

and walking is such good exercise, he says."

"Damn!" thought Mr. Pomroy. He had planned to go to Diane's for tea. But of course there was nothing to be done about it.

Slowly the Pomroys and Flossie walked down the street. Slowly, inevitably, they came abreast of Diane's apartment. It was hard for Mr. Pomroy not to look around, but he managed to walk nearly past with unturned head. And then, with a joyful yelp, Flossie ran up to the studio door. Before Mr. Pomroy realized it, Diane had flung wide the door.

"Hello there! Come right in," she called. "I'm all ready for you."

The next instant she realized that Mr. Pomroy was not alone. That, in fact, Mr. Pomroy was in the company of the one person who should not have been there. But it was too late to undo the damage. With a long-drawn "Oh," of swift enlightenment, Mrs. Pomroy saw it all.

"Oh James!" she wailed. She cast one stricken glance into the studio. It was, all too plainly, an art studio. With that glance, injured pride, outraged respectability, rose up in all their majestic dignity. Mrs. Pomroy associated nude women, immorality, the worst aspects of bohemianism, with art.

"James Pomroy! That you, of all people, should be having an—an affair! And with this—female!" Mrs. Pomroy exploded with a fizzing sound like a large fire-cracker.

"But Molly—" Mr. Pomroy faltered.

"Don't you 'but Molly' me!" snorted his outraged spouse. "You come straight home! And as for you—you," she could think of nothing adequate, so she glared at Diane with a malevolent eye, "I'll settle with you later!"

With a dramatic flourish, Mrs. Pomroy gathered together her skirts and sailed full-blown back up the street.

Behind her, in sullen crestfallen silence, Mr. Pomroy and Flossie walked drearily home. And if Mr. Pomroy tweaked the leash a bit vehemently, he must be forgiven. After all, it was all Flossie's doing!

death in the evening

by

john thompson

I died last night. The doctor sat in the big oak host chair (borrowed from the dining room) and rubbed his chin and said that he couldn't understand that high temperature. Mother and dad and the two kid brothers crammed themselves into my little bedroom and stood looking on—not overly interested or concerned. I had been sick before.

They all talked about the doctor's son, who played on the same high school football team with my brothers; and about whether it was advisable to rush a boy into a decision on his life's work in order to get him right into college—then suddenly the doctor remembered that I was the one he had come to see. He said that there they were, all talking about his boy, Henry, and football and such, when I was lying there dying.

So you see, I'm not kidding—I have the doctor's word for it.

But the peculiar thing about it is that none of them know just when it happened; not even the doctor. Although he realized, in a sort of technical manner, that I was passing away, if you were to ask him today, just when I died, he wouldn't know. He might say anything to cover up his ignorance. He might even say that

he was sure that I hadn't died at all. You see, he has a reputation to defend.

But I have no reputation to defend, and if I had, it wouldn't matter. You see, I know just how it all came about because at exactly 8:36 p. m. I slipped quietly downstairs (while they were all talking) and telephoned the city hospital to come on an urgent call.

Then I went back upstairs and got into bed again. I suppose I should have told them that I was dead, but I don't think that they would have understood. I knew, and that was enough. I saw the two hospital men come to take me away on a long stretcher, with a sheet pulled over my head. The family and doctor had all gone downstairs and so I got up and stop-

ped the men as they were going out. I pulled the sheet back. Yes, there I was. But so young looking. And so cheerful too. I certainly had never looked that way when alive. But death does strange things. I put the sheet back and the men went out.

Yes, I am sure I died last night. Of course I can't prove it, but I don't particularly care to. I was twenty-one last May, and I should have died then, but I have always been slow to catch on to things so I suppose I put it off as long as I could. You see, I happen to believe that there is no difference between what a man thinks and what he does.

And I think—I am sure—that I died last night.

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