inclined to be lazy, not shiftless (as some of us might like to think), but just always too busy conversing to do much constructive work in any field of endeavor. They are always about to settle down to a job, to write the great play, or to compose a symphony to put Bach to shame. However, the only works that are accomplished are the verbal inspirations, anticipations, and ideas that are split upon the tables of the many gloomy bars.

To the Bohemian, life is often not worth living, and a minority find themselves turning on the gas jets in their cold attic rooms, or dramatically hurling their ragged and pitiful bodies from a high window to the grey street below.

A question arises . . . in what way are the Bohemians different from, say, the inhabitants of Peoria? They differ in the fact that the greater number of the people in Peoria, or any other American town, seek a higher standard of living . . . "chickens in the pots," furs for the ladies of the houses, new cars each year for the masters, and college educations for their offspring. The people of Greenwich Village seek something far greater and finer than material gains . . . they seek life, love and the true God of man. These people search for a life (good or bad) to write and paint of. Even though they may come to the belief that there is a great deal of evil and suffering in this "fad-crazed world," they do not care for wealth and power with which they may fight their difficult way through life. Though they may wish for immortality, they are content with a candle to burn, and a glass of wine to drink.

I cannot say that all Bohemians are the best of citizens, or that their theories should be devotedly followed, for if I should, my statement might prove false, and would offend men who believe their way of life to be the right . . . and what method is the right method? There is too much liquor, dope, and lewdness; too much filth, shabbiness, and laziness in this settlement to make it the ideal life. But perhaps, there is too much striving for material gains, and not enough sincerity in the thoughts and lives of those other strictly conventional men, for me to believe their method is the ideal.

Thank God!

Shirley Jo Waltz

Carol stumbled out of the house, the car keys gripped fiercely in one hand, almost blinded by tears. As she opened the door and scooted under the wheel, she felt almost like a person living in another world or a bad dream, or perhaps this was the way one felt when in the throes of death. Numbly, almost mechanically, she
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guided the car down the road toward home. The tears poured quickly, silently over the stony face.

Was this really she? Really Carol Matthews who had passed through all the nightmares of the past month? Surely not. Certainly she would shake herself and find that she was at home with Daddy and Cindy and . . . Mother. But no, that part of it at least she knew to be true. Mother would not be there. They would never all be together again!

It had been only a month ago that Carol had heard Dr. Barton softly whisper, "I'm sorry, but she's gone; I'm so sorry." Sorry? Sorry, yes, everyone was sorry. But what good did that do! It didn't bring her back did it? Carol laughed bitterly, almost hysterically through her tears. Sorry! What did any of them know about it. How could anyone know how they all felt! How could anyone answer the baby when she asked them when they were going to bring Mommy home again. Why had God done this to them? And Mother had always taught her that God was good. How could a God be good who would take away her Mother! Her hands gripped the wheel until the blood left them and the knuckles became white. Still the car rolled slowly down the road guided by the driver with the mask-like face.

The platinum moon glowed down through the trees, and the stars flickered like lightning bugs in the sky. A whiff of pine was in the breeze which was slowly cooling the warm earth. But Carol neither saw nor felt any of this beauty. Her mind was filled with unhappy thoughts and depressing ideas.

How comforting Bruce had been to her during her mother's illness and all through those last horrible days. He had been constantly at her side like a rock for her to lean upon. Even then she could remember thinking, "I will always have Bruce. He will always be there. Nothing could ever change that." But now . . . only one month later . . . even that was changed. Their engagement broken just an hour ago. Now Bruce . . . was gone forever! Why had God allowed this? God had taken everything from her. Everything she had ever cared about. The air was getting cooler; she was approaching the river. Her mother had always loved the sound of the waves upon the shore. She once said that it was a lullabye sent from God to lull all the little creatures of the earth to sleep. But not tonight. It was laughing at her unhappiness. He had deprived her of everything, and now He was laughing.

The wheels turned over more quickly, showering gravel into the air. Her eyes bright and face set, the tears no longer coming, Carol turned the car toward the little wooden bridge. Of course! Of course! Why hadn't she thought of it sooner! It would be so easy. She would just swing the wheel quickly. The little wooden planks on the side of the bridge were old. They would give way easily. Then
it would be over soon! It would all be over! Her foot pressed
down hard on the gas pedal; her face was expressionless; and all the
little outdoor noises of the evening seemed to silence.

For some strange reason, the car didn’t respond to her pressure
on the gas pedal. Fiercely, almost madly Carol thrust her pedal to
the floor. But it was of no avail. The car just slowly crept to a stop.
Suddenly her body convulsed with sobs. She threw herself across
the seat and cried out loud. The dashboard showed the gas tank to
be . . . empty. Everything, everything was against her. God would
not even allow her to take her own life. Surely that belonged to her.
At least her life was her own to dispose of if she pleased. But no,
there it was. The gas needle pointed stupidly, dully, obstinately at
empty.

There was no God. No God at all. Or at best He was an evil
God. A very evil God. Suddenly she pitied all of humanity who
believed in God and love, and life, or anything good. There was
nothing good in this world. Nothing! There was no love.

Carol finally sat up and looked around. She was only a little way
from home. Perhaps she needed more time to think. She would
walk the rest of the way. She walked aimlessly on down the road,
onto the bridge.

How life does go on in spite of man and his attempts to change
it, she thought. Even if she had succeeded in her attempt to be lying
at the bottom of the river, the waves would still be resounding on the
shore; the same stars would be shining in the sky; and the same moon
shining up above. Carol breathed a sigh. It seemed almost a sigh
of relief. And the breeze seemed to cool her hot brow. Her foot-
steps quickened as she saw the lights of home ahead. Oh Dear! It
must be past Cindy’s bedtime. Poor little thing. She would be tired.
The breeze was sifting through the trees like a spirit stroking the
strings of a lyre and causing them to murmur. Carol breathed deeply
of the fresh air, and looked up into the night. What was it she had
once read about trees? Oh yes. “God is like unto a tree, and I stand
in the comfort of its shade and drink of its strength.”

A little figure was running up the road to meet her, and a little
voice rang out like a bell in the night. “I’m awful glad you’re home,
Carol.” Carol bent down and gathered the tired little bundle into
her arms. A plump little arm went around her neck, and a wet, warm
kiss was planted on her cheek, and a little voice whispered in her
ear. “Sister, I love you!” And then Carol knew. All her questions
were answered in that one little sentence. Suddenly the world seemed
fresh and alive, and good once more. The trees were her own per-
sonal fans; the stars were diamonds for her hair; and the breeze
carressed her.

As she carried Cindy up the stairs to bed, she turned to her
father . . . “The car is parked down the road, Dad. I ran out of
gas.” And then under her breath, “Thank God. Thank God!”