Zack is a good person . . . he'll help you . . . he'll help all of us . . . Please say something. (pause) We're having steaks for dinner. Would you like one? They'll be awfully good. Zack's cooking them now. (pause) Mother, please . . . (Mrs. R. is unresponsive, oblivious to everything).

Flora rises and kisses her mother gently on the forehead, and then

moves slowly into the hallway. At this point, Carter walks boldly out of the kitchen.

Carter: Hell, I don't want coffee! Where'd I put my bottle? (Zack rushes after him and Carter continues on into livingroom).

Flora: For God's sake, Carter! Will you ever stop drinking!

Zack: Come on, Carter; give it up and have some coffee.

Carter: It's not time to give it up yet.

Zack: You won't be in condition to eat the juicy steak I'm cooking for you.

Carter: Hell with the steak . . . I'd rather drink. (Pause in which Flora and Zack look thoroughly resigned) No! . . . No! . . . I'll have that steak. Just one drink before . . . A before dinner cocktail.

Flora: Carter!

Carter: Maybe mother will join me. Mother! I'm sorry if I hit you. Now, wake up and be sensible and join me in a cocktail. (Flora, and then Zack sit down, watching him closely) Ah, what's the use . . . she won't wake up. The hell with her. I'll drink alone. What a state I've come to. Nobody will drink with me . . . But I don't care. I enjoy it.

Flora: What's the use. He's drinking himself into oblivion again.

Zack: Trying to forget. (Flora sighs) But don't take it too hard, Flo. Things may change now. We've rid ourselves of the root of the trouble.

Carter: What root of trouble?

Flora: (going over to his chair, sensing a new approach) Carter, do you know what?

Carter: (grumbling) What?

Flora: Mr. Spiller has left us . . . for good.

Carter: (sobering a little) What makes you think that?

Flora: Because he just has: take my word for it.

Zack: No . . . I don't think he'll be back. He probably has a very heavy conscience . . . if that's possible.

Carter: (interested) What did he do?

Zack: He tried to . . . tried to . . . No! I don't think we'd better talk about it.

Flora: Go ahead and tell him, Zack.

Zack: It's not an easy thing to talk about . . . but he tried to . . . ah . . . you might say, molest, deflower your sister.

Carter: (unbelieving) No!

Flora: It's true. Zack was outside the door . . . he heard.

Carter: By Christ, how do you like that! Did you hit him, Zack?

Zack: No . . . Flora took care of him. I don't think you have to worry about him becoming one of the family.

Carter: (Brightening up as though he had caught on to something. He looks over at his mother) So that's why she's like that. She's lost her lover. (He laughs loudly with great gusto. It is not a very healthy kind of laughter) It serves her bloody-well right . . . and him too.

Flora: Carter. It hasn't been her fault . . . none of it has. It was Spiller who did all this to us . . . to you and to her.

Carter: (gulping down the remnants of his drink) Let's not think about it tonight. We'll all have a party . . . Mother too. (He rises and pours himself another shot).

Zack: (approaching oblivious mother) Don't think she's in the mood for a party tonight. (Looks straight into her eyes then with a sense of urgency) Look! I think we'd better get her to a doctor.

Flora: (coming over to inspect her) She looks awful. We should do something.

Carter: Offer her a drink.

Flora: Don't be stupid! That's what got her into this state.

Zack: Mrs. Rawson! (gently) Mrs. Rawson.

Carter: Ask her if she'd like a steak.

Flora: Let's move her upstairs.

Zack: (sniffing with his nose in the air) I smell something. (Moving off quickly into kitchen) The bloody steaks are burning! !

Flora: Oh, no! (Carter laughs and takes a big gulp of his drink).

Carter: We'll have to have a liquid supper. (laughs again)

Flora: You're insufferable! Zack bought those steaks himself!

Zack: (entering dejectedly from kitchen) They're ruined.

Carter: Have a drink and forget about it. I didn't want one anyway.

Flora: (to Carter) It's all your fault!

Carter: Yeah . . . It's my fault; everything's always my fault.

Zack: (taking off the apron) Come on, Flora. Grab your coat; we'll go out for supper.

Flora: What about mother.

Carter: Go ahead; I'll take care of her.

Flora: Like you did last time.

Carter: No, I swear I won't touch her. All she needs is a little time to get over the shock . . . Hell: she'll be alright.

Zack: I'll call a doctor.

Carter: She doesn't need a doctor.

Flora: Yes, Zack. Call the doctor.

Zack: Then I'm taking you out.

Flora: Do you think we . . .

Zack: Yes, damn it! I can't take too much more of this.

Carter: Running out on me, eh? Just when the party's getting hot. A fine bloody pair you are.

Zack goes over to phone in hall, picks up receiver, puts it down, looks in telephone book and dials, talks to doctor. While he does this, Carter and Flora are talking.

Flora: You alright, Carter?

Carter: Yeah . . . sure. You go on out with Zack. I'll take care of her.

Flora: But . . .

Carter: Don't worry, kid. I won't hurt her. I was out of my head back there. (He takes another gulp) Go out and enjoy yourself. Mother and I will have a party.

Carter: Looks like I'll have to have a party by myself 'til the doctor gets here. Then maybe mother can join in.

Flora: Take it easy, Carter.

Carter: Sure, Flo. I'll handle the situation with kid gloves. (Takes the bottle up in his hands) This goddam bottle is almost finished anyway. I'll have to go to bed and sleep it off.

Zack: (smashing down receiver) He's coming over. Let's go, Flora . . . And Carter . . . for God's sake, try to control yourself.

Carter: Sure, Zack, old buddy. Everything's under control. Now get the hell out of here and let me drink in peace.

Zack: O.K. We're ready. Ready, Flo?

Flora: (opening the door) Yes, I'm ready. Goodbye, Carter.

Carter: So long, Flo. Bye, Zack. Don't lead my little sister astray.

Zack: (smiles) No fear there, Carter. See you later. (Closes door).

Carter sits back peacefully in his chair, sipping his drink; then becomes aware of his Mother. There is a slight twitching in her face, and an inquiring look as though she wanted the answer to some question.

Carter: Mother . . . Mother, are you awake. The doctor's coming for you. (pause) You know what, Mum? The world isn't coming to its bloody end . . . The bombs aren't going to drop after all. (He looks at her quizzically) Look at me, Mother . . . your son . . . your flesh. (Voice takes on note of authority) Come on, Mother, snap out of it. That Spiller bastard wasn't fit for you . . . No . . . God's truth he wasn't. He wasn't fit to tie your shoes. (Childlike) He was bad. Just plain bad . . . rotten. Now come on, Mother. You never wanted to marry that guy, did you? (pause) The doctor's coming to take you away. He'll take you away from all this crap. Naw . . . It's no good here. (Optimistic) Hell, no, I'm not staying. I'm going back to college where I belong. What do you think of that, Mum? World sure looks rosy, doesn't it? (Mother's face begins to break. Carter notices, and watches her closely) Mother . . . (softly) Mother. (Mrs. R. brings her hands to her face. Her light sobs are barely audible) Well, what do you know about that! Mother's alive again. I'm sure glad you're back with us, Mum. Do you think a drink will do you any good?

Mrs. R. shakes her head to answer in the negative, and continues to sob softly. Carter reaches over for the bottle and pours the remaining two ounces into his glass. He drinks it straight.

Carter: Here's to your continued good health, Mother. I'll just have this one more drink . . . and then, maybe I'll have a look for a job again tomorrow.

CURTAIN

MARY HALL

Blarny, while serving a jail term for forgery, engages upon a conversation with his cellmate which leads to a discussion of the gullibility of people who regularly attend church. Blarny, who will be released shortly, is quite taken with the challenge of setting up his own little institution to test this same gullibility.

The following scene occurs when, in celebration of his Little Yellow Church's first anniversary, the now Father Barnabus calls upon some of the converted members of his congregation to tell their own stories.

Father Barnabus: The first person you will hear from is George Yarnslobsky.

George: (shuffles self-consciously to the front of the room, puts his hands in the pockets of his baggy trousers, and, looking at the floor, begins in a monotone) As you know, I was what some people refer to as a beatnik. When I left Woodoak High School, I didn't know what I wanted to do. Nothing seemed to interest me, so I did nothing. Then it soon seemed that everyone in the town turned against me. I realized at once they were all unhappy, because they couldn't do what interested them, like I was doing. I tried to talk to some of them—tell them where they went wrong. But they wouldn't listen to me. Now it seemed I had to do something for these people, so I turned to poetry. And I sent my poetry to be published in the local newspaper. Each poem I wrote was for one person in the town. It wasn't a very big town; wouldn't have taken long to finish with them all. The first poem was to my school teacher — the most frustrated man I've ever seen. I thought that this was his trouble, so I wrote,

You who teach, oh can't you learn,
You boys are far more interested in sperm,
Than what makes this old world turn.
So why don't you take a lesson from them
And find yourself a little old hen,
She can make you happy then.

The people didn't appreciate my poem. They ran me out of town. So I came here to join a group of other beatniks who were trying to solve the problem of people's unhappiness. One day I saw all you people come in here. By the looks of everyone, I thought it was a beatnik meeting, and I came in too. Then I heard Father Barnabus. And I saw everyone looking as if they had an interest in life. So I was happy. I have stayed with you ever since.

A little later in this same scene, Father Barnabus introduces another member of his devoted congregation. This time, we see a little old lady,

wearing a rather long, black dress with an enormous red-rose pattern in it, hobble to the front. Her face is a battlefield of wrinkles, all of which she has tried to conceal with a generous application of rouge and lipstick.

Blarny: Mrs. Grettle Beard is going to conduct a conversation of considerable interest. Her husband Allan, passed from this life eight months ago, when he was hit by a motorcycle. For some time, Grettle and her husband have been able to converse with one another.

Grettle: Oh, thank you, dear, dear Father Barnabus. Without your help, I'd never have heard from Allan. You arranged it. I just know you did.

Blarny: The infinite belief of you, and your departed husband, has made it all possible.

Grettle: (looking about the room) Is it eight o'clock yet, Father Barnabus? That's the time Allan said he would—

Allan: Grettle. Grettle. (Voice which sounds far away and echoing, comes from beneath the stage).

Grettle: (to audience) It's Allan! (shouts) Allan. Here I am. Over here. (There is a slight pause).

Allan: Where in the — where are you, Grettle?

Grettle (a little nervously) Here, dearie. (Apologetically to audience) He's never come here before. I guess it takes a little adjustment.

Allan: Well, there you are. Hello, dear.

Grettle: Hello, my love. It's so nice of you to come here to talk to the people.

Allan: That's alright. It's just like the old times, spending the evening talking to you.

Grettle: (sighing) Yes, when we sat in those rocking chairs on the verandah and watched—

Allan: (chuckling) Careful, dear.

Blarny: (interrupting) Perhaps, Mrs. Beard, your husband would tell us a little about his new life.

Grettle: Oh, I'm sure he would. Allan, could you . . .

Allan: Sure thing. (Sounds a trifle cross) Perhaps I'll feel better if I talk over some of my gripes. All I can say is I never thought it would be like this. Grettle, remember how we used to complain about the heat . . .

Grettle: Yes indeed, I still . . .

Allan: It's got nothing on this place. Here, we don't tan, we just turn bright red. And there are no shady trees to sit under either. The trees that are here are all shrivelled up and look as if they're just waiting for us to come near enough so they can grab and eat us. As if we'd have time to sit if there were trees! The boss makes us work from dawn until dark; and he holds back the darkness if he feels we haven't accomplished enough. What a grouch he is! If we stop work for so much as a second, he prods us with a fork he always carries. And he sees every little thing everywhere, all the time.

Grettle: My poor dear!

Allan: It wouldn't be so bad if there was any point to all this work. But it's crazy, just plain crazy. I've spent ages trying to type a letter. Imagine, me typing a letter! It doesn't even say anything. But there can't be a single mistake. Well, every time I get to the very last word, all the keys seem to jump down at once. What a mess! So, I have to start all over again. Boy, I'm sorry I ever complained about my secretary's typing.

Grettle: Allan, why don't you just put your foot down. After all, I always thought that when a person . . . when a person . . . died, they went to live in a beautiful land of bread and honey. Why don't you go there?

Allan: I wish I could. (Pause) Remember, Grettle, I told you your father was here when I first arrived, and then he seemed to disappear? Well, he came back today. He was at this other place where all the fields are green and have little streams running through them, where flowers grow wild . . . he said that when the boss thought you were too good at your work here, he sent you to this beautiful land on a trial basis. Sometimes you stayed there, sometimes you came back. (Chuckles) Your father refused to take a bath every day so they sent him back—

Grettle: (horrified) Allan!

Allan: Well, he had a good point — they never do anything there, only eat, sleep, and play. He claimed he never did anything to get dirty, so he didn't have to take a bath!

Grettle: If you could just finish your letter, Allan. Maybe it is your application form for admittance to this other land.

Allan: (dreamily) I almost finished it today. Just one more key to press. And I was being so careful. Then this beautiful woman appeared in front of me. I was so excited I hit the wrong key. I wouldn't have minded, but when we started to talk, I found she was the most conceited thing I'd ever met. She claimed that two countries actually fought one another just for the possession of her. I was never . . .

Grettle: Allan, do you mean to say that there are women up there with you?

Allan: (abashed) Well, yes dear. As a matter of fact, I have been meaning to ask you something, if you don't mind . . . I mean if you'd care if I . . . Well, what I want to know is . . . You know how lonely I've been up here and (long pause) I do miss you so much. But you know I never could iron my shirts properly. And the heat here. I use so many every day. Would you be angry if . . . just until you come, of course . . . I have a . . . housekeeper? After all, you . . . Grettle screams and then faints to the floor.

As Blarny and Herman rush to her, a voice in the background faintly calls, "Grettle", and the curtain falls.

JOHN WHITMAN

NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP

Five months prior to December 24, Michael saw his father being seduced by an intimate friend, a Mr. Boswell, on a hunting trip. Three months prior to December, Michael's father died of a heart attack, leaving behind to his family and his society a creditable reputation worthy of an army general and a prosperous business man. To those just mentioned, he was a symbol of strength, fortitude, and intelligence; in brief, the summation of manliness. To Michael, he is a symbol of hypocrisy, weakness, and deception.

It is Christmas Eve. Michael has returned from university a dissolute, truculent, and undesirable person. His mother, Amanda, weak, fluttery and high strung, looks upon Michael's neurotic behaviour as an emotional disturbance. Determined not to seek the advice of a psychiatrist, she has invited the one man whom her husband continually praised for his sociability and perceptivity, to counsel her son — Mr. Boswell.

Michael is trapped. The constant, but futile pleas of Amanda as to what is bothering him only exacerbate his dilemma. Because he has doubts as to his own masculinity and sexual proclivity, Michael is suspended between two poles; either to thrust out and to destroy all that his father meant to his family, or to retreat into his own inner-self, and there to taste the bitter-sweet juices of remorse and hate.

The following scene is Michael's first encounter with Mr. Boswell which Amanda has arranged. Mr. Boswell epitomizes the deceptive masculine element so pronounced in Michael's father. His walk, his mannerisms, his speech, denote a definite confidence and assurance. Mr. Boswell, through an earlier conversation with Amanda, has become suspicious of the fact that Michael is fully aware of the homosexual relationship he had with his father.

Mr. B: Is anything wrong?

Mich: Nothing!

Mr. B: Don't feel offended. It's just that you look tired, almost beat.

Mich: On the contrary, I feel fine.

Mr. B: Then why the bags under the eyes?

Mich: (with sudden, forced, over-dramatized vehemence) Are they swollen, puffy bags that hang like bulging grey tears from my eyes? If they are, I haven't noticed them there recently.

Mr. B: Lack of sleep?

Drama

Mich: No.

Mr. B: Lack of —

Mich: I was born with them! A fortuitous gift of the flesh from my mother and father! Even when I was a child, people remarked on how cadaverous I looked. I tried to rub them out one day, but all that happened was a crimson flecked mess. I decided then that I preferred the swollen, puffy grey bags.

Mr. B: Why are you talking this way?

Mich: What way?

Mr. B: Why are you trying to sound so dramatic about such a trivial incident?

Mich: It wasn't a trivial incident. Mother was very worried when she saw all the blood!

Mr. B: Do you rant on this way with everyone?

Mich: Only when necessary.

Mr. B: Is it necessary with me?

Mich: (very strongly) YES!

Mr. B: You've grown a few inches since I last saw you.

Mich: That was three months ago.

Mr. B: No, I didn't catch sight of you at the funeral. It was five months ago. That hunting trip we took together with your father.

Mich: I remember it vividly.

Mr. B: I'm surprised to hear that. If I remember it correctly, you thoroughly wished that you had never gone on such a trip. You gave me the impression that the sooner you could forget it, the better.

Mich: Past impressions are future illusions.

Mr. B: That sounds equivocal.

Mich: You shot four birds down, you smoked three packages of cigarettes, you drank a carton of beer, you discussed the pros and cons of the Republican party, you sat up to all hours of the night making a lot of strange noises . . . you see, I have a remarkable memory for detail.

Mr. B: You sound so vehement about it, as if to remember such an experience were painful for you.

Mich: You have the habit, Mr. Boswell, of misinterpreting my appearance, my voice and my intentions.

Mr. B: Why do you dislike me?

Mich: I don't know you well enough to dislike you.

Mr. B: Then why this false demeanor, this affected stance, this pouting lip, this childish determination to impress.

Mich: I don't know your objectives, Mr. Boswell . . . that is, I don't quite understand them yet. I presume that Mother pleaded with you to help me . . . to help the frustrated boy fraught with fits of fancy and misery. Correct?

Mr. B: Correct.

Mich: Your services are not being appreciated, I'm afraid.

Mr. B: You're being dreadfully inconsiderate of your mother's feelings. Whether you know it or not, you've made her feel extremely unhappy — unhappy to the extent that she is on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Your mother has had a tremendous burden to carry, one that needs to be supported by all her children.

Mich: Your studied incantation has a surprising note of sincerity.

Mr. B: In a boy of your age, impudence implies a lack of maturity.

Mich: I don't give a damn what it implies.

Mr. B: It implies that a spoilt, pampered, affected boy is indulging in self-conceit, self-complacency, and self-deception.

Mich: DECEPTION! The very word bites my tongue. You smear me with that name like the pimp who would be crass enough to blame his trollops for promiscuity. The cause cursing its effect! . . . we're all a bunch of churlish souls ripped open by that word . . .

Mr. B: Gross generalizations. Obviously, you don't —

Mich: A hunting trip can be a handsome disguise, Mr. Boswell, the black that covers white.

Mr. B: What are you talking about?

Mich: When the cat's away, the mice must play —

Mr. B: What are you insinuating?

Mich: Men are mice . . . they seek a warmth when not hunted by the cat; they scamper off into a little cubby hole of darkness to lose their fears in a furry belly of warmth!

Mr. B: Shut your goddam mouth!

Mich: And I like watching mice lie. They never thought of watching me . . . they spread their foul contagion that rots and rots, until its crumbling dirt fosters a new growth of mouse. Our family just reeked with mice — a blinded cat who never caught her puffing, greasy mice!

IAIN MacLEAN

The play is a take off on the usual story of a young man trying to find himself. Ken is the young man in question who leaves his "square" middle class Canadian home to become a beat figure in Greenwich Village. After an abortive attempt to have an affair with an actress, he leaves his jazz records and "cool" manner of talking when he hops a liner to England. The scene printed here shows Ken in an Oxford setting, where he has become an Englishman of the old school. Eventually he tires of this life and goes back home to his original loved one, Eloise, who could be described as a sweet kid. However, upon his return, Ken finds to his chagrin that Eloise has turned into a beatnik. Presumably they reach a compromise, are wed and move to the suburbs, but do not buy a television set.

Scene — an English pub, dark panelling, copper things and armour on the walls. A mixture of tweedy types, male and female, are seated or standing, with large "pints" of beer. One particular table is in focus for the audience, a mutter of conversation is taking place at the table. The noise of a vintage sports car is heard pulling up outside. A moment later Ken enters, wearing tweedy clothes and a monstrous scarf around his neck, a tweedy, sports car blonde in tow.

Ken: Greetings, chaps. I say, the old Bentley you talked me into buying is strictly first class, made old Porlock Hill in second, pretty fair for a 1927 motor car—

Miriam: It's smashing.

Malcolm: (at the table) Join us for a pint. We have time before the proctors come around.

Ken: Fine. (Ken and Miriam both sit down) Did you see in the Times that a group of angry young men are promoting a debate against the "Establishment."

All: Outrage! How dare they!

Ken: They plan to give a paper titled "T. S. Eliot Is A Fraud."

All: No! This is rank outrage!

Hubert: (at the table) So you're the Canadian chap who is trying to get the poetry fellowship at Balliol.

Ken: That's right. I may be showing a lot of presumption by coming here before enrolling, but I shouldn't have too much trouble, what with the rise of the angry young men—

Miriam: What have the angry young men got to do with you getting into Oxford?

Ken: I am surprised at you, my dear. All the angries are writing plays and poems attacking the "Establishment" as well as Oxford and Cambridge. You know, it's a publicity stunt for the provincial univer-

sities. Oxford is offering all sorts of fellowships to get a set of young writers who will blast the angry young men out of existence.

Hubert: What did you do before coming to England?

Ken: Oh, I was a member of the Beat Generation, you know, an angry young man in a T-shirt with a jazz record under one arm, drinking espresso coffee and reading Samuel Beckett.

Hubert: What made you change your mind. I don't know if I trust these beat generation types, taking people's cars and driving across the country on the spur of the moment.

Ken: I discovered, in New York, where I made an exhaustive study in Greenwich Village, that these artistic beat people are all phoney and illiterate, but the worst of it is the way they talk. It sounds weird, a type of baby talk mixed up with the patois of the jazz musician; it's really quite strange. People call each other cat and chick, somebody's apartment is a "pad", and so forth. It must be the American education system which breeds contempt for the subtleties of the English language.

Hubert: Quite so, most North Americans do not know how to speak proper English. I am glad to say, though, that you are an exception which possibly proves the rule.

Miriam: I notice, Ken, that you speak almost like an Englishman. Surely you didn't pick it up in the few weeks you have been here.

Ken: It's not a question of accent, really. I think you will find that cultured people, with breeding and good manners, speak the same way all over the world. People of accomplishment, who place education and the good life above the mere acquisition of money and prestige, will not affect any peculiar accents.

Miriam: I'm so glad to hear there are some people of refinement in Canada. I always pictured it as a cultural wilderness.

Ken: It is, really, but a few of us try to keep the flames of knowledge burning. It's an uphill battle all the way, but the feeling that you are aiding the great unwashed to understand, all the trials are worth it.

Hubert: I see. You are over here to receive the gospel from Oxford in order to give the good word to the primitives in America.

Ken: You hit the nail on the head, Hubert. We who are privileged, by our birth and by our education, must fulfill our obligations to our lessers and inspire them to follow our example.

Miriam: Very nicely said, herr professor; the elite are only the elite when they realize their obligation to society.

Ken: (motioning to the barkeep to bring some more beer) Some more inspiration of the gods. By gad, the U.S. may reign supreme in foreign policy, but give me a Burton from the old country, in a pewter mug; the height of degradation to me is drinking American beer out of a tin, watching the late late show on the telly.

Hubert: An angry young man would like that better than anything in the world. Beat your mistress and read the News of the World every

Sunday — that's their credo, wear a fur-collared jacket to the cinema every Saturday, and they call it non-conformity. I doubt if most of them have heard of *The Wasteland*, let alone read it.

(A turtle-necked chap enters the pub).

Miriam: My God, there's Colin Amis, the angry young writer.

Hubert: I hope he doesn't come over here; it's so embarrassing, he drags everything and everybody into the dirt. He's nothing but a sewer rat with a volume of scurrilous poetry in his pocket, mein gott, he is.

Ken: This should prove interesting.

Colin: Greetings, decadents, how's the Establishment today; drinking beer, I see, rather non-U, eh, what. Where's the usual champagne, or are you crying poor, as the rich always do.

Miriam: Must you always be objectionable, Colin. Sit down and shut up.

Colin: For you Miriam, I'll do anything except shut up. Besides, since when has the noblesse oblige set been using horrendous Americanisms like "shut up."

Hubert: Gad, you're insufferable. However, I must be polite and introduce you to Ken Naysmith, a Canadian, but a civilized one, not your ilk at all.

Colin: Must be something wrong with him, if you like him, Hubert. It's always a pleasure to meet someone from a more vital land. How do you do, Ken.

Ken: Pleasure. I don't have much to do with angry young men, but a new person met is a new experience, as they say, ha, ha.

Colin: My God, they grow them worse in Canada than they do here. English accent too, worse than mine, and I was born here. I've met some fake people in my time, and in thirty seconds I've decided you take the cake.

Hubert: See what I mean, Ken, a typical angry young man. You've already been sized up and dismissed; you might have had a better chance if you hadn't shaved today. Of course, wearing a tie was a complete mistake.

Ken: You are very much like the beat types I knew in America.

Colin: You must be a real pseudo-Englishman, even mistakenly calling the United States America, as most Englishmen do.

Ken: Really, old chap, you are impossible. As I was saying before you interrupted, you remind me of those completely aimless types one meets in those Bohemian jazz clubs in New York.

Colin: By your tone, I assume you dislike jazz; unusual for a North American.

Ken: Of course I do; loathsome, uncultured noise. A little is alright at a party. I understand the angry young men have adopted jazz to express their distaste of all that is civilized. It's typical, actually, using music of protest along with their words of protest. One wonders, however, what the protest is against.

Colin: I am amused at your presumption, a Canuck, becoming part of the

- Establishment, spouting W. H. Auden at cocktail parties where one is not admitted unless he is wearing a waistcoat.
- Ken:** As I was saying before you arrived, to, to the manner born, as they say, wherever we are in the world, instinctively know how to behave, what to wear, say, etc.
- Miriam:** Yes. We know, and you don't, Colin.
- Colin:** (mockingly) I think I'll go home and cry.
- Hubert:** We, at least, know our place. I wish I could say the same about you.
- Colin:** You are all very childish . . . To change the subject, who owns the disgusting old Bentley outside; it looks like a typical Establishment car, reactionary as hell.
- Ken:** Old W. O. Bentley wouldn't like to hear you talking like that; it's a superb motorcar, the like of which is not being produced today.
- Colin:** America is the only country producing motor cars today; there's nothing like the smooth, comfortable ride of a Buick, not like these decadent motorized carriages with whip sockets beside the speedometer.
- Ken:** Trust an angry young man to like things American. Just because the beats in Kerouac's *On the Road* drive across the country in big Cadillac's and Hudson's, does it mean the Angries start admiring every vulgar American motor car?
- Colin:** Merely because Gilbert Harding and the other BBC boys like their Rolls Royces with horizontal radiator slats—
- Miriam:** I thought all Rolls' radiators had the slats going up and down.
- Ken:** Those who know, those who drive Rolls Royces of vintage previous to 1923, have the slats horizontal, and consider the drivers of the newer models to be mere upstarts, pups. But the point I'm trying to make is that these despicable angry young men covet all things American and sneer at the fine old British motorcars. Next thing we'll hear is that the turtle-necked crowd build these "hot rods." I think that's what they call them on the other side of the Atlantic. Failing that, they drive the English cars the most slavishly copy the great beasts from Detroit. I really wonder if Colin has a fishtail complex.
- Colin:** Posh, utter folderal, typical Establishment rationalization. All the BBC types living in the 'twenties covered with grease trying to start their wrecks that were falling apart when Waugh wrote *Vile Bodies*. We live in the present, discovering what's new, and taking advantage.
- Ken:** A bunch of social opportunists showing a flagrant disregard for the venerable traditions of our heritage.
- Colin:** Reactionary poppycock. This is not 1923, this is 1959, the age of instant espresso coffee. You still have crumpets and tea, but the crumpets are fresh frozen, and the cup you are using is made in a fraction of a second by injection molding.
- Ken:** Not my cup, by God, nothing but bone china between me and my tea.

- Miriam:** You must admit, Ken, that Colin has a point. The day of beautifully made, hand crafted goods is gone.
- Ken:** You picking on me too. Everybody's against the Establishment.
- Miriam:** No, I'm not criticising the Establishment. But I think you are being a little too precise in hewing the Establishment line. After all, world war three is almost upon us. And as for vintage cars; I like these old monstrous machines on a nice day, when they are working, you know what I mean, the time you took me to the Hurlingham Ball. I was in white, very virginal, you know, and the bloody dry sump oil thing burst all over me . . . you almost lost one girl friend that night . . . the Hit of the Ball . . . Miss Miriam Hampton-Jones, wearing a white organdy chiffon gown, trimmed with Castrol.
- Ken:** You were a hit; every sports car buff danced with you that night.
- Miriam:** Only to inhale the Castrol fumes, though.
- Ken:** It was marvellous; reminds one of the story of old S. H. E. Davis driving the Wooler-Montcrieff at Brooklands in 1933. The chain drive broke, bursting the dry sump—
- Miriam:** There you are again, going back into the past. You weren't even born then.
- Ken:** What difference does it make . . . One can still revere the past —
- Miriam:** And be totally oblivious to the present, as you are. I think one can carry this adoration of past idols too far.
- Colin:** I never thought I'd see the day when you would be taking my point of view, Miriam.
- Miriam:** That, I would never do . . . actually you are both extreme ends of a pole. Ken, who would wear goggles and a duster driving if he could be sure people wouldn't laugh at him; and Colin who describes anything old fashioned after it has been written up in the Sunday papers.
- Colin & Ken:** You're generalizing from particulars.
- Miriam:** Not at all.
- Colin & Ken:** Outrageous assumptions.
- Miriam:** Merely observation.
- Colin & Ken:** Meaningless bumf—
- Miriam:** It's quite true.
- Colin & Ken:** Frivolous bunkum.
- Miriam:** It's not a question of arguing, Gentlemen. It's quite clear that both of you are extremists. What about the Golden Mean—
- Colin:** They call that sitting on the fence, nowadays — afraid to take a stand on anything.
- Miriam:** I try to get the best out of both the past and present.
- Ken:** You can't do both. You've got to be one or the other . . . either you follow the past with all its admirable institutions, or else you throw away all tradition, as Colin has done.
- Colin:** That's me, a Borstal Boy, without any roots.

TONY VINTCENT

This scene concerns the four members of the Powers family, who are very well to do and society conscious.

The relationships between the members of this family will be clarified as the scene progresses.

Alan is 21 years of age and Martin is 19.

Mr. Powers is on the phone as the curtain rises. Mrs. Powers is sitting glancing through a fashion magazine . . . she looks up.

Maggie: Tell them we could make it for cocktails, darling.

Lewis: Maggie says cocktails . . . What? . . . Oh fine . . . Tomorrow at six-thirty . . . Right . . . Bye.

Maggie: Oh darling, what a bore, but I suppose it is a duty. Sometimes I wonder if all this society nonsense is worth it. Really!

Loud noises of young men laughing and the sound of music as a door off stage is opened.

Maggie: My God, listen to those brats . . . (yells) keep quiet you two, and go into your own rooms.

Lewis: They haven't changed.

Maggie: I don't know what to say. Martin is usually so quiet and well mannered, but whenever Alan comes to the house they are just like hellions. Cheeky, insolent, rude and inconsideration. Alan is the cause of it all, and he knows it. I have told him a thousand times that until he behaves like a member of this family and acts a little more adult, he will be treated like a baby.

Lewis: Well, he has his own mind now.

Maggie: He doesn't even know his own mind. He is still an immature child. Why, today he came into town wearing those gray suit trousers without the jacket. I told him first thing to take the trousers off. He said he couldn't as he had no others. When I suggested that he get some others, he replied that he had no money to get some cleaned, and that, anyway, they were an extra pair and that he was the one wearing them, and that the suit was his own at any rate. His manner is enough to make me sick. He's always right and anything anyone else says is automatically wrong.

Lewis: I'll have to have a talk with him soon. I won't have him being insolent in this house, if he intends to stay here.

Maggie: I hate burdening you with this trouble, dear, but I wish something could be done.

Lewis: Are they in for dinner?

Maggie: I don't know. Alan probably isn't, he doesn't seem to like our company. (Pause).

Lewis: I'm going up to change. Do you want a drink?

Maggie: Please. Martini.

Lewis: I met Jim Casey today. He and Bob were lunching together at the Themis.

Maggie: Oh, . . . that's Molly's husband, isn't it?

Lewis: Yes.

Maggie: I must have her to lunch. I'd like her to join the girls in our weekly bridge club. She's president of the Women's Auxiliary of the Lerner Institute, you know.

Lewis: Um . . . here you are, see you in a few minutes.

Maggie: Oh darling, get me a triangle thin . . . thank you. Don't be too long, will you, sweetheart.

Lewis exits.

Maggie sits, stirring the cocktail: she lights a cigarette . . . we notice a twitch in her fingers and she has trouble lighting the cigarette.

Maggie: (to herself) I wish those doctors would find out what is the matter; nerves they, I wonder? Don't exert yourself they say, what rot! What do they know? . . . (again the noise upstairs subdued) Those kids, they're enough to drive me mad; sometimes I wonder why I ever had them, they're more trouble than they're worth. They expect to be treated as equals, at their age, the young brats. . . Well, we'll see, we'll see. They won't get anything from me, they don't . . . (At this point Alan enters, wearing a sport shirt and gray trousers.)

Alan: (as he comes in) I'm going out.

Mrs. Powers: (pretending she hasn't heard) Um?

Alan: I said I'm going out.

Mrs. Powers: Oh?

Alan: I thought you'd like to know.

Mrs. Powers: I see . . . like that?

Alan: Yes, anything wrong? I'm going for a walk.

Mrs. Powers: You're not going out of this house in a costume like that.

Alan: Why not. What's wrong with my clothes?

Mrs. Powers: I don't want people we know seeing you so sloppily dressed.

Alan: Listen, Mum, I'm going out to see some of my friends. They happen to be sons of your friends, and you know what? They are also dressed like I am.

Mrs. Powers: That means absolutely nothing. WE don't dress like that. Go and put a tie and coat on immediately.

Alan: I'm sorry, I'm not going to. I feel I am well enough dressed for the occasion.

Mrs. Powers: (not listening) and while you're at it, remember that you are not allowed in this room without a tie and sportscoat on.

Alan: Why not? This isn't an office, I'm not trying to impress anyone in this house, I'm trying to be natural that's all. I don't want all this artificiality to get the better of me.

Mrs. Powers: In MY house you'll do exactly what you're told.

Alan: I'll say, this is a house, not a home. I'm not a member of this family, there's no love or understanding between anyone here . . .

Mrs. Powers: Keep quiet, you cheeky young whippersnapper. I don't want the servants hearing this.

Alan: To hell with the servants!

Mrs. Powers: Alan!

Alan: O.K., I'm sorry . . . but why can't we be natural here, why do we have to talk behind each other's backs. WHY?

Mrs. Powers: As soon as you begin to act like a member of this family, you'll be treated as such, not until. You have to be treated like a child, because you are a child . . . now get changed.

Alan: Then don't expect anything more from me. I don't intend to lead a life of artificiality, of nothing more than worrying about social commitments. Why not just try to do what you want for once?

Mrs. Powers: You are being perfectly ridiculous . . . now quieten down. Here comes your brother.

Enter Martin 'correctly' dressed.

Mrs. Powers: Hello dear, how was grandpa?

Martin: Fine, Mum, just fine.

Mrs. Powers: What are your plans, dear, for tonight? You'll be in for dinner, won't you.

Martin: Oh yes, I'll be in, Mum.

Alan: I won't.

Mrs. Powers: Oh?

Alan: I'm going out.

Mrs. Powers: You won't want any food, then?

Alan: I can't be here for dinner: we eat too late. Can I go into the kitchen to get a sandwich?

Mrs. Powers: No, I'll ask James to bring you something in here. (Rings buzzer) What do you want?

Alan: Why bother them, they have plenty to do without getting me a glass of milk.

Mrs. Powers: Do you want anything or not?

Alan: (resigned) A glass of milk and four pieces of bread and butter, please.

Enter James.

James: You called, Madame?

Mrs. Powers: Yes, James. Four pieces of bread and butter and a glass of milk, for Mr. Alan, please. Bring it here in five minutes.

James: Very good, Madam. (Exit James)

Mrs. Powers: I'm going to get ready for dinner. Don't let your father find you in here like that. (Exit)

Alan: (bitterly) God Almighty, I'm going mad.

Martin: I heard it all, I was in the sunroom. It's absolute rot, of course, but Alan you mustn't let it bother you. Try to realize that things are as they are and be resigned to it. I don't let it bother me.

Alan: Unfortunately, it's a little easier said than done. This sort of thing bothers me; I see other families and the warmth they have and I can't help feeling bitter and upset about the lack of it here. We just don't see eye to eye on anything, not one thing. I'm sure we haven't laughed in this house for years.

Martin: I know, I know, but just live your own life and forget about it. You'll be on your own soon anyway.

Alan: The sooner the better.

Martin: I have my books, of course. I can just read and forget all about this house. That's why I spend so much time in my room. You should do something like that.

Alan: Not books, my interests aren't academic . . . You know what I heard today? I was down at Rockie's and I was talking to her. I guess I must have been a little depressed and she saw right through me. We got to talking about this family, I told her I supposed it was just a phase, but she said no. Apparently Mum never liked children, so it was no surprise that there was tension here. Rockie was telling me that we never had any real love when we were kids. Mum couldn't be bothered to come to us when we were crying, she just let us lie there and bawl. Rockie used to try to give us some affection. She wouldn't be allowed to. She seems so bitter and sorry about this, as if it was her fault.

Martin: Ya, I can see that.

Alan: It's the same now. Mum is jealous of our affection for Rockie. She's always trying to belittle her.

Martin: It isn't only us. Poor little Tish, Rockie housebroke her and had to train her. She did it because she didn't want the poor animal to have to be hauled off to a kennel to be trained. Imagine not being bothered to train your own dog, and what gratitude does Mum give Rockie; she doesn't even let her see Tish nor does she tell her how she's getting along. I was wondering why we were never allowed to take the dog down the hill. I have to laugh when I think of the excuse. "The dog is too thoroughbred, she mustn't exert herself." Oh well, let's forget it. You said you were going out, what's up?

Alan: The drama guild is putting on a play in a couple of months. I'm helping to organize it, and also I'm trying out for a part. You remember Mr. Angus?

Martin: Sure.
Alan: He's the director.
Martin: Really good. That's one field you can do a lot in.
Alan: Anyway, we've got a reading circle tonight. Mr. Angus is phoning the others to see if they can come. We're holding it at the Recreation Centre.
Martin: It's a long way to the Rec. Have you got the car?
Alan: No.
Martin: Why don't you ask for it?
Alan: Martin, you don't understand, I can't. Don't you see, I've tried to get away from them, and anything they can still have control over me allows them to keep a finger on me. I can't ask them for anything. They only hold it over me and gloat over it. I won't ask them for it. I can get on without it. Oh I know, I'm just suffering in silence, but still I cannot ask them for anything.
Martin: Well, you can just ask.
Alan: No I can't, they'll just say no and ask questions anyway.
Martin: What if they say yes?
Alan: I don't want the car. I don't want anything from them. I'm sorry.
Martin: Well, I . . .
Alan: I'm not like you, Martin. Things don't roll off my back, so don't try to change me.
Martin: O.K. . . . I know that . . . Sorry.
Alan: Hey, what do you think she'll say if I ask for something more to eat? I'm hungrier than I thought.
Martin: Try and see, I don't know.
Alan: I'll wait until James comes in . . . Maybe she'll be here by then, and I can ask her.
Martin: Why don't you stay for food. The reading circle isn't until after supper, is it?
Alan: Because I just can't stand their company any more. I have to get out. To escape. I told Mum, anyway.
Martin: There you go again. You're just cutting off your nose to spite your face. Why go and spend money on food when you can get a perfectly good meal here?
Alan: I know, but I'm afraid I'd rather do it this way.
(Enter James, with clean glasses for the bar.)
Alan: Oh, James, do you think I could have some beef sandwiches instead of bread and butter?
James: Certainly, Mr. Alan.
Alan: Thanks.
(Exit James.)
Martin: You're crazy, just try to be unconcerned. Eat here, you don't have to say anything.

Alan: No thanks. The conversation bothers me too much. It's so superficial and shallow. It's completely unnatural. Anything we ever say is taken as being cheeky, not an opinion. Whatever we say is always laughed at, and cast aside as being worthless and childish.
Martin: O.K., don't talk, just eat. Don't waste money on eating out.
Alan: Maybe some other time . . . Oh, oh, here we go again.
(Enter Mrs. Powers. She goes to bar and pours a drink.)
Mrs. Powers: You're still here?
Alan: Sure.
(Enter James with sandwiches and milk. Puts it down on table and goes out. Alan begins to eat. Mrs. Powers glances at the plate, sees beef in sandwiches and . . .)
Mrs. Powers: Here Alan, don't eat that. It isn't for you. James has made a mistake.
Alan: It's O.K. He was in here and I asked him to put some beef in the sandwiches.
Mrs. Powers: Listen here, my boy. You are not allowed to order everything you like. You ask me. I ordered bread and butter, and if you wanted more you should have said so.
Alan: I know, but I felt hungrier after. You weren't here and he came in; so I asked. There is lots of beef and two slices won't harm.
Mrs. Powers: Another time you do not order anything, do you hear. These people must be trained to take orders. Don't mix them up.
Alan: Mix them up? Two slices of beef between four slices of bread!
Mrs. Powers: Shut up, you brat . . . Do you two realize what you are doing; you are slowly wrecking my marriage, you realize that don't you? I think you must be trying to do it. You must know how heartily sick Dad is of hearing of these quarrels and bickerings. He's ready to give up, you know.
Martin: Mother, for heaven's sake.
Alan: Don't bother telling him about the stories then, he only gets one side of them anyway . . . but don't worry, I'll soon be out of here and out of your way.
Mrs. Powers: The sooner the better. And this summer you can live away from here. Your father doesn't want to have to go through the catastrophe of last summer.
Alan: It's O.K. with me . . . Thanks for the milk. (Takes the other sandwich and goes to the door) I won't be too late. I'll lock up. Get me up in the morning, Martin, will you? About nine. Good-night! (Exit)
Martin: I think I'll go and read, Mum.
Mrs. Powers: That brother of yours . . . he'd better learn some manners. Don't forget, dinner is at eight o'clock, Martin.
Martin: I'll be there. (Exit)
(Mrs. Powers is left stirring her cocktail.)

BRIAN JONES

TWO ON THE TERRACE

In this short excerpt from *Two On The Terrace*, Brad, man about Westport, and editor of *Girl Crazy Magazine*, finds himself in the unfortunate position of having all three of his current girl friends arriving at the same time for the weekend at his aunt's exurban pleasure palace. The rest of the play is largely taken up with Brad trying to keep the three girls apart.

Michael: (enters) Cousin Brad, how did you get yourself in such a delightful, romantic set-up?

Brad: Mix-up is the word. (Pensive and worldly) It's really quite simple. All you need to do is put yourself on a very careful timetable.

Michael: A timetable?

Brad: Yes. You must assure yourself of getting a good night's rest in between each mad fling. Take my present situation. Sally is in one of those Greenwich Village plays that has a performance nightly, except Sunday and Monday. I know where she is every other night of the week. Every Monday, however, we wander around all the Bohemian cellars, eat exotic foods, and cha-cha-cha to Jamaican rhythms. We then retire to her apartment for some espresso coffee and theatrical chit-chat with her roommate Dolores, who I think takes dope. Anyway, she's never really with us. It makes for a most delightful evening.

On Wednesday, I take out Claire, who has to work just about every other evening at the Columbia University library. Like Sally, this is her one free evening. Generally, we go to an illustrated lecture or the ballet, and then visit some of her arty friends, and discuss Picasso. Claire has a passion for modern art, among other things.

Friday evenings find me in the arms and kitchen of Sabrina Duval. She's the top fashion designer for one of those slick magazines picturing the outfits most of its purchasers can't afford. We eat duckling and popovers, and curl up on the divan with some creme de menthe and watch T.V. — *Person to Person* is our favourite. One week Sabrina was on, so I stayed out in the hall and watched it on the monitor set. Sabrina is so domestic for a sophisticate.

This all makes for a most delightful week. All three are a little neurotic, so they fit in anywhere. Every Sunday I catch the early train and have mid-afternoon dinner with your mother.

You notice, this way I spend a quiet evening at home, and get a good night's rest every other night. There has never been any complications.

Michael: Until now!

Brad: Yes, a place for everything, and everything in its place, I thought. Louise comes in Wednesdays and Friday mornings, and probably thinks I'm the most celibate man on the isle of Manhattan. At least she gives me that sort of look every time she hands me my mail. She's a very attractive little thing, but then, I could never fit her into my timetable. Anyway, it's gauche to make love after toast and coffee at 8:40 in the morning!

You see, Michael, in our modern American way of living, especially here in New York, love becomes a game, a hobby, a pastime. In the hustle and bustle of this mechanized atomic age, that's all it can be. And New York is simply over-populated with beautiful young things seeking momentary rapture on their evenings off. You find them both at Schraff's and the Stork Club, at art films and Broadway musicals.

Michael: But which one do you prefer, Brad?

Brad: That's the trouble, I like all three of them — they each satisfy my different urges in different ways.

(Fantasy Sequence)

The stage is expanded to include a cleared terrace. The lights have blacked out at the conclusion of Brad's last speech. Suddenly a spotlight is shone on.

Sabrina, who appears in a black cocktail outfit, straight out of *Harper's Bazaar*. She is wearing an oversized chef's hat, and is carrying a wooden salad spoon and fork. She starts a cha-cha-cha South American type step to a modified version of "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To". Brad's voice is heard: "Sabrina is chic . . . domestic . . . a tigress . . ." At the conclusion, she freezes in place as the spotlight shifts to

Claire, dressed in an academic gown and horn-rimmed spectacles. Stretched out in her hands is the novel *The Best of Everything*, which she momentarily is reading. She discards the book and her glasses, and does a jazz-type bump-and-grind to "I Could Write a Book." Brad's voice is heard again: "While Claire is literary . . . intellectual . . . frantic . . ." She too freezes, and

Sally emerges between the two wearing a trench coat and dragging a silver fox fur. In her hand is an academy award. She embodies three of the stages in the life of an actress: the radiant ingenue, the starlet at the film premiere, and the sophisticated award-winning veteran. Brad is heard saying, "And Sally is talented . . . a beauty . . . dramatic . . ." Sally does a ballet-type step to "You Ought to Be in Pictures." At the conclusion of this

All Three do some steps in unison to an up-beat version of "The Girl That I Marry." Then the lights black out and are brought up on the living room set.

PHYLLIS REEVE

Fly Away Patsy

Beribboned Patsy Byrd in pink taffeta floated through rose-petalled streets. Onlookers forgot they were going to the A & P to buy frozen peas and aquamarine soap flakes. They stood still as telephone poles, and stared at Patsy.

"Oh!" they gasped. "Isn't she beautiful!"

"Who is she?" asked a short man in brown tweed, crushing his hat in his hand and biting its brim in excitement.

"It's Princess Margaret," exclaimed a small girl with blue eyes.

"Or Elizabeth Taylor," said the small girl's brother.

There goes Patsy-watsy.

Ya, Ya, Patsy-watsy.

Go home, Patsy-watsy, fatsy Patsy-watsy.

Crash. Very tiny Patsy in the patched tunic she wore even on holidays stumbled over the counted sidewalk cracks. Out of a house poured a dozen children in party dresses. At their head a girl with real pink taffeta and ringlets waved her fist and sobbed furiously. "It's MY birthday party, my nice party, and I won't have you spoiling it, Patsy Byrd."

"Patsy Byrd. Fly away, Patsy Byrd," they sang. "Fly away on your wings."

"I will, I will," the storm inside Patsy buffeted her quiet, tripping self. "Someday I'll fly away and that will show you all. I was only walking past your stupid party anyway."

Just in time she found a corner and turned it. Farther away the children chanted, "Fly away, Patsy Byrd." Then they gave up and went back to eat their pinwheel sandwiches.

Patsy sat on the steps of the flat and waited for her mother to come home from work. The four dandelions beside the street emitted their last glow and decided to go to seed.

Her mother came, and supper and Patsy's question. Her mother's hand, rushing the towel in brisk circles around and around the plate, moved more slowly as she answered. Patsy waited, posed and sculptured in the act of lifting a glass to its shelf.

"Yes, Patsy. Yes, of course, you can fly if you want to. Everyone has wings. All they have to do is use them. But not many people do."

Patsy was no longer a statue. She let her breath out again in a long slow softness and placed the glass neatly in its destined position.

"Do you ever fly?"

The dishtowel moved quickly again, in small certain circles around the china.

"Not much anymore, Patsy. I guess I don't have time. I used to fly a great deal."

The plate moon polished by dishtowel clouds watched Patsy thinking in bed.

In the clean silver morning she stole to a corner of the golf course. Hidden by a secretive clump of trees, she stood ready to fly. A sudden itchiness of her shoulder blades made her jump and wriggle and laugh. And there she was — flying away on a peal of laughter.

"I'm really doing it. Isn't it wonderful?" she thought. Then she had to stop thinking about how wonderful it was, because she was so busy feeling the wonderfulness.

She steered herself around a tall tree and interrupted a crowd of breezes. One of them bumped into her and apologized, "I'm sorry. I can't stop to speak now, I'm in a bit of a hurry." The breeze blew off towards the hills.

A pair of swallows, blue and grey and overwhelmingly alive, overtook her. "Come now, Patsy," they urged her. "This straight line stuff is no fun at all." And they soared ahead of her in long glorious sweeps up and up almost forever and then long breathless dives curving into upward sweeps again. Soaring, swooping, singing, she followed the swallows. There was music all around her. The swirling and swishing and rustling freedom of winds and birds and all the flung sky was a concerto for one each of organs, flutes and clarinets. From the mountain tops trumpets sounded, and the rain clouds beat drums.

Strangely running through the symphonic chords and echoes was a simple air to be whistled by children and blades of glass —

Fly away, Patsy Byrd,

Fly away on your wings.

Fly, fly Patsy,

Fly, far away.

After awhile it was nearly lunchtime. Flying uses up energy, so Patsy landed lightly and went in to eat.

Later she walked to the store for her mother. She walked, because the flying was something special, not to be used for just anything. Besides, even robins use their legs when they shop for worms.

Coming home, she heard the chanting —

Ya, ya, Patsy-watsy.

The old cold despair gripped her before she remembered. "Phooey to them. They don't bother me anymore."

The children ran out from a lane.

Fly away, Patsy-watsy.

"All right," she said, "I will."

Off she flew, up, up and around the houses, darting between chimneys.

The children watched her and began to cry. She was sorry. No one should stay on the ground all the time.

"Come on," she called to them encouragingly. "You can do it too. Everyone can. Come on. Try."

But they wouldn't believe her. They wouldn't try. They stood in a miserable sobbing group fastened to the sidewalk, looking small and lost to powerful Patsy.

"I'd better go away," decided Patsy. "In a few minutes they'll stop crying and go on playing. But I wish they would fly."

The swallows shot over a steeple. "Don't worry," they told her. "Someday when they need to, they'll know how to fly."

Comforted, Patsy soared with the swallows. All the leaves were singing a madrigal, a dancing of many voices in familiar lyrics —

Fly away, Patsy Byrd.

And Patsy Byrd flew away.

Peter Wilson

LOVE IS A SILVER CUP

Through year gains lustre so much more
Love is a silver cup, my dear;
When new is brilliant, yet from year
Through year gains lustre so much more
Than ever we imagined for.

Then if we choose all tarnish to
abolish,
Must needs a little awe, a little care
—and polish.

Thomas E. Baker

EPIC FOR A SMALL ORCHESTRA

The day the Martians landed,
Blasting with their ultra—
Vaporizing things in seconds,
Cities felled, mountains moved by
Subatomic transformations,
The general called me to
His office-heap of de-
Contaminated tin, and
He told me to stop them, even
Gave me a dull sword with
Chipped pearl handle, and
"You can do it boy; I've got
Paper work or I'd help."
But he looked scarcely confident,
And I was nervous.

But David with less or
George with courage slew,
They slew the evil other,
Always conquerable other:
We always win, and
The general knows— but
He was busy, too busy
For mere Martians—
We always win.

They were beyond the river,
A night's ride to go
If horses hurry and careful
Not to lose the way.
The general said he'd call
To see how things were,
To offer his ready advice;
But the lines were cut
Or he was dead and
No one called. And so
I crossed the river at dawn.
My Wellingtons were wet and
I was cold and miserable:
The general said, "You can do it boy"
But I was nervous.

Heroes of old, Achilles, Hector—
Or they died, but they saw Helen;
Paris kissed her in the smoke and flames,
Her robe torn, her eyes
Frightened like a child, but
He was Paris and his arm
Strong as a Trojan bow—
And the gods were watching:
Gods always help.

The general told me to beware,
To be careful of their tricks
Of proffered hands or limbs,
Or whatsoever Martians use
As symbol in their greeting.
But with my sword and with
My strength of heart and
Gods that care for heroes;
With my massive love of men
And simple human beauty,
Rounded head and tapered limbs—
The Martian menace was a sham,
I could be friend and comrade,
Tell them farmers' daughters tales—
But truly I was nervous.

Agamemnon sang the day
The fleet returned, and with
His arm about the slender waist
Of fair Cassandra, homeward
Without benefit of warnings
From lips too beautiful
To speak of murder— homeward
And safe from the arrows of
Trojan foes on the plain.
It was perhaps noon when
I came over the small hill and
Saw the assembled Martians.
If only there were no mud
Spattered on my glasses or
If my Wellingtons were dry or
If the General had called; but
It was now or never, and

I charged down the hill,
Sword slapping against the
Wet sides of the horse and
Silver bridle shining in the sun.
It must have been imposing to
The casual onlooker who didn't
Know that I was nervous.

King Arthur and the others who
Sat round the table had a cause.
There was Good to fight for and
Evil to fight against, there were
Ladies to be won and kingdoms
To conquer, honour to have —
But once there was one who
Couldn't quite see through it all:
He tilted windmills.

Well, when I got there and rode around
Swinging my sword, trying to
Attract attention, no one seemed to
Notice me at all; they just
Pushed buttons and watched lights.
I charged at them, went through them,
And they never saw me, never
Started or cried an alarum—
Just pushed buttons and watched lights.
As I lunged at one small Martian,
It dissipated before my eyes, leaving
Lights for a moment to blink, then
Fade as their Martian masters one by one
Faded, distilling to a memory drop
In the hollow bucket of my brain.

When Orpheus returned from the shadows,
When his mind had had time to clear,
He sat down on a small ledge covered
Over with leaves and lichens, and
He looked long at the blurred horizon.
And when the lumps of pain began to
Melt and flow evenly through his tired body,
He picked a grey lichen from the rock-face,
Sighed once deeply, and moved slowly on.

Bill Hambly

FUGUE FOR A GAS MAN

Fugue for Gas Man is the story of a musician who has attained the highest rung on the music world ladder. He is a jazz trombonist frustrated by the problem of what to do now that he has reached this exalted position in which he finds himself, for he feels that there is now only one direction in which he can move — down. It is his struggle and his life which is being displayed.

Structurally, the novel is very complex for it is patterned on a four part fugue, each part being represented by one of the characters about which the central plot revolves. It is poured into the mold of the twelve bar blues with the added embellishment of an intro at the beginning and its restatement at the conclusion of the piece differing in that the 'blues' feeling building to a climax in the beginning is dissolved during its restatement at the end. The statement of the main theme which sets the story and sketches the main characters follows the first intro. There are twelve chapters corresponding to the twelve bars again broken down into episodes corresponding to the 4/4 pattern of the beats broken yet further into incidents of varying length in relation to the notes they portray. The first line of improvisation is a repeat of this form with the trombone playing the first line matched to the saxophone of the boy playing the second line to give substance to the solo and balance the full tone of the brass. The trombone is always the first line but it is not necessarily this line which is the most important at all times. In the fugue pattern there is a completeness both vertically and horizontally, that is both harmonically and melodically. The third line is the girl already sketched but lying in the background contributing to this wholeness yet not fully developed. The fourth and bottom line is the steady throb of life and society represented by the practical agent. The next chorus moves the girl into the foreground while the boy falls back into her now vacant place. The next chorus is a restatement of the 'head' or main theme and brings all the characters to the foreground. Although the melodic line is basically the same, the harmony is much more modern and the fugue rises to a climax. At this point all the problems have been developed and it is during this chorus that they are resolved and the final mold cast. Thus the restatement of the intro follows here as outlined above and the piece is complete, the dissonance is dissolved, the ear is satisfied.

This extract is from the first intro and is designed to create the impression of blues building within the hero. The problems themselves do not appear until the statement of the main theme, the purpose of the intro even to the style of writing is to set the mood.

— The Author

He walked slowly, this man; he walked without feeling, his horn swinging by his side, rubbing against his thigh. It was dark now, the neon was behind him, solitary streetlamps before and the light was swinging and his soul was swinging and the bustling day's garbage swirled in the gutter and his lip was numb from the pressure of the mouthpiece.

He walked slowly, this man; he walked without looking while his mind wandered and his eyes followed black and white notes skipping across the page — the head, the bridge and the chord changes sliding past the bar stops and his mind ran with them and a fugue was weaving through the blackness, a fugue of life and people, their love and fear and himself sliding through the changes — the changes of life.

Johnny Black walked with his horn and thought about the fugue and all the progressions were there.

Johnny Black walked with his horn and feared the night for there was a fugue, he felt it gathering in the darkness, one of her and Johnny and the boy who haunted his future and the man who haunted his past and all the melodic lines were there. He knew where they came from, he knew where they were, but the last phrase was missing and he could feel it coming, one of blues and minor fifths.

Unconsciously he read the street sign—Madison and Tenth in plain white on black, neon punctuated in rain-guttered dusk — and he turned with the wetness down his neck and moved up Tenth past the liquor store with its advertised specials and the subway was ahead of him and he felt the trains underneath. He stopped at the top of the stairs to get a token from his pocket and then moved on and down. The tunnel was empty and he paused to read a poster calling him to the Town Hall to play a gig for those who paid his salary and for a brief minute he was back in reality but he stood alone and it was just another name in the end of time and he heard a wrong note in the progression which pulled him on down the tunnel and he knew all things were mortal. He moved mechanically in contradiction and thought of someone pulling the strings till the curtain closed for the last time and the last switch cut the house lights and no one was there to see him step through the door to the alley with its garbage and scribbled on walls. He moved on down the tunnel towards the tracks and the steel fence wheels jumping forward clicking monotonous turnstile through the past and running now towards the nearest car, aboard, the doors banging shut, the blurred station plate running faster in opposite direction upon the lavatory yellow of more walls. The sudden emptiness of tunneled humanity; pounding drills and cursing men sweating over tools in the murk of dripping light before the coming of the rails which shrilled in sharpness to the twisting train dipping past the block signals, and Johnny heard the hiss of air and braced himself against the post which held the blinking ceiling to the floor. Minutes ticking always ticking in the endless cycle of a four letter word spelling life and Johnny Black had lost the beauty of the fugue. Maybe he left it under

Tenth when feet echoed on the stairs and sound followed across the trodden floor until he gulped for breath as the doors banged shut. He always felt the doors bang shut and it hurt this man who walked in blue along the city streets.

Johnny stood in the quiet of the subway train with people sitting all about unseeing unbelieving in anything but work tomorrow and tonight was a bitch but it was left behind and above in the stations distance joining to the same geometric patterns of glass and brick and twenty-five blocks of synchronized traffic lights routing the jockeying beams of Chryslers, Oldsmobiles, and checkered cabs with all the chrome removed.

Johnny Black, the quiet one, leaned against the silver post and let it thrust into his back with the rushing of the express on its way uptown. Johnny watched another station emerge from the tunnel still a tunnel and he licked his lip and the hardness pleased him. His tongue touched the slight ring which was forming on his skin and he thought of the years before when he longed for this distinguishing mark of a brass man as a part of himself. How he carried his horn with him everywhere so he could shout his love to the whole world, so he could throw his love in the faces of the studs who looked down at music as something disgusting and beat. Now he didn't care for he had tasted of the lavatory bowl of urbanism and the putrid tang sickened him. Let them look out, for Johnny Black was a big man and Johnny knew a big man who was scared.

So he watched the people leaving their seats and the new ones slipping into them. He always felt he could tell which ones would take which train and where they would get off, and when they stopped again he watched them go unknowing of their brief intrusion on his life and he waited to see if he was right. Johnny knew the city and he knew where all the people lived. Johnny knew the city and he'd learned the way in which they lived for he'd rubbed against them all and their dirt and their perfume lingered in his mind. Where the hell were they all going? Many times had he pondered this, the city never still and blaring juke boxes replaced the luring of the piper's strain. Now, there was a soul brother who could blow with the best. And behind the lights what scandal, what love what life? Let a bottle crash to the floor in the room next door when Johnny was trying to sleep and Johnny would reach for the bottle neck and let the other look out, for Johnny was a big man and Johnny knew a big man who was scared.

They had stopped again — this must be the fourth time, yes it was Linear Station. Johnny let his eyes wander across the platform. There were a couple of young spook cats about fourteen years old wailing up a storm near the middle of the train. Their fingers were snapping to the offbeat of a tempo which was pretty high up and the harmony was a gas. A few people had stopped to watch them, more out of curiosity than appreciation and Johnny thought of the orators on their boxes in Hyde Park when he had been gigging around off Shraftsbury Avenue back in 54. He wondered if that old man with the angle irons who'd build a

house a minute was still being heckled on Sunday afternoons. But these young kids, they were something else and silently he wished them luck. For a brief second the fear was forgotten and the blues were gone and a major chord was written in the progression, the dissonance had been dissolved.

They were moving again and the local was still sitting on the other track with its doors open and Johnny had forgotten to watch the people. So the train was back within the tunnel in the tunnel and it was black outside. In here there was light and people who had suddenly become aware of each other and Johnny looked on in quiet. He'd seen it before and he'd see it again but for the moment it was amusing for the drunk was riding the trains and he'd found a victim. This cat up further in the car had a beard and he looked quite good in it, a full beard carefully trimmed. At first he looked like a pseudo on his way to a party but he was dressed too nice. Johnny knew people and he knew this cat was no stud. He was taking the rap gently, talking with the bum, humouring him and Johnny heard the conversation. The people were smiling at the drunk's antics but Johnny was listening to this cat who was eloquently grinding the bum into the floor and Johnny knew this cat was no stud and Johnny was smiling too. Then the train began to slow and it was Johnny's stop and he moved towards the open door and the cat with the beard moved towards the door and the drunk turned towards an American soldier while the people smiled and hoped he'd stay a little further away.

The train was stopped now and the doors were sliding open and Johnny walked into someone rushing in through the doors. Johnny jumped and swung fast the trombone case coming up to watch your ass mac and it was over as fast as it happened and the bearded cat was gone and Johnny stopped until he was all alone and the blues were back, for Johnny was a big cat and Johnny knew a big cat who knew not what he feared.

Alone with himself walking down the corridors of life, no family no friends no love but his music and that filled the emptiness and Johnny walked slowly his love swinging by his side. He knew this time there was light up ahead but a light had burned out in the corridor and for so many steps it was darker here but Johnny didn't really notice for the blues were here and he was just walking onward until the light. There was a gate then through which he stepped and a flight of steps and Johnny was all wrong for the light was behind him in the tunnel and Kleen Street was dark. He stopped out of the tunnel into the rain and the wind and moved quickly down the street into the shadowed doorway. His horn he leaned against the wall and he stood there watching the rain on the quiet street. He tapped a cigarette from his crumpled package and wished he was back in Canada where they put them in boxes which were easier on the cigarettes. He wished he was anywhere where the sun was shining even here tomorrow after the rain but then the people still walked too fast and if he was in New York they all walked with a limp so what the

hell, he might as well go home to bed and sleep for a few years like the bears do and then he'd wake up and everything would be different. Sure it would, another day, more trouble and he'd be thinner just like the bears were but they stuffed themselves before they went to bed so maybe he should try that but the thought of food nauseated him so he stood there and smoked his cigarette.

He leaned against the wall and stared into the sky and there was nothing to see but he could hear the rain. Johnny Black flicked away his cigarette and watched it arch through the blackness into the silence of the rain-soaked street. Johnny didn't stand there any longer for it was getting early and he needed to get his sleep. So he stopped back into the rain, out of darkness into darkness and walked on down the street. At first he side-stepped all the puddles and it was like a simple little game that children play but children never got this tired so he gave it up and walked right through them.

Johnny used to like to talk with himself as he walked along but that was long ago. He liked to think and let his mind wander with him and his thoughts would fall to the tapping of his soles on the sidewalk and the puddles he used to skip between would set up a syncopated rhythm with the sidewalk cracks looming up as the bar stops and his eyes were just beyond the next crack so the game wasn't as childish as it seemed. But now he just walked, just walked and walked and the first corner came and went and the street lights glimmered in the darkness. He walked to the second and the third and the lights were dirty yet it was just as bright because the sun would soon be up and Johnny knew it was close to five o'clock. He turned now away from the dawn and he was on Dumaur Street at the 800 block and he knew every alley and every doorway even if they all did look the same. He often wondered how he ever managed to find the right door when he staggered along this stretch with a multitude of V.O., beer and Scotch rumbling in his stomach. Matter of association and a shrug of his shoulder was his answer and he was thinking about that now so he suddenly realized that he hadn't really changed and stopped thinking even if he did believe it was bad to think. Bad to think too much I guess. Hell I'll soon be home and up those stairs and maybe I'll have a cup of coffee and pull down all the blinds and take off my clothes and lie on the couch if I picked up all the crap I left there when I went to work yesterday and a little bit of something would sound good, something relaxing like the Brandenburg Concertos or a little of the M.J.Q. or even something way out like Guiffre's Travlin' Light or something and . . . where the hell is my door . . .

So he stopped walking now and began climbing until he reached the third floor and down the hall and the smell of greens not the mustard stuff because that was too bitter and he rattled the lock a little getting it open and he stepped into his room. It was a swinging little pad this with his dishes piled beside the sink all neat like because Johnny was a real neat cat even if they weren't washed. The livingroom had the blinds

pulled down and it was real dark and cozy like when the turntable was spinning and the sounds were booming out of the Legato speakers and he could lie on the couch with just a soft blue light to filter the music through the apartment. Man it was a crazy scene and Johnny had nice taste in furniture and clothes and women and they really dug this boy and there were a lot that would like to make this scene but Johnny's taste was too good and his ideals were too high for all but one to fill and he hadn't found that chick yet. He'd been looking for a long time, never finding, until he just gave up in disgust which was the right thing to do if he had have thought about it and his ideals didn't get lowered in the process, they just got better.

He made the coffee and poured himself a double from the decanter which also stood beside the dirty dishes on the sink. He was blue so he played something blue. Ella on the Duke Ellington Songbook and it was nice and it came out balanced and soft and he floated about the apartment not tired now and it wasn't the coffee that kept him awake just the thought that if he went to bed now it would be around four when he woke up and that would mean an hour to kill before Darling called and he couldn't go out until the self-centred overly patronizing society contact did call and the hell with him because agents sure could be a drag. Bob Darling was a nice guy and a real friend but Bob Darling liked money and Bob Darling thought a little time on the road would be good publicity and he wanted to talk to Johnny about it, and if you'd met Johnny you'd know he was about as interested as he was in eating rotten eggs for breakfast at four in the afternoon. . . .

Bill Hambly

OPUS DE BYSSHE

Off beat, after beat,
Inroads in the sand,
And the water laps delightfully
By offshore breezes fanned,
And the on beat, forward beat
Recourses it to sea,
As the water runs returns to one
All tribulations flee.

He lies upon a marble slab,
The goddess lies beneath,
And I've heard tell of Oxford lads
Who decorate with wreaths—
The on beat, after beat
A heart that would not burn,
But the body cast upon the beach
Lies dormant in an urn.

Paul Jones AT SEA

In spite of the fan, the Mess deck was hot and David felt like taking another stroll on deck. He got up, stretched himself, made sure his kit-bag was still secure, put on his overcoat and Plimsolls and went to the upper deck. A cold wind was blowing and the sea was far from smooth but rolled against the ship with a slow breaking menace so that gobbets of spray hung illumined in the light for a brief moment before they fell on the deck or back into the sea.

A few couples from the officers deck were forcing their way along, laughing as each sudden dip swung them to bulkhead or rail. They barely spared him a glance, each couple warm in their own cocoon of friendship and excitement. David felt very lonely. Perhaps if he had not failed the Officer Selection Board he too might have been one of those young officers. He walked to the forward part of the deck; this was glass-panelled and he could look out to where, scarcely to be seen, the bows ironed through the water. He thought he was alone, then he heard a movement behind him and, turning, saw an army girl sitting on a seat and peering excitedly through the glass.

"Quite a night," he ventured.

"Yes," she said. She scarcely looked at him as she said it, she seemed so rapt in the view of darkness, spray and occasional rain.

"Do you like the sea?" he asked.

She turned to him and smiled shyly as though she were a trifle ashamed that her absorption and excitement should be so obvious.

"I always have done, at home I always used to take the ferry on stormy days."

"Where's home?"

"Liverpool, can't you tell by my voice? I'm a proper scouse, lived there all my life."

She turned to look at the night once more, as though there were no more to be said, but David, feeling bolder than usual, was not inclined to let the conversation drop so easily. For the moment, however, he could think of nothing worth saying; so pretending that he too was enthralled by the sight of ample wetness, he turned to watch the play of dim light upon driving rain and the enclosing darkness. His wits seemed lost, a thousand gallantries sprang to mind, and then receded into oblivion when he tried to focus them. Impatience at his own stupidity enfolded him, the girl might go as others had gone; seeking more lively company. At school, David had never understood how it was that companions easily worsted in the debating chamber could with so little effort worst him in more important pursuits. While he stood tongue-tied, some oaf, capable of nothing but the destructive playing of Rugger, could sweep off the girl David had shyly been paying court to all eve-

ning. But now the world, up to then so hard, had relaxed; given him a ship, a girl, and a night so stormy that no one was likely to interrupt them, given him everything but the courage to use these things. He mentally backtracked over the conversation, it was scarcely good raw material but it would have to do.

"Is Liverpool the nearest," he paused to swallow, "I mean is Liverpool the nearest you've been to the sea?"

Startled, she looked at him as though surprised that he was still there.

"Yes," she said, and smiled defensively. "I suppose you think I'm silly?"

For the first time it dawned on David that she was as shy as he was, and the knowledge gave him confidence.

"Well, now you've got four weeks of it."

"Yes," her tone was that of a child finally granted a treat desired for years. She turned away, closed her eyes and then opened them again.

"Oh! I think it's wonderful."

Wonderful! David peered forward, trying to make out what was so impressive about the sight of darkness, and thrown spray. Now that he looked, now that he allowed an always strong imagination to have full rein, he saw that there was something awe-inspiring in the sight of this ship, thrusting forward, seeking a harbour in far Singapore. Even as he felt something of the girl's unaffected pleasure, he began to despise himself for entertaining such a commonplace feeling. He had been taught that emotion was sophistication; to be uplifted by Bartok correct; to enjoy a play was the mark of intelligence but that to enjoy an ordinary movie as opposed to a foreign one was an indictment that one lacked the finer feelings. Dismayed, he felt himself being moved by the girl's enthusiasm, and then he saw how to make use of it. The idea struck him suddenly, it was so simple, so direct that before he could be afraid he had asked her.

"Would you like to go down to the bows?"

An emotion, older and more genuine than any other, moved within him. She turned to him eagerly, and then her face fell and she looked away over the side.

"We're not allowed to, our officer told us."

They were both silent, both reminded that this was still the army and many things were "not allowed." Now the girl looked a little cold; it was so obvious that her earlier excitement had evaporated, and David himself began to feel chilled even through his thick battledress. A seagull swung in from the gloom and out again so suddenly that they were both startled. The girl clutched his arm for a second.

"That was a shock, poor thing, it must have been lost!"

David sought to cheer her, dredging up half remembered facts.

"They don't get lost, know their way like radar."

She got up to go, and eagerly, too eagerly, David bent forward to detain her.

"Can I see you tomorrow?"

It was a mistake, he knew that as soon as he had said it. Her face automatically assumed a coquettish expression. The expression she had used to tantalise a hundred boys at the local Palais de Danse.

"I don't know, I've got a lot of boy friends on the ship."

She waited expectantly for the smart rejoinder. David blushed and muttered something inaudible. All at once the gulf had widened between them, he could not cross it; he did not know how. She waited a second, surprised, and then—

"I must go now, good night."

She turned, smiled briefly and then disappeared round the corner. David was left to himself. "Anyway, she wasn't my type," he thought, but he felt disappointed. "There'll be others," but he couldn't quite believe it.

An officer appeared, his arm round a girl; he stopped when he saw David and laughed wryly. They hesitated for a moment, and David, taking his cue, got up and left. He heard their feet patter behind him as they ran to the seat; he heard the officer say "Obliging fellow" and the girl's laugh; he was aware of the silence then and knew they had settled down in each other's arms.

"If only," he thought as he made his way back to the troopdeck. "If only I hadn't failed that selection board."

Bill Hambly

DIRECTION

Youth talk of death,
Old men of youth,
But one who dies first lives.
In time perhaps
We yet may find
The converse too this gives.

On every road
There is a fork
Hills don't go just one way.
There is no wave
That runs ashore
Which does not run away.

There is no length
Which can't be laid
The other way around.
But say to him
Who argues this,
"The apple hit the ground."

Elma Beall

DEBUT

Out there, a multitude of white, empty faces rose and fell to the rhythmic hum of impatient conversation. Russell stepped back dizzily from his stage-door peep-hole. His heart was loud in his ears, he felt sick to his stomach, and his hands — long and white with nervous, lithe fingers — were wet. Such a little boy he looked, and was; yet there was something in his face which made me wonder if he had ever laughed. Watching him proudly, the mother said, to herself, for the thousandth time, "The face of a genius!" The genius shifted his feet in their too heavy, too new shoes, and wondered if all great artists had felt this way before their first solo recital. Then it was on him in a rush: the bright last-minute smiles and excited whispers of mother and teacher, and somehow he had walked alone to the centre of the stage, bowed to the Great Unknown, and seated himself at the piano.

At first the keys felt alien and slippery (or was it his own fingers?) but gradually the great Prelude began to swell with power and he felt that peculiar exaltation that comes when you know it is the music that is playing and you are simply its guide. Yet within you, it would be formless and blind; you are a necessary condition. The pattern unfolded; the Prelude gave way to the Fugue, and Russell did not know whether he were good; only that it was good.

Then it happened. He got stuck.

It was as simple as that; as simple as a needle caught in a groove. He had reached the point where the introductory theme is repeated and then leads into the inevitable conclusion. But the end would not come! Instead, the uncontrollable fingers returned to the middle passage. Russell fought to keep his panic down, to keep thinking "they'll never notice, it will be all right this time," but again the music reached the point of no return, and again it returned. He was caught, helpless, in a vise growing tighter, tighter; off-stage, his mother was sobbing into her hands and his teacher was making frantic, idiotic mouthings. Suddenly, from the murmur of embarrassed agony rising out there, came that fatal whisper; "Poor little kid!" One terrible wrench and his fingers were free; he was off the stool and running, running, past mother and teacher, out the great oak door, into the impassive night.

You never know, at times like this, how long you have been running or where you are going, and you never care. The heart seems to be trying to catch up to the madly pounding feet — or is it the other way around? — and each breath forces its burning way through a swelling throat. Russell went faster, faster; he knew he should go back, but the thought of his mother's tears, his teacher's pained reproach, the unbearable contemptuous pity of them — he could not face it!

And he kept on running.

Elma Beall

GREENER GRASS

A fine-featured and rather pale young man was striding purposefully along the dirt road which ambled its way past stretches of lustrous black soil and multicoloured crops towards a sedate old farmhouse. The purposeful air was a sham; he was actually feeling resentment at being dragged from his beloved textbooks, and some apprehension as well. A letter had recently arrived from home, bearing the information that an old friend of his father's was living on the outskirts of the small university town, and the request (or command, to be more accurate) that he should deliver the paternal regards. His ensuing apprehension stemmed from a natural reticence; the resentment was more difficult for him to explain rationally. He knew he could easily spare the time from his studies, but he preferred to spend his idle moments wandering through the library or plunging into some abstruse discussion with one or two bearded, bespectacled fellow-philosophers. Ah well, the visit had been arranged; he might as well get it over with. The young man stalked morosely around the offensive pile of manure in his path, oblivious to all the warm vitality of the spring-quickened land.

Alexander MacRae, sitting in his favourite armchair in what he termed the "back-kitchen," felt a trickle of uneasiness along his backbone. To have to entertain some unknown youngster was bad enough, but one of those upstart young college boys with their disconcerting ability to make an utter fool out of a fellow. "Ach man, it willna last forever," he muttered consolingly and shifted his attention to the panorama of farmland framed by his window. The unbelievable greenness of pasture, the golden undulation of grain, the gentle rise and fall of the distant hills, like the breathing of a sleeping child: these impressions blended into the pastoral symphony which never failed to calm and refresh him. But suddenly there was a discordant note: he had sighted the figure of his friend's son approaching the house. MacRae's uneasiness returned in full force; he rose and walked to the door feeling abjectly inferior, and yet almost truculent.

"So you're Bill Pierce's son, are you?"

"Yes, I... I understand you and my father served in the same regiment during the war."

"Aye, a long time ago, that. But come away into the front room. It may be a wee bit dusty; I dinna seem to use it much. Fumbling apologetically, MacRae ushered his visitor into the unfamiliar gloom of his "company" sitting-room. Young Pierce suppressed a superior smile as he noted the over-stuffed furniture, the frowning daguerrotypes and the inevitable "Bless This House" sampler. But as he inhaled the strange musty air his nervousness returned.

"Have you lived here long, Mr. MacRae?" he inquired formally.

"I came out after the war, in '46. I've been on this farm ever since then."

"You must be very fond of the country."

"Fond? Och, it's... it's..." MacRae floundered helplessly as he always did when he tried to put his love for the land into words. "I wouldn't live anywhere else," he finished lamely.

"You are fortunate to have found happiness so easily." The condescension in the young man's tone was unmistakable, but MacRae was at a loss for a comeback.

"I suppose you've found your happiness at the university learning from all them books," he suggested almost wistfully.

"Well, I wouldn't call it happiness, exactly. It's stimulating and exhilarating, but there's always the horrible frustration of knowing you can never read all you want to, and of trying to untangle the conflicting ideas of all the great philosophers and formulate your own concepts. It's exhausting and often depressing, but of course it's the only kind of life... for me," Pierce added hastily.

"Why on earth am I telling all this to him, as if he could understand?" he thought angrily, saying aloud, "Do you read much?" The question was abrupt, but it was a moment before old Alexander could collect his thoughts enough to reply. He had heard of students like that, but had always refused to believe they actually existed.

"Read?" he murmured vaguely. "I read the Bible sometimes, and the newspapers. I never seemed to have much time for learnin' whn I was a lad, so guess I haven't the habit."

"Not enough time? Why, what did you do all day?" Pierce exclaimed incredulously.

"Well, there was a good bit to do on our farm and in my free time I was always away on a ramble somewhere climbin' on the cliffs or fishin' the loch. Or I'd lay on the heather in the sun, just watchin' the clouds and smellin' the earth. Matter o' fact, I still do." This last was spoken with a proud defiance. Boyhood memories had loosened the old man's tongue and he wanted to communicate the wonders he had seen and felt.

"But ye canna ken what I mean if ye've never bided on a farm yourself," he went on, lapsing into the familiar dialect of years ago, and speaking now more to himself than to Pierce. At that moment the latter was thinking, "The original child of the soil — it's really incredible. How Rousseau would have loved him!" After this exchange there was little to say; both felt defensive and ashamed to having exposed their feelings. It was with a sense of escape that Pierce left after a few concluding formalities, and with no less relief that MacRae saw him depart.

He stood once more by the kitchen window, an old man surveying the countryside which had brought back the peace and happiness of his childhood.

"How in the name of Heaven can a lad shut himself up that way and

spend his life filling his brain wi' the ideas of a lot of dead men?" he mused. Yet the remembrance of that pale intense face, the glowing eyes, and the power of verbal expression which had left him stupefied came back to disturb him.

"I never had the chance to study," he thought. "I've been slaving on the land all my life. I wouldna want to be him, and yet . . . I dinna ken . . ." The farm, his pride and joy, seemed suddenly barren and lifeless in the evening darkness; he turned from the window, sank down at the table and dropped his face into hands that were suddenly trembling. "I'm old," he thought, "and what have I got left? I'm old; I've sweated my life away, and what have I got to show for it all?" And as he sat there, the loneliness of the old house closed around him; he gave a sob of despair.

Pierce almost ran along the road leading to the college. He could hardly wait to get back to his solitary room and lose himself once more in the flood of criticisms and theories which the old scholars were always waiting to pour forth. "How in the Hell can the old fellow be so dead to the meaning of things?" he wondered. But he recalled, in spite of himself, the peaceful rapture on MacRae's face as he reminisced about his childhood pastimes, and the snug serenity of the humble little farmhouse. "Why might'n' I wind up in a worse situation than he?" the young man thought. "Now that my mind has started this endless journey, where will I find a resting place for it when I'm old and useless? What does he find just by looking at the dirt around him that I haven't found after years of sharing the thoughts of the greatest sages of all time?" For the first time he felt the full destroying heat of his flaming brain, and there seemed to be a strange taste — like ashes — in his mouth.

Elma Beall

A SENSELESS SPECULATION

Lowliest of the low, the worm:
Mindless, sightless thing
Of the earth, moves ring by ring
In varying form — his name a term
Of revulsion and scorn. To the world he can bring
Only his own, begot
In sexless act — what a thought!
And yes — does he, too, know it's Spring?

Ian Pemberton '58

THE GARGOYLE

Claude Spenser ran one hand through his thick, blond hair and regarded the typewriter in front of him with distaste. Four days ago in Paris, those marvelously grotesque gargoyles had seemed an ideal subject for a new story, but now, back in his New York apartment, he had his doubts. Sure they were horrible, all right, terrifying enough to scare the wits out of superstitious peasants in the Middle Ages. But they were well-known now; thousands of tourists saw and accepted them every year. No, Claude decided, this topic was not for him. He cursed softly at his premature enthusiasm of a few days before when he had gaped at the ugly creatures which had decorated Notre Dame for centuries. When Claude was in a mood like this, only a long walk could cure him. He seized his overcoat from the sofa where he had carelessly thrown it. Within a few minutes, he was in the street, walking briskly in the general direction of Broadway. The cool autumn wind felt pleasant on his face.

Claude walked without noticing where he was going, so concerned was he about a new source of inspiration for his writing. Before long, he had entered a neighbourhood which was unfamiliar to him. It was a very old section of the city on the lower east side, a place of narrow lanes and ancient, overhanging tenements. Claude first became aware of his surroundings when he heard footsteps following closely behind him. As he nervously turned his head, he was rather surprised to see that the street behind him was completely empty. Dusk was just beginning to descend, bringing with it an ominous silence which Claude had never before experienced. These streets, even at this hour, usually abounded with life. Gradually, as if coming from far away, Claude's now sensitive ears heard a strange sound, like the wings of an enormous bird. "My imagination is getting the better of me," he declared aloud. A few blocks away, an irate motorist leaned heavily on his horn. The familiar sound was welcome to Claude and he turned himself in that direction, noticeably quickening his pace. The footsteps behind him began again as suddenly as they had ceased before. Claude felt violently ill; he wanted to run but something seemed to restrain him. Somewhere just ahead was a main street with people, traffic, lights, and, above all, security from this thing which was following him. The sound of wings had been growing nearer, until now it hung over him, pounding in his ears, filling him with sheer terror. Claude knew that he would never reach the comfort and safety of that main street; he knew it even before he looked up at the sightless eyes above him. The hideous face was very familiar, as were the huge

claws, and the bat-like wings. Claude remained alive and sane just long enough to feel those talons on his chest.

The doctor shook his head. "Are you sure that's the whole story?" he asked the young police officer. "Sure, I'm sure," the officer replied, slightly indignant that his word should be questioned. "I heard someone yelling. I ran over to where a little crowd had gathered and there was this old guy dead on the sidewalk." The doctor went home late that night and slept extremely badly. For several weeks afterwards, sleep did not come easily. When he did manage to doze, he was troubled by dreams of a young man whose face was a mask of Hell. Although the man's body had not a mark on it, his hair was as white as the purest snow. It was no wonder that the police officer mistook him for an old man.

On the Cathedral of Notre Dame, the gargoyles, which had so impressed a promising young author, continued their timeless vigil and patiently awaited their next victim.

Andrew Little '57

SO SUDDENLY SO

Dawn days of light life
In worlds won by older hands
And rivers of such simple blue.
Clear days of freedom fine,
A freedom not really free
Because we fools,
Blind,
Couldn't see
And itched
With a vague yearning which
Idiot optimists
And senile old idealists
Imagine
From within their ancient, altered cerebellums.

And while we for freedom's winter waited,
Our mouths slack open, our spirits elated...
There fell the crushing blow,
From truth, so suddenly so.
Then staggering along a while,
Alone, but in Indian file,
We found a river of now not so simple black
And puking from the civilization rack
Yet thirsty too, from the blazing sun —
We gratefully drank its drops — one by one.

Andrew Little '57

T.V. QUIZ

Precisioned platoons of passive people
Call out with the shoreline echo of a thousand hands;
Call out
So unrebelling,
So sleeping,
Dormant,
Undisturbed.
Yet call out, call out, call out
In answer to nothing
And because not of pain
Or fear
Or even boredom.
But of habit —
Of rigid, ridiculous habit.

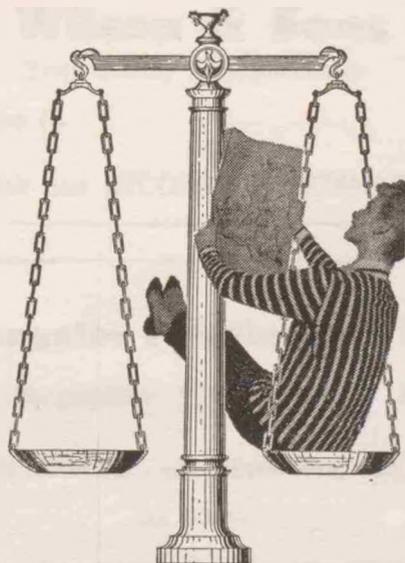
The coddled and cuddled at home watch,
Eyes glued to an electronic box.
They signify maternal all approval
As emcee after emcee deify the usual.

Watch
As life's watch
Ticks off seconds with timeless monotony.

Neil Tracy '28

THE SONNET

The dapper dandy with the trim black beard,
Wrought out his fourteen lines to suit his tune;
Of pope, duke, minstrel, painter, or buffoon,
The hawk on wrist, the black boar newly speared,
Brown girls among the vines, their red lips smeared,
Lisa's green eyes, Guilia beneath the moon,
A furtive love that broke and passed too soon
The clay that God breathed on, the gods have sheared - - -
Our father, Petrarch, with his tuneful band
Of duke, clerk, painter, singer, renegade,
They knew the tale was written in the sand,
Death held the counter when the throw was made;
That love and death walk ever hand in hand,
And wine and wormwood on our lips was laid.



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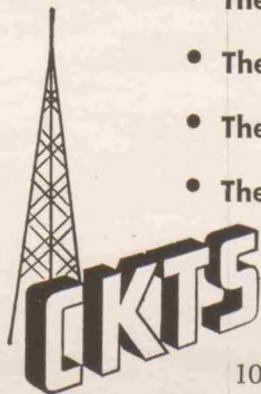
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