

Java's Last Night

RICHARD G. FINLEY

He might have been your neighbor, or your boyfriend, or just the fellow you see clattering along in a Model A Ford any place in the country where college boys take the gang home from football games. He might have been, but now he was no part of that former life.

Tonight the moon flooded the field with a brilliance known only in those far flung lands of the South Pacific, and there he stood. Behind him, dark and silent, stretched the shadow of a P-40.

His face, half turned from the moonlight, was void of emotion, and his eyes looked far away into a distance that could not be measured by miles, nor separated by oceans. The square, strong line of his chin was accentuated by a month growth of whiskers, which of late were becoming ragged. His shoulders drooped slightly and every line of his lean frame showed exhaustion. He was tired, desperately tired.

As he turned from his thoughts and moved mechanically toward his plane, the

moon caught full the twin bars of his captain's insignia and his silver wings over which reposed the star and wreath of a flight commander. His eyes, now alive, reflected not the sparkle of a game well played, and won, but the sharpness of a battle desperately waged against an inevitable end. Many things had passed before those eyes, and the weight of responsibility showed deeply in them as he met squarely those of each of the pilots who had by this time gathered at his plane for orders. None were in age more than a year younger than the flight commander himself, yet they listened respectfully and quietly to his last minute instructions.

With a steady hand he lighted his cigarette, and the glow revealed a face calm and passive, all signs of fatigue having fled. As I looked, a feeling of calmness overtook me, as I know it did those pilots gathered around him.

They followed him that night. They followed him to the end against a vastly superior enemy force. Somewhere, they follow him still.

The Quaint And Romantic City

JOSEPHINE HABOUSH

Ebony-skinned negroes bearing round baskets atop their kinky heads, easily balancing their loads of fruit and vegetables, make their way across the uneven stones of the old French quarter of New Orleans. Bright-hued sunbonnets, hiding the faces of dusky wearers, add color to

this quaint scene. The beauty and romance of this whole Latin quarter have made it a Mecca for travelers and a theme for stories.

This old French quarter is, in reality, a city within itself and is very little touched by the tide of industry which has made

our bustling modern cities of today. The French quarter is hemmed in by smoking factories, rambling warehouses; and its narrow flag-stone paved streets run between crowded rows of quaint old dwellings, erected, I'd say, over a century ago, and designed after the Old World houses of southern France, Spain, and Italy.

As we walk down the narrow, crowded streets, we see heavy, iron-bound doors that open abruptly on the uneven sidewalks. We open one of the squeaky iron gates covered with clinging vines of roses and ivy, and we see fine old courtyards with time-scarred fountains and statues, well-worn walks, and sometimes, we might say, almost a riot of tropical greenery. Hanging over these courtyards are beautifully carved balconies of wrought iron. The Creole families, whose history dates

back to the early days of New Orleans, in their quiet dignity, dwell in these old mansions. To make the scene more picturesque, we see twisted streets named after French and Spanish governors. The old market place reminds us of a vanished past and of an early morning when the market was crowded with hooped skirts of women and top hats and tails of men, or the less wealthy in their shabby shawls, haggling over their wares.

But, alas, tourists, as well as the old French and Spanish families sorrow as the wheels of commerce relentlessly crush down the old fascinating city, and in its place is erected a modern city. In spite of all this, however, I still believe that this city where history, poetry, and romance are so closely linked, will never lose something of its old charm.

Garden Of Eden

KEN SKELTON

The large wrought iron gates were thrown open to admit the throngs of people of which we were a part. Supporting the gates were square, substantial looking red brick posts; winding back through the posts was a narrow macadam road, which was last among the beautiful slopes. On one side stretched row upon row of small, heavily laden apple trees. The coloring was so perfect and the spacing so uniform that it seemed like an overdone picture.

When at last we reached the top of the hill, we came upon a group of white frame buildings. One, the house, was surrounded by bright yellow marigolds and symmetrical evergreens. In the side yard was a bird hotel. It, like all the other buildings, was

white with a red roof. One of the other red-roofed buildings was used as a tool shed, although it was much larger than the average. The third building was, perhaps, the most interesting, and also the largest. It was beyond its large sliding doors that the cider bar was located. The bar was short, perhaps ten feet long and about waist high. Behind the bar was a large stainless steel plate with three spigots. Under the spigots was a well polished drain trough. This was much used, for the sparkling, amber cider flowed like water. Over at one side was the apple grader. This was a long, narrow trough, down which the apples were run. At intervals was a kind of chain with round holes in it. The apples