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Arrogant Dreamer

BETTY MURNAN

WINNING SHORT STORY, BUTLER LITERARY CONTEST, 1944

In the highest mountains of the Alps there lies a tiny village, isolated and remote from the rest of the continent. Many legends weave themselves about the snow covered peaks and crags, a few stretching into the villages and tangling themselves in the minds of the people. But the village of which I speak is too self-contained even for legends. There, the people, protected by their environment, are secured against false imaginings and petty schemes. They go about their daily work oblivious to both the perils and the beauty which may lie on the other side of their mountains. Their stories are the true stories of their people, and their truth is absolute and imperishable.

Anton Herzig, the club-footed shoemaker, is as much a part of the remote village of Schlezic as is the antiquity of its church spires or the color of its landscape, although to the casual tourist he would be no more nor less than a modest, white-haired shoemaker, the epitome of all others of his trade, and an object for compassion. But to the villagers he is much more than a stereotype, more even than a good, honest laborer. There is, in spite of his deformity, something in the noble carriage of his stocky frame, in the purity of his locks and the directness of his eyes, that is a symbol to them. For he bears the grace of a man who has lived abundantly and who has aged with the serene complacency of one who walks with truth.

Anton lives alone in a bare little cottage just outside the village proper at the foot of the mountains and not far from the lake, working quietly, seldom looking out the one little window, and going abroad only twice a day. Every morning he rises early, and, after eating a simple breakfast, walks to the village and back again. As he walks through the village streets, passing the shepherd on the way to the pasture or the farmer on the way to the field, he is greeted with the respect of a long-standing honor:

"Good morning, Anton. And how does it go today?"

To which Anton’s answer is always, “Very well, friend, very well.” And then he passes on, gravely nodding his head.

To the children of the village, Anton’s figure is one of awe-inspiring mystery, and they whisper strange tales of childish imaginings of the hermit who makes their shoes, but who has never lived among them. It is only the oldest villagers who know the true story of Anton and the reason for his hermitage.

Long ago, Anton, too, had been a little boy, they said, laughing and running as do the village children even now. But his was not the contented mirth of childhood. Often, in games, when others would not play his way, he would draw quickly aside, and muttering to himself, curl his lip and laugh wickedly. “You will not let me lead, and I know the right way. I would lead you up the mountain, where the path is steep and exciting, where the flood waters tumble down over the sharp rocks in the rainy season. Higher than you have ever been,
but you will not let me lead you. So I go alone." And off he would run to scramble painfully up the mountain side, sending down tiny avalanches of rocks, until he reached a small green plateau high above them, where he would stand, hands on hips, and laugh down at them. "You, down there, look at you, how little you are. And me, look how big I am. If I jump, I can touch the sky. You cannot see anything, but I, I can see everything — almost the whole village. You cannot even see the grass on my little plateau. And there is a flower blooming here. I've never seen one like it before. It's big and red. I dare you to come up here and see for yourselves."

Anton's taunts struck their mark. The others, too, wanted to see the plateau grass and the red flower. But they looked at the sharp rocks and the steep climb and were afraid. So they soon ran home to tell their parents of the daring deeds and the taunts of Anton.

The parents of the village were afraid, too, lest their offspring should accept the challenge, follow Anton up the mountain side, and, while climbing, slip and fall to be dashed to death at the foot of the mountain. So, warning their children, they told them how Anton was different from the other boys. Anton, they said, was almost as wild as the sheep or the goats — more wild, for even the sheep had someone to take them to pasture and bring them back to the village at night. He had never been a really bad boy, but only a little over-active, and his father was too old and deaf to do anything about it. No one knew much about his mother except that she had been young and pretty. Some of the oldest villagers said that she had been found, when a child, wandering about in the Alps, nearly frozen and starved to death. But no one really knew the truth, so they seldom talked about it. She had died when Anton was born, and he was left to live a free and wild existence of his own making. Even from birth he was a strange, moody boy, and as he grew older, his queer antics and sudden changes characterized him more and more as something supernatural.

How strange, they said, that this boy of the lame foot should be so daring. How strange that he should want to climb the mountain without so much as thinking of his physical handicap. None of the other villagers had ever dreamed of climbing their mountains. God had put them there, they said, for protection, and it did not become men to be curious about God's work. And so, believing these things, they looked with wonder and fear at Anton. He would lead himself to destruction, they said, for such action is not natural. But day after day went by, and still Anton could be seen scrambling up the mountain or lying quietly on the little plateau. The people, as they walked through the village or worked in the fields, could look up and see him, sometimes gazing down upon them, sometimes standing, head uplifted, a defiant silhouette against the blue of the sky. What was he doing? What could he be thinking? And then they went on with their work, turning their eyes back to the soil.

Anton, on his private plateau, wondered too. Why do they watch me? They care nothing about the mountains and less about my plateau, my flower. Let them burrow always into the dirt. To me, they are no bigger than the worms turned up by the probing of their plows. And, turning his back upon them, he would lift his eyes again to the mountain peaks, to the sky beyond.
But there was one, a pale, blue-eyed girl, who watched Anton more closely than the others. At the foot of the mountain, where she could see him climb step by step from rock to rock, she sat quietly watching. In the blue of her eyes was the same wonder which the other villagers felt, mingled with admiration and longing. The higher he went, the rounder and bluer were her eyes, and with each step she felt the sharpness of the rocks on her own feet. And sometimes, when he had reached the safety of the plateau, he turned once to wave at her. Always, she waved back, and then, intimidated by her own boldness, she, too, ran home.

But came the day when Anton, as he climbed, stopped to look back at the intent figure below. He said nothing, but it seemed to her that he had called her name. Then, quickly, he went on again, and she knew she was mistaken. That day he stood looking down at her from the plateau for a long time, and when he came down, she was waiting.

“You waited?”
“Yes.”
“For what?”
“For you.”
“You like the mountain too?”
“Yes. Does the red flower still bloom?”

Never before had Anton been asked about the red flower. His eyes shone with pride and eagerness to tell someone about the flower, the plateau, and all the things he thought and did. Yet, he hesitated. She was only a girl. She could not understand. He looked at her eyes and saw that she was sincere. She did want to hear about his mountain. So he told her all he knew — how the people in the village got smaller and smaller as he climbed, how the rocks sometimes turned under his weight and caused him to slip, how their sharpness went through the soles of his shoes, how the pain was good to feel, how the plateau grass was soft and damp, how the red of the flower danced against the green of the grass, how the air felt clean and cool, how it pressed against his ears, and how, some day, he would climb on, past the plateau, to the very top of the mountain. There, he stopped. I will do it, he thought. Before, he had only dreamed of the mountain peaks with wistful yearning. But now, he would get to the top somehow, sometime, soon. This, he dared not discuss, even with Frieda. He had said enough already.

From that day, Frieda became his constant observer and only confidante. Every day, when he came down from the plateau, he told her what he had seen and heard and thought, and she listened but said nothing. He hated the people, he said, in their ignorance, their plodding contentment. Did they never think of anything but their own physical needs, putting clothing on their backs and food into their mouths? Did they never do anything but work, and eat, and sleep? Did they never get tired of doing the same thing day after day, of seeing the same things? Frieda only looked at him and shook her head silently in sympathy, and he would go back to talking of the climb, the plateau, the flower. Even when he talked of these things she said nothing. But there was something in her eyes which spoke of hunger. And one day Anton saw it there.

“You, Frieda, you want to go with me? You are only a girl, but I can help you. The way is not too difficult. I know every rock, every foothold on the way.”

Frieda looked up from where they
sat at the foot of the mountain. The plateau looked friendly. She could almost see the green of the grass and the red of the flower, and she knew that the sun would be shining there. It would be like stepping into another world. But she saw, too, that there was great distance between the plateau and the ground. She felt the ground beneath her, and it was smooth and hard, and she remembered the sharpness of the rocks and the steepness of the climb. And she was afraid.

Anton saw the fear in her eyes, and he was angry. "You are just like the others, rooted to the earth. Stay here until you wither away. I can go alone." He turned and began the climb, faster and more recklessly than ever before. "This time I will go to the top."

"No. Wait. I'm coming with you. Wait for me."

But Anton was past waiting, and that was why he didn't see her fall. When he reached the plateau, she lay very still at the foot of the mountain. And when they found her, he was nowhere to be seen.

The climb from the plateau to the top was much steeper than Anton had dreamed. Again and again he slipped and fell back almost as far as he had climbed. The rocks were sharper than he had thought, and his hands were torn and bleeding. He could feel the strain on his lame foot. And the peak was no nearer. At last, exhausted, he gave up and slid, face down, back to the cool grass of the plateau. Below, was the village, just as it had always been. The mountain peak, now clothed in black clouds, loomed above. And Anton, lying half-way between, knew that he would never reach the peak.

He had lain there for some time when the storm broke. Thunder crashed and rolled about him, and he lay shivering with cold and fear. The lightning cracked through the clouds like a huge whip, and the plateau shook with the fury of the storm. Then it died away with one last murmur, leaving the gentle fall of rain in its place. Slowly and painfully, Anton rose and began his last descent.

The people, seeing his still face with the fear lying in his eyes, asked him no questions. Frieda, they told him, was dead. Their words came to him across great space, hung heavily in the air, and throbbed against his ears. Their faces, white against the dusk, floated before him, faded, and came back again, merged into one accusing stare. And they were gone.

It was weeks before Anton would leave his cottage. When the villagers saw him limping slowly near the cottage, always looking down at the ground, they looked at each other with faces of pity. He was only a boy, they said. He had not meant to hurt Frieda. Perhaps, if he had had someone to care for him, someone to tame his wild spirit... They watched him, feeling the pain in him, but they did nothing. He was very young, they said, and he would outgrow it. And in the years that have passed they have wondered, too, about what happened on that stormy day. Anton, the maker of shoes, has never told them. But they say that he has looked upon the face of God.
The Faces

MARY ALICE KESSLER

WINNING POETRY, BUTLER LITERARY CONTEST, 1944

The door opened slowly
Noiselessly, easily,
Casting a great shadow on
The dust-coated planking.

Faces marched in.
Bloody, shining faces.
A hundred or more,
Scraping the splinters
With dry, red foot.

Red, dumb faces
Creased with hollow sockets
And dry mouths.
Scarred with the pain
And hate of ten thousand years
Twenty thousand or a greater number of days
And nights—twilights and awakenings.

Red with the bright blood
Of childbirth and foaming wounds,
Dagger slashes and dumb fists
Pounding into bubbling blood.
The ten count of leather strap
The scarlet of cursing armies
The blood of passion and hot, black nights
The blood of twenty thousand or a greater number
Of years and minutes and endless seconds.

Great bells throbbed on the night in soft waves.
Booming clangs brought red, cold faces
Into the night,
Their waterless eyes remembering the days
And seconds
Of spring.
The memory blowing cool and sweet
Into empty minds
Behind red masks
Of spring and dew-drowned
Buds of lilacs, roses, peach trees
Cool and damp and fragrant
In soft, white palms
Palms burning with spring
Fevered with longing
Soft with dew from lilacs, roses.
The gentle trickle of dew and icy water
In the great dark river
Pushing winter vapors out to sea
To mingle with emerald foam and the
Wine-red of men's veins,
To swell with the burnt wood of dead ships and
The feathers of screaming winged things.
The winter vapors, pushed toward the sea
A laugh sparkling among pink-crowned forests.
The gurgling of suckling infants and the river
The soft-lit, deep, damp woods filled.
With birds songs
And children's.
Soft petals gently blotting out
Rotting oak roots
And a child smiling with the river.

"I must go away.
We'll never meet again.
I thirst for you and the river.
To let my hands drop easily
Into the black coolness
And feel you near."

The river limps to the sea
And a bird cries.
Of summer.
Of blond fields
And green-fringed hills,
And golden water.
Of rose pebbles,
Red from swift streams.
The throbbing nights,
Pulsed with thick, rich odors,
Silver with a blanket of stars,
Blown with high winds,
Wet with rain.
The leaf, thick and waxed,
Pouring fountains of water into the black, hot earth.
The buds are bloomed
And the hot night is filled with
The frog's sonata and the cuckoo's madness.

"Truth is beauty,
Life is beauty,
And now life is full and rich.
And full of truthfulness
And beauty.
But I must go before
Dawn ends the beauty and the truth."

The water shines in the night
A thin waft of air carries it on.

Of autumn.
Blue-haze and shining bronze.
The homesick smoke odors,
Rising over hills dabbed
All golden, scarlet, mauve.
Of hunter's bugles
And ringing shots.
Of mounds of fat apples and voluptuous pumpkins.
The corn stubble, thick with frozen dew.
The water chilled and ice-green
Profound and melancholy
As a deep note of lovely music.
Of songs and tears and smoky chill.
"The beauty is dying.
The sun is gone
And I must go
If I will live."
Disease-filled ripples lap the bank
A dry, black leaf circles to the mud.
Of winter.
Of white lace meadows
And powdered branches.
Ice-warmed twigs
And frozen buds.
Of the dazzling dead-white days
And bright silver nights
When balls of breath hang for a second in air.
When the ground groans and crackles
Under heavy blankets of winter.
The water moves slowly under its lid of ice.
The ashes of the dead are cold
Under phantom rock of icy gray.
What of the cobwebbed tombs?
Beneath lie happy ashes
Ashes that have laughed and sung
And kissed and seen and heard.
Ashes that have been whole bodies
Soft hair and clear eyes,
Smiling lips and soft warm hands,
Caressing lilac and rose buds
And cold linens.
Warmth that has smoothed rich satins on dainty bodices,
Warmed thick silver and limp beads.
The ashes are warm, smouldering with
Burnt fire of precious pasts.
And the buds are green and warm in
wood beds.
Clear winter—dead, clear winter.
"I am dead.
I went away and I am dead.
For I left the beauty and truth
I left the river and you.
I am dead."
The frozen faces fixed a mad gaze
On the door
A hundred or more bloody, shining faces
Marched into the frosted moon night.
And the door closed slowly.
The great shadow on the dust-coated planking was gone.
The prep school dormitory was a long, white-painted room in which rows of brown wooden bedsteads were alternated with large brown dressers and separated from each other by white curtains on poles. The Sister told Janet these were called alcoves, gave her the corner one, and left her to unpack.

It was ugly and very large and still, but when Janet had pulled her curtains she didn't feel alone. They worked just like the shower curtains in hotels. Then she opened both her windows. At least she had two. The other alcoves had only one window.

It was very quiet outside and she wondered where the other children were. The tall Sister from the office had just taken her on to a big side porch where there were a lot of children and some more nuns, and mentioned all their names, and taken her away again. She couldn't remember any of the names. But she could remember some of the faces. A pudgy little girl with hostile poodle eyes, and a little girl who was very ugly, with glasses and a foolish smile. She'd been the only one who smiled and Janet had felt big and gawky. This was the sort of school where you started in kindergarten and went through college, and these were the ones who belonged. They'd looked at her with the half-eager antagonism of all children toward the new. And she was afraid of them.

But she sighed and leaned on one of her window-sills. At least she had two windows. That was a good omen. Through this one she could look across the campus toward the college building which was Gothic and new and of yellow stone. Between it and the prep school were green lawns and walks and trees and bright beds of zinnias and early chrysanthemums. To the right was a slight slope and the thick trees of the top of the river bank.

The air was hot and hazy but everything had the slight dustiness of fall and there was a fall buzz in the air. It was a lazy, happy day and so beautiful that Janet felt good in spite of everything. She wanted to get out of doors quickly again, so she turned to unpack.

But first she looked out of her other window to make quite sure of the view there. Right outside was a willow tree, rounded and dripping and perfect, and through it she could see more walks and a building. Beyond that, she knew was the river.

In all the literature she'd had of St. Theresa's she'd read about the river and how beautiful it was, and that was what she wanted to see above all. Perhaps, she thought as she turned back to her suitcases, if I hurry I can go now, before supper.

First she arranged her books and the top of her dresser, and then she took her neat piles of cotton underwear from the suitcase and laid them in the musty, wood-smelling drawers; put her stockings in one small drawer and her hair-ribbons and handkerchiefs in the other. She did all this very carefully because everything else in the dormitory was so clean and neat and because it was exciting.
to be arranging her own things in her own alcove.

She was really almost afraid of her excitement. When she was eight she had wanted a sailor dress, but she wasn't allowed to have it. But when she was nine she got two. And then no one wore them. That was the way it always was, and thinking of it frightened her a little so she decided not to. All her life she had wanted to go to school with people and she'd had nurses and tutors. But now she was here — and was even going to sleep in the same room with the girls. And she had two windows and a willow tree.

A big, fat blue-bottle suddenly buzzed in the window with the willow tree and went too high so that he was caught against the glass, beating his body against it. Then he flew away and lunged back at the window, but still too high. Janet almost held her breath watching. Poor fly, she thought, Poor fly. Then after a moment she slapped at it and moved it down so that it found the open air and was gone, the light making a brief blue shimmer on its wings.

After that she took her suit and her dresses and the four blue cotton uniforms out to the hall where there were lockers to hang them. Sister had said hers was Number 12. The hangers were too big for the little cubby and the clothes hung crookedly and looked very funny, but at least they went in.

Then suddenly she thought she couldn't wait any longer to get out of doors into the sun. She started for the steps and then she remembered something about the quiet, white severity of the place that made her go back and stuff the papers in her suitcase and push the case under the bed. She even smoothed the bed and pulled the curtain back.

There was a light feeling of release in her as she tore out of the dormitory and ran down stairs. And on the second flight she slid down the iron bannister. Just outside the wide doors were the grass and the sunshine. But just as she jumped off the railing a thin girl with very dark hair and thick eyebrows came in through the front doors. "Hey," she said, "that's against regulations."

"Oh," said Janet. And suddenly she felt terribly guilty. She looked around quickly to see if anyone else had noticed her, but the tiled hall was otherwise empty.

The girl was grinning a little. "It's all right," she said, "but you'd better not let Sister Blessilla catch you."

"Who's she?" asked Janet.

"Don't you know?" Janet shook her head feeling ashamed.

"She's the head Sister," said the girl a little scornfully.

"Oh," said Janet.

"Where were you going?" asked the girl then.

Janet suddenly felt secretive. Somehow she had a feeling she shouldn't say anything about the river or someone would tell her she couldn't go there.

"Just — out," she said.

"Well — You're Janet, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"I'm Babbette Bowers."

"Hello."

"Hello." They stood looking awkwardly at each other for a moment. Janet knew she ought to say something but she felt uncomfortable and she wanted to get away, out of the dim hall and she didn't know what to say.

Finally the other girl said, "Well, see you," and ran on up the steps.

Janet watched her go unhappily.
other girls were unfriendly and this one wasn't, but because she was ugly and looked like the Kipling boy in *Stalky* and because she was sure of herself, Janet couldn't speak to her.

She went slowly down the steps and out into the sunshine. The children were shouting somewhere now and their voices sounded like the echoes of voices. Perhaps she thought, she never could be one of them. She'd sit alone in her corner alcove and look out of her two windows toward the river.

But she could go and look at this river. No one had said she couldn't and it wouldn't make any difference anyway. But she felt stealthy as she went toward the trees.

There was no one on the walks, though there were some old nuns going into the chapel. She ran down the walk and around the square building she could see from her window. On the other side was another walk and a strip of grass and then the trees. But there was a fence along the ridge.

Then the river was forbidden territory. But it didn't matter. If she were careful she could go down anyway. At least she could go down once. She went to the fence and looked over. It was made of pipe and on the other side the bank was very dense and very steep, and far below was a shine of water. She could have climbed over it easily but there were windows in the building behind her, watching, and the bank didn't look very practical. But surely if she ran along this fence long enough she could find a place.

She turned and began to run very quickly down the grass, because, quite suddenly, there was nothing in the world so important as getting over it and down that river-bank. If she couldn't do that, she was shut into a prison of white walls and curtains and still women in black serge. On the bank were green vines with red stems and old trees, and under them beetles and ants and silver-trailing snails and small snakes. And they were all alive. Up here even the moths were sluggish.

Quite abruptly she stopped running. Any place was as good as another. But still she hesitated. It wasn't that she was afraid of being seen or that she was afraid of the bank. She was never afraid of things like that. But she was afraid of something, and she didn't like the feeling. Maybe if she didn't do it now she never would.

She put her hands on the iron, and it was warm from the sun, and it was rough and slightly unpleasant to her palms. She drew her breath tight and started to lift one leg.

And then a voice was calling behind her. Someone was calling, "Little girl!" Janet stood very stiffly and that terrible feeling of guilt rose in her again. Slowly, then, she loosed her hands and looked up. Leaning out of the window was a Sister with a round face and thick green glasses that made her eyes seem to go out beyond her coif. They were staring at Janet blankly as caterpillar's eyes. And because of her guilt Janet couldn't look into them.

"Where were you going?" the Sister asked.

"I was just — looking around," said Janet.

"You're too close to the edge," said the Sister, "and it's time for supper. You'd better hurry back." And then she was gone.

Janet stared at the blank window and then down at the river. She wanted to go on, but a bell began to ring, and she slowly turned around. It was that
they were so cold and remote, she thought. It was like disobeying gods.

As she rounded the corner of the square building she looked up at the willow tree and thought she saw her window. At least she had two windows, she thought. That was an omen. Then she remembered the fly on the glass. And her hands were dirty for supper.

Tangled Patterns

JANET JARRETT

The woman pressed her body against the wall and leaned her forehead against its hardness. She tightened her body against the wall and beat upon it with her fists. The dull thud came through to her with an insistent beat, and the urgency she felt lost itself in the pounding of her own fists. She leaned against the wall and let herself become the pounding and nothing more. She wished the pounding could be inside the minds of all the people she knew in the next room. She wanted to beat against their heads until there was nothing left for them either but the thudding sound.

When the pounding finally stopped, she walked to the window. The cold glass was good to feel against her cheek, and she pressed her wrists against it too and cooled them until the little pulse that was there beat slower. The pointed lights in the street below had a hypnotic quietness. If she opened the window there would be the river smell; but she would not open the window, it might bring back the pounding, and the lights below would become too hypnotic to resist.

She thought she would have to be back soon to the people she knew in the other room. She remembered how it had been when she left. The heaviness had beat upon her mind and body until the room had flattened out into a cardboard bedlam. The noise made by the man at the piano had poured through the room and stopped at the other end where it rebounded endlessly between the floor and the ceiling.

The room was filled with the people she knew and she hated to go back. She knew them all too well. They had all at one time or another brought the twisted patterns of their lives to her. She knew more about them than they knew, and being with them only snarled the tangles of her own mind. She wanted to scream at them to make them listen to her. She had learned to be alone and to straighten out her own pattern of existence for herself. Why couldn't they?

Because her mind was losing itself in the lights below, she let it remember the day she had left the man she loved. Ann stood at the door of the cottage and looked out at the lake that lay quiet in the pink of the early morning sun. Allen had already gone out someplace, he always liked to get up when the morning was still gray. He said that morning was like a woman. You couldn't know her properly until you had seen her without paint.

She felt the wood of the door beneath
her hand and it was rough and wooden and full of splinters. She rubbed her finger against it and a tiny piece of wood caught in her skin. She pulled it out and squeezed until there was a tiny round red drop of blood. She felt an unreasoning anger at the sight of the blood. How much longer would they have to stay in this place?

She turned to look at the room. The floor was rough and wooden too and through the door she could see the big black stove in the kitchen. They were staying in this place while Allen finished his picture. He had nearly finished it now, he could do the rest in New York.

She went into the next room to look at the picture. She remembered the day she had asked Allen what it was. He laughed and said, “Why, darling, it’s us. Don’t you see that?”

She had looked at it again. There was a starkness of broken white monuments against deep blue shadows and pale yellow sand and there was a fuzzy green moon that was only half a moon and not well formed. It was unreal and impressionistic and she didn’t understand.

He was speaking, “Ann, sometimes I’m almost frightened at your mind. It’s so hard and cold. You can’t see anything beyond the surface rules of life. You’re those rocks, white and absolute. You forget that most people are fuzzy moons that don’t know the rules very well.”

She had let him think that. Let him think that she didn’t see the meaning of the two circles of water that spiralled out to meet each other and pass and then meet again on the other side when he tossed a stone into the lake water a little farther than the one she had thrown. Let him think that she wanted to go back to New York because it was an obligation instead of a pattern to be finished.

It had always been like that, if she had only known it. He had always wanted to stay in a place beyond the time that was allotted to that place. They always stayed too long with groups of people. Whenever they stayed too long the purpose of their coming had diminished in proportion to the time and when they finally left there was no reality or pattern to their having gone.

It was that way with themselves. He had never known when to leave her. Because a thing was good for a length of time, he believed that it was good for more than that time. And it was never so.

She didn’t mean to do anything about it this particular time. She never had because she had always hoped that he would see the relations of things. Perhaps he would this time.

Breakfast was nearly ready when he came in. She forgot her irritation when she saw him. She could almost believe he stayed too long because that was his pattern and perhaps his pattern was as good as hers.

They didn’t say much at breakfast because they never did say much to each other. She knew his thoughts as well as he did and their conversation was always about his thoughts, so there was no need to talk. Over their coffee he leaned back in his chair and said, “Do you know what I’m thinking?” She looked at him and she knew, but because she hoped she was wrong she said she didn’t know.

“I don’t want to go back to New York. The picture’s almost done, but there’s no reason for going back except to do those damned murals. You know I hate to do them; so I think I’ll write and tell them I’m sick or something, then
we can stay here the rest of the summer and through fall. I'm tired of doing things I'm supposed to do."

Yes, he had always been tired of doing things he was supposed to do. Her anger came back coldly and with a reason, but she spoke slowly and carefully, "But Allen, you promised to do the murals, they are waiting for you. You can't forget your obligations like that. We wouldn't enjoy staying here on stolen time. If you go back now you can have them finished by next spring and then we can plan a vacation, if you like."

She had chosen her words carefully, but she might as well have spoken without thought. The effect on him couldn't have been worse.

"Of course you'd want to go back. Can't you ever forget the rules. It's part of your well-ordered existence that we should go back. How you even forgot yourself long enough to marry me is more than I can see. Come to think of it you probably planned it anyway. Well, I for one, am sick of planning. I'm staying here and to hell with New York and murals and plans. You go back if it's so important. Maybe I'll see you around sometime."

Even as she packed to go back she didn't mean to. Maybe she was wrong after all, maybe patterns didn't get you anywhere. She started to go in where he was painting to tell him that. But when she saw what he had done to the picture, she only said, "I'm leaving now," and walked out of the room. In one corner of the picture against the pale yellow sand he had painted the blackness of a high fence.

Ever since, when people had spoken of her patterned life she had let them talk, let them believe that the world was really black and white for her. It was easier that way, her pride could never be hurt. Sometimes she almost believed in the pattern herself. It was when she faced the hopeless tangle of her own thoughts that she hated the people she knew. She had learned to pretend that her life was patterned. Why couldn't they?

As she leaned against the window, the lights in the street below drew her to them until they almost were at her fingertips. She decided to open the window and let the lights and the smell of the river do their work, but the door of her room was opened quietly, and one of the people she knew came in.

"I'm so glad you're alone, Ann. There's something I want to talk to you about."
America Is Dancing

CAROL JARRETT

1. An Indian Ceremonial Dance, Dells City, Wisconsin.

Rushing down to the docks and trembling with excitement, we are afraid that we might be late. Dells City is certainly a busy little town during the first two weeks in July when Indians from all over the country unite to hold their time-honored annual ceremony. It takes time and strength to elbow through the idle crowd that throngs the docks just before the launches shove off toward the Upper Dells, and we reach our seats by the big open windows none too soon.

Tonight the Wisconsin River is beautiful and our excitement subsides a little as we lie back lazily enjoying the cooling breeze and the towering cliffs which frame the river. As we reach our destination, we must start the long climb from the dock around the side of the cliff and down to the ceremonial grounds. Coming very suddenly upon the huge natural amphitheatre, we stop to catch our breaths and to take in the natural splendor of our surroundings. Although the moderns have added benches to the hillsides which gently rise away from the flat central plain on three sides; and although the same enterprising businessmen have equipped the grounds with lights, the natural beauty of the place cannot be hidden. There is a tiny rippling lake over to one side at the base of a cliff which rises sharply on the north side of the dancing grounds. The cliff and the surrounding hills are densely wooded with huge pine trees which have grown extremely tall in their quest for life giving sunlight. Indians from almost every tribe in the country are silently moving about, quickly preparing for their dance. There are myriads of colorful costumes which seem even brighter against the dark evening shadows. As the darkness overcomes the fading daylight, and as the bright full moon slips above the tree tops, the insistent beat of tom toms announces the beginning of the dance.

The huge central fire sends grotesque shadows across the line of dancers as they silently move around the arena. This is the famous Snake Dance, and it is more beautiful than any we have ever imagined. Each figure, from the very old, bent, Indian woman to her five year old son, is moving with complete grace and confidence. Their softly chanted words seem to take us back to the years long before the white men invaded this part of the country. The cadence of the tom toms echos back from three or four hills in the distance; and now the Snake Dance is coming to an end, and the dancers find their places about the fire.

An old Indian love song is perhaps the most beautiful of the evening. A lovely Indian girl is standing on one point of the rocky cliff before us as her mate calls up to her from down below. He is climbing up to join her as all the Indians below dance around the fire and rejoice at their happiness.

The Rain Dance is almost the last of the evening. Each year the Indians pray to their rain god to bless their crops and make them grow. While the Indians are softly chanting their prayers and at the insistent beat of the tomtoms, images of corn are being drawn on the ground with blue, red, yellow, and green maze. The dance progresses and suddenly we
see a girl clad in white slip silently from
the nearby lake. Her arms are out-
stretched and she comes toward the
dancers to sprinkle water on the pictures
on the ground. The girl is now leaving
as quietly as she came, and the dancers
begin their chant of thanksgiving for the
rain which they have been promised.

How reluctant we are to leave the
dance and to return to the hot and hur-
rried town. However, the return boat ride
is even more pleasant than the first. The
round moon is high in the sky and thou-
sands of bright little stars twinkly above
us.

II. A Modern Jitterbug Dance,
Indianapolis, Indiana

As we make our way through the
milling crowds, the heat seems to come
up in waves from the pavement to
smother us. The dry summer breeze
offers no relief from the day's sun even
as the familiar buildings are graying and
daylight is dissappearing. Our spirits are
high, however, as we make our way to
the clubhouse which is famous for its
jivesters. We are temporarily relieved
by the damp coolness of the poorly
regulated air conditioning system.

The check room is almost empty to-
night because of the extreme heat, and
an excessively made up girl is leaning
over the counter ready to pounce on the
first available male. Her huge earrings
seem to mock her small eyes and narrow
forehead; and the sophistication which
she has donned for the evening is identi-
cal to her junk jewelry — it is wearing
thin in spots.

Glancing around us we see dozens
of teen age boys and girls leaning against
posts loudly laughing and cracking jokes.
With a few exceptions they are dressed
for comfort and action. Bright colored
stripes and checks rate high with the
girls, and the boys have blossomed forth
in multi-autographed white corduroy
pants, vivid socks, and shirts.

The air no longer seems fresh or cool,
and the noise of music and shouting
drowns out any serious thoughts which
might find their way past the door. Look-
ing across the crowded floor we see arms
and legs flying in every direction seem-
ingly without control. Watching on the
sidelines is almost as tiring to us as the
actual dancing would be. A lone couple
soon takes over the floor, and the others
fall back clapping in time with the loud
rasping piano. The two dancers are
applauded loudly and are urged on and
on. After turning in and out, whirling
about, and jumping under, over, and
around each other, they stop only long
enough to get a new breath and take off
again. The noise increases and even the
pictures on the wall quiver in protest.
For the first time we realize that we are
hot and tired even though we have been
inactive. The glare of the bright lights
suddenly draws our attention to the
cracks in the bright red enamel of the
chairs, stains on the table cloths, and
white spots on the varnished tables. The
only real thing is the laughter and even
it at times seems forced by a few couples
standing to one side. Some are in uni-
form — young and gay, but just a little
less noisy than their comrades. The fact
that we aren't enjoying their fun makes
us ashamed to stay and anxious

to leave.

As we open the door the hot breeze
brushes by us. It is so welcome — this
fresh pure air. The clear stars wink at
us and the big yellow moon laughs as we
escape from the bright lights, harsh music,
and modern jive.
III. A Southern Ball, Atlanta, Georgia

The walk up the long avenue to the huge Lane mansion actually seems to transpose us to the eighteenth century. It is somehow easy to lose our sense of hurry which is the result of our mad scurry to prepare for the ball. Our friends, some newly made this morning while we were knee deep in the limp filmy dresses of Civil War days, have spent the entire day dashing from house to house in order to outfit themselves and us for the dance. Every attic was raided and forced to yield reluctantly its ancient relics prised even more now then they were a century ago. Being typical Northern Yankees, we feel just a little strange in our newly acquired Southern 'finery, and yet the Southern hospitality is so warm and so sincere that we are welcomed as honored guests rather than as invaders.

The dark green branches of the trees on each side of the lane touch overhead, making a perfect archway all the way up to the house. Many people have already gathered on the lawn under the cypress and magnolia trees. The blue green lawn which slopes down from the white colonial house is stopped only by the road almost half a mile away. The house is alive with yellow lights from every window, and outside the wide veranda and the lawn are lighted with brilliant antique lanterns. They cast a rainbow of colors across the lawn as the lights are reflected through the colored glass. From the cloudless sky above thousands of stars sparkle down on us, and a soft breeze wafts the lighthearted perfume of a nearby rose garden gently toward us. We rather reluctantly decide to go in as the orchestra is taking up the strain of some slow and deliberate music.

The ballroom which is on the second floor completely takes up one side of the house. Dozens of windows are flung open to allow some of the evening charm to steal in from outside. The dance seems truly to be an eighteenth century one. We evidently are not the only ones struggling with our unaccustomed flounces and stiff shirts. Even the most southern belle appears to argue now and then with her hoop skirt or extra frills. The men look strangely alike in their cut-away coats, narrow trousers, and very stiff shirts; however the girls' dresses are of every variety and color. The most lovely dress is a filmy chiffon, and perhaps the most exciting is a deep red taffeta with a huge hoop skirt and deeply ruffled sleeves. All the clothes are precious keepsakes of a day long past — a century long lost.

Many southern dances are revived and among them, of course, is the Minuet. The dances are more real, more beautiful tonight than they ever have been before because of their natural background. The slow easy-going southern manner is easy to understand tonight; and as we prepare to leave, our thanks for a lovely evening comes from the depths of our hearts. We feel somehow that a mutual respect and understanding has sprung up between us and our southern friends.

As we cross the lawn, the light from the lanterns fades, and the full bright moon spreads a golden path before us on the cool grass.
my eyes became used to the darkness, I could distinguish an old, black iron stove in the center of the room. To my left were boxes, crates and sacks. They were as drab and plain as the rest of the store. Farther back was a counter with crates of eggs and a sort of old yellow scales. The whole side of the room was lined with cans; they looked lazy and bored, as if they were to stay there forever. On the other side of the room was an old glass counter that contained thread, shoe laces, flower seeds, combs, pocket knives, and ten-cent cosmetics. Hung on a thin wire above the counter were farmers' straw hats and red bandana handkerchiefs. Two old men were sitting on a wicker settee that was leaning against the wall. One got up and came towards me and I knew it was Clem. "Is there somethin' I can do for you, ma'am?"

"I reckon that that there buildin' across the way jes' looks like a pile of old boards to you folks," the old man at the filling station said as he wiped the car windows.

I looked across the road and saw what seemed to be a dingy, run-down loafing place for all the idlers and farmers of the community.

"Well, it ain't what you're a-thinkin', ma'am. That store is Clem's whole life. See, you can tell it's Clem's store 'cause it says so right up over the door in big red letters, Clem Johnson's General Store. 'Course, now the sign's kinda faded 'cause it ain't been painted for nearly twenty years or so, jes' like the whole dern buildin'. Clem's been a-managin' that store ever since his pa died when Clem was eighteen. It used to be a right-nice lookin' place."

"Clem's planned for years to re-do the old place and have it painted and repaired and then three years ago when he had the money all saved, his barn burned clean to the ground in the middle of the night. Nobody knows what caused it. Then Maud, that's Clem's wife, took sick and she's been abed ever since."

I slipped quietly out of the backseat of the car as the old man continued to tell the others about Clem, and I walked slowly towards the store. Indeed, it was badly in need of repair. The unpainted frame structure was covered with tin and cardboard signs advertising tobacco and bread, and on the left side in front of the building was a shabby bench which was the favorite spot for gossiping farmers. The door creaked as I opened it. I stepped inside the door and the room was quite dark, and it had a musty odor. As my eyes became used to the darkness, I could distinguish an old, black iron stove in the center of the room. To my left were boxes, crates and sacks. They were as drab and plain as the rest of the store. Farther back was a counter with crates of eggs and a sort of old yellow scales. The whole side of the room was lined with cans; they looked lazy and bored, as if they were to stay there forever. On the other side of the room was an old glass counter that contained thread, shoe laces, flower seeds, combs, pocket knives, and ten-cent cosmetics. Hung on a thin wire above the counter were farmers' straw hats and red bandana handkerchiefs. Two old men were sitting on a wicker settee that was leaning against the wall. One got up and came towards me and I knew it was Clem. "Is there somethin' I can do for you, ma'am?"

I had just gone into the store out of curiosity and I hardly knew what to say. "I — I just wondered if you had any candy," I managed to say.

"No, ma'am, I ain't. It's hard to get these days with the war and all."

I thanked him and walked across the uneven and somewhat sloping floor into the sunlight.

When I got back to the car, the man was again slowly wiping the window. I slipped into the car and heard him say, "Yep, like I said before, that store is everything Clem's got. It jes' kinda reminds me of Clem's life. When he was a young man it was a fine lookin' store, but now it's gettin' to be old and run-down, jes' like Clem; but he's a fine man. Yes, sir, he sure is."

[VIRGINIA COXEN]

Clem Johnson's General Store
Saturday is an interesting day because it has a different meaning to almost everyone. To a few, Saturday is a day of rest and relaxation; to the majority of the public today, it is just another day of work; a young boy's definition of the last day of the week might be that it is a day to finish any chores which have accumulated through the week; still another definition familiar among women, especially, is that the day under discussion is a day to accomplish any tasks in the business district of the city. This last phase may be combined with a certain amount of pleasure, such as window shopping, visiting the department store's sale on hosiery, etc.

What with the war and its accompanying complications, more and more people are riding the buses and streetcars to town and walking the two or three blocks that they used to drive. This adds to the confusion and bottlenecks on the sidewalks and is steadily making it more of a dread risk than a task to go into town on Saturday.

Let us make an imaginary trip to town on a Saturday and see part of what happens there. First you board your bus, trolley, or streetcar, which you share with the other 387,000 people in the city (or so it seems); after half an hour's patience-testing ride, you arrive in the heart of the Hoosier capital where you discover just how many people there are in Indianapolis and its neighboring cities. You are now standing in a so-called safety zone which appears safe only when you are out of it. While working your way to the opening in the safety zone, in order that you may cross the street legally, you will probably collect a few new phrases to enter into your little black book. Once you are free of the safety zone and supposedly safe on the sidewalk, you meet an onrushing crowd of hurrying, dashing, anxious and anticipating, but otherwise sane people. While possibly meaning well, these people make you feel as though you are the ball carrier on a football field with the entire opposing team about to pounce upon you. If you are a strong hearted person and can stand this treatment for about five minutes, you will then gain enough courage and stamina to try to make progress amidst this unarmed army. Playing safe, you "follow the crowd" for a short distance; then you remember why you came to town (i.e., supposing, of course, that you did have a purpose for coming). You remember that you wanted to go to a department store for something; just what it was is of small concern now, but it may be recalled when you reach your destination. Now the time has come to break away from the trend of the crowd, which is flowing as steadily and fast as an electric current; you take a deep breath and make a left turn toward the street, battling the swiftly flowing current of people until you reach the curb. For a short moment you are comparatively safe; all you have to oppose here are a few automobiles and an occasional streetcar, which are compelled to stop at the traffic signal. You take a step from the curb and one of your fellow men narrowly misses making you a case for the hospital with his automobile, but your nerves are built up to such an extent now that such a trivial incident fails to make its impression upon you.
As you approach the vicinity of the department store which you intend to patronize, here again the people are flowing in and out of its doors, somewhat resembling a mighty river current. Contrary to first impressions, getting into this store is really quite simple — you merely edge your way within range of one of the revolving doors, and you are soon inside, willingly or otherwise. Your trip through the revolving door will probably not differ much from that of others who have had the same experience — average number of children lost, a heel or toe bumped here and there, a few hats mangled, etc. But remember, you intened to come into the store; there are those who unfortunately wandered too close to the revolving door and were victims of circumstance. As to the matter of what it was you wished to purchase — that is more blurred than ever now. As far as you can see there are people going in as many different directions as exist, and accomplishing apparently nothing. Remembering the proverb, "A stitch in time saves nine," you decide to take the escalator to your desired floor. After riding two flights, you are compelled to wonder whether the proverbial "stitch in time" saves nine lives — or nine minutes; the proverb doesn't say, but you can draw your own conclusion.

You have now reached your desired floor and have sighted a sign, hovered close to the ceiling for protection, which denotes your particular department. Upon reaching this department, you find all the clerks willing and trying to help — help get rid of what customers they have. Without having to diagram the desired article to the clerk more than once, you are now the proud possessor of an article purchased from a department store; ordinarily this would be nothing unusual, but since it occurred on Saturday, you undoubtedly deserve a gold medal.

Having purchased your article, you are now ready to leave the store; your mission is half completed. All that remains is the "long journey home." Having made use of the escalator once before in the day, you know how the crowd moves and you can look about you now. Here you will very likely see the small boy who is trying desperately to ascend a descending escalator — an example of perpetual motion in the making. Now you are on the main floor and are again approaching the only device that takes in as many people as the local draft board — the revolving door. This time you know the method employed so you are not worried; after all, there are only two possibilities: either you get through alive or else you have nothing more to worry about.

Calling upon your last ounce of energy, you brave your way to the streetcar or bus line. Here you board your vehicle which is operated by a courteous, patient operator. You know he (or she) is patient and courteous because the advertisement says he (or she) is. Maybe Webster's definition of "patience" and "courtesy" doesn't agree with the bus company's definition — Webster is simply out of date! After riding your allotted mileage, you alight from the vehicle and again learn how to breathe.

It is indeed peculiar how this event will make you realize what a safe place home is, in spite of what safety engineers would have you believe.
A Discourse On Cats

DOROTHY WILSON

A cat is an animal. Zoologically speaking, a cat is a Felis domestica belonging to the family Felidae of the phylum Chordata. According to Webster, a cat is a carnivorous domesticated quadruped. The encyclopedia exposes the fact that the cat receives its heritage from a long line of tigers, lynxes, pumas, leopards, and cheetahs. Sardonically speaking, a cat is a woman. To me cats are not discernable, and I find that in any size, shape, or form, cats annoy me. In the first place, cats make me sneeze. That is, the Felis ciomesticas make me sneeze; the Homo sapiens irritate me only from within.

Cats find their habitats in the most peculiar places. Under my window at two o'clock in the morning is one of their more secluded havens. Another tantalizing spot of heaven seems to be on my bed; their kittens like that place too. The kitchen table is nice, except the food is usually inconveniently placed, so that sitting and supping is almost an impossibility, so they must be content with just supping. I have come to the conclusion that under my feet, though, is the most pleasant of all refuges. If must be the coziness of the situation. I usually end up meeting them face to face this way. Of course, some cats haunt sorority houses, but this kind do not sup on the table, or crawl beneath my legs.

In the spring cats usually fall in love. They gaze at the moon, and they gaze at the stars, and then they proceed to tell their troubles to the world. It is said that the remote ancestor of the common cat was a species known as Felis libycas, or the Egyptian cat. I have often mediated the thought in my fevered brain that possibly Cleopatra had somewhat of an influence over these feline descendants of the libycas. After all love first bloomed in Egypt, but then each spring cats fall in love whether they are in Egypt, or whether they are in Alaska. All types of cats fall in love. We sit each noon and Wednesday night, and listen placidly to why we are no longer hearing about Bill but why Tom is the man of the moment. As the moon comes stealing stealthily over the hill, poetically speaking, we also listen tolerantly to the cats, and hear their wailing due to the fact that Joe is no longer with us. Oh dear, where is Joe? The last we heard he was on the sandy grounds of Egypt. Perhaps he is spending an entertaining evening with a Libyea; on the other hand the cat probably is wearing a skirt.

Perhaps my aversion toward cats dates back to my first impressions during my childhood, even before they made me sneeze. But then on the other hand, the feeling might be from a prenatal impression. They tell me my mother enjoyed bridge. Of course, it is really probably due to the fact that kittens always scratched me, cats ate helpless canaries, and cats always spelled out “candy” and “ice cream” over my head while slipping a piece of cookie to the kitty, under my chair, so that my tender ears should not hear what my stomach should not have. Nevertheless, cats have made a lasting impression, and I dislike them all.

However, I am not nearly as cynical as you might suppose on this topic of cats, for I own a lovely, large Persian (at least that is what we think she is, but
her father was the black sheep of her family, so we have never been absolutely sure) who at this very moment is lying idly at my feet, looking reproachfully at me with her large amber eyes. It is amazing how it is possible for one to damn a race, excluding one certain individual, who is definitely an exception. My cat is the exception in this case. She never howls—it is always the neighbor's cat which I hear so early in the morning; she never falls in love; is it her fault that men find her so lovely and irresistible that they cannot help falling at her feet and worshipping her? Her charms are dazzling, and her character unquestionable.

Cats have their place in the world just as castor oil and spinach. There are quite a number of cats who are doing more than their share in the modern world today. Cats still go about catching rats, and in our changing universe there are many rats to be caught. Thus, cats are very distasteful in many instances, I must admit, but the world would not be the same, if it were not for cats.

**Smokey**

_Jack Stauch_

"It won't be long now; the zero hour is approaching. Where can that crew chief of mine be? He is probably down at that pub with that O'Brien girl he met the other day. He should be here to supervise my feeding. Ah! here comes my dinner."

A long gray-green petrol truck pulls alongside and disgorges its volatile contents into Smokey's wings. Next come the low slung ammunition trucks bearing the solid food in one ton and fifty caliber packages of lethal death. Hurry up with the loading; Smokey's off on a mission in twenty minutes.

"Well, it's about time he got here. What's that he's got around his neck? Oh, I see; it's a green scarf, probably a gift from that O'Brien girl. Ah! This is better; a full load and I'm rar'in' to go. Here comes the gang, Joe, Jimmy, Tommy and Kitty too. Good old Kitty!"

"Easy there, don't twist my nose so hard, I'm a fragile hunk of stuff. Now for a little exercise. I'll race you. Up and up into the clear cold sky we go. My but that cold air feels good rushing by my gills. Look out, paperhanger, here I come."

Faster and faster, farther and farther he races through the darkness. Hamburg, Berlin, Stuttgart are the targets for tonight. Heavy flack is encountered over Stuttgart, and Smokey is shaken up a bit.

"Gee, it sure is hot up here tonight. Ouch! That one got me in the tail feathers. I sure hope I stick together."

"Pilot to bombardier, pilot to bombardier. Over target; bomb bays open; good hunting."

"Ah! There they go. I'm lighter now. Watch me go. Look at those explosions. It won't be long now, Shickelgrueber. Ouch! There went my right lung. A direct hit! Well, I guess it's home on one now. I'm sure glad those people at Lockheed know what they're doing when they make my brothers. We're close to home now; I can see the white cliffs of Dover. I can rest now, for these boys will get me home."
“Hello there, Norma. Can you wait a few seconds while I finish?” asked Bomar Cramer, Indianapolis’ foremost pianist, as he suddenly emerged from his studio into his reception room. He extended a firm, warm hand into which I meekly put my cold one, and then he quickly disappeared again into his studio as I faintly murmured, “Why, certainly.” I had been waiting for Mr. Cramer for about five minutes, and during this time, I surveyed his outer surroundings. The room was rather dark and was entered from the outside through a heavily-draped glass partitioned door. Directly opposite the chair in which I was seated was a bust of Mr. Cramer, to the right side an autographed picture of Lawrence Tibbet and to the left an autographed picture of Rudolph Ganz. The room was a small one, but not overcrowded with furniture. It was pleasing and restful.

Mr. Cramer entered again, introduced me to a leaving pupil, and ushered me into his studio. I was immediately made comfortable and then Mr. Cramer began to talk. He now has a small exhibition of water colors at the Art Center of Indiana University in connection with a formal exhibition of Mr. Burke of the Art Department at Indiana University. This exhibition is an effort to link together the art world and the music world. Mr. Cramer first started painting when he was in the first grade in a school in Texas. When he was in the fifth grade, as a reward for outstanding work in his art class, he was taken to an exhibition at a well-known conservatory in Texas to see the work of the academy. The president of this academy had heard that he played the piano also, so she asked him to play for her. A scholarship was arranged for with a department head of the music school. During Mr. Cramer’s first year of study of piano there was great competition between his teachers as to which field he should make a life study. As we all know, music won and art was given up entirely until about ten years ago when Mr. Cramer began to paint for enjoyment while in Michigan and also in Mexico.

When asked about modern music Mr. Cramer said he liked it very much, but that he did not play much modern music in Indianapolis because the Indianapolis populus insisted on the older, romantic pieces, particularly the works of Chopin. In Mr. Cramer’s opinion, modern music is not always beautiful, but as long as it is architecturally strong, has design and cleverness, and is intellectual to a degree, it is good. He added that modern music is difficult at large, and he went ahead to say that Tschaikowsky “is not in the scheme of things.”

Mr. Cramer feels that Mexico is a paradise. He loves all foods, but is particularly delighted with the greasy, highly seasoned foods of the Mexicans. He spent three summers in Mexico, one playing in the National Theatre in Mexico City (1935) and the other two painting. He said that some small restaurant in Austin made him stay in Texas last summer because it served the favored Mexican foods.

Mr. Cramer is an extremely dark individual. His hair is dark and straight, his eyes are snapping, his skin dark, his stature good, and his smile pleasing. He
smokes all of the time, and constantly paces the floor even while talking on the telephone. His manners are superb. He is quite charming and endeavors to make all around him feel at ease. He likes to be surrounded by either extremely modern furniture or furniture of the Renaissance period.

Mr. Cramer was kind enough to allow me to examine some of the relics in his studio and explained the history of some to me. In one corner was an early seventeenth century Florentine cabinet. On the wall above his second grand piano was a chasuble of the early eighteenth century. This was a delicate lavender satin interwoven with silver thread. On a small stand in front of one of the windows was a handcarved Mexican Madonna by Miguel Magano. Displayed on the most inconspicuous wall was an oil painting of Mr. Cramer done by Mrs. William C. Bobbs of the Bobbs Merrill Company. In another corner on a high pedestal was a statue of Diana de Gabies, willed to Mr. Cramer by the late Mrs. de Marcus Brown. Pictures of his sponsors, Lawrence Tibbet, Rudolph Ganz, and Joseph Levene were the only photographs displayed. He explained that he did not exhibit pictures of his artist friends because he felt so many pictures "clutter up the walls." Mr. Cramer likes his studio because it is secluded from the noise and hum-drum of the outside world.

By then the allotted time so graciously granted me by Mr. Cramer had hurried along too fast, and I left with the feeling that many hours could be spent pleasurably with this great artist.

Sam Vello

LENA WILLKIE

Sam was a foreigner employed at the steel mill in my home town but no one seemed to know his nationality. He was one of the "wops" which meant that he was from one of those mysterious countries in southeastern Europe. This was obvious from his physical characteristics and his accent. Sam was short and stocky with the heavy shoulders of one who earns his living by manual labor. Black hair and eyes, a swarthy complexion with a heavy beard showing blue below a closely shaved skin which was coarsely textured, sideburns a trifle too long, high cheekbones and blunt features gave him a somewhat Mongoloid appearance. His hair was always neatly trim-
could easily have afforded a better neighborhood, he lived close to the mill and it was said that he did so that he could get home quickly when he was dirty.

Sam was not married and he showed no interest in women. The ruling passion of his life was clothes. It did not matter how correct they were as long as they were of good material, well made, and "loud." Checked, plaid and striped suits, shirts, ties and handkerchiefs were mixed by him with reckless abandon. All of his shirts were silk. A large pearl tie-pin, a diamond ring and an ornately carved wristwatch were worn with every costume. It was not unusual to see Sam two or three times during the same evening in a complete change of clothing. You might see him in a loud-checked suit, dark shirt, suede shoes with heels higher than is customary and a derby. Later you would find him in a pearl grey double-breasted suit with pearl grey suede shoes and Fedora and again he would be in full dress, complete with top hat, white tie and tails. It is small wonder that everyone in a small midwestern town knew him.

Sam possessed no great intelligence and was never happier than when he was the center of attention. He went to all the basketball and football games and smiled happily at the whistles and catcalls his appearance, and attire, always evoked. After a game he always came to the local Sweet Shoppe and treated whoever was part of the group to which he attached himself. Naturally there was always a crowd of boys and girls around him. Sam was about 45 or 50 when I knew him but he preferred the company of young people. His naivette and eccentric clothes caused him to be looked down upon by his contemporaries but that never hurt him. His grin and ponderous wit were an ever present part of him.

Small luxuries which we take for granted gave him intense pleasure. He smoked cigars constantly and always the most expensive ones. He rolled them from side to side in his mouth, taking them out now and then with a precise air and regarding them as though they were precious. The same was true of the sundaes and sodas he partook of with the school crowd. He savored each spoonful thoroughly before he swallowed it. His attitude was that of an orphan at a circus for the first time in his life. He never spoke of his native land but his cleanliness, his passion for clothes and his intense enjoyment of little things spoke of a bleak childhood in grinding poverty.

The most vivid recollection I have of Sam was attendance at High Mass one Easter Sunday. First of all it was a surprise to see him in church as no one had ever known him to attend before, but what made the congregation open their eyes wide were his clothes. Sam was attired in a white fulldress suit, complete with white tie, white shoes, and a white top hat! Sam seated himself about midway on the center aisle and the only persons who gave their undivided attention to the services were those who sat in front of him. At the Gloria and Credo when the priest seated himself at the side of the altar and donned his mitre, Sam put on his white top hat. When the priest doffed the mitre, Sam removed his. The usual coughing and stirring of a group of people were absent that morning as eyes were fixed on him in rapt attention, but outside of these unfamiliar acts of worship and his striking attire, he conducted himself with seriousness and dignity. Sam followed the ritual closely and it was very evident that he had come to church.
to pray. It was later learned that he belonged to the Greek Orthodox church and was following its ritual. Of course, his appearance at church was the topic of conversation at all church meetings and gatherings for weeks thereafter.

The mill has since been dismantled and the workers have gone to other mills over the country. Sam had to follow the work he knew and he left my home town. I often wonder what his wardrobe now contains.

A Nobody

ROSALIE ELKIN

The little flag hanging in the window had turned dirty with age. Now it didn't stick out like a sore thumb as it had when it was new. The white field surrounding the gold star was a dingy gray, almost black, matching the color of the house to which it belonged. The house was like most of the houses in the Negro district of the city. It didn't have more than three rooms — two bedrooms and a kitchen that served both as a living and dining room. There was no wallpaper covering the walls and no carpet covering the floor, but the people living there didn't mind that. This was the best house they had ever lived in — so far. All they had to do was glance at the flag, and they'd forget about the dirty rooms and the scarcity of furniture.

That flag stood for their own Jed. John George Washington was his real name, but everyone called him Jed. He was the oldest of the five Washington children. His childhood was spent in the south, but later the family moved north. Jed remembered only two things about the south. He remembered the school that he attended. He loved reading and studying. He wanted to be "somebody," someday — maybe another George Washington Carver. Jed also remembered the day that he met some white boys coming home from school. They started throwing stones at him, and Jed, not to be outdone, threw some back. Then they began to yell, "Ya dirty nigger — ya dirty nigger — ya dirty nigger" Jed was bewildered. He wasn't dirty! He was always clean when he went to school and today he had been especially careful because he had on the new shirt his mother had made for him. He stopped throwing stones, so they shoved him into a nearby alley. Someone knocked him down, and they shouted, "Stay where ya b'long, ya dirty nigger!" Jed ran home, hid under the porch, and tried to figure out why the boys had called him dirty and why they had told him to stay in the alley. He had as much right on the street as they!

Jed never forgot this. He remembered it again when they hanged his father. They said he had killed a man, but he hadn't. Jed knew this. He told them about it. He was taking a walk with his father when they saw two men fighting. One man was being beaten badly when Jed's father tried to separate them. Jed saw the real murderer slip the knife into his father's pocket. He ran away, leaving the murdered man in his father's arms. Jed told them this, but they wouldn't believe him. He heard someone
say that you couldn't expect anything but lies from a "dirty nigger."

The young boy had to stop school after his father had gone. He had to support the family now. Jed often felt sick when he realized that he wouldn't be "somebody" — ever. His first job was as a clerk in a grocery. It was a short-lived one, because the owner discovered that some money was missing. Jed and his son were the only ones in the store — and a man just doesn't accuse his own son of stealing.

After a succession of jobs, Jed began to think that maybe the people were right. Perhaps he was only fit to dig ditches. It was while he was working at the cemetery that war was declared and he was drafted. He wasn't any good as a civilian, so why would they want him as a soldier? There were a lot of things that Jed couldn't explain to himself, and this was one of them. So Jed went overseas, and when it came time for one of the men to sacrifice his life for the others, Jed didn't hesitate. He wasn't good for anything else, was he?

Yes, the Washingtons are proud of the dingy, gray flag with the gold star. They're even prouder of the Distinguished Service Cross lying in the bottom of their dilapidated bureau. You see, John George Washington became "somebody," after all.

Athletics' Place In Education

ROBERT R. MUNDELL

The question asked by college students, college athletes, college faculty members, and the world at large is, "What is the place athletics should hold in our present day educational system, or do athletics belong at all in the college program?" The question is a natural one because there exist arguments pro and con. I believe the arguments for athletics far outweigh those listed against them.

Everyone will admit that athletics do round out the personalities of college students but everyone will not admit that the student needs this rounding out of personality. Such people are apt to say, "Athletics are just one of the many side shows to detract from the main event; we should take sports out of our college program." Still these people will state that a pre-medic student definitely must have courses in literature. Yes, I agree that the pre-medic student should have a literary background and athletics as well. Simply, athletics make the individual appreciate the necessity for good health.

That keen competitive spirit which is every American's heredity has been ground to its present sharp edge greatly through sports. Athletics gives the students a pride in his school because of the natural enthusiasm taken by sports fans not enrolled in school. Higher school spirit can easily be created through athletics. Schools with good athletic programs find their other school functions strongly backed. This ends the old argument on the fact that "some individuals attend college just because of athletics." This does occur in a few cases, but it does help the school by creating winning teams and raising the spirit of the student body; and why should we evict something we
enjoy so much because of a few cases.

"Oh, to be sure," anti-athletic friends says," school spirit is raised but now the student is interested in sports, developing the cerebellum region, and interest falls in his studies, or his cerebrum suffers." Oh, sorry, that reverts right back to the pre-med and his literature. Remember we have already answered that argument.

"But," says Mr. Anti-athletic, "football, baseball, track, and basketball are too strenuous for some people." Well it's plain to see this perspiring debater never went out for a team or he would know a thorough physical examination is required of all participants in sports. I'm wondering why he limited athletics to the "big four." Swimming, tennis, bowling, golf, fencing, hockey, and, yes, dancing can do much for the molding of sound bodies and characters.

"Padding of athletes grades and colleges' paying their tuitions have been suspected, but never for good students," declares our desperate debater. Colleges have been known to give athletic scholarships as well as scholastic scholarships; but as to padding grades that is in direct opposition to the purpose of athletics.

Forgetting our friend let us not condemn athletics but welcome them as a blessing to humanity, as one of the greatest mediants for national and, through olympics, international good fellowship in a world of hatred.

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**Reunion With The Family**

**Muriel Holland**

One custom which has outlived the passage of time, wars, petty differences, famine, and flood is the good old family reunion. This is a time when grandparents, grandchildren, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, aunts, uncles, cousins, all get together for a short period of time, perhaps a day, perhaps more.

Possibly some members of the group have not seen each other for a number of years; some may never have seen all of the others. The family reunion, then, is a time for family fellowship and re-acquaintance.

A celebration such as this calls for a feast of some sort and here the cooks of the family come into their own. Time-worn recipes, handed down through generations, are carefully brought out and dusted off; cook books are consulted as the creative genius of the chief cook is taxed to its limit.

Family reunion is a paradise of stories for the younger generation. They scamper for the coveted position of sitting on a favorite lap or else occupy space on the floor. The little boys do belly-flops to land flat on their stomachs while the little girls sit demurely upright cuddling dolls. Amid this contented scene Grandfather sits silhouetted against the firelight, spinning yarns or pausing now and then to chuckle at some ludicrous picture he has painted. "When your daddy was young he was quite a case!" he might say to a small boy perched wide-eyed on his knee.

History is brought up-to-date at the
family reunion. From the passing of Great-aunt Sarah to the recent arrival of small Linda Lou, each event is reviewed and discussed until the family has caught up with themselves and their doings.

At the reunion this year, however, there are several faces missing from the family circle: one with the Marines in New Guinea, two in England with the Air Transport Command, and one missing in the Southern Pacific area.

Before leaving the gathering, while everyone is still together, the family reverently kneels as Grandfather prays — for the safety of those boys across the sea, for the welfare of our nation, and for a peace to encircle all nations and all men everywhere.

At the close of this meeting, these true citizens of the soil realize that this is indeed a great American heritage, one of the freedoms for which we are fighting: the right to a home and family and the love of that family; the right to "family reunions."

Spring

MARIANNE BUSCHMANN

The gay voices of students quieted as the last bell rang and the professor walked into the room with her quick, jaunty step.

"Ahem!" She cleared her throat in preparation for the lecture as the notebooks were opened and fountain pens were put into position.

"This morning," she continued in her high mouse-like voice, "we shall discuss the outbreak of the French Revolution. I wish you to take sufficient notes on the subject, please."

At first my notes were very neat and my writing legible, but as the minutes dragged by her words became less audible and my notes more jumbled until finally I had stopped writing completely. My eyes had wandered to a little speck of red which was partially concealed by tiny new leaves of a not too distant tree outside the window. Upon continued observation, the speck took the form of a cardinal. Its cheery song floated on the soft breeze, and as it flitted from branch to branch, so my eyes followed.

"Ahem!"

With a start, I straightened and began to scribble hurriedly on a blurred sheet of paper. I wondered how long I had been gazing out of the window, for other students had already started a second page while I had barely completed even a half page of notes. So as not to be thought behind, I, too, quickly turned to a new page and continued writing. Cautiously I looked at the lecturer and was relieved to find that at this moment her glances were directed at an unsuspecting individual who quite unconsciously had fallen asleep.

Slowly my eyes turned again toward the open window. The noise of an electric mowing machine caught my ears, and I sensed the pleasant odor of freshly cut grass.

Across the way a little white cottage surrounded by a low picket fence and a gateway entwined with ivy presented an entrancing picture. Beyond the gateway yellow jonquils lifted their smiling faces
to the sun. Golden dandelions had poked their heads through the green lawn despite the previous year's careful weeding and resembled a painting of tiny bright coins flung casually upon a blanket of velvety green moss. Two lilac trees, one white and one purple, guarded each side of the doorway, their heads raised proudly.

The whole outdoors seemed to shimmer through a veil of soft green and appeared as a lovely spring bouquet with cherry trees all dressed in white, budding lilacs, entwining vines, and awakening lilies of the valley amid soft clusters of purple violets.

My mind was filled with the beauty of the spring and the songs of the birds when the sharp sound of the dismissal bell pierced the air. Almost automatically my notebook closed and I tripped gayly out of the room. Such is the life of a student in the spring.

Excerpts

I look up at the house settled so comfortably on the hill before us with the garden of flowers, each competing with the other in the race for new coloring... The tile house with the steel framed windows overlooks a tranquil glen that once held a maze of gladiolas of every hue, but now has thousands of slender green rye wisps, gently bending with the breeze. As I ascend the crest of the hill, I notice the undisturbed arrangement of the small spruce and pine trees circling the house and garden... The evening shadows slowly descend upon the quiet scene as I turn homeward again to walk the old familiar path. I trudge the last few steps in silence with myself, for I feel the deep regret I shall always feel when I think of leaving home. The soft strains of "Largo" reach my ear, and the music speaks, saying "I am home." — from Revery of My Country Home by Wanita Earles.

I have heard of people who delight in numbering their dollars. I have heard of girls who have written their names, addresses, and telephone numbers on prominent park benches. I have heard of people who have scrawled their name on menus. I have heard of students who absent mindedly pencil out their names on their texts as they study, but before I came to Butler I had never been aware that the disease Imarkinbookitis had been exposed to and contracted by so many people. — from "Imarkinbookitis, or Move Over Brother, as I am Ripe for that Padded Cell" by Jeanne Gronseth.

I once had the invigorating experience of hearing a man say to a preacher, "I don't like to go to church, therefore I don't go." In my opinion that man has learned, perhaps by long and arduous experience, when an excuse is necessary and when the undecorated truth will serve the purpose just as well. — from "Excuses" by Evelyn Doyle.