

She shrugged in bewilderment and returned to her search for food for Schnapps. In the dark back entry, she thought she recognized another Gro-pup box. Starting toward it, she stubbed her toe on a large grey enamel pan, hard to see in the dimness. It was full of something. Tea bags. Hundreds of used Lipton tea bags, each with its tag attached.

She shivered with a sudden chill. Then she picked up the Gro-pup box and shook it. This was the one. Quickly she opened the door and stepped gratefully out into the sunlight.

A Day at the Races

Lois H. Cole

AT LEAST they had been lucky to get such perfect weather for their day at the races, Ellen thought, even though she still wished they had never accepted Don Parker's invitation. Tom, as usual, was betting—and losing—more than he had any right to. Her eyes took in the colorfully crowded grandstand. It was an unusually warm day for early May. The brilliant sun pouring down from a cloudless sky heightened the contrast between dark-suited men and more vividly garbed women in crisp whites. There was a sprinkling of pastels, and the whole picture was punctuated here and there by a dash of red in a hat, a scarf, or a gay bunch of flowers. It was like a many-hued rainbow, mused Ellen, at the foot of which everyone there was hoping to find the proverbial pot of gold.

The Willoughby track was beautiful this time of year. Multi-colored tulips bloomed in horse-shoe-shaped flower beds opposite the grandstand behind the finish line. Other geometric plots of white candytuft, edged with pansies, interrupted the solid carpet of green turf in the center of the track. High-spouting fountains, surrounded by rocks interlaced with lavender creeping phlox, tossed their dancing water into the air to shimmer in a sparkling spray. As a team of work horses finished dragging a flat triangle of wood around the race track to smooth it before the next race, Ellen watched little eddies of dust rise briefly in the gentle breeze and then settle back into the smooth tan strip of earth.

"They're off!" yelled Tom Grennan excitedly, as the little doors flew open in the barricade starting gate and the horses catapulted forward like so many toys whose springs had suddenly been released. "Now come on, Brigadoon, you're my baby!"

Ellen watching him, thought how much like a little boy he still looked in spite of the tiny flecking of gray that only faintly tinged the hair at his temples. He hadn't ever really grown up. She studied his face that was free of lines, as if events had not touched him deeply enough to leave their mark. He loved all carefree activities and poured himself into them with wholehearted abandon, just as he was now participating with feverish excitement in the horse race.

"I hope you bet light on this one, Tom," Ellen said quietly at his elbow, trying to make sure her voice did not carry to the other couple sitting next to them. Her eyes took in the floor of the box, where the evidences of Tom's extravagantly unsuccessful betting lay scattered in a vari-colored confetti of torn-up tickets.

"Oh, don't be a spoil sport, Ellen," Tom snorted without lowering the field glasses as he intently followed the racing path of the horses going around the far turn of the track. "One good winner will make me well," he assured her.

"Hmm," she said.

"Damn that jockey, he ought to be whipping him in. He's dropped back to fourth position. Oh God!" Tom groaned as the rhythmic clop of the hooves went by on the track below and he saw his choice finish in fifth position. He ripped his betting ticket in half and flung it to the cluttered floor, and then stooped over to pick up a half-filled highball glass and drained its contents in a few quick gulps.

"Be a good girl and lend me \$50. I guess I didn't bring as much cash with me as I thought." Tom held his hand out to Ellen in anticipation of the money.

But the only indication that she had even heard him was the noticeable tightening of her jaw, as she clenched her teeth to hold back the flood of annoyance she wanted to avoid expressing here.

"Okay, if that's the way you're going to be," Tom shrugged his shoulders and turned his attention to a large plaid thermos bucket in one corner of the box. He filled his empty glass with ice and then poured the amber liquor over it from a bottle Don Parker handed him.

Ellen never could see why Don continued to invite them down for the opening of the racing season at Willoughby. She could understand how the two men had found common grounds for comradeship in the suspended vacuum kind of relationship of fraternity and college life. Even though their personalities and interest were totally different, she could see that the more sedate nature of Don had found relief and pleasure in Tom's humour and in his lackadaisical, fun-loving manner. She knew by heart all the stories of pranks and scrapes the two men still reminisced uproariously over each time they got together. The difference was that Tom had

never really progressed beyond those days. She failed to see why Don Parker, now a successful lawyer, serious in his outlook and pursuits, wanted to maintain contact with Tom, who had bounced unsuccessfully from one job to another, and who still preferred his light-hearted sophomoric diversions. Her husband's only claim to fame seemed to be that he had married the daughter of the wealthiest man in Bradford, who had so little respect for his son-in-law that he wouldn't even keep him in his business.

Ellen recalled her surprise when the annual invitation had come from Don a few weeks ago. She had rather expected him to use his recent divorce as a good excuse to break the routine. But the usual warm letter had arrived, and the only change she had noted was his comment that he was looking forward to their joining him *and* his date, Jane Fotheringham.

She studied Don now, as he and his effervescent little blond companion pored over the racing form together, trying to make an inspired selection for the next race. His careful, studied approach to the sporting event at hand, she thought, was what she would have expected from just looking at his serious face and conservative though expensive manner of dress. Earlier in the afternoon Ellen had decided that his relationship to the Fotheringham girl, who was obviously much younger than he, was just a casual one. Watching his occasional forced efforts at flip conversation and light humour, which he seemed to be dusting off from an earlier stage of his life, she guessed it was no easy thing to readjust one's self to the old pattern of having dates and all the forced pleasantries and trivial sparring it involved. She wondered if Don felt this awkward readjustment was worth even the freedom he had gained from Beth's neurotic bickering after twenty years of his life with her.

The blare of the bugles announcing post time for the next race interrupted Ellen's thoughts. In spite of her wretched irritation at Tom, she found herself thrilling as she always did to the exciting pageantry of the race scene. She could feel the heightened tenseness in the stands as people bent over their programs, jotting down last minute calculations designed to produce the magic winning answer. Yellow lights winked on the scoreboard, adjusting the numbers to the latest change of odds. Pencils remarked and refigured, and she watched men and women scurry towards the interior of the grandstand where they could place their last-minute bets. She looked down at the track and watched the sleek, smoothly curried horses making their way in a leisurely, straggling line towards the starting point. There were glistening dark brown ones that seemed almost black, some that were reddish chestnut, and a single mottled gray—all moving forward gracefully, their legs moving rhythmically, their tightly braided tails standing out stiffly behind them, and carrying their jockeys in vari-colored silk shirts and breeches. Ellen marveled that soon these lounging jockeys and relaxed animals would be transformed by the starting signal into a

wildly pounding onrush of flying figures.

"See you later, Lady Bountiful," Tom sarcastically muttered as he stood up a bit unsteadily and walked out of the box. Ellen tried to ignore his accusing look. She realized he still might have enough money to head for the bar, or perhaps he hoped at this last minute to run into someone near the ticket windows who would lend him money to bet on this last race. She found it really no longer mattered.

Market Day

David W. Heard

T IRED of sitting in the loaded fruit truck, Jonathan decided to join the chattering throngs of labourers milling through the huge open-air market. The bedlam of different tongues rising high in the air seemed to float away with the combining odors of men, animals, and the clear sweet smell of freshly picked grapes.

As he turned through the old, seldom used packing shed, Jonathan's entrance brought a sudden stillness over a group of talking men. The pungent sickly aroma of *dagga* assailed his nostrils as he walked in. His heavy farm boots ringing loudly on the floor made him think of the absurdity of why the gang of labourers should suddenly quiet at the sight of a white man. Even if they were smoking the illegal drug *dagga*, he was not the law anyhow. The pregnant silence was broken by a sudden vehement curse in Basuto.

"White man, my knife is yours today!"

Jonathan, turning quickly, noted that the gang of loafers had split fast in anticipation of a fight, some blocking the sun-lit door through which his safety lay, others forming behind the leader like vultures awaiting the kill. Involuntarily backing towards the wall for what little protection it offered, he recognized the leader as a tall, lean mulatto with a badly pock-marked face who had been fired from his farm several months ago as a trouble-maker and habitual drug addict.

Unarmed he saw the futility of trying to bluff his way out. This would have to be a quick knifing so they could scatter into the crowds for protection.

The mulatto, his pupils contracted to pinpoints and blind with the evil smoke, mouthed venomous curses as he sawed the air with a razor-sharp packing knife, stirring himself up into the killing frenzy. Jonathan jerked back fast as the knife came across at his ribs in a feinting slash. The mulatto, arms shoulder high for the next deadly thrust, stiffened as a light thud stilled him for a second. His eyes and head lowered to look at his left armpit. The sight of a slim