

Come to sea with me, my friend; it's not too bad — I—I guess. I've been here three years. Old salt, you say? No, I reckon I've lots of pepper in me. I got hurt last time. That's why I'm a—drinking. I've got to go on—got—to—g'on.

There are people watching me. They think I'm pretty bad. Maybe I am. I should *not* get this drunk. There are lots of us out there killing, aren't there, mister? You say your son is? Gee, that's tough! What's he on, a transport? Yep, that's tough all right. I—I'm on a heavy cruiser. Heck, mister, we have so many

guns there's not room for all of them. Loud! You bet they are. Deadly, too. We're the best. We blew a ship clear out of the water last battle. But they got a plane from their carrier through our flack. Bombed us, they did. Killed about a hundred of us. But we're getting better each time. The battle before last three or four hundred boys never heard taps.

Well, so long—I'd better shove off—better—shove—off. Oh, yes, and when you see your son, you say to him, "Don't drink, son. The public just don't understand—just—don't understand."

Sketches

DONALD TAYLOR

Miracles

Gray sky, white snow falling softly, stillness — I sat dreaming in a chair by the window. I had laid aside my book and was gazing into the out-of-doors. Several old, shriveled and dried chrysanthemums were all that remained of the flower bed in our yard. Across the street, two children were playing on the sidewalk. A small boy was giving his little sister a ride in his wagon. Their cheeks were red, kissed by the wind. Their mother came to the door and called them, and together they ran toward the porch. The little girl fell on the steep embankment, and her brother helped her off the ground.

The sky, the snow, the flowers, and the children caused me to recall some lines of Walt Whitman's I had once heard. ". . . who makes much of a miracle? . . . every cubic inch of space is a miracle, . . . what stranger miracles are there?"

Repeat Performance

A grey haired old man stopped to wait on me as I entered the second hand store. "Do you have any tables," I asked, "one that I could use for a tool bench?" He had no tables, but he insisted on showing me an old piano. Its varnish was cracked, and the keys were dirty, but when he began to play, all of that was gone. He saw not a dirty store room, but a cozy theatre, dimly lighted by kerosene lamps; not an old piano, but a shining grand piano on the vaudeville stage where he had worked for so many years. He looked at me, but saw instead a smiling, laughing audience applauding for an encore. He saw and felt the past in this repeat performance. And for a moment, I caught the spirit of his music and the heart of his dream.