Malahini, Deen; Biographer, Turli; The Grey House, Karlin; The Post-American Way, Dixon; Nosedive, Wylder; Poems, Perkins; Hitherto Shalt Thou Come, Regan; The Victors Can Also Be Vicious, Simon; Wino, Armstrong; Disaster Van, Merriam; Courage Lost, June; Ultimatum, Simanton.
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Malahini

By TOM DEEN

The boy could not have been more than nineteen. His sunans hung on him loosely and his small overseas cap was cocked back at a jaunty angle across his dark hair. He stood on the highway about halfway between Wahiwa and Honolulu, and every now and then he would glance anxiously down the paved road. Whenever a car came into view shooting down the road toward the city, he would pick up the small khaki-colored kit bag from beside his feet and glance beseechingly first at the car and then in the direction of the city. Car after car whizzed by and after each one he shrugged his thin shoulders and mopped the sweat from his face with a rusty-colored handkerchief. He waited for an hour; then he picked his bag up and set off down the road with a determined stride. He had only gone a few feet when a huge truck roared up from behind him and pulled to a halt in the loose dirt at the edge of the road. A beefy faced corporal stuck his head from the window and bawled, "Come on, get in, I'm in a hurry."

The kid's thin dark face lit up as he ran to the cab and clambered into the seat. He tucked his bag neatly between his feet and looked anxiously over at the driver, who was rummaging under the wheel, staring fixedly at the road ahead. He cleared his throat and turned his eyes toward the open window at his elbow. As far as he could see, the fields wound endlessly up one gentle slope and down another. The bright green rows of pineapples made clean, even lines across the red soil. In the distance, some tall peaks rose smoothly into the clean sky, a bright metallic sky, barren of even the tiniest whisk of cloud.

Now they passed through a small clump of huts. Here and there curious brown faces peered up from a doorstep or from a window and the boy smiled as they passed a group of women talking and laughing in the shade of a fruit market. For a minute Danvers Corners on Saturday night flashed into his mind, with his mother and the other women gossipping in front of the co-op vegetable market, Danvers Corners back in the States... so far away.

The corporal must have seen the smile. "You can't trust those Gooks," he said.

"Why not?"

"Why not!—Pretty good reason why not. Half of 'em are Japs. That's why not."

"But aren't they loyal?"

"Say, sonny, I can see that you haven't been here long. I was here during Pearl Harbor. I never
want to see anything like that again. They rounded up a bunch of Japs that day, and let me tell you, those dirty bastards won't give anymore secrets away. Why, down at the North Gate they had a radio, mind you, directing those pilots all the time. The boys went in there and let 'em have it. There wasn't any time for questions that day. Don't ever trust one of those Japs. You can't tell what they're thinking. Why, they'd just as soon knife you as look at you.'

The kid had turned a dull red as he listened to the driver. In his mind he was cursing himself. Couldn't he ever fit in? Did he always have to say the wrong thing?

"I didn't know," he stammered.

"That's OK; by the time you've been here as long as I have, you'll know."

The flush on the boy's face subsided as the truck roared on down the road, but he had moved as close to the door as possible, leaving a wide expanse of greasy seat between the driver and himself. He tried to shove the one-sided conversation from his mind, the conversation that kept churning around in his head calling him a fool, an ignoramus a... what was the word the Hawaiians used?... a malahini. He glanced quickly around at the driver, afraid that he might somehow guess that he had been using a word that he had no right to use.

The corporal's intuitive sense must have deserted him for he was still hunched over the wheel, oblivious to anything except the shining lane extending out in front of them.

They passed the naval houses and the boy's eyes clung hungrily to the bright green roofs and the multicolored flowers that sprang out of the trim, neat lawns. Ahead a huge pineapple canning factory hove into view and he felt a sudden warm, friendly feeling as he recognized a familiar name strung down the towering smoke-stack. He was back in the kitchen at home. It was early morning and the sun was streaming through the window over the sink, falling across the brown and yellow squares on the floor, making them warm and alive. The room was filled with the rich fragrance of the cake on the table. And there was his mother bending over it, smoothing the icing, first on this side and then on that... and the empty can with its bright label... "What?"

"Where do you want to get off?"

"Oh. Are you going near the 'Y'?"

"I can let you off about a block from there."

"That'll be swell."

He looked out and saw that they were already entering the business section of the city. On either side of them the tall white buildings looked cool and remote, indifferent to the throngs that surged through the street. His heart quickened as he looked at the crowds. Surely out of all those people, and there were so many of them... maybe... maybe..."

"Well, here you are."

"Thanks, thanks a lot!"

"That's OK. So long."

The truck pulled away from the curb and the boy looked around trying to orient himself. He was standing next to some kind of amusement park and the air was filled with cries of "Step lively! Come right in!" and all of the other familiar phrases. His eyes lit up and he grinned to himself as he walked over to the entrance and
laid a coin down. The inside of the place was bleak. He could see at once that all of the color was on the outside. He looked in vain for a fire eater. There had been a great fire eater at the fair that last year... but that was so long ago. There was a lot of noise in this one and not much else, except a few greasy looking people and a messy collection of junk. He tossed a few hoops at the pegs and missed. He put a dime into a machine that was labelled "Moviette" but it was too light and it was impossible to see anything on the screen. He hitched up his bag under his arm and edged out the side exit.

He was in a different street now, and across the way the big white front of the Army & Navy YMCA loomed up out of a mass of great dark trees. He knew it was the "YM" because a huge white banner with big red letters hung lifelessly across the front of the place proclaiming its name and welcoming everyone to come in. He walked across the street and up the stone steps. A few soldiers and sailors lounged around the door.

Inside it was noisy and dirty. Cigarette smoke hung in the air, motionless. All manner of rubble littered the floor. There was a sort of mouldiness about the whole place. Halfway up one wall a sickly yellow bulb illuminated a sign that said that this place was your home away from home.

There was a line in front of one of the desks and he got into it. It moved pretty slow, about three cigarette's worth, and when he got to the desk he found that he could have a bed in the auditorium that night at nine if he wanted to give them fifty cents. He signed the register and gave them the money. They gave him a little card that

had a map of the city on one side and the locations of all of the army medical stations on the other. He flushed and quickly crammed it into his pocket. There was a window down the hall that had a sign that said "check," so he walked slowly over to it, shoved his bag in, gave the undernourished-looking individual a dime and got a ticket which he carefully tucked into his billfold. He walked back into the lobby, looked around hesitantly and made his way back into the street.

He had to hurry as he walked along the sidewalk. The crowd caught him up and swept him along. He could see that for the greater part the crowd was made up of servicemen from one branch or another. He ducked in and out, tossing a salute at first this officer and then at the next. It finally became too tiresome and he quit. Nobody else was doing it anyway.

As he passed one shop window his eye was caught by a pile of bright kerchiefs spread out in a brilliant array. He turned and fought his way through the mob and went into the shop. After a long time he was waited on. He told the girl what he wanted and she draped a half dozen of the flimsy things along her arm and wriggled impatiently as he made his choice. He did take a long time but he knew how important it would be to his mother. He could just see her as she unwrapped the package and held its contents up for the family approval. "All the way from Hawaii... ."

Finally he picked one of Chinese red and gulped when she named the price. He had to have it, though, so he dug the ten dollars from his wallet and handed it across the counter.
Sometime around noon he went into a cafe and waited, playing a pinball machine, until there was a seat. When the waitress came he looked up at her hopefully, but she looked over his shoulder as he ordered and set his meal before him with studied indifference.

In the afternoon he went to a movie and when he got out he found his way to a bar that was, by some miracle of chance, open. The place was filled with soldiers in various stages of intoxication, all laughing, singing or shouting in order to be heard over the din. When he did get a drink he had trouble identifying it until a gregarious individual across the table told him that it was pineapple brandy. The first one tasted pretty awful but after the second it tasted fair. He started to feel gay and carefree; he even struck up a conversation with the guy on the other side of the table. Everything was going to be all right.

When he tried to order a fourth drink he found that the bar was closed. They had run out of brandy. He picked up the brown paper parcel from the seat beside him and made his way out into the night. Outside the air was cool and clean. It was dark. He walked on and on until he suddenly realized that he was terribly tired. He looked around him. The street was strange and everything was quiet. He must have wandered out into the residential district. He walked on a bit farther until he came to a bench set back up under the low, hanging trees that bordered the sidewalk. With a grateful sigh he threw himself down on it and closed his eyes.

As he sat there the events of the day danced through his mind in a jumbled, hazy profusion.

He thought of all of the people he had seen, thousands of them and not one had seen him... no one. Suddenly he went rigid. Someone else was sitting down next to him. He opened his eyes and peered into the dark. At first he could see nothing. Then the whirling darkness resolved into the dim figure of a girl.

"Hello." His voice sounded far off, strange...

"'Ello." A warm friendly voice that edged nearer.

He sat still, not moving a muscle, scarcely daring to breathe. There was a strange tightness in his throat. He tried to speak but could not.

The girl slid off the bench and grasped one of his hands in hers, so small and warm. She rose and followed, his heart pounding with sickening violence.

They were walking along the beach now. He could hear the soft lapping of the water and see the phosphorescent glow along the edge. He hesitated once and the small hand clasped his more tightly and pulled him along. He was confused and scared. He wondered if it were really he or someone else. He wanted to pull away and yet a strange exciting force pushed him on with frightening urgency.

They came to a small house, and the girl pushed the door open with her free hand and he followed her into the dark interior. She closed the door and released his hand. For a moment he was panic-stricken; then there was a click and the room was flooded with light.

He blinked his eyes and looked across the few feet that separated them. Her round brown face was expressionless; her almond eyes revealed nothing.

"Have you got any money?" He nodded.
"Enough?"
He nodded again, not taking his eyes from her.
She motioned to a couch at the far end of the room and moved toward a curtained door, unfastening her blouse as she went.
He stood there looking at the swinging curtain through which she had just gone, his face strained and his eyes bright. He clenched his fingers into the package that he still clutched in his hand. The paper crackled and tore. He looked down and saw the bright stuff puff out through the hole. The room spun around him and he turned to the door and lunged out into the night, running.
Down on the beach he fell exhausted onto the cool damp ground. He lay there digging his hands into the sand, his shoulders heaving. The sea crept gently up and touched his fingertips, then receded.

Biographer

By IRENE TURLI

He meant to give them only such
A portrait as was bright and clear.
Strangely, when he had told it all
Her essence seemed to disappear.
OTHER and Elly were up now. She could hear them moving around downstairs. She could hear the low murmur of their voices, and the rattle of the dishes. If she kept her eyes shut a little longer, she could pretend that it was just like other mornings and that the rug in her room was not rolled up in a corner with string around it, and her's and Elly's clothes flung on the rocking chair and the foot of bed, instead of in the closet where they belonged. She squeezed her eyes as tightly shut as she could. She kept wondering what kind of day it was outside. If it rained, everything would get wet when the moving-men took it out into the van. If it shone, then it would make it harder to leave.

She rolled over and buried her head under the covers. She pinched herself sharply and grimaced with pain. That will show you, she told herself. Every day since the day three weeks ago when Mother had come home and told Elly and her that they were moving, she had decided to pinch herself every time she thought about moving. She did not want the house to know. The house always knew what she was thinking about. She had been friends with the house ever since they had moved in. She had always made friends with the house they had lived in—especially the ones that Mother and Elly did not like very much—like the one that was painted a pea-green and had the oil burner that never worked and the ceiling that cracked. She Julie, had loved it, because it had looked so unhappy when Mother and Elly openly criticized it to its face and made fun of it when people came over. One day, she had spoken up and said so, and in flash, the house straightened itself and smiled at her gratefully. They had been friends after that. That was when she had invented the pinching game. The house they had moved into after that was shiny and new and prosperous and Mother and Elly sang its praise until it became so unbearably conceited Julie could not bear it and told it so one day when Mother and Elly were not around. "Some day," she told it scornfully "you'll get old and your paint will peel and you'll crack and they'll complain and someday they'll come and tear you down." She uttered the last words in the most solemn tones she could—but it simply shrugged a shoulder and yawned. She felt almost angry enough to chip at the plaster. But she could not bear to hasten its
mountaineer
doom. It came soon enough. The living-room ceiling got a great crack in it in time, and another and another, and Mother and Elly began to complain, and the house began to wear a sullen and desperate look. Julie could not help being secretly glad.

But this house! It was such a lovely house. It was like a gentle gray kitten, and its walls enclosed all the furniture and the books so happily. It was obvious that the people who had lived in it before had loved it for a long time, and that it had been alone, and sad for want of someone to love, and that it was trying very hard to please. Julie encouraged it in every way she could. She teased for a rose-bush to cover up the shingle that had fallen off in front, and put all her toys away when she was through playing so that it would always look neat and bright. Visitors always commented upon its cheerfulness. But Mother and Elly said scornfully that it was quaint, which was all very well if you liked that sort of thing, but they wanted something more modern, thank you. And one day, Mother took them out to a new development and fell in love with a shiny chrome and glass brick house that was so superior it would not even return Julie’s timid how-do-you-do with so much as a nod.

She never told the little house directly, but it knew. She pretended that they were not going to leave it and out of good manners, it let her pretend. As the time drew near, it was hard to say which of them felt the worse. Julie and the gray house. Julie drooped and would not eat and pinched herself black and blue and the gray house listlessly developed cracks in the most obvious places and the 1-burner began to act balky for the first time. Mother and Elly loudly declared they were lucky to be rid of it and rolled up rugs and packed china with renewed vigor. “Julie, get up!” Elly was shaking her. “Come on, the moving men will be here in fifteen minutes. Get dressed and hurry up for breakfast. ‘You're the laziest child sometimes.’”

Julie climbed out of bed, then, so that Elly would go downstairs and leave her alone. She hurried her dressing and even buttoned most of the buttons in the back of her pinafore, so that she would not look at the misery of the walls that were retreating farther and farther from her. When she came downstairs, the moving-men had come. She stood on the landing and watched them, her hand laid protectingly on the trembling wall of the house. She knew now that, somehow, she must reassure it.

Mother and Elly were too busy directing the men to notice how little breakfast she ate. She gulped her milk in a hurry and slid out the back door before either of them would spy her and set her to work helping to strip the house. She ran around to where the juniper bushes were thickest, and crouching under them she put her mouth against the rough gray shingles and told it gently that she was leaving and that she loved it very much. She told it that when she grew up she would come back and live in it forever, and to please not get too many cracks so that they would—well, think it was older than it was—she did not dare say they might tear it down.

She heard them calling but she would not answer. Elly came peering about the corner of the house as she crouched deeper beneath the juniper bushes. She called and called, but Julie would not answer.
Finally she went away. Julie heard her tell Mother that they would pick her up on the second load—she was probably saying goodbye some place. From under the juniper bushes, she heard the moving van roar off, then the higher-pitched whine of their car. Then she and the house were alone.

She crawled from under the bushes and ran around the corner of the house and inside. She stopped at the threshold of the living-room in horror. She had never been in a house when almost all the furniture had been removed—she had always had to go before the dismantling started so that she would not be in the way. A few pieces of newspaper floated idly on the living-room floor. Otherwise it was quite naked. The burner was off, and a damp chill was beginning to pervade the little house.

It seemed to stand there helplessly, and suddenly it seemed to turn away from her with mute reproach. It withdrew, wrapping its arms about itself to hide its nakedness. She sat down on the floor, stunned. Then she slid full-length, face downward, crying into it, begging it to be friends again. But it would not speak to her.

They found her so when they returned an hour later. They thought she was frightened because she had imagined that they had gone off and left her, and they soothed and petted her, but she would not stop. She sat out in the car, crying softly until they turned the key in the lock. She would not look back after they had started—she sat with her hands folded in her lap, staring in front of her, her forehead wrinkled a little as though she were trying to remember something she had lost.
The Post—American Way

By GEORGE I. J. DIXON

THE GREATEST and most powerful organizations in the world, throughout history, have been military machines. Here in America we have in the recent war demonstrated the tremendous power of organization toward military ends. The decisive effect of that military organization in operation cannot be denied. The marks of American Might have touched nearly every country in the world.

The mark of American Might finds a testimonial in the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where we have reached the most recent peak of military organization. No less important than this instant devastation is the individual grave of an American soldier in a forest of Holland, a field in France, a roadside in Germany, or a hole in some jungle.

We are still breathless or confused when we consider military organization. Because a military effort deals either in secrecy or in astronomical figures we have not considered the true importance of mass organization. The fact that American railroads transported a million men a month within the confines of American borders, not counting civilians, means little to us. None of us can picture a million men. Laid end to end, they would create a long line. So what? Neither have we dared to ask how many atomic bombs have been built at the Manhattan project. A single atomic bomb destroyed the city of Hiroshima. At Nagasaki the atomic bomb was a partial failure; it only destroyed half of the city. So what? Just what is a picture of a destroyed city? What is a destroyed city in terms of Missoula, Montana? Or Kalispell? Or Great Falls? Butte? Glendive? How many American soldiers laid end to end would cross the state of Montana from east to west? From North to South? Secrecies and comparisons have transcended human practicality and even human imagination.

At the poles of secrecy and astronomical figures we can unearth distinct reality in tangible form. That distinct reality is a single soldier, a single housewife, a single child, a single worker. Let us look at these singular apexes at the extreme poles and study their relationship to military organization. Purely and simply we find the problems that face you and me, our associations, and those with whom we are not associated except as citizens of a unified nation. In
this sense, the problems that faced us before December 7, 1941, are not the problems that face us today. We cannot, and shall never, return to the old way of life. We are older now. We have lived and died within the confines of our group associations. In an age of potential, almost instantaneous, mass destruction we suddenly find that our immediate group situations within the areas of our direct associations in family, friends, church, and school are inextricably bound to universal unification. We are instinctively aware of this despite our efforts toward imaginary escape from reality. The symbol of this international organization of military power was that of the Allied Nations. It is important to notice that the unity of military might directed us into a unity of nations in the quasi-peace of today.

We have now three significant factors to consider in organization for peace. First is the atomic bomb. Second is the military organizational strength of a nation and third is the combined military strength of several nations. These military factors have forced into being a United Nations Organization. Of even greater significance is the fact that the United Nations Organization has grown out of fear and terror rather than intelligent consideration. The fear and terror are of military organizational potentialities in which the atomic bomb plays an all too important part.

Well, we are the ones who possess the atomic bomb. We also have the greatest potential military organization in the world. In short, we are to be feared; we hold the clubs and all the aces. The very fact of possessing these realities changes potential forces. And there must be change. We will dictate or indicate that change as our organization sees fit.

The American Creed, the American Way of Life, the Good Old Days have all been transcended by the outcome of military operation. We in America possess the atomic bomb and worse weapons. We have also been represented at and condone the trials at Nuernberg which hanged eleven men as criminals. We possess a means of mass destruction. We have outlined means of punishment to restrain criminal actions of war. How can we then feel that with these innovations to society we can revert to the old way of living, that old way that has never been defined?

Our trials at Nuernberg have pointed the finger of death at the criminals in a military war, a military machine that enslaved the peoples of nations and slaughtered six million Jews. We have committed our nation to the court authority of the United Nations. We can never be the same.

Last we commit the crimes of fascists and nazis, we had better examine ourselves. We had better study our post-American Creed, our post-American Way of Life. Are we willing to accept the prophecy of J. Edgar Hoover, in a recent speech to the American Legion, when he states that some day all Americans will have to stand up and be counted? In Germany all the Jews stood up and were slaughtered. They were not Germans. Who is an American? A man who supports an MVA, or a man who opposes an MVA? Is an American a man who supports universal military training, or one who opposes it? Is a man an American who supports lynch law, or one who opposes it? Who shall be among the chosen?
Here, of course, is a broad basis for thinking. However, the broad basis of influences can be narrowed down to our own isolated situation here on the campus. For example, we as a student body have permitted without rebuttal statements like Mr. Hoover's to be made on this campus. We have not asked for an explanation, and we have nourished dissension through our complacency. Our complacency is directed in almost ironic channels. We accept without question the tirade of implications by Mr. George Washington Robnett, arch-Tory speaker at the Missoula Constitution Defenders meeting.

We are students, veteran and non-veteran. We have been exposed to the mass organization of war time. We strained to get out of that type of organization, but we realize that we are not free from it. But do we seek any control over potential mass military organizations? We neither look for, nor assume any degree of leadership in the quest of world peace, although our sensibility forces us to realize that it cannot be attained without organization. I will wager that a greater number of qualified voters in the student body voted for a Homecoming Queen than voted in the state and national elections. And was a Homecoming Queen picked on her merits, or was it because she received the vote of her organization? Is this truly the American Way? What brilliant organizational irony!

It is interesting to note that there is not a single outspoken organization of professional men on our campus that is dedicated to the perpetuation of world peace. There are only two groups on the campus, aggregating a total of hardly more than fifty people, who dare discuss peace. Yet in Chicago there is a movement to give teachers the sack because they proposed certain books as texts. Would a student body such as ours stand behind a teacher? Would the faculty stand behind a colleague? Would anybody take sides at all?

But let's dig into our campus life. Do our literary groups still fiddle around with art for art's sake, or do they emphasize the social issues presented by artists? Do we have any professional groups at all? Are they active? What is the attendance at lectures and programs that deal with national and world issues? Is the organization of student groups of the students or is it manipulated from above? What is the antipathy to thinking on current issues? Why does it exist?

This campus seems to be constructed on a reign of fear. It seems that there exists a group referred to as "They" who will bounce you if you say anything that is not accepted. Or "They" will see to it that you are socially ostracized. "They" have done it before, you know. Will we, as University students some day have to stand up and be counted? In the Post-American way?

Students have not let themselves be heard. The voice of the student has been principally through the pro-temp public relations officers of the University. We have advertised our music department, our forestry school, our business ad department, our University in general. But have we advertised our ideas? Is it because we have no ideas? It is true that the average citizen of Montana feels that University students are a segregated group in society, and therefore no group at all. Once the voice of a former student did speak up, but Dr. Urey's address on atomic war-
fare fell for the most part on deaf ears. But we boast of the fact that he went to this University!

The mere fact that we have men and women becomes potential active organization. We have the men and women, several thousands of them, but little organization. A voice in a mob is an unheard voice. The voice of a group can be heard above a mob. The economic stability and opportunity for which the average student is preparing himself depends upon the stability of the world. How quickly atomic bombs and biological bombs can destroy stability.
By ROBERT WYLDER

WHEN a Richard Barthelmess picture came to our town, Johnny and I never missed it. We would go afternoon and night for three days straight, until they changed the program. We got into a lot of trouble doing that, like missing meals and getting walloped and having to stay in after supper for a week, but we didn’t care. We could stand to miss a lot of things in life, but when a Richard Barthelmess picture came, we couldn’t miss that. One time in the fourth grade I had the measles when The Flying Eagles came to town, and Johnny went without me the first afternoon. He came over and talked through the window and told me all about how Richard Barthelmess had shot down sixteen German planes before he was shot down by the German Flying Circus when his gas ran out. The way Johnny told it, I just couldn’t stand it. That night I got up and went to the show with him. We sat in the front row. It wasn’t sixteen planes, it was seventeen, and Richard Barthelmess died in Germany in a prison camp. I couldn’t trust Johnny to get it straight.

When I got home, I got a good walloping from my dad. When he took a hand, the offense was pretty serious. The measles epidemic didn’t clear up for about six weeks after the picture left town, though, so I figured I wasn’t entirely to blame. Johnny got the measles, but we both got over them all right. We were immune to measles after that, but we weren’t immune to Richard Barthelmess. We always went to see him when he came to town.

We would go to other shows, of course, Buck Jones and Tarzan and The Three Musketeers. Tom Mix was all right, and Johnny Weissmuller, but they really weren’t so much compared to Richard Barthelmess. I remember once in Squadron Z when he escaped from a German prison camp, stole a German plane, and shot down fourteen Germans before he had to escape to his home field. When he got there, his own men shot him by mistake, and as he crawled out of his battered plane, he mumbled, Good shooting, boys, and dropped dead, a smile on his face, a tear in my eye. I looked over at Johnny. He was brushing his eyes, too. He looked at me.

I got something in my eye, he said.

Yeh, me too, I said. I guess I must have got some dust in them this morning when we were playing ball. They been hurting all day.

Mine, too, he said. We walked out. Our eyes were all red. This
sun sure hurts my eyes, Johnny said.

Yeh, I’ll say, I said, swallowing. We weren’t fooling each other much, but we had to make the effort. Neither one of us would admit crying at a show. That was girl stuff. We saw the picture six times, and got sand or something in our eyes each time. We didn’t go to the show for a long time after that. Our eyes were pretty sore from all that sand.

Once in a while we had some trouble getting enough money to go to the show, but we could always figure out something before it was too late. When Wings Over France came to town, Johnny and I were both broke. We had just come in from Cub Scout camp, and the picture was playing only one day more. We were pretty mad at the Cub Scouts for a while, but we figured if we went in the afternoon and stayed to both shows at night, we could almost catch up. We didn’t have any money after coming in from camp, and didn’t have much time to earn any. I tried to get some from my mother.

Mom, I said, I have to have some money.

All right, she said. Go out and get some.

Well, can’t I have an advance on my allowance? You’re three weeks ahead now, she said.

Well, I’ll rake a lawn or something tomorrow, I said. I need this money right away.

That’s what you said last time, she said. Go out and rake a lawn now. I won’t give you any money.

Aw, ma.

Don’t call me ma. Now get out of here and stop asking. You’re not going to get any. What do you want it for, anyway?

Nothing, I said. Skip it. I could have told her, but it wouldn’t have done any good. She didn’t appreciate Richard Barthelmess.

Johnny had the same trouble. His mother wouldn’t listen to anything, he said. We ended up at one-thirty with seven cents I shook out of my little brother’s bank.

We still had a chance. We went up to see Lewis White. His dad owned the theater. Sometimes, like when Richard Barthelmess was playing in town, Lewie was a good friend of ours. That day he was one of the best friends we had. We went over to his house.

Hi, Lewie, Johnny said.

Hello.

Sure is hot, isn’t it? Johnny said.

Yeh, Lewie said, it is. He didn’t seem very glad to see us.

What you gonna do this afternoon? Johnny said. It’s too hot to play kick.

I’m going over to the swimming pool, Lewie said.

Oh, Johnny said. The swimming pool proposition stopped him for a moment.

That water in the pool is sure dirty, I said. I wouldn’t go in that pool for anything. I’d rather go to the river, but it’s too far to walk on a hot day like this.

Yeh, Johnny said, I wouldn’t go in that dirty pool if I were you. You’re liable to get some disease. Bryce Gilbert was in last week, and he’s got sores all over his face now. His mother won’t let him go in the pool any more.

No kidding! Lewie said.

No kidding, Johnny said. I heard of a kid once that got so sick he died from going in a pool like that. I guess Johnny thought he was getting somewhere with his story. He kept getting more and more set against swimming in a
public swimming pool. I decided to help him out all I could.

My cousin got a terrible disease from a pool once, I said. He couldn’t see for a week. His dad won’t let him go in public pools any more. He says they’re too dirty.

Gee, Lewie said, I guess I won’t go. Let’s go out to the river.

Johnny and I didn’t want to go swimming in the river, or in the pool either, for that matter. Richard Barthelmess was playing in the theater downtown, and we wanted to be right there, and no place else. We didn’t give a darn for swimming. The comedy was about half over, I figured, and here we were, still at Lewie’s house arguing about swimming. The only way we could get to the show was by being nice to Lewie, and he wanted to go swimming. We were in an awful mess.

We can’t go to the river, Johnny said. It’s too far to walk on a hot day.

Besides, I’m afraid of the quicksand, I said real quick. My mom doesn’t want me to go swimming in the river because of the quicksand. She’s afraid I’ll get sucked under.

Well, where can we go swimming then? Lewie said. He was getting discouraged.

No place, I guess, I said. I don’t like to swim much anyway.

Me neither, Johnny said. Besides, it’s too hot today.

Well, what’ll we do then? Lewie said.

Oh, I don’t know, Johnny said. Maybe we could go to the show. What’s on? He knew what was on all right. He wanted to get there and see Richard Barthelmess in Wings Over France so bad it hurt, but he just casually asked Lewie what was on.
handed. He was a marvelous flier, but he was more than just that. He was everything a man should be to boot. He was brave and modest and polite to women. If I could have had my choice of being anybody in the world, I would have been Richard Barthelmess. Johnny would have, too.

That's the way it was with Johnny and me. We were crazy about Richard Barthelmess. We never missed one of his pictures. The day Lewie took us in the afternoon, my uncle came to town, and gave me a dollar. Johnny and I went again at night, and sat thru both shows. My dad walloped me, and Johnny had to stay in for a week after supper, but we didn't care. We expected it. The next time he came to town, we knew we'd do the same thing again, and we'd get walloped again, but we wouldn't care then either. We sure-did like Richard Barthelmess.

We swam in the pool all the rest of that summer and didn't catch anything. Lewie didn't take us to a show again for a year.

One day in the summer after we were in the fifth grade, Johnny came over to my house before I was up. He had a morning paper with him. I had to get up as soon as he came. When he got up before I did, it must be important.

Look, he said, there's a Richard Barthelmess show on at the Lyric starting tomorrow. 

Yeh, I know, I said. I knew that a week ago. What about it?

Well, Johnny said, I haven't any money. How are we going to get in the show? Lewie's up at the lake. You got any money?

No, I said, I spent all my allowance for BBs.

Well, come on, then, Johnny said. We're going out to get some money.

How? I said. We generally made it to Richard Barthelmess pictures without having to work. I didn't like the idea of working. We could find some other way.

Come on over to my house, Johnny said. I'll show you.

I grabbed an orange for breakfast and went with him to his house. His father owned a hotel, and Johnny and his family lived in an apartment at the back.

Johnny went into the back storeroom and came out with a basketful of fishing tackle. Come on, he said, let's go.

Where? I said. You said we were going to make some money so we could see 

Doomed Squadron.

I didn't want to go to work to make money to see the picture, but I didn't want to miss the picture either, so I had resigned myself to work.

We are going to make money, Johnny said. Let's go.

I went with him. We walked down to the river, a little downstream from the place where the city sewer emptied into it. We caught some grasshoppers and baited our hooks.

We can't fish here, I said. The fish are no good. We're too close to the sewer. What are we fishing here for?

Don't worry, Johnny said. I'll take care of that. You just go ahead and fish.

I did. The river was thick with fish. We pulled them out as fast as we could get our lines in the water. By noon, we had a couple big strings of chubs and redheads. We went home and put them in the bathtub in one of the empty rooms at the hotel.

When I got back to the hotel from lunch, Johnny was waiting
for me with a pailful of fish. Here, he said; You carry these. We’re going to sell them.

Sell them! I said. They’re no good. We caught them right down by the sewer. We can’t sell fish we caught by the sewer.

Yes, we can, Johnny said. Nobody knows where we caught them. You leave it to me.

We did sell them, too, Johnny went in to all the people he knew, and told them we had caught them in Clear Creek the day before. It was Thursday, and people wanted fish anyway. We sold ours cheap, ten for a quarter. They weren’t worth a penny for a hundred, but by the time we finished, we had $1.25. I felt pretty low about fooling all those people, but I wanted to see Richard Barthelmess so bad I didn’t say anything. I guess there wasn’t anything Johnny and I wouldn’t have done to see him.

Doomed Squadron was worth it. Richard Barthelmess proved himself a real hero again by rescuing a flying student who couldn’t land her plane. He had to get out on the wing of his plane, and walk on it out to the end, then crawl into her plane by its wing. He almost fell off a couple of times, and Johnny and I almost fell with him. When he brought the plane to the ground, he grabbed the girl and kissed her and made her promise not to do any more flying. Johnny and I didn’t like that part much, but we liked the wing-walking. We saw the picture five times and almost fell off the wing each time.

I hope nobody got sick from those fish.

Johnny and I were like that for two or three years. We never missed a Richard Barthelmess picture, no matter what. We didn’t go to see the pictures so much. They were all alike. We went because Richard Barthelmess was acting in them, and we thought he was just about the swellest person that ever lived. There was nobody like him in the world.

Well, we were pretty excited when we found out that Richard Barthelmess was coming through our town on the way to the coast and would make a personal appearance in the theater. When we found out that he was going to stay at Johnny’s father’s hotel, we quit living for anything else but seeing him. We asked Johnny’s father if we could talk to him, and he said he guessed he could arrange it. He was a fine man. He knew how much it meant to us to shake hands with Richard Barthelmess. He was almost as fine a man as Richard Barthelmess himself. Only of course he wasn’t a flier.

The night before Richard Barthelmess was to come, I slept with Johnny, only we didn’t sleep much. We just talked about what we would say.

I’m going to just walk up and say Hello, Mr. Barthelmess, Johnny said. How do you manage to shoot all those Germans? I sure like your pictures. I never miss one.

I’m going to get his autograph first, I said. Mr. Barthelmess, can I have your autograph, please? I think your pictures are swell.

Do you suppose he’ll come by plane? Johnny said.

Naw, he’s coming by train. I wish he’d come by plane.

Me too.

I guess we better go to sleep, Johnny said. We want to be in good shape tomorrow.

Yeh, I’ll say. Goodnight.

Goodnight. We couldn’t sleep. Pretty soon we were talking again.
Say, Johnny, do you think he’d tell us how to walk on wings?
I don’t know. He’ll probably be pretty busy.
Yeh, I guess he will. Well, goodnight.
Goodnight, Johnny said.
The next morning we got up early. The train didn’t get in until nine, but we didn’t want to miss anything. There was to be a big celebration and welcoming party at the train. The mayor was going to make a speech and offer Richard Barthelmess the key to the city. We got down to the depot at eight and camped right on the edge of the platform. We weren’t going to miss anything. Then the police came, and the aldermen, and the mayor and his wife, and the rest of the city hall, and by the time the train got in, we were a long way from the front line. We got to see him, though. He didn’t look quite the same without his goggles and helmet, but we knew him all right. He waved from the train platform before he got off, and he looked straight at us. We started to push up to where he was, but the mayor and the rest of the welcoming committee got in the way. We didn’t get to see him again until later, but we could wait. We were going to get to shake his hand and talk to him personally. It would be worth waiting for.
That day went awfully slow. Johnny’s father wouldn’t let us bother Mr. Barthelmess at the hotel until he was ready to introduce us, and he was busy with Lewie’s dad anyway, making arrangements for the personal appearance. Johnny and I just sat around and waited. I called up my mother and told her I wouldn’t be home all day. She said that was all right. I think she was glad of it.
The personal appearance was that night at seven. We paid our money, and went down and set in the front row. We were the first ones in the theater. We could see fine. Richard Barthelmess made a little speech about how glad he was to be there, and how much he appreciated our coming to see him. I don’t know if he knew Johnny and I were his best customers or not but he seemed to be looking right at us. It was marvelous. When he finished and went behind the curtain, Johnny and I got up and left. We didn’t want to see the picture. We wanted to get back to the hotel and meet Richard Barthelmess, himself, in person, face to face.
Johnny’s father met us at the desk. Come back at nine-thirty, boys, he said. I’ve made arrangements to have you meet him then. It was seven-thirty when he told us that.
Isn’t he back from the theater yet? Johnny said.
Yes, but he’s up in his room, resting. You come back at nine-thirty, and you can meet him.
OK, Johnny said, we’ll be here. We sat down right there and waited. Those were the two slowest hours we ever put in. We looked at our watches every five minutes, and got up for a drink of water every ten. We talked about Richard Barthelmess and watched the clock and drank water for several hours and finally it was nine-thirty. Johnny’s father came over to us.
We were ready. We went up with him, trying hard not to run. Johnny’s father knocked. There was no answer. What if he had gone to sleep? What if we didn’t get to see him after all? I was beginning to worry when a voice said, Come in. It was a shaky voice. We thought it must be Mr. Barth-
Richard Barthelmess wouldn't have a voice like that, rough and unsure. He just couldn't.

When we opened the door, we didn't see any secretary, only a tired looking little man sitting on the bed, his brown business suit rumpled. He had a glass of something in his hand. There were rings under his eyes, and when he got up to greet us, he lurched a little, not much, just a little, but I noticed it. So did Johnny. He walked slowly over to us. His shoulders sagged.

Mr. Barthelmess, Johnny's father said, this is my son, Johnny, and this is his friend, Bob. You said I might bring them up to meet you. They're two of your most ardent fans.

Hello, Johnny, he said in his thick, shaky voice. Hello, Bob. He held out his hand. Johnny shook it and turned away. He looked funny, sort of sick. I shook the hand then. It wasn't the handshake of a man who could fly a Spad against a whole squadron of Huns. It was a limp hand, limp and weak. I let go as soon as I could.

Well, boys, he said, so you like my pictures. I knew what was in the glass then. I could smell it. Yes, Johnny said.

Uh huh, I said.

Well, that's good, he said. I'm glad you do. He took a drink out of the glass. I wanted to hit him right in the face. He had no right doing that. Richard Barthelmess wasn't the kind of fellow who should be drinking. How could he fly if he was going to drink?

I guess they're a little scared and bashful, Johnny's father said. They planned to ask you a lot of questions. Don't you want to ask Mr. Barthelmess some questions, boys?

No, Johnny said. We have to go now. Goodbye.

Yes, I said, goodnight.

Goodnight, boys, he said. Johnny and I left.

We didn't say much about it. We didn't have to. It was awful. Johnny and I didn't want to do anything at all, just sit around. It was the same the next day, but we finally got in a ball game, and that helped.

Two weeks later, another Barthelmess picture came to town. Everybody in town went. The theater was jammed. Everybody that had seen him in person wanted to see him on the screen. Johnny and I didn't, though. We didn't go. We went fishing instead. We never went to see a Richard Barthelmess picture again.
Poems

By DAVID PERKINS

Airplane Graveyard, Austria

Upon these fragments, sunlight clings
Tenaciously; the earth embraces
Now what once the air held: traces
Of bent propellers, wires, and springs.

Here are the ends of many things—
Many names and many faces,
Many loves in many places,
Here in a pile of broken wings;

And in a far tree, some bird sings
A song that winds and interlaces
Broken flights with broken maces,
And the blood of fallen kings.

Rondeau in Autumn

Though you are gone, your spirits have not fled
Too far beyond us: even such a thread
As that which, broken, dropped your lives away
From our known pattern, holds us up today
Like puppets, and we live—and you are dead.

The earth moves on, as always: overhead,
Great flocks of birds are taking south their dread
Of winter; all the autumn leaves are gay,
Though you are gone.

But in these changes, certain things you said
Grow ever larger, like the circling spread
Of ripples from stones dropped in pools, and they
Go out beyond the narrow boundary
Of death, to give you wider life instead,
Though you are gone.
Log Entry

Here, at the end of ocean and of land,
I, Christopher, survey my fortune, and
Draw my fingers over my charts again.
The landfall still eludes me. All these men,
Grown frightened and impatient long ago,
No longer care—or never cared—to know
What lies beyond that line where sky and sea
Come one unto the other visibly.
How can I blame them? I myself am tired,
Aye, and frightened, too. Have we aspired
Beyond the bounds of man? Will vengeance come?
The wide sea swallow us? The wind from home
Stands in our sails, cheering us forward—nay,
I drank good hope out on the deck today:
I'll not forget it now. The wind's our friend;
The sea too, and the sunlight—they'll not end
Our voyage in disaster. We have sailed
Many weeks westward: though we yet have failed
To sight a bird, a floating branch or vine,
Tomorrow, surely, we will have a sign. . . .

Vigil

Bending away as wind a thin flame bending,
He is bent by fate away—my friend;
And though I pray there will not be an ending,
There will be an end.

No hands or prayers will keep this wind from blowing;
No shelter will permit this flame to burn.
His coming will be balanced by a going,
And a road of no return.
Hitherto Shalt Thou Come

By AGNES REGAN

TRACK season was just over and we were fooling around like we always do on Saturdays between sports when there’s no meet or game, just fooling around feeling good cause none of us had to practice. Chuck had come by and honked for me after lunch and we were cruising around hunting for the other guys. When we honked in front of Steve’s house his sister stuck her head out and said he wasn’t around so we rolled down Main Street once and then went out to get Whit. We chugged up blowing all the horns at once and stopped with a sputter by the gate.

I swung out over the door and jumped the fence, just to see if I was still in practice, and started up to the door. Then I saw Whit’s mother back in the garden so I went around to see if he was there. Mrs. Whitlow looked around and stood up. She’s tall like Whit and light for a colored woman, hardly any darker than a person with a good tan, Whit’s darker and his old man’s nearly black.

“Gosh, Mrs. Whitlow, I forgot to bring that pan again,” I said. She’d left a tray or something at our house once when she was cooking for a party of Mother’s and I’d been forgetting it for a couple of months.

She smiled because it had gotten to be an old joke. “Don’t worry about that,” she said. “I’ll pick it up when I come to help with the hospital tea. Are you looking for Harold?”

“Yeah, I’ll go in and get him,” I said, but just then Whit came bounding down the steps and out to us.

“’Allo, ’allo, ’allo,” he shouted. “Let’s run three laps.”

“’Allo, ’allo, ’allo,” I said. “You’re being funny, son. I’m dyin’ laughin’.”

“You can trail us,” Chuck yelled from the car. “We’ve joined the leisure class.”

“I won’t be here to get dinner, Harold,” his mother said. “I’m working tonight.”

“OK,” Whit said. He tapped me on the shoulder with a quick left punch and ducked so quick I swung at air over his fuzzy head. He laughed. “Where we headed, son?”

“Oh, around,” I said. “I’ll remember the pan next time,” Mrs. Whitlow.

“Tell your mother my iris are out if she wants them for the table,” she said.

We piled in the car and Chuck started the thing with a lurch and we swung around back down town.

“’Bout time we put a new paint
job on this crate,'' Whit said. "What'd ya want to make it? Blue again?"

Chuck frowned and ran his left hand down the outside of the door, feeling the paint, almost caressing it. "I don't know," he said. "Maybe we should be classy this time. Maybe red. And black. Red with black trimmings."

"Oh, Jeez," I groaned. "Don't do it till I'm gone for the summer. I can't stand to look at it that way."

"It's not the art, it's the work griping you," Chuck said. "Hey, Whit, lookit what I put on this morning."

He stopped and they both climbed out and lifted up the hood and poked around inside. I heckled them from the car but I couldn't even get a rise. They're both nuts on mechanics, only Whit knows more about it than Chuck does.

After a while they got back in and we rode around for a while. It was real warm like it gets in late spring and everything was moving slow and easy. We took off our shirts and got some coke and lazied around in the car looking for something to do, but nobody much seemed to be around. A carful of girls passed us and we blew the horns, but Chuck didn't want to follow them. He doesn't go for girls much; he doesn't like hardly anything but sports and that car of his. Even when we go on trips with the team he and Whit usually go off and hunt up a used parts lot instead of going to the mixers. They thought they heard some new knock in the motor so they got out and fiddled with it for a while and then Chuck got back in and started it to see if it was OK. Whit watched for a second and then ran to catch up with us.

"Say, wait a second," he yelled. Chuck looked in the mirror and saw him running after us and laughed.

"Still in training, son?" he yelled, going just fast enough to keep ahead of him.

I turned around to watch Whit run. Jeez, I wish I had a build like that guy! He moves so smooth he doesn't seem to be working at all, and you watch him coming up looking like he's running so slow and then he's passing you, still smooth and easy while you're racing your legs off. Same way in basketball—the rest of the guys are scrambling around and he comes in smooth and lops the ball right through the hoop. Somebody told me once that niggers who are good are always smooth that way but I never watched any others much. Whit's the only colored kid in high school now. He kept a little behind us for a ways, his skin getting shiny like polished brown leather in the sun; then he sprinted up and caught onto the back of the car, I leaned over and pulled him up.


So we got milk shakes at the Drive In and then rode around town a little. Down on Main Street we saw Steve standing on the curb waving his arms at us.

"'Allo, 'allo, 'allo," he yelled, "Wait for me."

Chuck slowed down and Steve ran out and jumped in. "What are you guys doin' tonight?" Steve said, piling in on top of me. "Say, what're you doin' tonight?"

"I d'know," I said. "What're we doin' tonight, Whit?"

"Nothin'," Whit said. He yawned. "Not me."

"Hey, lookit what I got," Steve said. He shoved a bunch of tickets
in my face and waved them around. "My old man gave me these. Some kind of a feed. Wanna go?"

"I d'know. We gotta dress up?" I said.

"Unuh, it's at the KC hall," Steve said. "You don't gotta dress up for the KC hall, do ya?"

"What is it?" I said, holding his hand still so I could see the tickets. "Young Republicans? How come you're old man isn't using these?"

"Jeez, he's a Democrat," Steve said. "He has to buy'em but he won't go."

"They sort of asked the team," Chuck said. "Last week, remember? Only they decided not to treat."

"I don't want to go," I said. "We'd have to dress up for the Young Republicans."

"Yeah," Steve said. "Mebbe that's right."

And we wouldn't have gone, either, only we met the kid that's cameraman for the Sports Club and he talked us into letting him take our pictures, not action shots but pictures with coats and sport shirts of all dumb things. So we were sorta dressed up anyway about dinner time and we drove past the KC hall to see how it looked.

"Let's go just for the hell of it," Steve said. "We can walk out if it's too bad."

"Suppose they'd kick us kids out?" I asked.

"Don't be a dope," Chuck said. "We'll be voting pretty soon. Besides, they asked the team, didn't they?"

We got out and Steve and I went on in while Chuck stopped to show Whit something about the fog light he was going to put on the car. We were standing there just looking around when Mr. Benton came bouncing up and pumped my hand like he does to everybody. He's some kind of a big shot—I don't know what.

"Well, well, well, how are you?" he said, like he was an old buddy of mine and hadn't seen me since the last convention. "Well, well, I'm glad to see you young men taking such an interest. Just make yourselves at home, make yourselves at home."

He went shooting off to give somebody else the glad hand and just then Chuck and Whit came in and we all went over and sat down toward the end of one of the long tables. They were all pretty well filled up and I was looking around to see who was there when the people across from us got up and moved over to one of the other tables.

"Hey, who was that?" I asked Chuck. "Was that the new N.P. man? He used to play ball for St. Louis, didn't he?"

"I don't know," Chuck said. He looked sort of funny, like his collar was too tight. He squirmed down in his chair and cracked his knuckles. I looked around the hall and tried to spot somebody else I knew. It's a dance hall, really, big and bare as a barn, with lights hanging down on long cords so bright you have to squint to see anything. There were tables from where we sat all the way down to the door to the kitchen at the other end of the room, and a lot of people I recognized were sitting all over. Then I saw the N.P. man get up and go up to the head of the big table and say something to Mr. Benton.

I poked Whit. "Hey, isn't that the guy used to play ball for St. Louis?" I said. "Somebody was telling us, remember?"
Whit didn't say anything. He looked at Chuck and then he looked away again.

"Yeah, that's the guy," Steve said. "I saw him down at the Y the other night. The fellas said he played third base."

"Jeez!" I said. "Suppose he'd coach the team this summer?"

I kept on staring at him. Mr. Benton went over and got somebody else and they all talked for a minute and then looked over at us.

"Hey, lookit them," Steve said. "What'sa matter with them?"

Chuck sat up. "Look," he said to Whit, "I'm not very hungry. I don't think I want to hear any old speeches."

"What'sa matter with you?" I said. "We oughta try to talk to him. We need a new coach, don't we?"

I looked around and couldn't see him anymore, but I did see Mr. Benton coming around the tables toward us. He came around behind and put his hand on my shoulder and bent down.

"Say, fellows," he said, "I'll let you in on a secret." He shoved his fat face down close to mine and smiled like a scout master. "They give you damn little food out here and you have to listen to a lot of dull talks. Tell you what," he jerked his head toward the other end of the room, "if you come out in the kitchen I can fix you up with twice as much."

"Well, gee, that'd be swell, Mr. Benton," I said. Chuck and Whit got up and Mr. Benton patted me on the shoulder and started to move away. "Say, is that the guy —" I started to ask him and then I saw Whit going toward the door. Chuck started after him.

"Hey, you guys, didn't you hear him?" I said. "Let's go eat out back."

Chuck didn't stop and Mr. Benton was watching me and Steve was talking to somebody so I said, "I'll be back in a minute," got up and followed them. Outside I looked around for the car, but they weren't there. It wasn't dark yet, but getting a little dusky and cooler, with a breeze beginning to come down from the mountain. Some kids were playing hopscotch on the sidewalk and a dog was barking at one of the doorways. I stood there a minute and then I spotted them, walking fast, already down the block. I cut across the lawn and ran after them. They didn't look around when I came up panting behind them.

"Say, what'sa matter with you guys?" I said.

Chuck turned to look at me but he didn't stop. Whit kept on walking fast with his head bent, so all I could see was his fuzzy hair and the back of his neck, a little rim of brown over his jacket collar. Chuck's neck was red and his ears darker red, and I got sort of scared the way he looked, like the time he almost slugged the ref at the basketball game.

"Hey, aren't you going to take the car?" I said.

Chuck doubled up his fists and kicked a rock into the street. "Damn them," he said. "I'd like—"

"Don't," Whit said. "I should have thought." He ran his fingers thru his hair and then stopped and looked at the brown hand, strong and big enough to curl around a basketball and drop it easy through the hoop. Then he shoved it in his pocket and started walking again, fast. "I should have thought," he said again. "Oh, God, I should have known."
SOLDIERS, it is true, are only men. But even the men who fight for the cause which is just have their share of vicious notions and characteristics. Americans formerly in the army during the war proved to be no exception. So many of our men, after donning a uniform, undergoing overseas training, and being sent to such remote corners of the globe as India, Burma, China, Ceylon, or what-have-you, for some reason acquired an attitude of intolerance, offensiveness, and tyranny which they directed against the poverty-stricken downtrodden natives of the countries in which they were stationed. In retrospect, all this seems unnatural, almost frightening. One wonders: what is there about the influence and culture of America which prompts Americans to act in this manner? How and why do these actions take root? It was as though our men had always been beset by an overpowering but frustrated desire to become swaggering bullies in their own right, and on eventually finding themselves confronted by a cringing population, steeped in filth, disease, and degradation, they at last found their long-awaited opportunity to assume the role which had been denied them at home—that of Big Shot.

Having been stationed in the CBI for two years, I was in the position to witness this display on the part of so many of my fellow GIs. The first time I became forcefully aware of it was shortly after landing in India, when, along with hundreds of other men in my outfit, I traveled on a troop train from Bombay to an air base near Calcutta. The journey took a number of days, during which time we were able to see a good deal of India and its people. The majority of the men were apathetic towards the scenery. Their attitude towards the Indians, however, was shocking.

Although technically the year 1943 was not considered a famine year, judging by the number of pitiful wrecks which besieged our train during its frequent stops, it was difficult to believe that there were many inhabitants of rural India who weren’t hungry. In the face of all this, the men’s initial reaction for the most part was silence. Never having been witnesses to such misery before, they seemed awe-stricken at first. Perhaps most of them were prompted to feel sorry for these unfortunate
people. But whatever commiseration may have been felt, there were many who soon gave way to exhibitions of cruelty and contempt.

In answer to appeals for scraps of food by the children, who in attempting to move the Americans to pity cried, "No mama, no papa," our men responded by shouting, "Why you poor little bastards." Whatever humor one might find in this retort would quickly pale on seeing the pleading, famished expressions on their gaunt faces, their nakedness, their bloated bellies. The women were accorded even more humiliating treatment. In answer to their cries of, "Bucksheesh, sahib, bucksheesh," many of the men replied with a single Indian word—a word one would use in propositioning a whore; the meaning being, "How about it?" At times, the more pitiful the appearance and condition of the people, the more violent became the reaction on the part of many GIs. At one stop, a woman, a leper, old and hideous, approached the train with arms outstretched, begging for food. She was met with even louder insults and shouts of abuse, among them being, "Scram!" and "Beat it, you old bag." In case the men had fears that her disease was contagious, how much easier it would have been to have kept her from approaching by throwing her scraps out of a box of K-rations; there were at least twice as many boxes of rations on that train as were needed.

On arriving at our destination and settling down in India bag and baggage, the men were in a position to arrive at judgments and evaluations of the people through personal contacts. Once again it was difficult to find many men who could eye the things they saw dispassionately and in the light of reason. Instead, it all seemed to boil down to this: Indians were crooks; Indians were filthy; Indians were diseased; Indians were abysmally ignorant. They were just a bunch of no good, dirty scoundrels. An attempt was rarely made to determine WHY these people were what they were. There didn't appear to be many men who bothered to ask themselves whether or not the Indians would sooner be honest than thieves, clean than dirty, healthy than sick, educated than illiterate. If men ever came to the conclusion that instead of blaming the Indians, it might be a better idea to point an accusing finger at the two hundred years of British colonial rule in the country, they certainly gave no evidence of this in their actions toward the people. The patience and tolerance which our men should have exercised towards them, in the realization that there were other factors responsible for their condition, never materialized. It seemed easier, and to many apparently more pleasurable, to wallop the daylights out of a servant boy caught stealing, hurl abuse at beggars, to treat the women like sluts.

One of the tragedies resulting from the behavior of our men was the almost complete shattering of the illusions that the Indian had harbored about America and the "American sahibs." Yes, the legend of America had also reached India. To people there, we were a rich, young, and virile democracy, with a form of government dedicated to the belief that all men were equal. We were haters of tyranny, intolerance, and injustice. They knew of our fight against Britain in 1776 and our successful throwing off of that
country's selfish and despotic rule. They were hoping that we would see the parallel between our fight and theirs. Unfortunately, they were in for a disillusioning jolt; for not only did so many of the men from America fail to represent these ideals, but instead, we began to typify an army of contemptuous and brutal conquerors. Some of the Indians may have wondered if the theory of the master race was a Nazi monopoly. Eventually, it reached the point where most of them had to admit that although the presence of the British was humiliating enough, Americans were no bargains either.
PRAWN lived in a buck and a half hotel, and he drank wine on Third Street. Everybody in San Francisco called him a wino, and they pointed at him from across the street. Strangers though, they were good things. Once in a while they would come down looking around, and when they saw Prawn they would always look at each other and say look at the poor old man, and they would give him a dime. Strangers were good, and Prawn respected them. That was why he always waited until they were out of sight before he disappeared into the alley and groped through the dark this side of the street light for the back door of the Three Fingers. At the Three Fingers, big Happ gave him the stuff special, ten cents cheaper than anybody else. Big Happ had a favorite joke, sometimes he liked to pour wine over your head and surprise you. Prawn never got mad when Happ did this, that was why he gave Prawn the special price.

Prawn had lived in wine for fifty years now. Ever since his twentieth year. He would never have known if officer Henderson hadn’t made him count it up last Thursday. Prawn’s father before him had lived in wine, and he had lived to be eighty. Prawn’s mother and his two grandfathers too, they had all lived in wine. And his old aunt Jeanette, the one who went to mass every Sunday, his father used to say things which would make Prawn believe she got her share of it too.

One time when he was very young, Prawn decided that he would not take to wine. That was when he was in love and had thoughts of getting married to Aggie. Aggie would never even let him kiss her, and he liked that. Aggie was good. But one day she got a picture of a stretched out Christ being taken down from the cross by some long, stretched out men and she fell in love with it. After that she became a nun. After that Prawn had hated the picture. Aggie gave it to him the night before she went away, and he spat on it and tore it up right in front of her.

That was the very day, Prawn remembered, he had swiped the old man’s jug from under the sink and started right off then to be a wino.

The reason Prawn was thinking these things was that he was lonely, and when he was lonely, he got friends out of thinking back. Big Happ didn’t like for him to come around when he didn’t have
money, no matter how well he took the wine in his hair. Rat wouldn’t talk for long because Rat was always thinking a guy wanted some of his wine. The old man who slept in the lobby of the hotel had nothing to do with Prawn because there had been no snuff from Prawn last week.

Thinkings back weren’t good all the time, so Prawn wanted another friend. He thought all at once of his knife. Prawn used to be good with the knife in the old days, not cutting, for Prawn hadn’t needed to cut. Whittling was what he meant. Why, he could carve fourmasters and dolphins quicker than hell. Used to. Now he didn’t know.

All through the years his knife had swung about heavy in his pockets when he walked. He never used it no more than to peel off his nails. He took it out and turned it over and over. Seemed to be all pretty good. He spat on the curb outside the hotel and scraped her to sharpen her up good. Prawn knew where there was a hunk of wood, just the thing to begin on. Like that Prawn took to the knife again. He took to it for company. He didn’t let it interfere with wine. Everyday he was able to get money he went to Happ just same as usual, slammed down coins a little like he used to slam them down, and then went off by himself with his own wine.

He didn’t have anything special to make when he started out, for old Prawn never thought any more than he talked.

Only lone one thing he ever liked to hear, and that was jokes. He could sit by the bottle listening to them. And no one knew more and better ones than Happ. Prawn didn’t know any jokes. He started off to make one up with his knife when he saw the way the wood was going. It was a bitter joke all about his sister who had been a whore. Lucy didn’t want to be a whore, and she held back all the time. Holding back in a whorehouse. Old Prawn would laugh at it yet, silent and sour.

Everyday Prawn worked on the block of wood. Just like carving on a fourmaster. He hadn’t forgotten his old friend. His old friend hadn’t forgotten him either. When he didn’t have money or it didn’t look like he was going to have any, Prawn came into the dirty bare hall and took the long block of wood from under his pillow. He would unwrap the newspapers from it and work long and slow. Nobody ever bothered it under Prawn’s pillow. Not even the drifters, for they all had heard something sometime about old Prawn the wino.

One day he finished it, and old Prawn thought he had a good joke to show Happ. He wrapped it carefully in papers he had pulled off the top of the garbage can in the lobby. He slipped out easily. He didn’t show it to anybody, but everybody heard him laughing a little to himself and talking to Lucy. Everybody looked and tapped their heads. He saw Rat do it. If Rat did it, chances are everybody was doing it.

Prawn didn’t want just to show Lucy to Happ and leave. That would not be right. He’d have to buy some wine from Happ. And Prawn would dip his knife in wine too, his old friend knife, just because knife was such a good friend.

So Prawn stood on the corner for a long time. He could see the street light in the alley shining fuzzy through the fog, and the foghorns out along the bay were tooting away. He asked some sailor, but the sailor swore at him and
told him to get to work. Sailors didn’t understand any more.

It was getting cold, and the fog was oozing damp and wet all about the wrinkles of Prawn’s skin. That’s when wine is best, just when fog is doing that. Wine eats fog away from you and lets the lights come in warm like never before.

Maybe Happ would feel good tonight and would trade for the joke. Happ had little books behind the cash register that were dirty. They were done by artists though. His lucy joke wouldn’t be good like artists could make them.

He went into the alley and kept close to the side of the buildings. The cops were out about this time of night and it was Henderson’s day off. Henderson wouldn’t pull Prawn in twice in the same week. The cops wouldn’t like lucy joke either. He felt the door of the Three Fingers and he fumbled with the knob until it clicked. Then Prawn went in. It was dry inside, and the one electric bulb in the ceiling looked like a cooked bean, and the light it gave looked like the thin soup.

Happ was behind the bar. This was the back bar where wino wine was. Happ only came out usually when he heard the door. And Happ always heard it too. Out front Happ made a real business off the slummers. Prawn had heard tell that it was swell out front.

“Got some dough?”

Prawn shook his head, “But got good joke, Happ.”

Big Happ poured himself some wine. “Lessee. Wait. Joke no good for stuff, huh?”

“I know, sure, I know.” Old Prawn shook his head. He almost decided not to show lucy joke in the whorehouse to Happ, but he became brave like he used to be once before, and his hands made the papers rattle when he unwrapped them from lucy. He set lucy on the bar.

“‘Hey,’ Happ said, and he drank the wine he was going to pour over Prawn’s head. Happ whistled and rubbed his clean fingers over Lucy. “That’s good joke. That’s good joke with some good class.” Happ rubbed his fingers over lucy some more, then he wrapped the papers all around it again. “Come with me, old crazy Prawn,” Happ said, “I got lady here who wants to see wino. Wait. Wait. Oh ho, I almost forget, no? I forget something very very nice. Wino like wine. Very very much, wino like wine, old crazy wino Prawn.” Happ poured a second glass of wine and then, after he had turned it around and around, talking soft to it, he poured it into Prawn’s hair.

Prawn took his hand and he rubbed it through his hair. The wine was sticky on his skin, so he licked it with his tongue.

“‘Ho ho,’ Happ exploded, ‘la la!’ He pushed Prawn ahead. “Come on, old wino.”

Prawn held back, but Happ took him by the collar and dragged him through the red curtained door. In the old days nobody would have done that to Prawn, not old Prawn, prawn Prawn.

Out front it was crowded. Prawn didn’t look around too much, but he saw that it wasn’t very different from the back room. Just more, that was all. There was the same souplight and the same beans. Just a little shine and a little more.

Big Happ shoved Prawn ahead and then he stopped. He held his arms out and he hunched up his shoulders. “This is the crazy wino, my friends,” then he laughed. Happ beat the top of Prawn’s
head, then he took him by the ear and dragged him up to a booth. "This is wino. Wino bring Big Happ joke to change for drink. Wino always have screwy ideas, this one special," and Happ put his white hands on his belly and laughed. "This joke," he took it out from under his arm and set it down. Happ made the paper rattle too. He turned his hands out to it, fingertips wiggling, and said, "LA!" and laughed again.

Prawn turned away, but Happ grabbed him. He felt his knife in his pocket and wished he had stayed all by himself with his knife.

Big Happ grabbed him before he could leave. "So this is wino," Happ said, still laughing.

The woman slummer wore a little hat and she leaned back and sighed. The man flexed up the muscles of his jaws. Big Happ was still laughing, and so were the others in the room, watching him. "Where did you get this?" the man said to Prawn.

"I made it," Prawn said. Prawn was ashamed to have the woman see his joke, so he closed his eyes. "I sorry like hell I no put dress on her. She my whoresister, Lucy. Long time ago I take her to whorehouse to start out and whoressus she look Lucy over in the hall. Lucy no want to stay, Lucy no want to be a whore so she look like that, almost." Happ laughed louder, and Prawn smiled, wanting to laugh too if the man and the woman did. But the man and the woman were not going to laugh. The rest of the room had forgotten Happ and Prawn, but the man and the woman hadn't forgotten, and they weren't going to laugh. The man and the woman were looking funny at the statue. Happ saw they were looking funny, and he quit laughing loud. He laughed littler and littler. Pretty soon Happ was quiet.

Big Happ pointed to the long skinny fingers of the whoressus all over Lucy. He look like he wanted to laugh and make the man and woman laugh.

"Beautiful," the woman said, and she rubbed her hand over the statue, letting her fingers go slowly over the fingers of the whoressus. "Beautiful."

To Prawn it was part of the joke making fun of Lucy, and he didn't have enough wood to make the whole whoressus so he had just cut out her long fingers here and there where they shouldn't be. Fingers of the whoressus on Lucy. And each place they touched Prawn had made Lucy cry like hell. He had made Lucy long and skinny like the Christ in Aggie's picture. That was part of the joke too. The whole thing was very funny, but nobody was laughing now.

Slowly Happ let go of Prawn and Prawn started to go away. Happ would never give him anything now. Not for no matter how much, not for insulting his good payers. Happ wouldn't even have him around.

"Just a moment," the woman said.

"Wait, the lady say wait," Happ caught him fast by the shoulder and jerked him. "What are you going to do with it?" She moved her hands near her face so that a ring on her finger spit and spit into the soup.

"You like joke, I give it to you." There, that should fix it up with Happ. Prawn looked at Happ. Happ was beginning to smile again.

"No. We will buy it from you for the museum."
"Beautiful, beautiful," the man said.
"Yes, yes indeed," the man said.
"But I make Lucy joke, I and my knife my friend, we do not make her beautiful. But nobody heard Prawn because the man and the woman were talking fast to each other and big Happ was beaming, shouting to the whole room about old wino Prawn.

The woman pulled Prawn by his arm until he was leaning near. With his free hand Prawn felt his winematted hair.

"Give Mr. Seymour your address and I'll come early tomorrow."

And Prawn gave them the address, and he took the drink they bought for him. He had Happ serve it to him at where the slummers were sitting, at a table, and he didn't have to let Happ pour any wine on his head either.

When old Prawn left he went out the front door. Lucy was under his arm, all wrapped up again in paper.

Prawn walked for a long time in the fog that night. Almost at every street light he stopped and took Lucy out and looked at her. At first he would laugh each time and think of the money the woman would give him for his lucyjoke. At last he didn't laugh any more. He couldn't remember what it was that the joke was about.

All at once Prawn was afraid. He was afraid of the thing he had carved out of the hunk of wood. His joke was laughing at him. He hadn't gotten it right and it was laughing at him. He hated what was different from him in it and he hated the slummers for making it different. Lucy was making a joke out of old Prawn. She was taking his thinkings back away and making him lonelier than ever. A liar and a joke, that's what Lucy was making out of him, and after so long a time. And maybe Aggie too, Aggie and her damned prayers.


Prawn took Lucy. He took Lucy with the crying wooden flesh and the prying huge fingers of the whoremissus. He took out his friend too. He took both of them together and he threw them into the sewer at the corner of Howard and Fourth. But he took the newspapers off Lucy first, and he folded them up nice and put them into his pocket.
Trouble, trouble, trouble. That was all my buddy Jeb and I had ever had with that blasted van. To begin with it was the damnedest contraption you ever saw. It was called a "Disaster Van" and it was supposed to be used in cases of flood or fire, but all we could ever see about it that was disastrous was the way it ran. Or the way it didn't run. It was tall and narrow, which gave it a fine excuse to turn over repeatedly and it was always going through an amazing succession of flat tires and broken engine parts. Boy, it was a mess. The back end was full of cabinets and stretchers, a sink, sliding trays, and ventilators that never worked, and all that junk just got in our way until we got mad one day and ripped it out. We'd run the van all up and down Italy and were getting nowhere but fed up with it.

One night we were sitting peacefully on the balcony of Signor Traversi's house, which was the house that we had been living in for the last three months. The Signor was contentedly smoking one of our cigarettes and having a great time playing some kind of card game with us. We played with an Italian deck, which was very confusing, since there are only thirty-six cards in it, and the Signor was winning every game mostly because we couldn't figure out what the cards were. He'd deal a hand and play a card. Then I'd play a card and Jeb would play a card and then we'd go around again in the same manner and all of a sudden he'd holler, "Eo vinco Eo vinco," which means "I win. I win." Then he'd gather in the money, deal another hand, and win again. What the hell. We couldn't figure the game out, but then the old man had been mighty fine to us and we didn't mind losing a little money. Besides, we learned a lot of Italian that way. The van was parked in the street below us and, since the streets are kind of narrow, it took up about half of the cobblestones. And just as the Signor was hollering, "Eo vinco" for the fiftieth time and I was beginning to wonder whether he was dealing off the bottom of the deck, we heard a shout from down below. It was an MP.

"Hey," he hollered up at us. "Who owns this thing?"

Assuming that he meant the van, we assured him that we owned it. Then we added a few choice insulting remarks for good measure and he gave us one of those cold stares that the MPs figure will
frighten the daylights out of anybody.

“You can’t park that thing here,” he said. “It’s blocking the street. You’ll have to move it somewhere else.”

And then he added as an afterthought:

“And what are you guys doing up there in that house? Don’t you know that all houses in Cherignola are off limits? You aren’t supposed to be up there.”

“Hell,” I answered. “We live here.”

“You can’t live here.”

“Not only can we,” says Jeb, “but we are, and we have been for three months and we will be until we go home.”

Naturally, this kind of an answer riled the MP no end.

“All right, wise buys,” he said. “Suppose we go and have a little talk with the town marshall about this thing?”

Only an MP can be so horribly sarcastic.

“Nothing would suit us better,” I replied, “than to see the town major. And furthermore it would not only suit us but we demand to see the town major and we demand to see him right now.”

I was confident because Jeb and I, being of the far-sighted type, had taken great precaution to get on the good side of the town major by taking his wife’s sister to Rome as a special favor. So when the MP hauled us down the street to see him he was not at all pleased with the situation, especially since it was past eight o’clock anyway and way beyond business hours. Besides, I think he wanted to be alone with his wife and kiddies. He was extremely friendly to us and told the MP in no uncertain terms to leave off the fiddle-faddle and go about his business. We found out later why he was so friendly; we had to go up to Rome again and bring his wife’s sister back.

We went back to the house and the Signor wanted to play some more of this Italian skin game, but we said we had had enough, thank you, and decided we had better move the van anyway in order to avoid other over-ambitious MPs that might be roaming around the streets. There was an alleyway behind the house with a sort of courtyard coming off it, and we decided that we would park the van in there even though the back end of it did stick out. We got it all set for the night, went back into the house, and soon got involved in a bottle of wine. But along about ten o’clock we heard a large commotion out in back and figuring that some of these Italian kids were playing around with the van, we rushed out to the back balcony to scare them away. It was another MP—a different one. He gave us one of those cold stares that the MPs figure will scare the daylights out of anybody.

“Who owns this thing?” he shouted.

It was quite obvious that we did, but we acknowledged the ownership again.

“You can’t park that thing here,” he said. “It’s blocking the alleyway. And furthermore,” he added, “what are you guys doing up there in that house? Don’t you know that all the houses in Cherignola are off limits? You aren’t supposed to be up there.”

“Hell,” I answered. “We live here.”

“You can’t live there,” he screamed.

“Not only can we,” says Jeb, “but we are and we have been for three months and we will be until
we go home and if you’d like to see the town major about it we will be very happy to oblige.”

Well, the upshot of it was that we saw the town major again and he blew his topper and issued a blanket order in headquarters that we lived at 14 Via Pietro Mascagni and weren’t to be disturbed again.

But Jeb and I weren’t very happy about the whole deal. So that night, along about two in the morning, we sneakied softly down the stairs and out the door. We went around to the back of the van, got inside it, took out a bucket of paint from one of the lockers, and quickly painted both sides of the van with the large letters MP. It was done by flashlight but we did a pretty good job.

“There,” said Jeb. “That ought to do it. They never bother one of their own kind.”

“Right,” I answered with some wit, and we shook hands on it.

The next morning we went out to our MP wagon, got it started after much of the usual difficulty, and drove out of the alley singing “Lili Marlene.” Safe at last, we started down the main drag of Cherignola, leaving a trail of thoroughly frightened Italians in our wake. Jeb wasn’t a very good driver. Suddenly a jeep tore past us at terrific speed and before we could figure out what was going on, a horrible face thrust itself through the window by me and hoarsely demanded, “Follow that jeep.”

It was an MP and I could feel Jeb feeling for some mental knife of wit.

“You heard him,” I said quickly, “This man is one of our brother MPs and he wants you to follow that jeep.”

I kicked Jeb in the shins as I said it.

He caught on and I’ll have to give him a lot of credit. He brushed that MP off the running board and onto a passing truck with all the skill of a professional. I even went so far as to congratulate him on it.

By this time we figured that the Cherignola MP station would be highly annoyed with us so we headed south for Foggia. We had business there anyway. We were within about five miles of Fogy when the engine began to cough and sputter and then, simultaneously, the two front tires blew out. The old tub went spinning around the road and ended up just barely teetering on the edge of a thirty foot bank above the river. Jeb wasn’t a very good driver. Suddenly a jeep tore past us at terrific speed and before we could figure out what was going on, a horrible face thrust itself through the window by me and hoarsely demanded, “Follow that jeep.”

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By this time we figured that the Cherignola MP station would be highly annoyed with us so we headed south for Foggia. We had business there anyway. We were within about five miles of Fogy when the engine began to cough and sputter and then, simultaneously, the two front tires blew out. The old tub went spinning around the road and ended up just barely teetering on the edge of a thirty foot bank above the river. Jeb wasn’t a very good driver. Suddenly a jeep tore past us at terrific speed and before we could figure out what was going on, a horrible face thrust itself through the window by me and hoarsely demanded, “Follow that jeep.”

It was an MP and I could feel Jeb feeling for some mental knife of wit.

“You heard him,” I said quickly, “This man is one of our brother MPs and he wants you to follow that jeep.”

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Courage Lost

By ROY E. JUNE

THE moon was out and its beams reflected on the muddy water of the river. The willows on the bank swayed uneasily in the warm breeze, the shadows of their leaves reflecting on the muddy water. Mosquitoes buzzed and droned among the foliage of the brush along the river. They preyed on the nocturnal prowlers that ventured forth in the night and they could be seen swarming over the water, ever hunting, and ever buzzing and droning. In the cottonwoods that hemmed the river a few yards from its muddy banks, hundreds of crickets sang their serenade to the moon. A smell of driftwood was there, and rotting leaves, and damp earth too. The warm air seemed to be pressing and confining all that it touched, and the noises of the night were unusually energetic as though they anticipated a great drama to come on the river that night. Under the humid blanket of night the little town near the river sleepily blinked its lights and was quiet except for one or two places on main street.

The young kids moved aside as the constable approached Ed’s Tavern. Some of them edged away and moved on down the street, their young hard faces reflecting false nonchalance. Others shuffled their feet and looked at the ground. The constable spat carelessly in their direction as he passed in the door. Ed’s was noisy and crowded but a hush fell on the customers as the constable entered. He moved toward the poker tables in the rear and sat down without an invitation. The men at the table dealt him in and the customers at the bar relaxed and went on with their merrymaking.

One of the customers at the bar haggled with the bartender over the price of a drink and the constable rose and walked toward the bar.

"I’ll handle this, Ed," he said, taking the man roughly by the arm and dragging him toward the door. The man twisted away and turned back to the bartender.

"Here’s your money; now let’s forget the whole thing," he said. Rage contorted the constable’s face as he grabbed the man again and marched him toward the door.

"I’m going to run you in," he hissed.

"Let him go, constable," some one said. "He’ll behave now." The constable would not listen. He jerked the man out the door and down the street toward the jail.

A few minutes later he returned to the tavern and joined the poker game again. Some of the men at
the bar looked his way and then whispered to each other. They shook their heads and then went back to their drinking.

A few minutes later, Henry, owner of Henry's General Store, entered the tavern and hurried back to where the constable was sitting. He spoke to the constable earnestly for a few seconds and then the two of them hurried out into the night.

The constable parted the willows and looked the few yards across the mud toward the river. His heavy frame swayed as he sought to regain his breath after the hurried trip to the river. He blinked, trying to accustom his eyes to the light. He held his breath, shut his eyes, and then relaxed slowly, opening his eyes again. He saw nothing. A night hawk screamed in the distance and the constable strained his ears to listen, but he heard nothing but the night noises.

The tracks had ended here at the river but it was here his real duty as the officer of the law began. As different as night and day, too, he thought. From the lighted streets of town where all was friendly, where all was easily predictable, where all was secure and comfortable, to the river, where all was dark and uncertain and foreign with strange noises and unfamiliar sights. Not like running in drunks, he thought uneasily.

It had been easy to track the stranger to the river. The fresh rain had left the path muddy, and the strange foot prints had been easy to follow. Too easy, he remembered, one print normal, the other the odd rectangular shape of a club foot. He had noticed this from the first when he had gone to investigate Henry's discovery. A mark of distinction when an officer of the law looked for small things like that, he told himself. Now he was at the river. Its quietness frightened him and he wished that he were back under the familiar lights of town. The whirlpool in the water seemed to draw the leaves of the willows into their murky depths, and as the constable watched them he felt as though his courage had drained from his body and was lost in the depths of those very same whirlpools.

The constable moved forward again, each step an effort. He followed a faint path for a few yards, coming closer to the muddy water, and then stopped to listen. The ever present mosquitoes buzzed and hummed around his head, and he slapped at them unconsciously.

Couldn't have gone far, he told himself. I was just a few minutes behind him and with that bad leg of his he must be moving slowly. Couldn't have crossed the river here; too dangerous, whirlpools and quicksand; no, must be in those willows there. The constable took a few steps more, stopping to listen after each one. He crouched to look through the underbrush. The damp leaves were spongy under his feet and as he dropped to his knees, their musty smell came sharply to his nostrils. He listened, straining his ears, holding his breath, until he thought his lungs would burst. Nothing. Nothing but crickets and mosquitoes. He must be in there; can't be any where else, he reasoned. Goddam bugs, why can't they be quiet? This is like a mad house with all this noise. He sat down on the damp leaves and his mind wandered. Wonder if the poker game is still going on at Ed's. If I hurry I'll be back before it's over.
Suddenly the night noises were interrupted by a sharp sound not far distant. A cough. The constable's nerves keyed to a high pitch as he listened. Again the cough, no mistaking it this time. The constable stood up, drawing his gun as he did so.

"Come out in the name of the law," he said, his voice echoing strangely and unnaturally among the willows along the river. "Come out with your hands in the air."

The constable stood up, drawing his gun as he did so. Again the constable stood up, drawing his gun as he did so.

"Come out in and get me," came back to him from within the willows. His heart stopped. Two voices, a few yards apart on the banks of the river, the only human creatures among the things and sounds of nature, and they were, by law, enemies.

"If you want me, you'll have to come in and get me," the voice said again.

"Come out or I'll shoot," the constable answered. He lived a lifetime in the next few moments, waiting, waiting for the sound of the man as he would approach. Sweat rolled from his face and he felt faint. No sound, no answer. The constable raised his gun, cocking the hammer as he did so. He raised his arm and peered through the willows toward the voice. Darkness limited his vision to a few feet, but he strained his eyes, trying to fathom the blackness. He took a deep breath and aimed the gun into the darkness. His lungs ached. His arm shook and he could not hold the gun still. At last his arm dropped to his side and the air rushed from his lungs. He looked down at the gun, not seeing it, and wiped his face automatically, not knowing it ran with sweat. He took the gun in both hands and raised it again. Again he pointed it toward the blackness, taking another deep breath. The blackness seemed to close around him like a great smothering blanket, taking his last bit of strength. He lowered his arm. He stood for a long moment, staring into the darkness.

Finally he shook his head and wiped his face again. He put the gun back into his belt. Then he turned away. He weaved unsteadily up the path, his shoulders sagging, his eyes staring ahead, blank and uncomprehending. He paused once and looked back toward the river. He looked again. A cigarette in the dark? No, it couldn't be. Must be a firefly; yes, that's it, a firefly. He turned again and moved toward the distant lights of town, thinking about the river and its strange surroundings. He remembered the damp, earthy smell of the rotting leaves. He remembered how the noises of the night had contrasted with the quietness of the river. At last he reached the outermost lights of town, and as he passed under the first street light a slow change began to creep over him. His shoulders straightened and his chest went out. He began to notice things about him. He allowed his coat to fall open slightly and his badge glittered faintly in the light on the street. He swaggered slightly and walked a little faster, beginning to think again. There would be questions, yes, and he thought of answers. No trace, that would be it; no trace of the bandit, that's what I'll tell them. Suddenly his pace slowed. He frowned. No, he thought, better not tell them that. His reasoning power began to function more rapidly as the shock of his experience disappeared. This guy will probably tell everything when they
do catch him, he remembered, and then they'll want to know why I didn't shoot. He removed the gun from his belt and picked up a rock from the ground. He struck the hammer of the gun several times with the rock, examined the gun momentarily, and then replaced it in his belt. Miss fire, that's what my answer will be to that question, he said to himself. A smile of satisfaction spread across his face. Must notify all surrounding towns to be on the lookout for him, he remembered.

He walked briskly along the street toward Ed's Tavern, hurrying toward familiarity, toward security, toward the things he knew and was sure of. Behind him the river moved its silent way, its damp parallel jungles alive with noises, but its own silent depths keeping his secret forever.
Jane had accepted the position at Goldham High School because it paid more than any other commercial teaching job in the state. It was a difficult school for any teacher. Class consciousness was in the air. Among those who knew from experience what a teacher faced there, it was known as the "Goddam" school. Jane knew all this, but she had to get money. Her sister's hospital bills had to be paid before long, or the doctor would go to her parents. They mustn't know about the baby, especially since it had been still-born.

As she unpacked her things in the bleak apartment above the all-purpose store, she felt quite noble. She knew it would take all the tact, patience, and stamina she could muster, but she intended to stay out the year, maybe more. Her plans were simple. She would show no favoritism, there would be no grounds for accusations of partiality, no possible excuse for dismissal.

The Ladies Club was holding a reception tea in the auditorium for the new teachers that night, and there would be a dance afterward. Jane wondered if the school board frowned on teachers dancing with unmarried men here as they had at her last school.

She chose her dress carefully. The brown wool would be perfect. The color was sober, and yet it contrasted nicely with her red hair. The long sleeves and high neckline were modest, the lines flattered her slim figure without accenting it.

A pause in the doorway of the auditorium to draw off her gloves gave Jane a chance to look over the crowd. It wasn't a big one as yet. A few older men stood near her smoking and talking, probably school board members. A lot of women stood around a table at the far end. The table was covered with a lace tablecloth, a big punch bowl; cups and plates of cookies were arranged neatly in the center. Jane walked toward the women. They turned and inspected her openly. One of them, plump, fiftyish, and wearing the very latest '43 hat, greeted her.

"Oh, my dear, you're Miss Maxwell, aren't you?"

"Yes, I am," Jane murmured, wondering how she knew her.

"My, you look younger than your picture, but then that doesn't matter in the least, does it? You know, dear, I told Harry, that's my husband, 'Harry,' I said, 'Miss Maxwell looks so congenial.' Harry agreed with me completely."

Before she could hear more of
Harry or her picture she was surrounded on all sides, and trying to remember what face belonged to what name.

Jane drank so many cups of the weak, sweet punch her stomach sloshed when she moved. She held another half full cup in her hand, putting it to her lips occasionally. For the moment she sat alone, and she noticed that some younger people had come into the hall, and that the musicians were setting up their stands and music on the stage. Some of the ladies disassembled the table to make room for the dancers, and to Jane’s relief she saw the punchbowl carried away. Then she realized an odd thing. The crowd had split into three parts. The younger set was all near the entrance. On one side ranged all the women who wore hats, and with them their cigar-smoking husbands. Mr. Sagle, the school principal and his wife were there talking to the woman that had spoken about her picture, and a man that must be Harry. On the other side were the women who wore little or no makeup, and who had obviously had their hair up in curlers all afternoon. Their husbands hunched uncomfortably in ill-fitting suits.

She turned when a woman’s voice behind her spoke.

“Well, have you picked your side yet?”

“Oh, hello,” Jane saw Anne James, the English teacher, smiling at her. “Do I have to make a choice?”

“The sooner the better, if you plan on staying here long,” Anne spoke matter of factly, and without humor.

“I rather think I’ll stay in the middle,” Jane answered.

Anne laughed. “Oh, my, don’t tell me you’re going to be a crusader for the downtrodden masses too. Well, we’ve all had a try at it. See you later.” The green feather in her hat bobbed mockingly as she walked away to join Mr. and Mrs. Sagle.

The orchestra had been tuning up and now began playing. The music was no better, no worse than most home talent products. Jane hoped she would get to dance a few times. A balding, perspiring man bore down on her from the front of the hall.

“I always break in the new teachers,” he announced, and pulled her to her feet. Dodging his feet required her full attention and she was grateful that the man whoever he was, didn’t expect any answers to his running commentary on the weather, music and himself.

After the first dance the husbands dutifully took their turns waltzing her around, and she was glad that they came from both sides of the hall in nearly even numbers.

After the dance she walked home with Anne, whom she found was sharing her apartment. Anne had come after Jane left, and her suitcases spilled clothes all over the bedroom. Jane hung her coat up and slid her tired feet out of her pumps. Anne sat on her trunk and smoked a cigarette while Jane undressed.

“God, I hate to think of another year in this hole. You’d think three years would be enough for anybody, wouldn’t you?”

“Why did you come back then?” Jane asked.

“Because I’m a mercenary fool. I can stand anything if there’s money in it. Besides, I wouldn’t know how to act in a decent school now.”

“Is it really so bad?”
"You get used to it." Anne ground out her cigarette. "Bedtime I guess."

The first few days of school were little different than at any other school. Getting familiar with pupils, class schedules, and working material took up most of Jane's time. Then she began to find out the undercurrents there were to cope with. Harriet Edgely lead one group, Johnny Tanner the other. Harriet was an energetic, intelligent, and forceful young person, and she was the daughter of the most influential schoolboard member. Johnny came from a farm a few miles out of Goldham, and was the star football player.

Jane walked into her typing class a few minutes late one afternoon, and found the two gangs arguing over which row of typewriters they should occupy. There were three rows; the first and second rows held the newest machines of the two makes, the third row had both makes in older models. The argument had come to the point where Harriet and Johnny were tugging at each other and shouting, and the typewriters were shaking precariously on the wobbly tables.

"Students, please stop this noise immediately." The arguments settled into silence and dirty looks. "Now, Johnny, suppose you tell me what this is all about."

"Harriet is trying to take my typewriter, Miss Maxwell."

"Is that true, Harriet?"

"No, Miss Maxwell. I had this typewriter all last year, and Johnny is just trying to horn in because he had it yesterday."

"It was my impression that these typewriters belonged to the school, and not to any one pupil. Now, as I call your names alphabetically you will take the seats I indicate, and I don't want to hear anymore of this nonsense."

There were other incidents. Ethel Swanson accused Tim Ellis of copying her accounting problems. Ethel was Johnny's girl friend, and Tim was a satellite of Harriet's. Harriet costantly complained that she couldn't type on her assigned typewriter. Jane remained calm, and thought she was keeping things pretty well under control. It wasn't so hard to maintain a middle course if you just made the effort.

Then came the play, and more trouble. Since Jane was the only teacher who had ever directed any kind of dramatics she was asked to put on the Junior play. She accepted. The class voted on those who tried out for the parts, and as luck would have it, Johnny and Harriet were cast opposite each other in romantic leads. Both of them rebelled. They would not play opposite each other, but neither one wanted to relinquish his part. Jane called them into her room after school.

"Harriet, Johnny, you are making things very difficult for all of us. I don't understand why you maintain such an attitude. You must know that we have to come to a decision tonight, as rehearsals start tomorrow night. It's up to you to give in, or get out."

"What do you mean, Miss Maxwell?" Harriet gasped.

"I mean that you have your choice of cooperating and taking the roles, or of not being in the play at all."

"But Miss Maxwell, you can't expect me to make love to this—this farmer, not even in a play!"

"Ah, gee, Miss Maxwell, Harriet thinks she's so high and mighty, she'd just try to hog the
whole play and make a fool out of me."

"Then you won’t change your minds?"

They were adamant. As much as they wanted the parts, they would not back down. Jane was sorry to have to take such drastic steps, but they would be in the way all the time if they had even minor parts. When she told Anne about it, Anne told her she was a damn fool. Jane asked her what she would have done.

"My poor darling, don’t be naive. Why do you think I told them I had never directed a play? I know what happens in those things. Sorry I had to shove it off on you, but it’s your baby now."

After that episode, Johnny and Harriet both went downhill in their work. Johnny’s work was so poor that Jane had to give him an F in typing and accounting. Because of his poor grades he couldn’t play football. Harriet got incompletes. Her assignments were two weeks behind. Mr. Sagle asked her to reconsider the grades, but Jane felt it wouldn’t be fair to the rest of the class for her to change them.

About a week after the grades were given out the school board called a special meeting, and asked Jane to appear before it. She didn’t mention it to Anne, but she had a feeling Anne knew about it. She didn’t worry too much. She felt confident that her record was good.

The members wasted no time in coming to the point. The opening preliminaries of the meeting were short, and as soon as they were over Mr. Edgely rose and faced her.

"Miss Maxwell, the members of this board have been called upon to consider your record as a teacher here. We reviewed all the information we could gather, and we consider your methods unsuitable to our school."

Jane started to speak, but before she could say anything, Mr. Edgely went on.

"We find, Miss Maxwell, evidence of personal prejudice, unorthodox classroom behavior, and disregard of your principal’s advice. As a result, your students seem to be losing their respect for you, and their classwork is not up to standard. In view of these circumstances, we feel we should warn you that unless this condition is greatly improved before the end of this semester your resignation will be requested. That is all."

"But Mr. Edgely, gentlemen, I would like to—."

"I believe you understand our position on the matter quite clearly, Miss Maxwell. The board has other matters to attend to tonight."

"Very well, gentlemen, good night." Jane picked up her coat and hurried out of the room before her temper and tears got out of control.

Anne was waiting for her when she got home. She went to the tiny refrigerator, got out a bottle, and poured a tumbler nearly half full of whiskey. She handed it to Jane.

"Here, kid, you need this. I got soused the night I got it."

Jane took the glass, drained it, and handed it back to Anne for a refill.

"Does this happen to everybody that comes here?"

"Sure," Anne answered. "Most of them leave rather than ‘sacrifice their ethics.’ Some of them, me for instance, stay on because they don’t really give a damn, or need a job."

"How can people go on being so bullheaded, so unreasonable? Can’t
anything be done?" Jane wasn't crying now, she just felt tired.

"Oh, you got away with it longer than I did. They read me off three weeks after I got here. Maybe they're improving, or maybe it's because Harry likes redheads." Anne poured herself a drink. "You'd better sleep on it, Jane. I might be wrong, but I think you need this job. Anyhow, as I said before, you get used to it before long."

Jane went to bed, but she didn't sleep much. Her mind went back and forth like a shuttle. She didn't like to give in, she had to pay the bills. Either way, it didn't look good to her. Sleep finally came when she resigned herself to the decision she knew she would have to make all along.

The next morning she went into the principal's office before her first class, and stayed only a few minutes. When she reached the typing room, Harriet was sitting at her old typewriter, and her friends had taken over the first two rows. Johnny walked in just behind her.

"Johnny, will you report to the principal's office at once?"

Jane sighed. Johnny would play football, Harriet would choose her own typewriter, and June would be jumping like a puppet at every pull on the strings.

"Open your books to 135, and do the exercises at the top of the page."
New Mountaineers

Leadoff man for the Fall issue of Mountaineer is TOM DEEN, sophomore English major, who makes his debut in these pages with a sensitive portrayal of a young GI far from home. Tom, a veteran himself, is from Emmett, Idaho. He was a member of the editorial board of last year's Cub Tracks.

BOB WYLDER, who will be remembered by returning vets and alums as one of the founders of Mountaineer and author of "Tank Hill," is back in the University after three years of service with the marines.

DAVID PERKINS, no longer "Sergeant," contributes some of his best verse to the Fall issue. During his absence from the University, Dave sustained the poetry department with work sent in from all over the ETO. He is a sophomore, from Harlowton.

Another and alas! not so glorious aspect of victory is described in ALFRED SIMON's eyewitness account "The Victors Can Also Be Vicious." Al, who spent two years in the CBI theater he writes about, came to MSU this summer.

He formerly attended The City College of New York, and is a native New Yorker. He is enrolled in the Jay school as a sophomore.

The faculty is represented in this issue by ROBERT ARMSTRONG, who joined the staff this fall as an instructor in the Department of English.

"Wino" is representative of a series of short stories he has done dealing with people helpless and lost in a lost world.

ALAN MERRIAM, well known on the campus for a clarinet technique that makes him the "Benny Goodman of MSU," appears in Mountaineer for the first time.

Al is a Missoula lad, who, like a number of authors in this issue, has but recently returned from the wars. He is a senior in the Music School.

RAMONA SIMANTON's "Ultimatum" marks her first story in an issue of Mountaineer. While her story deals specifically with school-teaching in a small town, it has, as an underlying theme, some very universal ethical problems. Mona, a junior majoring in English, comes from Malta.

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