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MISS MERRILIE MATHER

"Amelia"

By JUNE SALIE

Through the window all the fields had the ochre warmth of fall and the look of space that comes when leaves fall and the corn is picked. The bells of the Baptist Church in town started to ring, and the dog whined and moved around behind the stove. Len said, "Let's finish," and there was silence as the relation around Anne's table bowed their heads. Amelia sat little and round-shouldered in her chair, wrinkled hands folded in her lap, looking anxiously around the table.

"I can't understand what happened to Will," she said. "He ought to have the chores done by now."

And all her children looked up, opening their eyes, Anne grave, Sam's kindly expression hardening a little, Bernice turning her face against the baby to hide a twitch of amusement.

"I don't know where that man is," Amelia said in a puzzled tone. "It's time for church too."

"We went to church, ma," said Sam patiently. "Don't you remember?"

Amelia nodded. "The text was from Isaiah," she said promptly.

Anne looked at Bernice and shook her head, starting to stack the dishes in front of her.

"You menfolk go in the other room," said Bernice in her energetic way. "We're going to do the dishes."

"Ma," said Anne, "why don't you take a nap?"

"I don't want to take a nap," said Amelia. "You're always telling me to take naps."

Anne picked up a stack of plates and went into the kitchen, the dog close at her heels. The men walked off to the front room, Sam taking the papers along, and soon cigar smoke came drifting through the door. Amelia sat still and watched the children playing on the floor near her chair—two little girls with dresses that weren't very clean. Amelia wondered who they were. There were other children, too, running in and out of the room. "Anne is a good-hearted woman and she works hard, but, really, she shouldn't have so many children." Amelia stood up and walked around the table.

"I should tell her, I suppose, but I don't like to meddle." Amelia started to hum part of the hymn she had heard in church. She poked her finger into the bowl of plums on the table and brought one out. She ate it, let the pit fall through her fingers to the floor. "Now," she thought, "all I've had for dinner is a plum. Anne doesn't like to go to any trouble for me. When Will comes home, he'll have to eat, and Anne won't like that. I'll take a plum for him too." She

glanced around warily, and when nobody was looking, she reached for another plum. Amelia began to hum again, walking toward the door of the front porch. Dinner had taken a long time. It shouldn't take that long to eat. Anne had so much company—who were they all? The two litle girls followed Amelia out on the porch, and one of them grabbed her skirt and yelled, "Grandma, what's my name?" Amelia looked uneasily at the laughing face.

"You don't know my name!" the girl cried, and she turned and ran away.

"I can't remember names," Amelia thought plaintively, sitting down in the porch chair. Sometimes it was so hard to know who everybody was.

It was warm here, and protected from the sun. The sparrows chattered in the rain pipes. Looking across the bare fields, Amelia saw that all the white clouds were coming toward her in the wind.

The door slammed and Bernice came out on the porch.

"Ma," she said, "are you warm enough?"

"Why, yes. It's July, isn't it?"

Bernice took off her sweater and put it around Amelia's shoulders.

"There's a cool wind though." She stood over the chair, and Amelia was thinking, "Won't she ever leave? She just stands there!" Bernice looked out across the road and the neighbor's field. She said, "My, there's a nice view from Anne's porch." She shaded her eyes with one hand. "Why, isn't that our old place over there? Sure it is!"

Amelia looked sharply over her glasses, then dropped her eyes. She thought, "Bernice never saw it before from here, but I have. I knew all along it was there."

"No," she said aloud, "that isn't it."

"Those trees way in the distance, ma. See—that's our old farm."

"No," said Amelia.

Bernice sighed and turned away. "If you get cold, you better come in. You'll get sick, sitting out here."

"They're always trying to tell me what to do," Amelia thought. "They think I can't take care of myself, as if I'm a baby. Why I know more than they do. Bernice never saw the old place from here before, but I have. Bernice means well, but she's a poor housekeeper. Why, we moved there in 1903, March 15, it was. Everybody kept telling Will the land wasn't much good. It wasn't either. I wish he'd get home from church. He talks so much, that's the trouble. Always has to stop and ask folks about the crops and weather. He should be getting the garden plowed, too. Here it's spring and the garden isn't plowed."

Amelia settled back in the chair and looked over in the distance to find the clump of trees. The children came screaming down the sidewalk, disturbing her. She leaned forward and scolded them. "Why aren't you in school?" They turned and ran away, the smallest boy behind, puffing, his fat face red.

"They don't have any business being here," Amelia said. She turned again toward the horizon. Sometimes it was hard for her to find those trees, sometimes she had to make many trips back and forth across the flat line between earth and sky before she found them. But then her eyes came to a patch of trees, hazy and faraway, the trees she and Will had planted long ago, and it was time to think of things. Today it was potato-digging. That was always the nicest time, Amelia reflected with a smile. When the potatoes, clay-colored, came rolling out of the ground behind Will's plow, and the cellar smelled warm and earthy after the potatoes were in.

The trees wavered in Amelia's sight. She felt tired all of a sudden. The trees seemed so distant today; it was hard to keep her eyes on them.

"I'm full of tiredness," Amelia sighed to herself. She stirred in the chair uneasily as a few bewildered thoughts crossed her mind. Why, Will had been dead for fifteen years! She hurried to skip around the thought. "He was such a good Christian man. And he always had his work done before the neighbors."

The children were in the orchard, crawling into the apple trees, one after the other. Amelia could not hear their voices.

"I thought he was in church," she said aloud.

Now her eyes hurried to the trees, but when she found them, they seemed so far away. Just a dab of gray, dim, as if the sun didn't shine there.

Amelia looked in wonder. For time came to her across the long level land, from the small clump of trees against the sky. Time moving swift and dark like a shadow when the sun goes behind a cloud, passing roads and stones and fences. Time hurrying as if there were an end in view.

By ELEANOR MOHR

I will wear satin and laces tonight
Satin and lace
And a smile on my face
Pasted on tight.

"As Ships In The Night"

By MERLE WOOD

You know the type; blustering and well aware of their importance. The ones that wear glen-plaid suits, snap brim hits and a wrinkled trench coat when they should have given them up long ago.

"Taken?" He pointed toward the unoccupied portion of the chrome trimmed green leather seat beside the little old lady.

"No." The simple direct answer was a signal for him to toss his battered suit case in the overhead rack. Mrs. Johnson leaned close against the window to avoid being struck by his flapping coat tail.

"My! but it's nice to relax!" he sighed as he sat down. "I hate late trains and crowded depots. Traveling far?"

"Chicago." Another curt answer that should have terminated the conversation.

"Going on to the coast myself—business all done here in Pittsburgh," he chuckled.

Mrs. Johnson turned her grey eyes back to her magazine.

The train snorted its muffled whistle as it pulled from the passenger shed out into the squalorous surroundings.

Hobo jungles and bleak houses were reflected by the shiny steel sides of the sleek train. Clothes lines full of late week washings waved their flailing arms.

Cycles of bells sounded. Each street with its railroad warning bells added a measure. They receded and grew; faster as the train gained momentum. Then, suddenly they were gone. The houses thinned and finally gave way to the faintly green meadows and occasionally muddy roads.

Without looking up from her magazine she answered, "Yes, I live there."

"I used to be a Big Towner myself!" he laughed. "Quite a little city." There were other remarks but Mrs. Johnson was busy at her reading.

. . . PLUS ONE CUP OF SUGAR AND THEN STIR. THIS MIXTURE IS SLOWLY ADDED TO . . .

"Fine weather." His voice was boring. Every statement was followed by a childish laugh.

. . . SLOWLY ADDED TO THE BATTER. CONTINUED ON PAGE 156.

Mrs. Johnson deftly flipped to the back portion of the thick housekeeping magazine. PAGE 140. She turned one crisp page. Vacuum cleaners. Another. Two jumbles of tiny advertisements split by a thin column of print. Another. Another.

"Oh! That looks good! Yes sir, just about good enough to eat!" He laughed again.

The advertisement was eye catching. Brown wheatcakes crowned by a square inch of melting butter and dripping with crystal clear syrup.

She turned the page without comment.

The man beside her grunted a barely audible "Hrump!" and turned his attention to the other people in the car.

Across the aisle sat a young sailor and his wife. Further up the coach was a general blending of people. They all lounged lazily in the seats that had been so comfortable a few hours ago but now were like slabs of torturous wood.

Whistle stops steadily fell behind the train. The man beside Mrs. Johnson slowly went through two newspapers, then settled down into a quiet restlessness like the other passengers.

He looked out the window. The trees were just starting to bud. An occasional pond flashed by; a remnant of the lat winter snows and early spring rains.

Mrs. Johnson leaned back from her magazine and closed her eyes. "We should be in Chicago soon. It will be nice to see Gene and the baby again," she thought.

"Wonderful spring weather isn't it?" His words jarred her from her thoughts.

"Yes," she answered simply.

"Yes Sir," he said as he suppressed a yawn and stretched his short legs luxuriously. "Just like the spring of, let's see, must have been about 1912. Yeah. 1912, my last year in school."

'Spring?' His voice droned on boastfully as she dreamed, 'I remember a spring too. Mine was the most beautiful spring with its lilacs all along the campus drives. It was a beautiful world then because I thought I was in love." She smiled. "He was such a handsome fellow. Jack Priestfield. He had such a distinguished sounding name. I remember how I used to say, 'Mrs. Priestfield', over and over because it sounded so good. He just hadn't noticed me. Goodness! What makes me think like this. He hasn't even entered my mind for years. But I wonder . . .

" . . . and Joe is the youngest boy," he was explaining. "What a boy! Hate to leave them on these long trips that I have to take." I wonder if he can find his pajamas tonight. Every time I leave he's simply list.' She smiled again.

"I remember one spring when I was in Cairo. Yah; job takes me all over. Well, that spring . . . "

The sunset had swept the countryside away swiftly. The Chicago suburbs blinked past while the man droned on. A rush of sound and smoke-laden air announced the porter a few seconds before he stepped from the narrow aisle into the car. His heavy voice boomed above the muffled talking and the rhythmic train noises. "Lake Forest station in five minutes."

The announcement was like the noon whistle in a factory. Most of the tired people sighed, sat up straight, and began to arrange their things. Mrs. Johnson used the window with its black curtain of night for a mirror as she fixed a little straw hat atop her platinum grey hair.

The man beside her squirmed uneasily. He was annoyed by the people's busy preparations.

The train started to slow its speed. Finally the click of the rails was interrupted by a screech of iron brakes. Then the train breathed easily with its metallic wheezing noise as doors were thrown open and the little metallic platforms were clanged down to the cement ramp. People began to rise and leave the car. Mrs. Johnson stepped past the gray headed man and started down the aisle.

He watched idly as she walked away from the train, through the steel picket fence, where she was greeted by a strong young man and a slender girl holding a baby. They walked off together.

Silence, broken only by the faint noises from the ramp, fell on the few remaining passengers in the coach.

The slender, tired looking porter took a slim yellow envelope from the pocket of his soiled jacket as he entered the car. "Telegram telegram," he said. "Telegram for," he paused for a moment as he looked at the address on the envelope—"Telegram for Jack Priestfield."

The grey headed man at the far end of the car began to search for a tip in the pocket of his glen-plaid suit.

"Song Not For Singing"

By ELEANOR MOHR

Wish on a star
Sob for the moon
Weep for a love
Born once too soon.

Keen for the fawns
Grown into deer,
Think of me and
Cry in your beer

"Gypsy Earring"

She held the single silver earring cradled in her palm. The metal was old, and satiny, and cool to her work-worn hand. It was smooth and heavy, and could have been worn only by someone with pierced ears, an Indian princess, or a pirate, or a gypsy.

Before Millie Arden married John Carter and moved out to this bleak little farm house, she worked in the village at Haussenfeffer's General Store. One spring day while Millie stood in the front doorway of the store, looking across the street at the blacksmith sharpening plow lays, four big Cadillacs drove into Main Stree. Millie hadn't seen many Cadillacs. The few folks in Legornville who could afford a new car were proud to drive a Model A. The big automobiles skidded to a stop among little tornadoes of dust. Before Millie's startled eyes gypsies spilled from all four cars. One greasy old man, followed by two dirty little urchins waddled into the blacksmith shop. While Millie watched the fat man picked up a hammer and stuck it inside his shirt.

"What would I do if any of them came in here?" she thought frantically.

She turned and ran over to the old roll top desk in the corner, and took the key from the top drawer. Her breath came in sharp, short jerks, and she had difficulty turning the old key in the lock. At last she heard it click. It was a very comforting sound to her. She closed her eyes and leaned against the door in relief.

The squeak of a screen door startled her. The side door! She had forgotten it!

A tall gypsy man, followed by an old woman was already inside. The man, Millie noted, wore a white silk blouse, open at the throat, and his teeth were as white as the silk.

He gazed around critically, his glance taking in Millie and all of the interior of the little store. He sauntered around, stopping finally by the pickle crock. Disregarding the tongs, he used his thumb and forefinger to fish out one of the plump dills. The women watched him while he ate it. He nodded approvingly.

"Take these fine pickles to the car," he commanded.

The old woman picked the crock up carefully, and carried it out.

Millie held out her hand. "That will be $3.49," she announced.

The gypsy laughed at her. He turned and walked back toward the side door.

"I hope he leaves. I hope he leaves," Millie prayed.

But he didn't. He started taking down the rubber boots hanging there on the wall.

Millie felt slow shivers run down her back. "It's no telling what he'll take next."

She edged toward the main door, keeping her back toward the wall. Her fingers groped for the key; she knew she'd left it in the lock.

The gypsy looked up. He held the key between his teeth.

She just stood there for a while, watching him compare the boots.

"I could try to get to the telephone," she thought. She took a step toward it. The eyes of the gypsy caught her.

"No," he warned. His eyes were as cold and black as two ink wells.

Millie was getting ready to scream when a brown gypsy girl whirled in. The brown girl went over to the dry goods counter and started pulling out bolts of material. Nothing she found seemed to suit her, and she left bolts of discarded goods lying heaped around her bare feet. When she came to the bottom of the second pile, she found a piece of yellow satin, and she shook the sleek folds of it out eagerly.

Little flames of anger that had been smoldering inside Millie flared up. That piece of goods was hers! She had been saving it to make a party dress.

Millie spun across the aisle and ripped it away from her. The brown girl's shiny eyes flashed little golden sparks. She flew screeching at Millie. Millie slapped the piquant brown face while the brown girl howled and pulled Millie's blonde hair.

The gypsy man leaned over the counter, losing his newly acquired boots. He pushed the brown girl to the floor and knocked Millie in the corner.

The brown girl gathered herself up, rubbing her hip. She pouted, projecting her lower lip and looking at him from beneath lowered lashes. Millie wanted to slap her again.

The gypsy man picked up the yellow satin and draped it around the brown girl, drawing it tight across her breasts, and tucking it in around her waist. She smiled up at him provocatively, and reaching out, she clasped her little brown claws around his neck.

He took a step backwards and firmly removed her hands. Then turning abruptly, he went back around the counter to pick up the rubber boots. The brown girl looked after him, but he didn't turn around. So she grabbed up the yellow satin, crushing it into a wad, and slithered out, looking back over her shoulder at him.

The gypsy man sat down on the floor and pulled on the pair of shiny black rubber boots. He rubbed his long brown fingers up and down their smooth sides. Satisfied, and smiling so that all his teeth lit up his swarthy face, he went over and lifted the glass bell that covered the big round of cheese.

Reaching inside his wide belt, he drew out a small knife with a curved blade and jeweled hilt. He licked his thumb and drew it down the blade, testing the cutting edge. He sliced himself a gen-

erous wedge, and ate it slowly, savoring each bite. All this time he kept his black eyes glued mockingly on Millie.

She glared back at him. When at last he finished the cheese, he strolled across the room and helped her to her feet. His hands held her wrists very tightly. Millie swayed a little. He caught her by the shoulders, pulling her toward him. Then his mouth was warm and sweet against hers.

After a while he ran his brown hand through Millie's soft hair, pulling her face back. She looked at him for a long minute.

"You dirty, thieving gypsy!" she spat at him, and kicked him in the shins.

Startled, he limped backwards. Then, recovering himself, he bowed gracefully. Raising one sensitive hand to his ear, he unfastened one of the long silver earrings and threw it on the floor.

"This is for payment."

He stalked toward the door. Suddenly he stopped and turned. He came back to the counter and picked up the remainder of the round of cheese, tucked it under his arm, and left.

"Pet Pedantic Chipmunk"

By MARY ZINK

Pet Pedantic Chipmunk
I could dine
On wine
And Carolina pine
Magnolia seeds
And juicy reeds
Exotic perfections
Of dime store confections
Pylons of nylons.
Ampersand
I demand
My unconstitutional rights
Of you
Too
Extinguishing the quintessence
Of incandescence
And leaving me here for the night.

"The Neighbors"

By DON LARSON

"Oh, no! Not her!" The small living room walls shuddered under Mr. Weber's shout. His son stood looking at him, motionless as stone, his sport jacket drawn half way on his arm. He glanced quickly at his mother, then slid his coat slowly on the rest of the way.

"She's nice, Dad," he pleaded.

"You just mean you think she is. I've had all of that family that I can stand. This used to be a peaceful place before they moved across the street." Mr. Weber leaned stiffly back in his chair. He shook out the newspaper which had been crumpled in his lap, "Of all the girls in high school I just don't see why you have to pick her!"

Bill moved his feet uncomfortably and then glanced at his watch. "Our date is supposed to start in five minutes, Dad."

"Well go ahead and go. I'm not stopping you. Go with her every night—I don't care. I just thought you had better sense, that's all."

"Well, good night, Dad, Mom." The door closed quietly behind him.

Mr. Weber picked up the newspaper. He tried to read it, but he couldn't. His heart was pounding hard and his chest was filled with hot emotions like a thermos bottle of steaming coffee.

"You really shouldn't have been so harsh with Bill," Mrs. Weber said softly as she looked at her husband.

"You are always telling me that! Well. I wasn't harsh with him. I just wish he could learn how to choose friends! And you just can't know how that father of hers made me feel," he replied. Like a complete fool, he thought, like a complete fool. Mr. Weber looked at the print before him and tried to read it—but he couldn't. The print blurred and all he could see was the pathetic lost look on the face of his youngest son, Tim. It had been two weeks ago and he had looked up from his magazine just as Tim stepped inside the door.

Tim glanced from his mother to his father, his eyes large and frightened. Then he ran to his mother and clung to her and cried. He cried for a long time. Finally he was able to talk, his words broken and sob choked.

"He was going to hang me . . . '" He told me he was going to hang me . . . . He held my arm real tight . . . And he had a rope . . . He didn't, but he said he was going to . . ."

Mr. Weber bounded out of his chair. "What little brat was this?"

"Donald," Tim answered. "Donald Cannon. All the way home from school he told me he was going to hang me from a tall tree."

"Not him again," he shouted. "Didn't he try to pick a fight with you before? Didn't he chase you one day and tackle you in the mud? Isn't that the same one?"

Tim nodded slowly.

"Well, that's just enough of that!" He strode out the house, slammed the door behind him, stalked across the dirt road and mounted the cement steps leading up the steep bank to the new neighbor's yard. He was going to give that Mr. Cannon a piece of his mind and tell him to train his brat, or else . . .

He reached the top step and saw Donald playing there in the yard near the walk. As he started towards the porch the boy looked up and stared at him. Then Donald jumped up and ran for the house. He pounded on the door with both his chubby hands and then kicked at the door with his feet. The door opened and a man appeared.

"Pa! Pa!" cried the boy. "It's that man, Pa. Help me! It's him!" He clung to his father and stared at Mr. Weber who had stopped walking and was staring back.

"I don't know what you did to my boy," the man in the doorway declared, "but so help me you had better never try it again!"

"Mr. Cannon, I wanted to talk to you about that son of yours."

"Just talk?"

"Mr. Cannon!"

"I wouldn't believe it anyway, so save your breath." Mr. Cannon slammed the screen door, and the front door banged shut as he and his son retreated into the house.

There he stood, staring up an empty walk at no one. The man had slammed the door in his face. He didn't have a chance to tell him off, or to defend his son. He was just standing there looking at nothing. And he realized, suddenly, that those within the house were probably watching him closely. He swung about and walked off.

The newspaper had slipped from his fingers and Mr. Weber leaned forward and picked it up off the floor. He shook it out and tried to read it but that disgusting helpless feeling of looking up that sidewalk at nothing and feeling swelled like a fool within him. He threw down the paper and strode out to the kitchen. He jerked the faucet so the water splattered into the sink. He swirled the water in a swift circle in the glass, turned off the water, drank in deep gulps, and walked back into the living room.

He looked at his wife and said, "That Mr. Cannon irks me so much that I could just... You have no idea what a complete fool he is! There I was right in the cross road," he repeated, referring to the rainy Wednesday of the week before, "with my back wheels spinning like mad when that Cannon came driving off his hill and down the road right for me. My car just sat there, like a balky mule, and he kept on coming down the hill towards me, closer and closer till I swore he would push my door in!"

Then he strode like an expectant father, back and forth, back and forth, trying to work off his steaming fury. "And by God, he wasn't further than a foot from me when he finally stopped. He did that just to make me sweat, just to worry my fool head off about his putting the first dent in my car. So help me, if my wheels had not slid onto something solid so I was able to get moving again, I would have been sitting there cussing him yet!"

His short strong body moved quickly from one end of the rug to the other. His wife, watching him patiently, said, "But it was a good thing he didn't hit you."

He glanced at her sharply. "Sure, I should have stepped out into the rain and mud up to my knees and shaken his hand and patted his back for not smashing my car!"

He tried walking faster; he had tried talking. But the steam in his chest just got hotter and hotter under the pressure and there was nothing he could do. Finally, he swung around and mounted the stairs, hoping he could calm down enough to get some rest and sleep.

It was breakfast and he was pouring the milk on his corn flakes when he asked his son, "Well, Bill, how was your date last night?"

"Oh, golly, Dad, it was great. The canteen was jam-packed as it always is on Friday night—but we liked it that way. We really had fun. It was super."

"You talk like you were old friends."

"Oh, I've known her a long time. I talked with her in Chemistry and sat by her in assembly a long time before I knew her name and that she lived right across the street. It was the oddest deal—she always used her back door and alley to avoid climbing the steep steps and I just never saw her at home. And besides that, I always leave for school, well, sorta late, you know."

"Yes, I know."

"Well, after I knew who she was, it took a long time to get up nerve enough to ask her for a date. I was kinda afraid she would say "No." "

"But since none of her dozen boyfriends asked her for a date, she went with you, is that it?"

"Why, sure, Dad, and she just used me for an escort because she wanted to go to the dance so bad."

When Bill chuckled his dad glanced at his grinning expression but didn't feel like smiling, too. He knew it was too near the truth to joke about.

They were silent for a long time before Bill mused, "We talked about a lot of things, last night. I explained about her younger brother picking on Tim. And I even explained about why you went over there, and..."

"Why in tarnation did you do that? Let sleeping dogs lie!"

"It just seemed that if we understood better what really..."

"Oh, Bill! Haven't you any better sense than that? They have their alibis all planned out. They think they're right. You can't argue with people like that—not and win any points."

"Sure! They would be happy to show you their side—but I'll be darned if they would see yours!"

"But Joyce seemed open minded..."

"Well of course she did, Bill. If she wants to keep your friendship—and for some reason it looks like she might—she has to be tactful. Use that head of yours, Bill."

"But..."

"But nothing!"

There was another silence before Bill said, "I kinda wanted a date with her again tonight, Dad...She said she would go with me..."

"Why you were with her just last night!"

"I know it, but I had fun—really I did, Dad."

"Well, go ahead and go if that's the way you feel about it..."

After that, it seemed to Mr. Weber that Joyce was the only girl his son dated. They seemed to be together nearly every night. Not only did this get on his nerves, but he also feared Bill was ignoring his homework. And even worse, after every date Bill had something nice to say, not just about Joyce alone, but her whole family—about how friendly they were or about how nice they treated him. He continually tried to build them up and it made Mr. Weber good and mad.

It was a late hot Saturday afternoon when Bill said, "Say, Dad, I thought you should know that Mr. Cannon apologized for the way he acted that day you were over there."

"Not that family again! Oh, no!" Mr. Weber shoved harder on the ice cubes and three sprang out and flew to the floor. He swore, picked them up, and threw them in the sink. "And this is a fine time to say he's sorry—after all these weeks!"

"I know, Dad. But it was only last week that he found out Donald really does act mean. When he saw Donald pick on . . . "

"I know, Bill. You've told me that before."

Bill nodded and opened one of the sweating bottles of cold pop. "So now, Dad, he's really sorry he left without talking to you . . . "

"Left without talking to me, did he? He slammed the door in my face, that's what he did!"

"But he's sorry, Dad," Bill pleaded.

Mr. Weber just looked at his son, then he opened the other bottle and began pouring the pop in the iced glasses.

"Gosh, Dad," Bill said slowly, "It sure would be swell if I could tell him that there are no hard feelings . . . "

"What?" He glanced sharply at his son who was standing heavily on one thin lanky leg, pleading with his eyes. Mr. Weber felt like refusing him just on general principles, if nothing else. But Bill seemed to want him to so badly that he said, "Tell him it's O. K., Bill."

"You mean you will forgive him?"

"Just tell him not to worry about it, that's all. And take this glass of pop into your mother."

"Sure, Dad, sure."

It was an early Sunday evening. Mr. Weber was coming slowly down the stairs. He stopped on the landing half way down and, looking through the small square window, saw the red summer sun about to drop from sight. He breathed a sigh. He was still disturbed; but he wasn't as bothered as he was earlier. It had been over that Cannon family again, of course.

Bill had started explaining again. This time it was about the muddy hill that rainy Wednesday. Bill had said that Mr. Cannon couldn't stop the car even though he tried to.

"Well, I know that," he replied, "But he sure didn't try for a long time!"

"But, Dad, the road was slippery and . . . "

"And he gunned his motor at the top of the hill, too!"

"But that was because he almost got stuck there so . . . "

"Oh, he did! So, instead he preferred to push my car in," he said.

"But, Dad, he didn't do that to try to scare you. Honest, he didn't."

"Now see here, Bill, just whose son are you anyway? If you love that family so much why don't you move over there with them and live there? All you can do is talk about how wonderful and grand they are. Well, just move over there then . . . I just can't understand you, Bill!"

Bill watched, his face pale. "I didn't mean anything like that, Dad. Honest, I didn't. I'm sorry, Dad, gosh I'm sorry that you took it that way."

"Ah, hell," he swore and swiveled about and mounted the stairs feeling miserable.

Mr. Weber was calmer now, as he looked indifferently at the red clouds near the setting sun and at the puddles of water from the heavy morning shower that lay in red-brown splotches upon the land. The house was quiet. Only the distant ticking of clocks disturbed the silence. A voice was muffled somewhere. Soft footsteps moved and a door swung open. The voice was clearer. It was his son's voice talking over the telephone.

"No, no Joyce, it was my fault. I have been so anxious that our families be friends that I wasn't as careful as I should have been . . . Yes, I think that was the right method—to get on the "inside" and understand your view . . ."

"Yes it is. Very senseless. It's only misunderstanding . . . What? Well, I do think I know."

"I think that's it. And because Donald was a bit bad it was assumed right away that everyone was. And man, was that wrong . . . The best example was you . . . No, that's no line . . . You are nice . . As a matter of . . .What? . .Sure . Bye, Joyce."

Footsteps sounded and voices moved through the house indistinguishably. Mr. Weber stood there looking into the greying evening and wondering if maybe he could try to be Mr. Cannon's friend. It would be hard and he would feel like a fool pretending he could like someone he really couldn't stand. But maybe he should try just for Bill. Joyce seems to be all right, he thought. And Bill would naturally want him to be friends with her folks. Maybe he could try it, just for Bill.

Mr. Weber didn't know how much time had passed before the knock on the front door sounded. Bill dashed by the foot of the stairs and went to the door.

Mr. Weber was half way down when Bill ran towards him and said excitedly, his voice pitched high, "Say, Dad, he's stuck. He was trying to get his wife to a hospital and his car got stuck right here on Washington. He's half a block from the pavement. She's afraid the baby will come real soon. Can we help push, Dad, can we?" he asked.

He stepped off the bottom step and stood motionless watching his son. "No, Bill. No. You're too young. You might strain yourself if you don't know how to push right. I'll go."

He got his overshoes and put them on. At the door he paused. "I suppose that "he" is Mr. Cannon."

"Yes Dad."

He closed the door behind him and walked swiftly down the soggy road. At the car he stopped. Mr. Cannon was inside throttling the engine so hard the wheels spun violently in the mud and blue smoke rose from the hot tires.

"Hold up, Mr. Cannon" he called. He studied the car and saw it could not go further forward. If the car could be backed up it could be turned left so that it would get back on a drier rut.

"Try backing up,' he called. The wheels spun helplessly. Mr. Cannon got the car rocking and then Mr. Weber pushed hard as the wheels spun in reverse. The car crept backwards.

"Turn it left . . . NOW! Left, LEFT, not right," he shouted. "Now sharper, more. Straighten it out. O. K. now stop. You can go ahead now in the drier rut."

The car moved until it was a yard from the paving and then stalled. "Stop," he shouted. The tires smoked again. "STOP! Can't you hear?"

"Now back up a ways and start again. I'll push."

This time the car made it. It moved safely on the pavement and stopped. Mr. Cannon got out. "Thanks," he said, "thanks." He stood near Mr. Weber and his hands shook and his face was pale. "I'm a nervous wreck. My wife is taking a terrible beating."

"You should have left the car on the paving and kept out of this mud."

"I know. But she couldn't have walked that far."

"If you are in such an all-fired hurry, Mr. Cannon, I don't see why you stand there talking to me. I did what I could!"

"I'm too nervous to drive. I'm shot. My wife and this mud. I can hardly think straight, let alone drive. Will you drive for me, Weber?" Then he walked over and opened the back door. "I got to stay with May."

Mr. Weber stared at him and the car. A wave of disgust passed over him. A grown man with a wife and those kids, and can't even drive. Or thinks he can't. Or wants me to think he can't.

"Drive for me, Weber," he pleaded.

"Good God, man, drive yourself! One minute you slam your door in my face and the next you expect me to do you favors. I helped you out of the mud . . . Well, get going!" He turned and headed for the sidewalk. He glanced back at Mr. Cannon who was standing motionless beside the car. Mr. Weber walked on until he heard the roar of the car and turned in time to see it swerve narrowly away from the cars parked along the street.

You give a man an inch and he expects a hundred miles. Do one thing and he wants a hundred. Treat him nice and he tries to take advantage of you. Good God, he thought, I got him out of the mud and that was more than he deserved.

The emotions in his chest were steaming. But as he walked home something about the warm breeze or thud of his mud-laden overshoes on the walk turned his thoughts. He began to think of Bill.

And as he mounted the gradually sloping hill he wished that Bill would not have to know he had refused to drive Mr. Cannon. Yet, he knew Bill would find out, and he knew it would make Bill sad. He knew Bill could not help but blame him regardless.

And even though the south breeze was warm, he felt a chill along his back and a tightness in his chest.

"Judgement Day"

By ART MADSON

Some are dead but yesterday,
Yet they feel unrest—
Some are dead for—uncounted Time;
They, too, feel the unrest.
Whence comes the cold, whispering wind,
The chill wind with its awful portent—
From the land of the living, they said.
What says the wind, whispering low
From the land of the living ('tis said)—
"The dead are dead," echoes the wind,
The sibilant wind with meaning so dread,
"And that is all."
Some are dead but yesterday,
And they would shriek aloud—
Some are dead for—uncounted Time;
They, too, would shriek aloud—
That is, if they could—
At the gentle wind which whispers,
"The dead are dead,"
And that is all.

"Stor-Hans"

By ART MADSON

They say a story should have a point, that you should have a reason for writing a particular story well in mind before you ever take pen in hand and start putting words on paper. Well, I don't know, I like to tell a good story, and I like to hear one. Right now I have in mind a story that's been told in our family for quite awhile, about a guy called Stor-Hans. Stor-Hans and his girl, Gunhilda. His name was just Hans, but he had been called Stor-Hans, or in English, "Big-Hans", since his early youth. He was a cousin of my grandfather, old Peter Aaslakson. Old Peter was a devil of a hard worker and was getting along pretty fast. After only four years in this country he had a quarter-section of the best farm land in southern Minnesota, rich black earth, the like of which was nowhere in Norway. Oh, the wheat and corn he grew. Just last year he had built a large new granary and crib, using the burr oak for sills and studding and the red oak for siding. Both these grew in great abundance on his farm. Next year he would build a barn for the stock. He had made plans already—it would be a basement barn with a foundation of rock—a double wall of rocks, each one two feet thick. He would build a barn that would be a landmark, one that would stand for years for his sons to remember and think of the man their father was.

Yes, old Peter was acquiring sons, too. It was the good wife he had, even though she was not an old country girl. One son she had given him, a fine, strong boy, who already at eleven months would toddle across the floor when his father came in and laugh gleefully when he was swept up in strong arms and tossed to the ceiling. A second son was on the way, and, too, she could make the lutefisk and lefsa almost as good as his old mother in Norway. And when the sons were a little older and helping in the fields, then would be the time to think of more land. In another year he would get his citizenship papers. His sons would grow up as citizens of this great country he had adopted.

All this he reported in long, laborious letters to his old father in Alten. And Aaslak, the father, told all his friends and all his many nieces and nephews of his son, Peter, in the new land of Minnesota. And that is how Stor-Hans enters the story. Stor-Hans, the son of old Aaslak's sister, Lillie, and Arne, the fisherman. He would come in the evening after preparing the bait and caulking the boat and sit by the old stone fireplace, and gravely listen to old Aaslak, trying, with his small understanding, to comprehend all the wonders of the new country. He woud sit there, slowly smoking his clay pipe and nod his head and sagely say, whenever old Aaslak addressed him, "Yah, that iss right."

And finally old Aaslak would say, "Before you go, Stor-Hans, kindly bring in the pine logs for the fire."

"Yah, uncle Aaslak." And as the young giant lumbered to his feet and left the room, old Aaslak would look about him and say, "You have heard of my nephew, Stor-Hans, who is the strongest man in all Norway, whose very name is "big", and who soon will go to Minnesota, to my son Peter. You have heard of him?"

And all those gathered there would chorus, "Yah, Aaslak, we know Stor-Hans."

At last it was the week of sailing. Everything was in readiness. His rough woolen trousers were all washed and carefully packed away with his patched and work-stained shirts in his father's old sea bag. Lillie had made him a new gray suit for traveling and he was wearing it this last day when he went to call on Gunhilda.

It was a long walk from the town to Gunhilda's farm home, but this Stor-Hans did not mind. It was thespring of the year, the grass was green and fresh underfoot and he savored greedily the tang of the keen air as he drew huge draughts into his bellowslike lungs. As he turned into the trim little farmyard, his heart was pounding like a wheat flail; he did not pause, however, but plodded across the rutted yard and rapped on the rough, unplaned door.

"Oofta, Stor-Hans?" questioned a throaty soprano voice from inside.

"Yah, Gunhilda." How fervently the red, bristle-haired young Hercules wished he had the passage money, he would sweep the beautiful blonde girl into his arms and take her with him to Minnesota. "Yah, Gunhilda," he repeated.

She threw open the door and it hit him in the chest and bounced almost shut again. The next instant she was in his arms. "Cherista, darling, I'm sorry, did I hit your nose?"

"Yah-yah,—I mean, no, I'm all right, my nose is all right," he said, setting her down.

"Oh, your new suit," she remarked brightly, smiling pertly up at him.

"Yah, sure, I wear it today special." There was an awkward pause. "I have come to say good-bye, Gunhilda. Tomorrow I go to the new country—Minnesota—I—"

"Come. We will walk down by the fjord, down by the Alten," she interrupted. Taking his arm in hers, she started firmly off.

"Yah, sure, we walk," agreed Stor-Hans, who was having trouble with his thoughts. After several minutes of silence and liesurely walking, Gunhilda asked, "What are you thinking of, so serious and solemn, my big man?"

"Yah, I'm thinking of—lots of things."

"Of what?" she persisted.

"Of how tomorrow in Alten I go on the big steamship. It is a very large ship—I have seen it this morning. It is a large ship to go across the ocean."

Gunhilda was pensively still; it was not what she had wanted to hear.

"Yah," continued Stor-Hans, "Old Aaslak has fixed it that I work on the steamship; the captain came this morning and I signed the papers. There were three of them, three papers, then Aaslak wrote his name on them, too." He stopped short and faced the girl gripping her by the elbows. "You know I have not the money," he said urgently.

"Always you talk of money—let go."

He released her abruptly. "Yah—but you understand about the money? There is much money in Minnesota—already old Aaslak's Peter has bought the good farm. Then I come back for you, huh, Gunhilda? And the minister will marry us and I will buy many fishing boats and then it will be good, huh?"

"Yah, then it will be good."

They resumed their walking, hand in hand along the brink of the fjord, Gunhilda humming a tune. The worried Stor-Hans did not see the many glances she darted at him. He did hear, though, her startled cry as she lost her balance and teetered dangerously over the precipice. As he caught her and swung her violently away from the sheer drop, her arms somehow entwined themselves about his neck and pulled his head and lips down to hers.

"You do love me, don't you?" she asked.

"Yah, yah, of course."

"Well, why don't you act like it, then?"

"All right." He picked her up entirely from the ground and began deliberately planting kisses all over her face and neck, gradually squeezing tighter and tighter until he heard her moan, 'Oh, you're crushing me." But she was laughing. Throwing back his head, Stor-Hans boomed out his great joyous laughter, the faraway hills throwing it back in echoing waves. He squeezed a little tighter, then relaxed.

"Oofta," she said.

"Cherista, darling," he murmured.

"Yah, my Hans?"

"You are happy?"

"Yah, sure, so happy—now."

He caught her up in his arms and ran across the fields with her until his breath whistled in and out and he staggered and nearly stumbled. He knew not how to express his exuberance. They sat down against a huge, round old boulder, deposited there, if anyone cared to interpret the worn scratches on its surface, by one of the glaciers of former times. The afternoon breeze, freshening from off the Alten was turning cartwheels in Gunhilda's flaxen hair.

'Gunhilda," said Stor-Hans in a little, when he had regained his breath, "What will you be doing the long winter evenings when I am working in Minnesota?"

"Oh, there will be much for me to do—the house to keep and the chores of the farm and clothes to make—oh, many clothes, and—well—"

"And the young Kaafjord men from the copper mine—I think."

"Oh, you think too much sometimes."

Yah, I think I don't want them to forget Stor-Hans. I want them to remember that I come back some day."

Thoughtfully he stood up and surveyed the countryside. To the eastward, away from the fjord, it rose steadily in a gentle slope, sparsely topped by a few gnarled pine trees, then dropped away again, the skyline being about a hundred yards beyond Gunhilda's farm home. A small knoll rose directly to the north of the house. He smiled and peeled off his jacket.

"What—" she began.

"You will see."

He put his shoulder against the great boulder and heaved testingly. The crusted earth around its base held securely. He straightened up and looked around. He could barely see across the top of the rock.

"What are you doing—I want to know," she demanded.

"Well, then, I'm going to put this rock up on that little hill over there behind your house where everyone can see it and remember Stor-Hans. When you look out the window in the morning you will see the rock and remember my strong arms and how so easily they could crush the life from your beautiful body. And when the Kaffjord miners and the shark fishers from Alten in the evening walk out towards the home of Gunhilda, they will see the rock and remember how I might squeeze their heads between my hands until the brains ooze between my fingers like the guts of a codfish. Then they will whistle a pretty tune and walk home alone."

Knowingly he set about his business while Gunhilda idly watched. Using a small rock as a fulcrum and a long pole as a lever, he tried first one corner, then another until he got a good bite. Slowly he put his full weight upon the lever, slowly the boulder was inched out of its encradling bed. He gave a final heave; the pole broke, pitching him heavily forward on his hands and knees. He stood up slowy, ruefully regarding his skinned knuckles. But the boulder had been loosened. Putting his shoulder to it, with a mighty grunt he raised the monster from its ancient berth. He walked around the gaping hole, glanced at the waning western sun, then at the top of the hill a good quarter-mile distant.

"Yah" he muttered, "they will remember Stor-Hans." He smiled bemusedly, rubbing his chin with one broad, stubby-fingered hand. "You bring the little rock while I roll the big one," he said.

Placing his hands high on the blue-veined old boulder, he began his self-appointed task. It was warm to the touch on the western side, cold on the other. The bottom was damp and clammy. It did not roll easily, the bottom being somewhat flattened and tapered a little toward one end. It wouldn't roll steadily but had to be turned over and over with sturdy thrusts of his strong forearms and shoulders. Once he slipped and cracked his chin, biting his tongue. He swallowed the blood and continued doggedly, bending at the knees, grabbing hold, then rising and heaving powerfully. The cords on his neck bulged, he was breathing heavily and sweating profusely, but the distance was narrowing.

"Oofta, I'm tired," and with these words Gunhilda dropped the rock she had been carrying. "Let's rest awhile."

"Yah," He wiped the sweat from around his eyes and looked at the hill, then, under his shading palm, at the spot from which they had started.

"See," he said pointing, "already we are halfway."

"Yah, halfway." She smiled wanly at him.

He walked about, stretching his arms and shoulders and back, now and then pausing to kick out a leg, while she rested and watched.

'So as not to tighten up," he said, answering her unspoken question. "Are you ready to go again?"

"Yah, I guess so."

"Good. We'll go to the foot of the hill and then rest again." He smiled at her encouragingly. "Just think, cherista, how proud you will be when I have put the giant rock on the hill and people from all around will come to see it and they will ask you how it was done—and why. And you will grandly toss your head and say 'Yah, he did it for me—he put it there for me because I am his girl. He would have done many more things, he would have put ten, a thousand giant rocks there, together, if I had only asked him.' " He stopped his words—she was smiling now, the fret lines erased from her fair face, and he could see by the far-away look in her eyes she was envisaging the scene he had described. Yah, and she liked it. Again he thundered forth his exultant laughter.

Catching her fiercely up in his great arm, he squeezed her into the hollow of his shoulder, burying his face in her luxurious blonde hair.

"Yah, yah," he said, "iss good to be strong—and in love."

And that is how and why the great gray boulder came to be placed on the small hill which protected the home of Gunhilda from the bristling north winds. How long the last leg up the hill took him, Stor-Hans did not know. The sweat ran off his brow, down his neck, arms and legs in small rivulets. His new suit was rent in many places and all begrimed with mud. All the buttons on his vest were popped. His hands were raw and caked with mud and blood and sweat. Many times he paused, exhausted, only to start again. His breath came and went in great shuddering gasps. The thews and sinews of his body all cried aloud for rest, but he struggled on. All ceased to exist except the boulder which he pushed haltingly up the hill. The yellow-haired peasant girl walked in awe at his side and marvelled at this strange creature to whom she was plighted. And when at last the top was reached and he fell in an impotent sprawl, it was she who revived him, crooning in his ear and chafing his bruised hands.

For supper that evening he had fresh herring fried in butter, old potatoes boiled in spring water, brown bread, large tankards of milk, and a cake made of white flour, all prepared by Gunhilda. And also he suffered much grumbling from old Olav, the whining father of Gunhilda. He did not think his daughter should marry a fisherman, she should marry a nice farm boy who could work the farm. He, Olav was getting too old and feeble to do this much longer—one of these days the horses would run away with him and he would be trampled to death or else dashed against the rocks and left to die a horrible, painful death. The patient Stor-Hans replied not to this self-pity, only smiled at the faces of distaste his daughter put on behind his back and thought, yah, he, Olav, desires to go and sit all day drinking beer in the taverns at Alten and Kaafjord, while a foolish daughter and her husband plow the fields and raise the crops and herd the cows. And he silently picked his teeth with a splinter from the fireplace log while Olav complained further that it was but a symptom of Stor-Hans general foolishness to spend an entire afternoon rolling a stone uphill and look at him now all stiff and sore—why he could be turning furrows all day and dance all night and be better off—or at least he might be out catching the Greenland shark, since he was a fisherman, and selling their livers for the oil and be making money to properly support a wife. And it was neither right nor fair to his farm—it needed the hand of a strong, young man —and look at Gunhilda, there, as good a girl as ever was— is it fair to her to have to sit and wait while her man is across the ocean in a new, raw land—a land where are many women and it is easy to forget those at home—But the patience of Stor-Hans finally wore out. He did not like the manner in which Gunhilda had received this last outburst. Rising to his feet, he gently picked

up Olav and lifting the squirming, terror-stricken old man high, rapped the top of his head against the ceiling.

"Be quiet, old man," he said, setting the ashen Olav back in his chair, "and remember only this—no one is as strong as Stor-Hans, and be glad it is to me your daughter is betrothed. Now go and sit in the barn. I wish to tell Gunhilda good-bye, for tomorrow I go in the big steamship to Minnesota."

On the ship the next day, Stor-Hans was put to passing coal, for this was how old Aaslak had arranged for him to pay his passage. There were big men and strong men and well-muscled men in that black gang, and they greeted the newcomer with stony stares of appraisal when he stumbled down the iron ladder and into their midst. Their eyes widened a little, perhaps, when, under the direction of Chief Olson, he stripped off his shirt, for theirs was an aristocracy of brute force, and here was a man the like of whom none had ever seen.The extreme breadth of his shoulders, the swelling massiveness of his huge chest belied his great height, until, moving down to the last fire-box, they noticed how he towered over the chief, who was not a small man. Each then retired into himself, casting secret glances at the new man toiling in front of number six, the flickering flame. with its lights and shadows, accentuating the rippling play of his muscles as he fed the coal into the gaping red maw of the fire-box. Then in each face stretched a private smile of grim satisfaction. Such clumsy awkwardness they had never seen. Stor-Hans, laboring in the hellish heat, ignored the agonized crying of the fibers of his body and worked on doggedly. He felt, rather than saw, the eyes of the others upon him, and sensed the trial he was going through. He almost regretted the setting up of the boulder the previous day. It had left his body stiff and sore. But as the hours passed, he became fresher instead of wearying. The hard work and blasting heat were just what was needed to loosen his cramped muscles. He was working smoothly, rhythmically now. When the second crew relieved them, he was confident and happy, even though he caught a few surly glances. "Yah," he thought, "I'll have to bump a couple of their heads together. Then we get along."

The long trip from New York to Chicago, and then to Minneapolis, Stor-Hans remembered only as a bad dream, full of uniformed men, who impatiently read the letter he carried, then gave him to other uniformed man. But in Minneapolis, Peter, with a runabout and span of matched Morgans, awaited him.

It was good to hear Peter talking. Stor-Hans felt better and realized the long train trip had made him feel depressed. Never had he seen such country. Gently rolling hills stretched away in

every direction. It was early June and the small grain was thick and green. Tall, lush grasses waved in the pastures and hay fields. And all around, either at hand or against the horizon were virgin stands of oak. It was a beautiful country.

His thoughts deserted the past, Gunhilda, Norway with its rocky defiles and fertile but exacting seas. He became engrossed with the future, and the idea of wresting riches from this new, different country. He breathed deeply, filling his lungs to capacity. He flexed his chest and shoulder muscles, drummed with his fingers. He longed to leap from the runabout and perform some prodigious feat of strength. He trembled with eagerness. They travelled far into the night, the Morgans eating up the miles in a winging, tireless trot.

Stor-Hans told the eager Peter all the news, even of the new clay pipe of Uncle Olaus. Thus the time passed until finally they were there. Never before had a bed felt so good to Stor-Hans, even though his feet did stick out one end. Day coaches he had ridden all the way from New York and he was tired.

The next day Peter told Stor-Hans what was his plan. Timber land being cheaper than open land, he had signed a note at the bank for the quarter-section lying to the south of his own land, it being nearly all timber. Stor-Hans would fell and cord as much of it as possible, plow and plant in the spring, then clear more of the land.

And so the time passed—quickly enough. In the fall there were the stumps to be grubbed out with spade and axe and team. Then the winter with the deep snows, and the logs to split with maul and wedge and more trees to fell and the long, snug evenings, smoking and drinking the home-made beer and talking—oh, Peter was the great one for talking.

Thus the years flew by—one, two, three. Always it was work, work, work. In the spring the planting of his ever increasing fields, in the fall the harvest, in between the clearing of more land. And for Peter, to pay for his keep, endless chores to do. But on Saturday nights he hitched the Morgans to the runabout and went to town. There he would talk farming and prices with other men, young and old; he would watch the blonde buxom girls come and go between the shops and stores. Often he would go to the saloon and drink raw, flaming whiskey and become garrulous and talk much of Gunhilda, of Alten and shark fishing and the boats he would buy. Twice he had knocked a man down when he fancied himself insulted and the folk all learned to respect his quick temper.

Sunday mornings he went with Peter and the wife and the children to the church. The afternoons he often gave over to playing with Peter's children. There were three of them now, small, blue-eyed, tow-headed replicas of their father. Little Axel, nearly four, worshipped Stor-Hans so blindly and openly as to draw caustic comment from Peter.

Stor-Hans was eager to go home. The land was all cleared—the work he had liked was done. Toiling in the fields under the bitter hot sun did not appeal to him. He sold the land to Peter Aaslakson, receiving a certain number of gold eagles. Perhaps it was a fair price he received, perhaps not. Old Peter was not one to let his conscience bother him in money matters. And Stor-Hans was not one to haggle.

With a neighbor, one Helge by name, who was a sailor on the Great Lakes, he went up to Duluth, where the two of them signed on an ore boat going to Cleveland. This he did, instead of taking the train, because Helge could speak English and make the arrangements. From Cleveland he took the train and from New York, a ship, a passenger this time. At last he was going home.

And what a home-coming it was. No sooner had he stepped foot ashore, than, as if it were a signal, the storm, long promised by the plunging barometer broke. Icy, stinging rain spit from the sky. The wind, which had been idling all day, suddenly sprang to life and Stor-Hans had to lean against it as he walked along the quay towards Thorkel's Sailor's Inn. The rain turned to snow, the wind blew harder than ever, nearly tearing the door from his grasp as he flung it open and stepped into the Inn. It was a huge barn of a room; in the further end was a fireplace with a brisk, hot fire burning in it. Clustered around were a number of men most of them clutching mugs of beer.

"Hey, Thorkel," he bellowed, "a mug of beer for Stor-Hans."

At the sound of that mighty voice, the men all turned and stared. Stor-Hans saluted them—"Skoal"—and drained his mug in one gulp.

"Yah, sure, it iss Stor-Hans," they said and got up and collected around him at the bar. Stor-Hans grinned happily. It was good to be home again, to be surrounded by the men he knew, the men with whom he had grown up.

"To Stor-Hans," cried one, lifting high his mug.

"To Stor-Hans." The cry was taken up by one and all, and one and all they drank the beer.

"To Alten," they chorused.

"To Alten," they chorused.

"Drink up, drink up," cried Stor-Hans, who was tossing off mugfuls with each toast. "The next one is free because Thorkel is a good man and he is so glad to see Stor-Hans again, eh Thorkel?" And he laughed at his own joke and pounded the bar with his fist.

"To Thorkel, happy man," he called out, when every mug had been filled by the dour faced Thorkel.

"To Gunhilda." There was a sudden silence, save for the hoarse breathing of Stor-Hans. His eye roved the throng to see who had dared propose such a toast.

"To Gunhilda." It was old Olav, the father of Gunhilda, obviously far gone in his cups.

"To Gunhilda," he cackled again, "the best daughter, the mos--"

"To Gunhilda," interrupted Stor-Hans grimly. Everyone hastily drank.

"You are drunk, foolish old one. You had better to not talk so much. Go sit by the fire while men drink." Grasping the old man by the shoulder, he pushed him towards the fireplace. But Old Olav stopped halfway there and turned around, his piggish face working with unbridled hate.

"You Stor-Hans," he shrieked, "always I have hated you. Why should Gunhilda marry you? You are nothing but a poor fisherman, you have nothing, no money, no land, nothing. Not even a boat do you have. And now I tell you—you also don't have Gunhilda. Last week she is married to your cousin Ole and even now they lie in each others arms." Old Olav's, fiendish gleeful laughter was the last sound he made on earth. Before anyone knew what he was about, Stor-Hans had picked up the old man and broken his back across the bar, like an old dry stick.

"Where are they?" he asked, in a terrible voice. "Ole and—she." He grabbed Thorkel by the shirt front. "Where are they?"

"At-at Olav's farm," answered the quaking Thorkel. Flinging him among his kegs, Stor-Hans spun around and was gone, gone into the night, into the storm, leaving behind him a roomful of dazed men.

Well, that's the way the story goes. All except for the very last chapter. I'll tell it here just like my grandfather, Old Peter, used to tell it to me, long ago.

The next morning dawned bright and clear and the villagers were out in force to hunt down Stor-Hans, now considered a dangerous madman. His tracks were picked up in the snow outside of town. They led toward the farm of old Olav. Shortly thereafter the tracks of a pack of wolves overlaid those of Stor-Hans. Poor Stor-Hans. What a fate! But still they all felt a little relieved, for all knew his great strength and were a little dubious of what they would do once they sighted him. About then someone noticed the boulder was

gone—Stor-Hans Rock, as it was known. Had the wind of the previous afternoon and evening dislodged it? It seemed unlikely—harder winds had left it unmoved. Then Thorkel voiced the fear all felt—

"The wolves didn't get him—he put the rock up and he has taken it down again."

And that's exactly what he had done. The whole story was written in the snow. Forty mutilated, dead wolves were lying about. He had ripped them apart with his bare hands when they attacked him. But he was wounded, for blood was found along his tracks beyond the last wolf. On and on he went through the snow. It was seen he had fallen frequently. The tracks led right past the farm house, he had not paused, but gone on up the little hill just to the north of the house. He was on his hands and knees now, crawling up the hill. It was all plain as day in the snow. At last he was to the crest, to the boulder, and with his last remaining strength he toppled it down the hill. Down the hill it rolled, faster and faster, gaining momentum, straight at the farmhouse, through the wall, through the bedroom, churning the bed and its occupants, through the opposite wall, and finally lodged, part-way through the rock foundationed barn. And on the hill-top, Stor-Hans watched, and smiled, perhaps, at the grim, poetic justice he had exacted, then quietly breathed his last.

That's the way Old Peter always told it, execpt I remember, the first time there were only ten dead wolves.

"Gardener"

By ELEANOR MOHR

The rose is gone the way of lovely things,
(Oh, dust of roses must be very dear.)
But though I tended with the utmost care,
And watered this plant with a silver tear,
I failed—a shriveled orange berry swings
Where white and fragile roses bloomed last year.

"To Get There"

By DON E. LARSON

A crowd began to gather at the intersection of Fourth and Pierce. The light had just changed red. People crowded anxiously at the curb waiting for the light to change back so they could cross the street and get where they were going.

A large man turned and whispered loudly to his neighbor; then turned and whispered to his neighbor on the other side. Quickly every one was whispering. As each heard the news their eyebrows went up in shock and surprise. They turned excitedly one to another and proclaimed their view. Woman rattled lightly about it for they didn't believe it.

Men grew red in the face and turned to one another shouting, "I wouldn't put it past the so and so's! There ain't nobody you can trust now adays. Two bits they're Commies! The blasted . . . . "

But above the racket rose the timid voice of an intellect. "Now let's think this through. After all, it's only rumors. If we reason this out clearly I'll bet . . . "

"Reason, Hell!" shouted a large man in an overcoat with the collar pulled up to his ears. "We've got to ACT!" He turned and faced the crowd. "Do you realize what's going on? Those people on the other side of the street are after our skins! They're out to keep us from crossing this street! They don't want us to get where we're going!" He shouted and shook his fist at the group of surprised and curious faces across the street.

"And we have got to act NOW!" the large man continued. "We can't let them beat and destroy all our ideals. Don't you realize those people may have different religions from ours?" The crowd nodded in agreement. "That they think different politically?" They nodded. "That those people want to destroy us?" The crowd nodded automatically.

"Then we've got to FIGHT!"

At that word the crowd flinched. They grew scared and troubled.

"But look at what we have!" shouted the man in the overcoat. "I'm large, two men here are strong, some of you women have shopping bags filled with heavy stuff. We can't lose! Look at all we have to fight with! Look at what we have to fight for! We can't lose!" At that the crowd grew more confident and a look of determination filled their eyes.

"If there is any doubt, just look at those horrible mean people across the street," he yelled, and pointed across the street at the people who had now begun to organize and make noise themselves.

The light turned green.

The crowd charged across the street. A few individuals remembered the many times they had crossed this same street in the past —each person moving aside a little bit so that everyone could easily pass to their destination—but this was different today, of course.

The two crowds met in the middle of the street. Men fought; women batted each other with shopping bags; kids kicked and hit each other.

Later, ambulances came and removed the debris from the street. Only a few lucky ones were able to get up and stagger weakly on to their original destination.

There are two ways for people to cross an intersection in order to reach their destination.

There are two ways for the nations of the peoples of this earth to do the same thing.

Each has to "give a little."

"The River Missouri"

By ELEANOR MOHR

Sunlight is not kind to her,
The bald prairie sunlight, frankly upon her—
With the name of a slattern,
Missouri, Missouri,
Murky with ditch water
And trickles from the muddy gutters
Of every river town,
Soot from the steamers, and the smokestacks
Of the boisterous cities she has passed—
Sunlight showing her slovenly folds
While the docks point their grimy fingers at her.
When
Moonlight weaves her gleaming veil—
Snow from the lofty places
As crystal pure as icicles on the evergreens
Of the mountains of Montana—
All her depths are lovely, cool,
Detached from the hooting barges,
Serene as any Madonna,
Missouri, Missouri.

"Paper Doll"

By ART MADSON

Jerry O'Brien is the name of a twenty-eight year old checking clerk in the Marcus wholesale dry goods company of New York City. Many people, including Jerry, would consider that he lived a dull, rather ordinary life. Work, after all, was just that, work, a forty-four hour slice out of his life every week. His free time was spent variously at the public library, or in Central Park, or in Mike Conway's tap room, drinking beer. He probably—and this in his own words, too—did too much of this latter. Even Mike, red-headed, red-faced, everybody's friend Mike Conway said so. But what was a guy supposed to do? After all, Jerry would say, there's just so many hours in a week, and even after work, and mass, and sleep and eating and going back and forth, there were still forty or fifty hours a week left over. And this not counting the eight paid holidays every year, plus a week with pay in the summer. And he never was very good at making friends—he was the only guy he had ever heard of who hadn't made at least one good friend out of three years in the army. He had no special friends at work, even now; no enemies, either, they were just people. And where he stayed, it was just more people—most of them he didn't even know their names. He could have moved back into the old neighborhood when he was discharged, but somehow he just hadn't felt like it—there was no reason to; his mother had died. "What I mean is," Jerry would say—he's not a stand-offish guy, he'll talk to you anytime—"I haven't any friends at all, really, except Phyllis and maybe Mike, so why shouldn't I drink a little beer in my spare time? Its not hurting anyone."

Well, that's the life Jerry O'Brien leads—work, and walks, and drinking beer—and, oh, yes, the movies, mustn't forget the movies. Almost daily, he and Phyllis would go to one of the many, many movie palaces which abound in New York. It wasn't a bad life, really, but one day, not too long ago—well, to a casual observor it looked like it might change Jerry's whole life, but—

A Friday evening it was, rather early, but Jerry was pacing the floor of his one-room, walk-up flat, very agitatedly. He was muttering to himself, now and then even spreading out his hands in half-hearted gestures, and all in all he presented a picture of a considerably worried young man. And speaking of pictures, on the dresser against the west wall, glass-framed, was a portrait of a dimpled brunette. His half-articulated words seemed to be addressed to this girl—this picture, as though rehearsing a speech.

"You see, Phyllis, I never realized it before, but I do now. And its going to make a difference, because I do realize it. From now on things are going to be different." He paused in his pacing and faced in the mirror atop the dresser. What he saw was not altogether pleasing, but long familiarity with the orange hair, the angular face, the pale blue bespectacled, pleading eyes had engendered a wistful respect. Consciously he squared his shoulders, straightened his tie, brushed a few specks of white from his neatly groomed shoulders, then let himself out of the room, carefully locking the door behind him. He walked down the stairs and up the street, still rehearsing.

"You see, honey, I've been a coward all my life. That's a hard thing to think about yourself, but now that I know what the score is, why, I don't have to be any more. You see what I mean, don't you?" he asked anxiously.

"I don't think you—you're a coward, Jerry, you're brave."

"No, I'm not. I'm a coward, all right," he answered positively. All my life, ever since I can remember, even as a little kid, I was one. And it changed my whole life, being a coward." He paused reflectively. "Why, there's no telling what I might be like now if I hadn't been such a coward."

"What? I mean, gee, I wish you wouldn't talk like that."

He smiled at her, then said seriously, "No, its better to talk about it. Somehow it makes me feel better—and at the same time kind of ashamed, too. Its funny, you know."

"Not very funny."

"No, it isn't especially funny, is it?" They were silent awhile, then Jerry, as if under compulsion broke out again—"All my life. Its funny I never realized it before—you know I remember one time—about when I started to school it was—me and this other kid, Jimmy were playing out in the yard—we had a ball, I think —this big strange dog came running and grabbed the ball and I got scared and started bawling and Jimmy laughed and called me 'fraidy-cat'—and I got mad and chased him—but he could run faster—or anyway, I didn't catch him—and then all the kids started it—'fraidy-cat, fraidy-cat', wherever I went, whatever I did."

"Children are so cruel sometimes."

"Yes. And then when I was in high school everybody went out for something and I went out for football. I could of made the team, too—I was big enough—only the first night I twisted my knee a little and it hurt—some—and that made me hesitate a little

—or maybe I already did and that's why I got hurt—anyway, the other guys soon sensed it—and that made them hit me a little harder—only some of the older ones took it easy on me—but they all were pretty contemptuous—they didn't say much but I could tell—so I quit after about a month. I worked, got a job after school—that's the excuse I used but everybody knew, I guess —except me." He paused again, and nervously ran his fingers through his orange hair.

"And—that's the story of my life—high school, and work and the army and then this job I got now—little things, really, but piled up they make a big difference—especially with girls—you're the only one that ever really liked me—that's why it's important that I change—so that I can make it up to you—so you can be proud of me—take at work, for instance—I've been there longer than a lot of the guys, but I haven't got but one promotion—they always shove the dirtiest jobs off on me—and you know why?— Because they know I won't complain—too scared. But not any more —the very next time they try it I'll tell them—they can't pull that stuff on me any more—and then pretty soon I'll ask Hanlon for a raise—and if he don't give it to me, I'll quit. I can get another job—a better one—more money—I'm a good man—Hanlon knows that—and when he sees I can't be pushed around any more, he'll be—he'll give me a raise—I'll be worth it—a big raise—and then we can get married—and pretty soon I'll be a big man, an important man—"

"Yes, Jerry."

Mike Conway rang up the sale—four beers, forty cents—forty cents from a dollar—he made the change. Business was good tonight, though not more so than usual. And tonight Mike had another reason for being happy. It looked like his search for a dependable bartender was over. The new guy, George, was O.K. 'Might as well tell him so,' thought Mike and moved down towards the other end of the bar.

"Just thought I'd tell you, George—I've been looking for a good bartender a long time—got a good spot here and—

"Yah, say Mike, what gives with the red-haired guy over there in the booth? He nuts or somethin?"

"Him? Nah, he's harmless—a little off, maybe. Name's O'Brien —comes in every night and drinks beer and talks to himself— for hours, sometimes—as I was sayin'—got a good spot here—needed a good bartender in here with me for a long time, now—and— well, just thought I'd say you're doing O. K."

"Yah—well, thanks."

By ELEANOR MOHR

This is the day for lying on a wet dock,
Dropping down your hand to let the slick, green water
Fish through your fingers,
Some old dock that has borne the weight of snowdrifts—
White snow held lightly in Autumn,
Growing heavier with Winter's still-born child—
A dock that has stood on stilts and felt
The fog drift pale and gray
and kiss the rigid ice,
Only the dock watching stiff with yearning in the night,
Only a dock that knows
The small comforts of moss clinging to the damp places
And the silver where the dark stained witness of the planks
Dries in the sweet yellow sun.

"Trilogy"

By ELEANOR MOHR

(Reprinted from "Motive")

There are no nets,
Oh Peter, Oh John,
To hold the Love
You feed upon.

There is no boat,
Bartholomew,
To hold the Truth
Revealed to you.

There is no Peace
Except that ye,
Dearly beloved,
Believe on me.

"There Is The Sorrow"

By ELEANOR MOHR

There is the sorrow of wailing and gnashing of teeth,
Beating my head against the vertical wall,
And tearing my hair—
Oh, sackcloth and ashes!
That all the world may see
Surely I have a great sorrow.

Then there is the sorrow of dust choking in the heart,
And sobs racking the fragile bones,
All tears beyond any trying
In the desert of my sorrow
And then there is the sorrow of the snow falling softly.

"The Graduate"

By ART MADSON

He strides along the campus, whistling, far from fear;
This modern, happy College Joe—
His last week of school is here,
Then out into the cold cold world he must go.
He hurries up to old Main Hall,
Meets a waiting buddy and then
Off to the very last clas of all—
To listen and laugh at the old joke again,
To jot and note, to play the beau
With the blonde in the back row—
For out into the cold cold world he must go.
Class is over, out he strolls;
Nothing now but graduate,
Then onward, onward toward the star-distant goals
That his imperial Goddess, Fond Fate
Has in store, inviolate;
On he strolls, all aglow—
'Tis out into the cold cold world he must go.
The week is full, replete
With dances, dinners, speeches—

Eat
Peaches
In the French chateau
While you have time, Joe,
For out into the cold cold world you must go.
So we see him,
Gallant, gay-hearted Joe—
Oh, pity him,
Out into the cold cold world he must go.
Done with dear old 'State' — —
No more the ivied walls,
No more the cloistered halls
Where he would congregate
With his friends, old and new
And babble, Babel—
No more there to rendezvous
With all the coordinate rabble.
No more the campus, green and dignified
Whereon to stroll and rejoice, hand-in-hand;
No more the dusky tavern, wherein, pie-eyed
He would expound—expand—
The musty library stacks,
The drafty, dirty old gym
Resplendent with rusty brass placques,
The chapel with its discolored cherubims,
The time-honored traditions that will not slow;
Oh pity him—
Out into the cold cold world he must go.

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