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Maria

BILL WILLMERING '66

Slowly the unwieldy bus creaked up the road. Maria, sighing, turned and walked up the lane towards the distant buildings. It was good to be off the bus and away from the jabbering of the girls whom she couldn't understand and who could only give stupid smiles to her questions.

Ahead loomed the old boarding school and the convent where she had lived since spring. At first they had lived in the attic rooms of the school, but now they occupied the cottage below the kitchen side of the convent. Circling around the front of the school, Maria crossed the drive, descended the stairs, and entered the cottage.

"Ah, good! Mother isn't in," she thought. "Just time enough to get to the ice-box."

But just then the back door closed and Mrs. Pouvochek

walked in. "Maria, hurry and change your clothes, then run down and see if we have any mail."

"But, mother, can't I have something to eat before I go?"

"No. Hurry. Don't loiter around the school, and come straight to the kitchen so you can help us."

As Maria entered the office the young girl at the typewriter turned around and smiled. "Well, Maria, what can I do for you today?"

In the best English she could muster Maria answered, "Dee mail, pleeze."

"Oh! I'm sorry, Maria. There is only one letter for you today."

Maria took the letter and hurried out of the office. Formerly she had to stop when each girl tried to talk to her, but today the hall was nearly deserted and the few girls she passed merely nodded. When Maria had passed the long row of offices, she looked at the letter and stopped. Yes, it was Mrs. Hronsky's writing! At last she would know about Eva! Maria hurried along the corridor as fast as she dared, and entering the kitchen, waved the letter to her mother.

"Look, the Hronskys have finally sent us a letter. Perhaps

they are settled and are all right."

Mrs. Pouvochek looked at the letter, then at the other cook who was stirring the soup in the large kettle on the stove, and she said to Maria, "Yes, dear, but first we must do our evening's work," and with whispered tones she continued, "Don't rush into here that way. Don't you realize you could upset something? And remember to try to speak English." Maria said nothing as Mrs. Pouvochek slipped the letter into the large pocket of her apron. Reaching down a towel, she handed it to Maria and said, "The cook would like these washed first, and then when you have dried them, you must dust the study hall while the students are at supper."

"But, mother, can't we read the letter first?"

"No, Maria, we must work first. Then we may read the letter."

As the cook across the room began to ladle out the soup, Mrs. Pouvochek carried the bowls into the dining hall, and Maria began to wash the dishes.

"Maria, you mustn't be so impatient," the cook said, handing her the empty kettle. Maria smiled an acknowledg-

ing smile and began scraping the grease off the sides.

Later when Mrs. Pouvochek was settled in her favorite chair with her evening's knitting before her, she listened to Maria read the letter. After Maria had finished, Mrs. Pouvochek snipped off a section of yarn and said to her daughter, "I must write them now, and tell them that we are well too."

"Mother, can I write to them for you? Please. I could start tonight, and the letter will go with the morning mail."

"I don't know, Maria. We mustn't leave the lights on longer than the other people."

"May I, if I only write as long as the other lights are on up there in the school?"

"Very well, then," Mrs. Pouvochek answered, "but remember to do just what you have said you would."

Maria hardly heard her mother's warning as she ran to the bureau and withdrew first one and then two sheets of paper. In her own room, Maria turned on the lamp beside her bed and began to write:

Dear Eva,

How fortunate I am finally to be able to write to you. Since we were separated from you in New York, I haven't seen anyone I really know ex-

cept mother. We are settled now in our own house, though it is still right next to the school and the convent where you sent the letter. I don't go to school here though. I have to go into the city to a different school. I don't know why it is, but I do. Everyone says that I am so lucky to go there, because, as they say, it is a modern school. Oh, it's such a miserable way to do things. The teacher doesn't know any of our language, and she only smiles and tells me to be patient when I ask her to help me with my English. During recess I have to tell her in English the names for all the things she points to in the room, and then she makes me read the most ridiculous English primers. Well, at least that is better than going out-of-doors where everyone runs around or stands packed together and expects me to entertain them.

You should see how ugly the school is. It is only one story tall, and all the classrooms are exactly like. The only wood I have found so far is in the few empty bookcases. Even the shades are a sickening shade of green. Remember how back home we used to make fun of Sophia because she was the teacher's favorite? Now it's

the reverse. I'm the favorite of the teacher's favorite. Her name's Diana, and if Sophia could have an American counterpart, she is it.

In our school we have no cloakroom, but everyone has to hang his coat in a little tin locker. The lockers have the tiniest little doors that have to be slammed to close them. Do you remember that old tram mother used to take us to the dentist on every month? Remember how the conductor used to say, "Watch your hands, please. Watch your hands," as he would slam the old doors on the front? I'm sure if I could have spoken English well enough, I, too, would have yelled "Watch your hands" to Diana when she tried to show me how to slam my locker door.

Do you remember how the teacher from the central office used to tell us how dishonest the Americans really are? Of course, I didn't believe his stories then, but you know I think over half the boys in the back of the room cheated on their last spelling test, and I saw one girl copy three words directly from her speller. Of course, the teacher was too busy helping Diana correct her test to see that the rest of the

class was cheating.

Oh, Eva, do you remember the old organ-grinder who used to come around on warm afternoons and play tunes under the back wall of the school? You know, I think I miss him most of all. Remember how, after the new decrees came out, when we were in the third grade, he used to look so guilty when the old teacher from the central office came out to call the police? Oh! Eva, I don't think I will ever see another organ-grinder again. . . .

"Maria," Mrs. Pouvochek said, sticking her head in the bedroom, "you must turn off your light right now, and go to bed."

"Yes, mother," Maria answered. Signing the letter hurriedly, she slipped it into the envelope and turned off the light. It was dark now and the hushing of the pines against the brooding bulk of the old school engulfed Maria with the full misery of the new world.

The next morning Maria awoke in the grey hazy light of the pre-dawn, and seeing that it had grown light enough to see, she arose and unfolded the letter she had been writing the night before. She read it through once and began to

make corrections when Mrs. Pouvochek opened the door and turned on the light saying, "Maria — Oh! you're up already. What do you have there? Oh! it's your letter to the Hronskys. Let me read it."

Maria handed the letter to her mother and moved across the room to the closet. Mrs. Pouvochek read through several lines, and chided Maria. "Maria! How can you say such things? Don't you think that we are fortunate to be here? What do you mean telling Eva that the school over here is no good. Why! you have been at the school only seven months, and already you know some English!"

"Oh, mother!" Maria answered. "I don't want to learn English! I don't want to go to school! I only want to go where there are people I know. Oh, mother! I want to go back home."

"But, Maria, we can't go back. You know we can't go back."

"Yes, mother, I know," Maria admitted sinking back down on the bed and staring at the floor.

"Well, then, thank God that we have been able to get here safely."

Maria raised her head and looking straight at her mother said, "But, mother, it isn't that way. America isn't what you say it is. If you only knew how they stare, and how they expect me to be their little doll to play teacher with."

"Well, perhaps you aren't friendly enough!"

"Mother, don't you see, we are their play-things? Don't you see that they are going to get tired of us soon? Don't you think it will be the same thing all over again?"

"Maria," Mrs. Pouvochek broke in sobbing, "you know that God wouldn't permit it again. It will never again happen. There's nothing left to take away from us. It can't happen."

"Yes, mother," Maria said quietly. "God wouldn't let it happen again."

After her mother had left, Maria, who continued to sit on the edge of her bed, stared at the dim light coming out from under the shade. Suddenly she rose, and opening the drawer of her chest, drew out a battered scrapbook. Opening the first page, Maria gazed down at the pictures of herself and Eva taken in the mountains. She flipped over the next page and came to the inscription

under the photograph of her grandfather: "For my sweetest Maria with hopes that she will always be as sweet and as happy as she is now." Maria laughed a little laugh that became a sob, and, clasping the book, bent over and cried, "If he only knew. If he were only here to know."

As she bent over clutching her scrapbook, Maria thought of a way to make her day bearable. She would take the book to school and somehow she would find time to look at it. She would be back home again. So, quickly dressing, she ran down to breakfast.

Later on the bus Maria felt better. She would be able to escape, and even Diana wouldn't be able to read the inscriptions or the poems her friends had written below their photos. Maria smiled inwardly to herself, and reassuringly patted the scrapbook concealed under her other books.

At lunch time Maria escaped to the yard. Sitting down by the steps where only a few children ran by because of the rain puddles, she opened her precious scrapbook. Maria was just turning the page to the class picture when Diana came running up.

"What do you have there,

Maria? What is it?" she asked. Maria cringed inwardly but smiled.

"Oh, it's a scrapbook," Diana added. "Let me see," she demanded, grabbing for the book. Maria could do nothing to protest but kept her hands firmly on the covers as Diana leafed through the pages.

"Oh, I must show it to Miss Foss. Do let go, Maria, so I can see it better."

In vain protest Maria answered, "No!" But Diana had already wrested the book from her hands. As she dashed up the steps to where Miss Foss was, a loose leaf—the one with

her grandfather's inscription—fell from the book and fluttered down into the puddle of muddy water at the foot of the steps. Just then Miss Foss called the class, and as the children filed by, Maria lost sight of the picture. By the time she was able to scream for them to stop, the picture was already trampled down into the water, and all that was left of the carefully penned writing was a few blue blurs mingled with the mud from the feet of the girl who copied out her answers and the boys who traded answers during the test.

THE SEARCH

Hurrying,
Scurrying,
To and fro,
On and on and on
We go.

Searching
For something
Men seldom find,
Searching
For something
Called — peace of mind.

ANN MARIE MILLER, '65

beyond the darkness

Lo, the wayward pilgrim I found myself to be
To the windward I kept my back
My face I kept alee.

Cloak of life around my neck, cloak both smooth and gay
I sauntered down the pleasure hill
And thought it worth the pay.

Feasts I ate, and wines I drank, and loved the muses all
My vitality clothed me well
But it withered in the fall.

Now the hill is ended, the path is upward bent
As my age beats me to the ground
My cloak is torn and rent.

With older eyes I recognize the light beyond the tor
And know again I must ascend
To where I'd been before.

The peak at last achieved, the light reveals the morn
And now that I must shed my cloak
I consider it well worn.

JOE OSBURN, '64

BORROWED

from

BLAKE

I am the miserable specimen
of centuries-old mutation.
I am one who needs the most,
but gets least consolation.

I am the weary, I am the sick,
I am the down-trodden man.
I am called inferior
since ever time began.

I am indebted to all who surround me.
I am not insulted when men impound me.
I give my friendship, but get only hate.
I give my best, but can never tempt fate.

I am illiterate, I am unlearned.
I am not invited, but always spurned.
I am not trusted, and yet am deceived.
I am instructed, and yet not believed.

But I am the creature
to whom God has said —
Man cannot hope to live
solely by bread.
Justice and mercy
upon me will shine.
By patience and kindness
will heaven be mine.

I'll live and I'll suffer;
God Incarnate did!
And forever my virtue
from earthlings be hid.
The Heavenly Father
will bathe me in light.
Although not like my body,
my soul will be white.

JUDITH TISHAUS, '65



"A beautiful day," mused Manilius Verrius as he guided his horse along the narrow, cobbled street hemmed in by tall, stately-looking apartments. "Yes, a beautiful day — to die!" he thought to himself as he looked eastward toward the rising sun. Passing on, the sun gradually crept up the brick walls of the plain-faced buildings, pushing back the shadows of night and loosening the morning sounds of a populace awakening from sleep — the vague chatter of voices, a clanging of utensils, the cry of an awakening child, lulling the senses and inducing a gentle, tranquil air.

Manilius Verrius, centurion of the Fifth Cohort of the Tenth Legion, the imperial army of Gaius Julius Caesar, ruler of Rome and all Italy, had been sent to head a band of legionaries whose mission was to promptly put down a local, but nevertheless potentially dangerous, servile insurrection running its course in Arpinum, a wealthy suburb of Rome in the Volscian Mountains. The patrician aristocrats were rumored to be in a state of abject terror; so much so that some of them had even, in a

wild frenzy, put to death their faithful servants in order to preserve their loyalty. The mere thought of such a condescension from their oft preserved, sacred dignity brought a bitter smile to the thin lips and cold, blue eyes of Manilius. He could even picture one of the obese nobles dashing around a table clutching at the skirts of his toga, his jowls quivering, terror in his dissolute, protuberant eyes, pursued by a ragged, dirty, howling slave brandishing a dagger in one hand and a leg of mutton in the other. The swollen distended bladder of pompousness pricked by the audacity of rebellion.

Too bad that such energy would be spent in vain, and so many brave lives lost, for the only outcome of an encounter between tough, battle-hardened legionaries and the wild, scattered bands of insurgents could be a harsh, bloody quelling of the uprising. And it was his duty as centurion of the Fifth Cohort to play his part in the bloody, distasteful drama about to be enacted. He would merely obey orders and slaughter a group of slaves who had dared to assert their freedom and challenge the sacred authority of Rome. The

sacred authority was embodied in the crass personage of Marcus Rufus Lentulus, legate of the Tenth Legion and immediate superior of Manilius. Lentulus had selected Manilius to head the detachment of legionaries. The crafty, jealous Lentulus, always ready to crush the spire of glory when it reared itself above the head of anyone else, had, no doubt, recognized a job which was heir to no special glory, and yet susceptible to possible failure and consequent disgrace. And, as if this were not enough to satisfy the greed of this noble Roman, the detachment was purposely undermanned for such an expedition. Moreover, Lentulus, the partician ex-Senator, had cleverly manipulated the official records to show no such deficit in the manpower of the detachment—a clever precaution, Manilius thought wryly. Perhaps it was better not to show such open resentment towards his superior, no matter how despicable he be. After all, he aspired to replace Lentulus upon his retirement from command of the Legion, and the fact that he had openly criticized the fickleness and insincerity of his general would not especially endear him to the crafty, old fox,

who might shatter Manilius's ambitions out of sheer envy. Too bad Rufus had any say at all about his successor, for otherwise Manilius, with his distinguished record of efficient service in the imperial army in Germany and Gaul, would absolutely be first choice to fill the vacated spot. Well, when he returned from this expedition, he would be sure to—

A flurry of shrill shouting suddenly broke the early morning stillness, and a silver basin flew out of a window above him, struck the stones of the street, and rolled into the gutter with a great clatter. There immediately followed the slamming of a door, and a gradual cessation of the harsh cries.

Manilius did not halt his horse or even slacken his pace perceptibly, but merely turned his head, and, shading his eyes against the glare of the sun, stared in the direction of the apartment window from which the missile had so suddenly sallied forth. Marital quarrels were too frequent to worry about and generally harmless to the participants, although occasionally dangerous for innocent bystanders. A slight smile played across his swarthy handsome countenance, ren-

dered austere by an aquiline nose, a singular handsome countenance, sharp features, and a square jutting chin. His steel-blue eyes twinkled with the inner glow of a strong, dominant character, impossible to be restrained or hidden for any length of time. An aura of maturity surrounded his lean, athletic body, an aura which was enhanced by his military trappings—his crested helmet, woolen tunic, leather doublet with plates of metal, brown cloak worn against the slight morning chill, and heavy hob-nailed sandals. The well-groomed, muscular white charger with bobbed tail and flowing mane, which he rode so easily and with such dignity, completed his impressive appearance — an appearance which reflected the might of the Roman Empire on this, the second day before the Ides of October, 58 B.C.

Manilius and his expedition wound their way through the narrow streets of the city, out along the wide, sun-swept avenue passing the stately Forum with its ornate columns, scrolls and wide marble steps, through the outskirts of the city, and along the dusty path threading the green plains and cultivated fields of the outlying districts.

Some of the laborers in the fields, taking advantage of the mild morning hours, gathering in the late crop of grain, or despoiling the vineyards of their large purple grapes, stopped their work momentarily to stare with languid countenances at the passing of the column of soldiers, the military might of Rome. Just as quickly, however, they returned to their work, such martial spectacles being commonplace in a city so full of splendor and magnificence of all kinds.

As the cohort wound its way through the foothills the sun was nearing its zenith. Manilius wheeled his horse off to the side of the rock road and, scanning the ranks of his veterans, called a short halt. Dismounting, he gave the reins of his horse to an attendant and strode off to the crest of the hill, where he stopped and slowly scanned the horizon. Doffing his helmet, he reached up and ran his hand through his dense black hair which was beginning to grey at the temples and was fast receding from his noble forehead. Here he was on the threshold of the last stage of his career, realizing the necessity of success in order to retire into a life of leisure and affluence so neces-

sary for prestige. The opposition of old Rufus towards Manilius's succession as legate of the Tenth Legion could possibly sway the Emperor's choice and force Manilius to retire as a mere centurion into the numberless ranks of the common populace. And suddenly a feeling of utter futility and destitution swept over him, destroying his confidence and overshadowing his spirit like a dark, ominous thundercloud. Surely there was some easier way along the stony path to success—one which was not prey to the doubts and fears which now gripped his mind in a vise. And, as if a detached observer, he looked down and saw himself bent under the burden of disgrace and defeat.

The sudden clatter of a shield dropped upon the stony ground brought Manilius back to reality with a start, and, sighing inwardly, he turned and strode back down the hill. After regrouping his men, he remounted and led them out along the trail.

The afternoon had almost spent itself, as the column of soldiers turned a bend in the narrow trail and saw the thin wisp of smoke arising from the vicinity of one of the splendid villas. Upon nearing the site,

the blackened columns and crumbling masonry of the large building became vividly apparent. A blast was sounded from the trumpet and there came from the gutted building two men and a woman, who rushed across the open space to the blessed safety afforded by the Roman military might. The older man, fat and balding, carrying a small jewelled casket under his arm was followed by a younger man and a plump, elderly lady, all clothed in patrician garb. Vestius, the older man, his moon face aglow with the joy of relief, told his story in breathless voice: how a roving band of marauders had plundered their villa while the family hid with their valuables. How the band of looters became drunk, quarrelled among themselves and finally left without searching too thoroughly.

Having detached a group of his legionaries to scout the surrounding area, Manilius ordered the rest of the troops to bivouac some distance from the villa and accompanied the family into their home to survey the damage.

When night fell and his scouting party had not yet returned, he accepted the offer

of the Vestii to spend the evening in their villa, while his troops were to encamp outside. It was then that the idea gradually overtook him. He could not say when the thought had first struck him, but yet there it was and it could not be obliterated. It pressed upon him from all sides and pointed out the perfection of the situation. The dead body of one of the slaves, who had apparently been killed in a quarrel with his drunken fellows, would provide the scapegoat. The remoteness of his garrison stationed outside provided ample secrecy. And the small exquisite casket of jewels and coins which Vestius had shown him and which had probably been extorted from honest but unfortunate citizens provided the incentive. A small fortune would be his if only he would seize the opportunity and not flinch from what must be done. It was now or never; here was independence from any need for obsequiousness toward others for the rest of his life. Fate beckoned, and heeding her call, he set about his work.

After begging a short leave of his hosts, Manilius went outside, and sheltered by a grove of trees, dug a small but

deep hole in the ground. Returning to the villa, he found old Vestius and his wife in the same room, and summoning up his courage, he dispatched them with little difficulty. Vestius's son, bursting into the room to find out what the commotion was, had only time to open his mouth once in startled surprise, before a hurled spear pinned him to the door.

The deed done, Manilius shook off his feeling of revulsion, seized the precious casket and carried it outside, where he buried it in the grove of trees. Having covered it with the loose dirt, he went back into the house, seized his bloody sword and hurried out toward his troops reaching them just as the alarm went up. A large body of marauders and slaves had fallen upon Manilius's troops and were pressing them hard. By the time Manilius could rally his men, they had been pushed back to a grove of stately trees near the villa of the Vestii. Having a double incentive for victory, Manilius fought with the strength of ten men, slashing, dodging, thrusting, urging his men onward by his own example. Swords twinkled in the torchlight and described

shimmering arcs in mid-air; triumphant cries mingling with the shouts of the wounded and a harsh clash of arms filled the air. The last thing Manilius remembered was the grotesque face of one of the enemy lurching forward into his field of vision, leering at him as he raised his sword to hack at it, and then—blackness.

The physicians in attendance upon Manilius in his bright, clean-smelling apartment back in Rome kept telling him how lucky he was that the blow from the sword had been a glancing, sideways one, else he would have been dead. As it was, however, his face and arms were scarred with innumerable wounds and his shattered right leg would probably never heal completely or properly. His military career was over. His soldiers had finally repulsed the band of slaves in bloody battle and had carried him back to Rome for medical attention. The body of the slave who had broken into the villa and slain the Vestii had already been found, and

now all Rome was ready to acclaim the brave centurion who had fought so gallantly in loyal defense of her authority.

Manilius Verrius, with the help of his crutch, hobbled up the hill leading to the restored *domus Vestiorum* surrounded by a group of high-ranking soldiers and imperial representatives. His long period of convalescence over, he had returned to the sight of the battle to witness an expression of the gratitude of the *populus Romanus*. Brushing through the grove of trees and entering upon the battlefield of that night, which now seemed so long ago, he dropped his helmet in astonishment and fell to his knees, tears welling bitterly from his eyes. There upon the spot where he had fallen that night, upon the small newly turned mound of earth where he had buried the jewels, had been erected a gigantic monument dedicated to the glory, valor and honor of Manilius Verrius, retired centurion of the Fifth Cohort of the Tenth Imperial Legion.

MOONLIGHT

The light reflects the water
as something clean and pure;
The bridge is quite romantic
in the night's silver lure.
Lovers have never spotted
that the water is putrid
And the wood is rotted.

Love

Love is the diamond,
not the pearl,
Hard and beautiful,
cold and bright,
Love bleeds your heart
And spends your spirit's life.
Love is the cold snow,
not the warm rain,
Delicious and cruel,
biting and soft,
Love brittles your heart
and leaves your spirit ice.

EVELYNN LOONEY, '66

I truly pity the lonely girl who falls for the tall, dark stranger at the tea party — more so if she confides her secret to the host, for he will very likely introduce them. Did you ask what would be so horrible about that? Could it be that you have never been subjected to the agony of an introduction? That you have never attempted to perform one? That you have never even observed the social martyr enduring this torture? Or was it too painful to watch? Whatever your excuses may be, I shall waive them for the present; permit me to enlighten you on the subject.

The plain truth is that a surprisingly large number of people in the world have never met. When this fact has been brought to their attention, few will have the good fortune of being introduced by someone who knows what he is doing.

“Egbert,” the ordinary host will begin, “this is Gwendolyne.” Immediately following this startling revelation he will proceed in the same muffled tone to offer an apologetic explanation about getting the fish out of the punch bowl—a task long overdue—hastily retreat and be seen no more that night. Left to his own re-

and
in
this
corner . . .

sources, poor Egbert is finding his collar a bit too tight and the room very stuffy. Murmuring a polite “How do you do?” and graciously excusing himself, he makes a bee-line for the nearest exit, trying to imagine what dear Gwendolyne’s surname might be. And although most people aren’t particularly hard of hearing, far be it from many to mention that they didn’t catch the name. Our mutual friend Gwendolyne still isn’t certain whether her dreamboat was christened Albert, Elbert, Robert or Herbert.

To the rare introductions that have survived all the trials thus far comes the final and most gruelling test, the handshake. In many circles this custom is politely ignored. People couldn’t stand the strain. A real tribulation is Undecided Annie, who squirms

uncomfortably for several minutes after the actual introduction, inwardly debating whether to shake hands or not to shake hands. Causing equal embarrassment is the pretty little doll who wouldn't think of offering her lily-white hand without first extracting it from her lily-white glove, a process requiring five minutes at best. Another type of handshake is the recent farmer who finds in an outstretched hand the per-

fect image of his fondly remembered well and proceeds to "pump" it vigorously. Last but not least is the famous brute with a domineering complex. He tends to crush everything he touches.

At last the ordeal is completed and after a few strained attempts at conversation, the newly-introduced couple find they have a lot in common, but mainly one thought—"Haven't we met before?"

Contemplation

What would you have of life,
My friend? Seek it first of God.
In Him is born all beauty, love and goodness.

If one would have water,
He looks not for a raindrop,
In itself possessing qualities desired;

But first he seeks the ocean,
Endless, fathomless source, supply
Of strength, refreshment, life.

Its magnitude and splendor
Far surpasses crystal rain-beads,
Dear and dainty though they be.

For if raindrops are desirable,
How much more the ocean?

MIRIAM KAESER, '66

Jay

MARILYN WEINBRECHT '63

As she floated across the stage, lights played upon the cameo shoulders and the unbelievably chiseled profile. With an intensely expressive gesture, her chin lifted ever so slightly and the melodious, cultured tones of her voice traveled through the hush of the darkened theatre. Uproarious outburst, clapping and cries sliced the quiet and tore it into shreds. A thousand hearts were touched! And one especially—a slight boy with a shock of black hair, who sat gripping the edges of a low plush seat. His whole being was enraptured and tensed with pride and longing. You are so beautiful, he thought, so supremely wonderful and untouchable. Perhaps he would be permitted to come to the cast party that night. He could stand beside her and people would comment on the striking likeness. "It's unbelievable," they would say, "they're exactly alike." "Did you see how his eyes are ex-

actly like hers?" She would put her arm around his neck and he would be so proud, so very proud. Perhaps . . . (he stopped, peered from his dreams momentarily to look anxiously at the tin watch with its illustrated pictures.) Oh, he had not realized it was so late. It was eleven o'clock. Mrs. McCarty would worry. He did not want to cause her worry. Besides, she was nicer than the other ladies he had lived with and he wished to stay with her. He pulled himself to full height, tightened the scarf about his neck, buttoned his overcoat and strode away with his oldish, well-worn expression. "Look at that," said the lady to her husband, "what a perfectly well-bred young boy!"

The street-car was crowded with the after-theatre rush. He felt that it would be gauche to give up his well-fought-for seat to the oldish lady standing nearby; besides, he was tired. However, but for only a moment, his love of showmanship overcame reluctance. With perfect courtesy and just a touch of intimate friendliness, he smiled openly and helped the old lady into his seat. He kept one eye open for bargainers. (They were the idiots who

were always ruining the act.) "Oh, thank you, Sonny," said the old lady, sweetly. Something sickening turned his stomach at that, but Jay rallied quickly, assumed innocence, and lifting his chin, with a quaver, he murmured, "Not at all, Ma'm. You remind me so much of my dear . . ." at this his lips trembled, more from the banality of the words than from the emotion, "grandmother." The old lady's heart began to warm and soon Jay had promised to visit her. (As mamma said, "Always keep a door open, honey; you may have to crawl in sometime.") Jay said good-bye sweetly and rang the buzzer, pulled up the collar of his coat and strode manfully from the trolley. The wind whipped briskly about his eyes as he braced his face boldly into its oncoming blast. He felt good inside. He had made a new friend and made that nice old lady happy. Nobility swelled his heart and he wondered idly if she were a good cook. People were often surprised at the ease with which he collected grandmothers.

He pushed the doorbell and prepared himself for the storm which was to come. (Like the humming of bees, their voices rose about him). "Jay, where

have you been? It's twelve o'clock. We were worried sick. It's not considerate of you at all." "I was out walking," said Jay imperturbably, "and I missed the bus. They're so terribly slow, you know." Then with aplomb, (eyes narrowed slightly) Jay pulled the candy from his pocket. "Look, I brought you this." Immediately the other children gathered round. Even Mark, their own boy, reached in for a handful. Jay's eyes narrowed again as he mentally compared Mark's supremely hard and broad and his own fine, thin one, with the narrow, deft fingers. "But, Jay," they said in a voice less harsh, "do tell us the next time you're going to be late. You could call you know." With a flush Jay drew himself up. "I didn't have a dime," and withdrew from the room. Damn them, damn them, he thought. Even if he did . . . , well, wasn't it fair to give them the pleasure of the candy? Of course he had hoped that they would overlook his lateness, but what could you expect?

He sulked in his room until a small knock at the door awakened his day-dreams. "Jay," said a soft voice. "Mother wants to talk to you."

Jay composed his face and walked with calm and ready step into the living room. "Yes," he said, "did you want me?" "Jay," said Mother McCarty, "I have something to say to you." Jay's eyes broadened somewhat, then narrowed to their normal width. "Jay, sometimes I think we seem harsh to you. We don't understand you sometimes, dear." Jay relaxed somewhat, he was winning. "Why didn't you tell us you spent all your money on the candy? It was very sweet, if care less, of you!" And Mother McCarty's hand brushed his head, gently sweeping back the long black hair. Jay smiled openly and sweetly in an expression of tenderness, "You're so good to me," he said, impulsively throwing his arms around her neck; yet even as he straightened, he could feel Mark's eyes boring into his back in an expression of cruelty and hatred. "Good-night," said Jay in melodic tones. "Jay," Jay turned, caught off guard, "how was your mother, dear?" Jay stiffened slightly. Of course, he should have guessed that she would guess where he had been. "Oh," he answered somewhat critically, "all right, I guess. Her diction was some-

what blurred. Poor acoustics I rather imagine. The stages they give you to work with are abominable. I thought the second act rather good. Of course, I've seen better. Well, goodnight, Mrs. McCarty," and then somewhat as an afterthought, "it was very considerate of you to ask about her. I'll be sure to tell her."

He was not surprised to find Mark waiting for him, leaning against the side of the tall clothes closet. Jay walked casually over to the drawer, opened it, rifled through it, looking for nothing in particular, and turned slowly, "Hello, Mark, anything much happen today?" "I'm afraid we don't understand you, Jay," said Mark, in jealous, subtle mimicry. Jay stiffened. He would like nothing better than to, but no, not in Mrs. McCarty's house; besides, Mark was bigger than he. In calm, reasonable tones, Jay turned toward Mark, "I don't see why you're jealous of me, Mark. After all, you're larger, stronger, taller than I am. Your mother simply feels some sort of pity for me." "Jealous," Mark's voice roared out in laughter. "Jealous of what?" "Of a two-bit b. . . . from a welfare agency?" "I'm not a

b. . . ,” Jay hissed. “My mother and father were, are,” he corrected himself, “beautiful, brilliant, talented people. My mother loves me,” he was rapidly losing control, “loves me very much.” “Your precious mother,” Mark hissed, “a lot you know. Where is she? She doesn’t give a damn about you. She’s nothing but a two-bit stagestruck w. . . .” Mark repeated the frightful, dark, underlying whispers and his voice grew and grew until thunder filled Jay’s ears. Jay could see but one spot, one white illuminated spot, and like a vice, his slender, deft fingers found Mark’s throat. The taller boy fell back with a muted crash, his fingers grasping and groping, terror in his panicked eyes. “Not, not, not w. . . .” he gurgled, “not, not, let, let go, not.”

As the mist cleared, Jay saw the older boy before him. His heart beating wildly, he tried to compose himself as he stood shaking by the cabinet. Quickly, he peered out into the hall, buttoned Mark’s shirt up, up high to cover the bruises. Splash, splash went the water, then dribbled down Mark’s face. He’s got to come around soon, thought Jay. Then as if in afterthought, he ran to their

room. “Give me some help!” he cried out. “Mark and I were wrestling. He fell and hit his head.” They came quickly. Jay held Mark’s head solicitously, as his fingers overlapped on the high collar above where the nasty, red bruises weren’t quite covered.

When Mark came to, the first thing he felt was the steady vise-like pressure of hands about his head. He felt, rather than saw, Jay’s burning blue eyes, impenetrable, incalculable. He heard Jay say, “Don’t try to talk, Mark, just lie back. One of the girls will get you something to drink.” Mark relaxed and let himself be carried into a soft world of blankets and sheets.

One half-hour later, Jay was calmly telling how Mark had promised to teach him a new hold. “That crazy rug must have slipped,” said Jay, as he shook his head. “I think I almost died when I saw him fall like that. I tried to catch him but I slipped.” “Now, now dear,” said Mother McCarty, “don’t think about it. He’s going to be all right.” Jay smiled tremulously. “I’m so glad,” he said. And mentally, he justified himself. After all, I really am glad; he’s not a bad kid; and he really did fall. It’s too bad.

He began to close off the part that was himself and to enact a role. Going into the kitchen, Jay went to the icebox and took out a coke. Stealing softly into the bedroom Mark shared with his little brothers, Jay whispered, "Mark, Mark." Mark heard him as if from a distance. "Mark, I brought you a coke. I thought it might taste good." Jay watched Mark carefully. Satisfied that Mark was conscious, he set the coke beside the bed. Then, completely without guile, Jay said sincerely, "I sure hope you're better in a couple days." Mark felt a chill run down his back. He would never taunt Jay again. Jay thought briefly about locking the door to his room. But to do so would be to deny his adopted role. Of course not. After all, he had sincerely forgiven Mark and shown his good faith. With that, Jay crawled into bed and resolutely closing his eyes, he slept the sleep of the just.

He was up bright and early to collect the morning papers. He cut out his mother's reviews and carefully pasted them in his scrapbook. Then he sat down to wait. He didn't leave the house. After all, she would only be in town for a few days and he might miss her. He

tried to tell himself how much she loved him. She wouldn't leave without seeing him.

On the fifth day, she came. His heart sprang to his mouth. She came running down the walk and when he opened the door, she swept him into her arms. A mass of perfume and hair and fur crushed against him. "Oh, my precious, my precious darling, I've missed you so much." And before he could ask, or say, or . . . , she stuffed a sack into his hand. "Well, open it," she said, with a delighted expression on her face. He stared for a mute instant at the small white sack, then his fingers unwound the top. The malted milk balls looked faintly sticky as they wedged in upon one another. He hesitated, then, "Thank you, . . . mother." He was conscious of a silence, a gap. He did not have to look up into her eyes to know what she wanted. Unconscious of his teeth biting his upper lip, he flung his arms around her, and she repeated her lines, "Oh, oh, my precious, precious, baby, I've missed you so much." I really hurt, I really hurt, thought Jay. And then, and then only, was he really conscious of how much he hated her.

The
rain has
ceased; once
more silence
reigns. Emerald
leaves droop dejectedly,
as tho laden with a world
of cares. A playful breeze
would shake them from their
lethargy, and a thousand tiny
teardrops fall to a sodden earth.
But a rainbow smiling through leaden
clouds renews The Promise, and all is
Well
with
the
world.

Trees after a Rain

THERESA MEYER, '64

Lonely

Lonely?

Who me? — never!

Can't you tell by my boisterous laugh?

Can't you tell by my cocky walk?

Can't you tell by my bubbling conversation?

Never change that laugh

. . . or they'll think you're angry.

Never change that stride

. . . or they'll be able to hurt you.

Never change that conversation

. . . or they'll never know you're there.

Lonely?

Who me? — never!

Or can you see behind my laughter?

Or can you see beyond my walk?

Or can you see beneath my words?

Then perhaps you're the one
With whom I can smile . . . not laugh
With whom I can walk quietly
With whom I can listen . . . not talk.

Then perhaps you're the one
Who will take the time . . . so little time really.

Please look . . .
Behind my laughter
Beyond my walk
Beneath my words
And care.

NORA FITZPATRICK, '65

CONFESSIONS of a TVviewer

JEANNE MOHR, '63

Do you get a sneaking thrill when the marshal finally plugs the stagecoach robbers? I do. Do you rejoice when father ultimately proves he does know best? I do. Do you watch with bated breath while the police close in on a suspect who's hanging by two fingers from Brooklyn Bridge? I do. All right, so I'm a maladjusted, neurotic, fantasizing lowbrow! So television appeals to my baser instincts! Am I bowed? Do I have secret pangs of guilt?

The rating experts tell me that I am not alone in my emotion. Apparently several million other Americans share my passion for action, roaring guns and the pseudo-realistic depiction of American family life that is our daily TV fare.

There are moments, how-

ever, when an evening of particularly bad TV sobers me. Then I lapse into a reflective mood. I try to convince myself that a certain amount of make-believe is harmless. I agree with many critics that TV often appeals to the emotions and not to the intellect. (How my ego winces with this flagellation!) I agree that TV can blunt the edge of reality. I agree that it can be a tranquilizer, a seductive lullaby of mediocrity. But, alas, the spirit is willing to believe but the flesh is weak.

My firm intentions waver. The luminous screen beckons. I plump up the pillows, switch on the dial and lean back comfortably. The bullets fly and with them go the pressures and frustrations of the day. De-Quincey never had it so good!



The Day Clem Whipped the Bear

around in raggy jeans, an' he was still the Bear. Nobody knew his real name.

Seemed to some folks he was a god or somethin', though most thinkin' people don't put much stock in that. "Couldn't be a god," they argued, "he's too ugly." But the others argued right back that he was at least an evil spirit, and evil spirits could be ugly. Nobody ever called the Bear an evil spirit to his face, though, 'cause he didn't take kindly to talk like that. There was one thing everybody did agree on, however, an' that was the fact he was ugly. He was a great hulk of a man, 'bout six-an'-a-half feet tall, 'cordin' to most folks. Course, nobody's ever got close enough to measure, but the Bear was a good head taller'n Buzz Brown, an' ole Buzz was an inch or two over six feet. The Bear weighed at least 350 pounds, an' most of it was muscle, though he was a shade hefty around the gut. The ol' timers claim the Bear had been gettin' bigger the last fifty years or so. They say he weighed more like 400 than 350.

Yes, sir, the Bear was big

There wasn't a time that people around these parts couldn't remember the Bear. He was the Bear when the ol' timers were kids runnin'

all right, but that wasn't the half of it. It was the Bear's face that scared most people, least what you could see of it, 'cause the Bear's head was nearly all covered with scraggy black hair that went right down 'neath his collar. Most folks thought it kept on goin' down his chest an' back. Others said he was covered with hair all over, just like a real bear. Reckon that's how the Bear first got his name, though nobody could remember back that far.

The Bear had two small eyes set close to a hammer nose, eyes that flashed red when he was mad, like a wild pig's. A jagged purple scar started near the corner of the left eye an' ran down across the cheek an' got lost in the Bear's matted beard somewhere near the mouth. When he laughed, which was pretty often, the grimy beard would mysteriously part an' reveal a black cavern broken by a few yellow stumps of crooked teeth. His breath was a nauseatin' mixture of cheap whiskey an' rottin' carrion, an' most people got sick when they happened to get in the way of the Bear's foul blast of laughter. It was a terrible sound, more like a roar than a laugh, startin' deep in the chest an' finally rumblin'

up into the throat, then dyin' away in the stomach. The Bear would stand plumb still, roar till he got nearly to the end of the laugh, an' then he'd bend over almost double an' slap his knee twice an' stomp the floor till everythin' shook. It was always the same: the roar, the slappin' an' stompin', an' then the Bear would straighten up slowly an' wipe the tears outa his piggy eyes. Yea, it was funny, all right, but nobody laughed when the Bear laughed, 'cause it was kinda frightenin'. Made the hair climb on the back of your neck.

The Bear always wore the same clothes — a red-checked flannel shirt open halfway down the front, an' a pair of baggy overalls so caked with food and mud it was impossible to tell what color they really were. Old timers said he wore the same thing far back as they could remember, an' most folks figured the Bear had never washed that shirt and pants. When the Bear came to town, he wore a huge pair of cracked, low-top boots, without any socks or shoelaces. That, people said, was so he could take his boots off again soon's he left.

He lived down by the river in

a one-room shack with weather-beaten boards an' no glass in the windows. There was a vicious dog, half as big as a horse, chained outside the cabin, an' the Bear called him "Brute." This monster at least kept most folks from comin' within a mile of the shack, not that anybody'd want to visit the Bear anyway. But sometimes some of the braver kids would hide in the trees till the Bear left the cabin, an' then they'd sneak up an' throw stones at Brute. The dog would charge them insanely an' nearly jerk its fool head off when the chain caught him up. The boys would stand back an' laugh till they were rollin' on the ground, an' the dog would attack an' attack again till he dropped to the ground from exhaustion.

One day the Bear caught some kids throwin' rocks at Brute, an' he lit out after them like a wounded rhinoceros. Only reason they got away was 'cause the Bear couldn't run very fast, but he threw rocks at them till they were almost a mile away. This close scrape put an end to *that* form of amusement for a while.

Once each month the Bear would lumber into town to buy a huge sack a flour an' a few

canned foods. Nobody ever saw him buy any meat, an' it was whispered that he stalked animals in the woods, but this wasn't very likely, 'cause the Bear moved too slow. Each Saturday afternoon he would come into town 'an put away enough whiskey to knock *four* men off their feet. He never used a glass, but chugged it by the fifth. Most men would clear outa the bar when the Bear came bustin' through the door, an' those who didn't wished they had. When the huge man got drunk, he would chase the unfortunate customers around the room, throw tables an' chairs at them, an' then roar horribly, slappin' his knee an' stompin' the floor till his face was crimson, an' it seemed he would strangle for sure. But the Bear would just straighten up an' wipe the saliva from around his mouth an' scratch a few fleas in his beard or on his chest, an' then he'd down another fifth with a loud gurglin' noise.

Sometimes a few of the sassier boys in town would run out from behind houses an' call the Bear names when he came lumberin' in on Saturdays. The Bear would just stop an' fix his red piggy eyes on 'em an' lean forward an' roar till they high-

tailed it away. Then the mountainous hulk would laugh an' stomp the ground till the fine red dust rose up an' smothered him in powdery pink clouds. The Bear would lope off toward the bar, growlin' happily to himself an' coughin' from the dust.

Now don't get me wrong. The Bear might've been comical an' sorta weak in the brains, but he was the meanest man alive in a fight. Nobody knows for sure how many men he'd killed. The reason Buzz Brown was the tallest man around at only six feet two was 'cause the Bear had already killed off the rest of the big men in town. Ole Buzz was close on sixty years an' skinny, an' I guess the Bear didn't even figure him a decent fight.

One by one the Bear eliminated the big, strong men around. Sometimes he'd pick a fight in the bar, or maybe he'd just walk up an' strangle 'em to death. Nobody ever did anything 'bout it, though, 'cause everybody was 'fraid of the Bear, even the sheriffs. Some years ago, the old timers say, a posse was got up to hunt the Bear after he killed Caleb Williams in cold blood. The Bear had taken to the woods like an animal. While the posse was

huntin' for him, he sprang outa some bushes, grabbed the sheriff an' snapped his neck like a twig. The rest of the men started frin' all at once, but the Bear just laughed an' lumbered off into the woods. Sam Thomas claimed he pumped least half-a-dozen slugs in the Bear's back, but I reckon Sam an' the rest of 'em must've been shootin' wild. Still, there ain't a better shot than Sam Thomas in the entire county.

The next Saturday, the Bear came into town grinnin' just like nothin'd happened, 'cept there were a few little round holes in his red flannel shirt. Matter-a-fact, those bullet holes are probably still there, if a person would look close enough. Some folks claim the Bear put them holes there himself to scare everybody. Well, whether he did or not, nobody messed with the Bear after that, even though he's killed five or six more men since then.

But what I really want to tell you 'bout is the day Clem Johnson whupped the Bear, so I guess I'd better say a few words 'bout Clem 'fore I get too far off the subject talkin' 'bout the Bear.

Clem was a quiet man with

a crazy shock of red hair that was always hangin' in his eyes, an' more freckles than spots on a polka-dot dress. He was a small man, 'bout twenty-five years old then, I guess, an' pretty well liked by everybody, 'cause he minded his own business. Comin' back from the Marines a few years ago, he settled down on a little piece of ground just outa town an' done pretty well for himself by our standards. That farm, a buckboard, a plow, an' a good plowhorse were 'bout all he owned, though, 'cause Clem was savin' his money to get married to the cutest gal in town.

Everybody knew Sally Benson was Clem's gal. They went out on Saturdays, but nobody knew where, for sure. Clem would pull up in front of Sally's house every Saturday evenin' 'bout eight. She'd come out in some p r e t t y, bright-colored dress, Clem would cluck to the horse, an' they'd head out the west end of town. Some folks said they'd seen the two sittin' down by the river in the moonlight, holdin' hands an' talkin' softly. But this was all hearsay. Must've been some truth in it, though, 'cause this was probably where the Bear first saw Sally Benson — holdin' hands with Clem down by the

river.

Well, sir, one M o n d a y mornin' the Bear came lumberin' into town an' went right up to Sally Benson's house an' knocked on the door. The Bear's shirt was nearly clean an' so was his pants. Even the river mud was scraped off his boots, an' his hair was trimmed an' slicked down with some sorta stinkin' grease. It was the cleanest anybody's ever seen the Bear: even his face an' hands looked like they'd been scrubbed with sand an' water.

Sally answered the door herself, 'cause her ma had a bad leg an' couldn't get around so good. The Bear smiled his friendliest, but still horrible, smile an' growled somethin' in his guttural voice. Sally looked terrified an' glanced around helplessly for a moment, then said something in a weak voice, an' the Bear stepped inside. When he came back out a few minutes later, he was still grinnin' his terrible grin. He whistled some crazy tune softly to himself an' ambled slowly down the street an' outa town.

That evenin' a buckboard with an ol' nag hitched up to it pulled to a creakin' halt in front of Sally's house. The Bear climbed down, slicked

back his hair with a huge paw, an' went up to the door. A little while later, he rumbled off with Sally Benson, who was clutchin' her handbag an' lookin' half scared to death.

Next day the town was worked up like a summer thunderstorm. Seems as though the Bear had tried to get fresh with Sally down by the river, an' she had pulled a gun outa her handbag an' shot the bear two or three times right in the stomach. She said she could remember hearin' him laughin' as she ran back to town. When she got there, her clothes were torn an' dirty, she was scratched an' bleedin' an' half dead.

Everybody was madder'n a yellowjacket, but nobody was sure exactly what to do. Tom Sandburn went down to the river where Sally said they'd been, but he didn't find anythin' 'cept a few wheelmarks and Sally's footprints in the soft clay. Some of the men wanted to get up a lynch mob, but not enough men would volunteer to go after the Bear.

Then, about noon, the huge man came amblin' down the street toward the bar, just like nothin' had happened. The women pulled their kids indoors, not trustin' the Bear's good-natured, idiotic grin. Then

he got drunk an' started throwin' chairs an' things. The bar cleared out in a second, all 'cept Chet Thompson, an' he owned the place.

The men hung around outside in scared little groups, mumblin' to each other an' glancin' nervously toward the bar. Now that the Bear was really there, nobody was willin' to do anythin' about it. Some of the men said they'd seen a couple of bulletholes in the Bear's shirt, just where Sally Benson said she'd shot him. This news started another round of talkin' an' excitement, an' the ol' stories of the Bear's bein' an evil spirit flew about hot an' heavy among the men. Some of 'em talked about the Bear bein' too tough for bullets to get deep enough to kill him.

The gabbin' died real quick, though, when Clem Johnson came down the street from the direction of Sally's house. He looked around at the men, spat in the dust, then went into the bar. The men quickly scurried up to the windows an' the door to see what was goin' to happen. Most of 'em thought nothin' would happen, 'cause it looked like Clem wasn't even packin' a gun.

Clem stopped just inside the

door an' was lookin' at the Bear. The huge man's arm had stopped halfway to his mouth, an' there was a look of stupid astonishment on his face. Then he slammed the bottle down on the bar, an' a gruesome smile spread slowly across his ugly features.

"Hi ya, sonny," he boomed in his friendliest voice. "C'mon over an' have a drink! On me," he added with a big, dumb wink.

Clem moved slowly toward the big man till he was only an arm's length away from his hairy chest. He didn't say anythin', just kept lookin' up hard into the Bear's little eyes. Clem was pale as death, an' even his freckles got scared an' seemed to fade away.

The Bear was still smilin', an' he reached across the bar an' picked up a glass. He poured it full of whiskey with a jinglin' noise an' then handed it to Clem. The little man struck out an' smacked it from his hand, sendin' the glass splinterin' against the far wall.

Some of the smile faded from the Bear's face an' was replaced by a puzzled look. He still thought Clem had come to drink with him. When his slow brain finally realized that the sawed-off runt was there to

fight, the Bear threw back his grizzly head an' roared his crazy laugh, slappin' his big knee an' stompin' his foot so hard that the glass in the window cracked. Then he suddenly straightened up an' looked hard at Clem, like he was figurin' how many mouthfuls he'd make. But what he saw was too funny, an' the Bear roared again while the saliva ran down his filthy beard.

The second laugh was a bad mistake, 'cause just as the Bear began to bend over an' slap his knee again, Clem smacked into the big man's stomach with a sharp uppercut, buryin' his arm up to the elbow in the Bear's flabby paunch. The huge man's guffaws turned into the raspin' sound of air rushin' from his lungs, an' he started to double up, a look of pain an' astonishment on his ugly face. Then the Bear slowly smiled his horrible smile, the yellow stumps showin' in his mouth. The wild boar look sprang into his eyes, flashin' fire, an' he became the stalkin' animal. He'd never tangled with one this small before, but the look on his face showed he was plannin' to enjoy it.

One minute the Bear was smilin', easy an' relaxed, an' then his big right fist came

rocketin' toward Clem's head. The men outside groaned. But Clem was ready, an' he ducked under the clumsy punch, got around in back of the Bear, propped himself against the bar, an' kicked at the man's huge behind with all his might. The Bear went sprawlin' forward an' smashed into a table, splinterin' it an' half a dozen chairs as he crashed to the floor.

The men at the door let out a tremendous whoop of appreciation, an' Chet Thompson dashed out from behind the bar an' joined them.

As the big hulk was angrily untanglin' himself from the chairs. Clem was shovin' the other furniture into the corners of the room for more maneuverin' space, meanwhile keepin' a close eye on the Bear. Before the ugly giant was all the way up, Clem danced in an' aimed a kick at the Bear's head. But he underestimated the big man's speed. The Bear grabbed Clem's leg an' slung him across the floor an' crashin' against the bar. The little redhead was stunned for a moment, an' he shook his head groggily to clear away the fuzz. Then he was up an' runnin', duckin' an' sidesteppin' the Bear's awkward charges. Once

the Bear had him trapped in a corner, but Clem grabbed a chair an' threw it at the man's legs. The Bear wasn't fast enough to get out of the way, an' while he hopped up an' down in pain, Clem moved in like an angry hornet an' aimed a flurry of jabs at the mountain's bulgin' gut. Then he was everywhere, zippin' in an' out, dancin' an' weavin', pepperin' an' jabbin' with the left an' crossin' with the right. Clem's arms flew like pistons, pumpin' out punishment to the Bear's stomach an' sides.

The Bear's smile was frozen on his face now, an' his breathin' was gettin' heavier all the time as he chased the smaller man around the room. He was gettin' mighty tired of this cat-an'-mouse game, an' his haymakers an' lunges were becomin' wilder an' more desperate. Clem just kept weavin' in an' out an' batterin' away. Finally the jabs to the midsection an' the whiskey began to have an effect on the Bear, 'cause he was slowin' down.

Then his red eye fell on the bottle of whiskey settin' on the bar. With a snarl, he grabbed it an' lumbered toward Clem. He broke off the end of it an' moved in, the jagged neck in one hand, an' the half-

full bottle in the other. Clem stood waitin' in the middle of the floor, breathin' heavily. The Bear faked with the broken end of the bottle, an' when Clem jumped to the side, the big man shot the strong whiskey right into his face. Clem grabbed for his eyes an' staggered back, reelin' helplessly.

A moan went up from the men outside. Clem was done now.

With a triumphant bellow, the Bear dove on his blinded opponent, an' both of 'em went crashin' to the floor, Clem completely hidden 'neath the Bear's tremendous bulk. The giant started sendin' powerful blows smashin' into Clem's face, an' in a second it was a mess of blood. The redhead tried to cover up, but it looked like he was almost done. But when Clem had gone down, he had rolled into a ball an' tucked his knees up against his chest, an' now his feet were planted firmly in the Bear's belly. When he realized this, he kicked out hard as he could, an' all 400 pounds of the Bear suddenly rose up an' went flyin' backwards.

Clem had smothered some of the blows with his forearms an' elbows, an' he staggered up an' began reelin' crazily

across the room, tryin' to clear his head. The Bear was right behind him, breathin' hard, sensin' a kill. Clem ducked behind the bar an' began wipin' his eyes, tryin' to get the blood an' whiskey out.

Then the Bear did a fantastic thing. Most folks I tell don't believe it, but it's true, 'cause I was there an' saw it. The Bear heaved his tremendous shoulder against the bar an' ripped it right off the floor. He started shovin' it toward Clem, trappin' him between the bar an' the wall. But the redhead had recovered a little, an' when he finally realized what was happenin', he jumped up on the bar an' kicked the Bear in the face.

The watchin' men roared their approval. They were shoutin' encouragement to Clem now, an' lots of 'em were even givin' 'odds an' takin' bets. The vicious kick stopped the Bear only momentarily, but it was long enough to give Clem time to get away. He was still tryin' to blink the whiskey outa his eyes, but he got back some of his wind.

Now the dangerous battle of punch-an'-go started all over again. The Bear seemed mad at himself for lettin' Clem get away, an' he stormed

around the room like a wild bull. Clem moved in an' out, batterin' the Bear's midsection unmercifully. The tired giant would roar an' then lunge wildly, throwin' himself off balance, an' Clem would dance in an' hammer away. Once the Bear caught Clem with a loopin' right, but the smaller man was movin' away, an' the punch slid harmlessly off Clem's bloody head.

Clem's kick had caught the Bear in the eye, an' it was almost swollen shut. The lumberin' giant stopped once an' tested it tenderly with his paw, an' then he was ragin' around the room again, slingin' chairs, tables, an' anythin' he could get his hands on. But Clem was too quick, an' he danced nimbly aside, always just outa reach, poundin' the Bear in the middle when he saw an openin'.

Finally, the huge man stopped in the middle of the room, decidin' to let Clem come to him. But the smaller man was havin' none of that, an' he started callin' the Bear names, tryin' to rile him into action. It didn't do any good; the Bear just stood there like an exhausted cyclops. At last, Clem jumped right in an' smacked the Bear a good'un in the

stomach, but the big man just smiled his crazy, one-eyed smile. Clem danced around the Bear, his fists flyin' like a hummin'bird's wings.

But he got too cocky. Suddenly, the Bear reached out with a huge paw an' grabbed Clem around the neck, snatchin' him right off the floor. He pulled the strugglin' man toward him an' then fastened his other hand around Clem's neck, nearly swallowin' the tiny man's head in his huge paws. Clem looked 'bout like a little puppet gone crazy as he desperately swung at the Bear an' kicked with his legs. But it wasn't doin' any good, cause his face was turnin' purple, an' the strength was leavin' him. The Bear just laughed an' squeezed harder.

Then one of the wild kicks caught the Bear in the groin, an' he let out a roar of pain that shook the buildin'. He dropped the faintly-strugglin' Clem an' doubled over, crumplin' to the floor with a deep moan.

Slowly, the color came back into Clem's face, an' he sat up an' gazed drunkenly at the groanin' mountain on the floor. Then he crawled painfully over an' began beatin' the Bear in the face with his fists. The big

man tried to cover up, but it hurt more somewhere else. Soon his face was bloody as Clem's. Then the Bear suddenly heaved up an' sent Clem sprawlin' across the floor on his back. The bloody giant stood up slowly, but Clem was on him again, swingin' like a wildman, his crazy red hair flyin' everywhere. Finally, the Bear's knees buckled, an' he collapsed senseless on the floor with a tremendous thud. Clem got up real slow an' staggered over to the wrecked bar, cradlin' his bloody head in his arms.

Now they were sure it was all over, the men rushed in an' started slappin' Clem on the back an' tryin' to shake his hand. Clem just leaned over the bar an' got sick. Some of 'em went over an' stood around the Bear, whisperin' in awe. The bets were paid off with some mutterin' an' swearin', an' finally the Bear began groanin' an' movin' sluggishly on the floor. Clem staggered over an' wavered back an' forth drunkenly above the Bear, fists clenched. But the bloody mountain m u m b l e d through his beard that he'd had enough. After a couple of unsuccessful attempts, the Bear heaved himself to his feet,

swayin' unsteadily. Then he looked at Clem an' blubbered through his bloody beard.

"No sense fightin' any more, sonny. Couldn't kill me anyhow, ya know." Then he turned his one good piggy eye on the men an' roared fiercely at them.

"What th' hell are all you jackasses starin' at?" he thundered. When they all jumped back, he laughed his insane laugh an' stomped the floor, spittin' out a few yellow hunks of shattered teeth. He was still the Bear.

"Damn good fight, sonny," he said to Clem, an' then turned an' lumbered unsteadily toward the door, brushin' the men outa his way like pesky insects or somethin'.

Nobody said a word as the Bear limped slowly outa town, leavin' behind him a redder trail of blood in the red dust.

Well, sir, nobody's seen the Bear around these parts since that day. Some folks say he went off in the woods to die, like some animal. Others still claim the Bear couldn't die, an' he just left to find better pickin's somewhere else. Then everybody laughs an' winks, an' somebody tells the story of how Clem whupped the Bear all over again.

I Wish

I wish . . . I could hold the glory of spring
In my heart the whole year long
To cheer me when days are bleak and grey
And my heart has need of song.

I wish . . . I could feel the southern breeze
Or imagine the warmth of sun
So I'd not mind the dark outside
When the winter has begun.

I wish . . . I could smile at all the world
To cheer both friends and foes,
Not just in spring, but all year long
Though the winter tempest blows.

I wish . . . I could hold the glory of spring
In my heart through sleet or rain
To lift my spirit, to give me joy,
Till the spring returns again.

DIANNE STILLMAN, '66

