

RHODODENDRONS

John R. Foutty

To walk in gardens where the russet bud
 Will, sun-jawed, open, feel the searching bill
 Steal from its honeyed throat tomorrow's seed.
 To see the rhododendrons blazing in
 A dew-crowned arabesque upon the hill;
 Outreaching stamen waiting for the bee.

Is there no shudder in the shadow here,
 The bloom so searched by alien beak or wing;
 No pride as pregnant fruit is set with seed
 To seek the second wombing place
 Where soil-bound root will brace the stem and bring
 The promise of another Spring to me.

The Simple Life

Barbara Zick

“FOR heaven's sake, John, turn off that music; it's driving me mad!” Tana Elsworth stretched out across the leopard skin chaise lounge and reached for a filtered cigarette, imported of course, from the ivory box on the ebony table by her side. “If I ever get through with this imbecilic picture, I'll never make another! Nothing but work and hurry from daylight till dark. I'm sick of it, do you hear?” She started to cry.

John nodded and walked in from the terrace outside Tana's room with two Martinis. He had heard this all before and expected it. Dealing with a temperamental actress was his job. “As soon as it's over, darling, I'm going to get you a six month's vacation leave to spend on that quiet little island . . . nothing but palm trees and the sound of the surf.”

“Oh, John, it will be simply divine! That's all that I live for. Just to be alone and to live close to nature, no one pushing you and no lines to memorize.” She downed the Martini and held out the glass to John. “Another, darling, and see if you can manage to make it dry this time.” She relaxed against the soft covering on the chair and breathed heavily. “Just a quiet paradise, the sound of wind in the tropical trees, the cry of the gulls, the music of the surf. I won't be able to stand it if there is anyone within a thousand miles! I'll love it, simply love it. I can just see my picture on the cover of every movie magazine in the country, and articles telling my public how I yearn for the simple life.”

She became silent and accepted the drink that John handed her, and sipped it slowly. Then she sat up quickly. “John, get J. B. on the phone. Hurry up, John, I've just had a simply tremendous idea for my next picture. And turn on that radio; this silence is killing me.”