

green world. Like the hand of God it bore down upon the unsuspecting ship, until——

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There came a sound like distant drums. A small boy turned over in his sleep, dreaming of the pretty shooting star, not knowing how close he came to never seeing another star, or another night again.

## Where's My Coffee?

Russ Bailey

**J**ULY 19, 1950, was just like any other day for me. At 6:00 p. m. Corporal Green and I signed on duty in the control tower for the night shift. The traffic was slow that night, and by 7:30 p. m. I sent Corporal Green to the mess hall for a gallon of coffee. Little did I know that the next forty-five minutes were to be the longest of my life.

As I sat there alone in the tower listening to the hum of the transmitter and the static crackling of the radio receiver, my thoughts were suddenly interrupted by an F-51, with radio trouble, requesting landing instructions. I gave the landing instructions and advised him to watch for the light-gun signals before landing. I picked up the binoculars and began scanning the sky for the aircraft.

At 7:56 p. m. a B-29 reported an engine burning and requested an emergency landing. I cleared the aircraft for immediate landing and sent out a blind call to the F-51 to clear the traffic pattern. Receiving no answer, I immediately alerted base crash and fire fighting equipment to stand by on the runway, and then I notified base operations of the emergency.

I was not particularly worried at this time because I expected the F-51 to make a pass and receive a green light before landing.

The B-29 entered the traffic pattern at 8:03 p. m. and I advised him to check on the base leg for final clearance and for the F-51 which was somewhere in the traffic pattern. As the B-29 turned on base leg, I cleared him to land and advised him that I was still unable to contact the F-51.

I stood there watching the B-29 slowly settling on the final approach when I was suddenly horrified to see, off to the right, below and ahead of the smoking B-29, the F-51 turning onto final approach. I grabbed for the mike and the light-gun simultaneously to warn the B-29 and try to wave off the F-51. It was too late for the B-29 to go around, and evidently the F-51 did not see the red light, and so I hit the panic switch which alerted the flight line of an impending crash. I stood there awaiting the spectacle. I do not know when the F-51 pilot became aware of the B-29, but immediately upon landing, he turned off the runway and nosed over on the grass. The B-29 missed the F-51 by about five feet and managed a good landing.

The F-51 pilot was taken to the hospital and treated for minor injuries, and the fire in the B-29 was extinguished without too much damage. With the crash equipment returning to its station, another routine incident in the life of a control tower operator came to an end. Now my only thought was, "Where is Corporal Green with my coffee? Here it is 8:15 p. m. and he is nowhere in sight."

## The Stranger Decides to Stay

L. E. Sullivan

THE appearance of the man and the mule startled everyone. We were spending our regular Saturday relaxation period on the front porch of the general store when they ambled into town. Ours is a quiet town, but it never had been so silent as it was at the first sight of those two. "What in the world is that?" someone gasped just before the most terrible conglomeration of whoops, hollers, wheezes, and gasps ever assembled welcomed the stranger. Bedlam reigned for a full thirty minutes, whereupon we took time to breathe, looked again, and doubled up with laughter once more.

Eventually Jesse Willard, owner of the general store, gained control of himself long enough to ask the man his name and where he was from. "I'm Abe Flynn from everywhere and nowhere. This is Aloysius," he replied pointing to the mule. There was a braying quality in his voice that made many people wonder who was talking, the man or the mule; and, when a remark was made to that effect, another gust of laughter burst from the crowd.

The question arose as to how he happened to be touring our remote county and he answered, "Do you see these ears? They're natural wind catchers so I'm forced to always travel with the wind behind me or risk being blown off Aloysius." Immediately we knew that we were going to enjoy his stay. It's always more fun to laugh at a person if you can laugh with him.

"What do you do for a living?" he was asked.

"Well," he answered as he straightened his legs and allowed the mule to walk from under him, "I'm about the handiest handy-man you have ever seen. I can fix or fracture, mend or mutilate anything. I've been a banker, barber, blacksmith, butcher, carpet-bagger, ditch-digger, gandy-dancer, hod-carrier, parson, poet, and shyster." The laughter at this answer carried an undertone of respect. Any man who could do that great a variety of work deserved credit.

He was a likable six-foot-six bag of bones even if he did carry the aroma of mules wherever he went; and with a natural comedian like him around, the idea of having a hoe-down sprang forth. It was greeted with boisterous enthusiasm and nominations to make Abe our guest celebrity. Upon Abe's hearing our plans, his mournful brown eyes lighted up with happiness and glistened with tears. His