

"Okay." Felicia paused only a moment. "Jan, can I use your car tomorrow for my hair appointment?"

"What time?" Jan asked.

"At 3:30," she answered.

"Well, I have to be downtown at work at 12:30," Jan warned peacefully.

"I know," Felicia continued, "but I could drive you down and then use the car."

"Okay," Jan said, "I'll see you here at 12:00 tomorrow."

"Okay," Felicia remarked as she turned and pushed herself away from the table. Over her shoulder she spoke in a brittle tone as she picked up her books.

"Please do something quick about Saturday night," she spoke bitterly to the newcomer, who had just sat down. "And call me when you get in later . . . Okay? I don't care where I have to sleep, but I have to get out of this hole this weekend," Felicia called over the din of the room.

Party Girl

Linda Oklitz

GLANCING across the room crowded with noisy, drinking people, Chris noticed a pale young man sitting alone in a corner. He was extremely thin and his cigarette smoke floating toward the lamp gave his complexion a bluish tinge. He seemed almost unreal. He sat there so quietly taking all in, but not sharing in the group's hilarity.

Chris had never seen him before. Something about this strange young man appealed to her, so she made her way through the boisterous company to the chair where the blue gentleman was calmly reclining.

"You must be new around here?"

The young stranger turned his head toward her.

"Did you know that you've got green eyes! Beautiful! I don't believe I've ever seen eyes that green—why they're the shade of a cool, foamy grasshopper."

"I really don't know whether to thank you or to compliment you on your line," he countered with a sly smile.

"Well, I didn't mean to trespass on your privacy!"

"And who said anything about privacy? I didn't say a word about privacy or trespassing or anything of the kind. Now, let's get down to something important—like what's your name?"

"Chris Thompson. And yours, honey?"

"Joe Burns. I'm a 'would-be' writer. What's your line?"

"Fortune-hunter."

"Beg-your-pardon?"

"Fortune-hunter. In other words, I'm on my own safari, sweetie, with big game in mind. Care to be my guide?"

"What's in it for me?"

"You said you were a writer, didn't you or rather a 'would-be' writer? Well, I supply the material and you write."

"Care for a drink, Chris?"

"Manhattan, lova."

"Hey, George! One Manhattan and one Scotch and Soda, please."

"You say 'please' to a nigger?"

"I learned that you always say please when you ask someone for something."

"How quaint! Oh me, I am getting tired. Been in town long, Joe?"

"Only about six weeks. The Gafneys were the first people I met here. Really fine people, I'd say."

"Well, Pete's O.K. in my book, but that Helen . . ."

"Now, let's don't get into any of this small town gossip. I happen to like Helen."

"You would!"

"Now, what was that supposed to mean?"

"You're male, aren't you? I have yet to see a male who didn't like that cold-fish. She absolutely snows them with that Southern chawm of hers. I wouldn't doubt she'd 'chawm' 'em right into the bedroom if it weren't for her watch-dog husband."

"Sweetheart, you're a typical five-letter woman. I can find lots of those around. Unfortunately, they're not all quite as obvious about it. Good-luck, doll. You'll need it."

With that, the tall, thin stranger lifted his gaunt frame from the overstuffed chair and headed toward the door.

"Well, wonder what's eating him? And I thought he looked likely!"

Skating

Priscilla Thomas

WITH SPRING better days came. They had bluer skies, and the sun used to shine on trees and drip from the branches when they were still wet. And in the spring, everyone skated. Of course, I skated alone more than with the other children, because I only knew two of them on my block, and besides, I could go faster and do more of what I wanted when I skated alone. Skating was my first love, except that I used to like to bounce a ball . . . thud, thud . . . against a sunny and yet dark red brick chimney. The lot was very narrow there, and that stopped me from making long throws against the side of the house, but I still loved playing with that rubber ball.

But when the afternoons were nice and when the sidewalks were not too wet, I would often skate for an hour or so after school. The sidewalk was long and stretched for three blocks. Parts of it were