

"By gravy," shouted Martin. "The smart little dee-vill. Bet I get him next time." With a mixture of facile awkwardness and incredible agility, he pursued the frantic creature to the point of his own exhaustion and the utter rout of the women.

A queer look had come over Miss Redfield's face. With the few shreds of composure left to her, she gracefully accepted her share of defeat, rose to her feet and murmured that perhaps it would be better to wait until fall and cooler weather to start Bill's lessons. With a supreme effort Mrs. Brooks unfroze from the edge of her chair,

released her anguished grip on its arms and bade her guest godspeed. When the Buick had pulled away, she collapsed into her chair and remained silent for a while. The bright evening star came out in the sky just over the black outline of the west woods. For Bill the world was again in tune.

After a moment or two Mrs. Brooks remarked slowly and emphatically, "Martin, if I ever visit one of your classes, you may be prepared for anything. I suppose, though, I should forgive you. You're probably right; a vacation ought to be a vacation."

## Lucky

JOHN J. MILLER

The heavy oak bar looked solid enough, but the short, slight man at the end, face loosely cupped in his hands, was holding it down with his elbows. The tic on the right eye of the pale-faced bartender twitched slightly as he flicked a dirty towel across the top of the bar.

Removing his chin from his hands, the little guy emptied his beer bottle into a glass, tipping the glass expertly. "Gimme another beer," he remarked absently—drank the glass and replaced his chin in his hands.

Opening the bottle with a practiced jerk, the bartender lumberingly placed it on the bar. "How goes it, stranger?" he addressed the smaller man. "You look like you lost your best friend."

The stranger raised his eyes from a point fixed on the floor and, running a hand through his sparse hair, replied "You

married?"

"Yep," the bartender sounded satisfied. Pursing his lips, he leered at the little man. "Married a family tailor-made; she already had two children. I wouldn't even know her ex if he came in here, but I'll bet he ain't so happy. My wife gets fifteen bucks a week alimony." He made another pass at the bar with the towel. "Pretty good deal, huh?"

"Yeah," the stranger replied, draining the rest of the beer in a gulp. "Yeap, you're sure lucky." He rocked off the stool, teetered slightly and moved toward the door.

"Wait a minute," called the bartender. "It's slow tonight—have one on the house."

The stranger turned in the doorway, looking at a point to the right of the bartender. "I'd *still* be buyin'," he remarked and passed out into the street,