

didn't like him. They had always avoided him. But Kenny was not ashamed of Jimmy. They used to do everything together. Because they were so close, Jimmy told Kenny everything. He had tried to tell his mother how he felt one time, but she became frightened and told him to hush. Kenny understood Jimmy. Kenny would bring him a sword soon. Until then the knife would have to do, but Kenny would be coming home soon.

III.

Jimmy took the shiny silver blade and put it inside his shirt. He crawled out of the bush and walked resolutely over to his bike. He walked the bike to the sidewalk, then rode down the street to Stevie's. The boys were still there, now playing blindman's bluff on the lawn. They were laughing and screaming while Joey, who was "it," kept walking right past little Danny. They did not see Jimmy, who was hidden by the line of shrubbery which divided Stevie's yard from Miss Thompson's. Jimmy waited. When Stevie had been caught and blindfolded and was starting to count to one hundred, Jimmy dropped his bike with a scream and ran up the hill. He jumped on Stevie from behind, locking his heels around Stevie's thighs. His hands, shaking with excitement, fumbled with the buttons on his shirt. He ripped his shirt in getting the shiny knife out. Jimmy plunged the shiny blade into Stevie's stomach. As Stevie stumbled, screaming, Jimmy raised himself higher on the bleeding boy's body so that he could watch the silvery blade go in and out. It was no longer silvery. Stevie tried to run, but fell. Jimmy was thrown over Stevie's head. He landed on the walk, but he was not hurt, just shaken and winded. Stevie screamed. Jimmy got up and went to Stevie, who was still writhing spastically, his arms and legs jerking grotesquely. Jimmy rolled him over and drew out the knife. It was broken in half. Half the blade was somewhere in the red pulp that had been Stevie.

"He broke my knife," Jimmy said to the horrified boys. He turned and walked away. Kenny would understand. He'd tell Kenny about it and he'd understand. Jimmy tucked the bloody blade into the top of his trousers and walked over to his bike. He rode home silently, but thinking not of Stevie. He crawled under the spiria and carefully wrapped the broken blade up in the rag and hid it again. Jimmy wished Kenny would hurry home with that sword. He needed it now that his knife was broken. He was all alone without his shiny steel knife. He was all alone.

Did You Say Hooch?

Rita Bradley

PROBABLY teen-agers have always devised their own languages. Forty years ago there was a popular expression, "twenty-three skiddoo," which later was changed to "skedaddle," "scram,"

and finally "amscray." Around 1955 we all said "wazoo." Now teen-agers exclaim with "neat" and "cool." Parents are always wondering what their children are saying, and children are always calling their uninformed parents "squares" or "old fogies." It is not surprising, therefore, that my high-school friends, my college friends, and I have used language foreign to our parents and teachers. It may be surprising to some, however, to discover that we have used expressions which even other students could not understand. I should like to list a few of these expressions and indicate the sources from which we took them.

My high school group consisted of four girls and three boys. Since we were all members of the yearbook staff, we spent a great amount of time together. As we worked, we gradually created a language built around four imaginary characters called Hooch LaRue, Sophie Glutts, and Wenie and Ethyl Hotchkiss. I did not invent any of these names, but I believe that they originated with other members of the group and were not borrowed from another source. To each of these characters we gave a stereotyped personality. Hooch LaRue was a dull, sloppy person whose greatest task was lifting his sandwich to his mouth. Sophie Glutts was in general his female counterpart, but we had a somewhat more specific image of her. We once saw a pudgy, middle-aged, chattering woman wearing a long red coat and a big black hat with a feather in it, and we decided that she must be the original Sophie Glutts. Wenie Hotchkiss was a typical cuckold, and Ethyl was his wife. How could a language develop from these characters? Obviously it was possible for us to use our stereotypes by referring to persons as "Sophies," "Wenies," or "Hooches," and gradually we acquired the habit of addressing each other with "Hi ya' Hooch" or "Hi ya' Wenie." This, however, was not all that we could do with the names. The word "hooch" (whose dictionary meaning we never learned) was applied to anyone whom we did not like. "He's a hooch," we would say. Then came the adjective "hoochful" referring to things that we did not like and the expression "hooched up" describing any confused situation. Finally, there was that common disease which every hooch gets in the winter, "post-nasal hooch."

Although the language of my high school group revolved almost completely around the references to our four characters, it did include one other term which was used in as many ways as "hooch." This word was "fit." A "fit" began as any argument, disagreement, or embarrassing situation. If the annual-staff advisor reprimanded a staff member, we said that an "annual fit" had occurred. The reprimanding was called a "fit on the student's head." If one wanted to condemn another, he used "fit" as a verb and said, "Fit on your head," or being more emphatic, "Fit on your bulbous head!" I believe that this word too came from no other source than our imaginations.

In contrast to my high-school group, my college group consists

of only three girls, and most of the phrases that we use are borrowed from students, parents, professors, and various fields of study. From our parents and other students we have taken trite and ungrammatical expressions which we find amusing. If one of us gets an "A" on a test, another says, "You done good." When we do not believe what someone else says, we reply, "Oh, fiddle dee dee." In the evening after dinner, we turn to that boring task of "retting up the dishes." We have combined three transitional phrases used by our professors and devised the all-purpose "Be that as it may, however, I see by the clock on the wall at any rate." From one professor we have also learned the all-purpose complaint, "Down with up." Last summer when we invented a card game resembling contract bridge, we could not think of a name for it and finally borrowed architectural terms, calling it "Proto-Baroque with Rustications." When we do not know the answer to a question, we usually resort to the literary phrase, "Ay, but nay." Our confused friends are called "paranoiac, schizophrenic, projecting escapists." Finally, we have learned from our books of education that everything "exists on a continuum." We are like Shakespeare's Nathaniel and Holofernes who had "been at a feast of languages, and stolen the scraps."

Why do teen-agers create their own languages? I can not answer this question. A few psychologists and educators have suggested reasons. Some think that expressions are invented to confuse parents and to give the students a feeling of belonging to a select group. Others believe that students use certain words repeatedly because their vocabularies are so limited. Perhaps one or both of these ideas are correct, but we will never be able to prove them. If anyone tried to convince the world that his theory was true and that all others were false, he would undoubtedly be a "hooch" at the positive end of a continuum of conceit and would cause an extreme "fit on his head" by those trying to "rett up" such positive statements of opinion.

The Dump

Nancy N. Baxter

OVER THE hill in back of the yard was an old trash dump; and it was here, when Mother and Sissie had gone down for their naps in the afternoon, that she liked to play.

None of the other children ever wanted to go there. Mother didn't understand her interest in it—it might be dirty; there would be mice. But she didn't think of it that way. Nobody had dumped there in recent seasons; and it was quiet and sunny and peaceful.

On the fringes of the dumping ground there were clumps of Queen Anne's Lace and Evening Primrose, where bees and cicadas hummed like bass fiddles. She would taste the sharp sweetness of the large strawberry-pink clover bowls before she made a chain of them. Here pressed against the warm earth, smelling its dark