



# **The Crucible**

**Volume 6, 1966**

**Lock Haven State College  
Lock Haven, Pennsylvania**

# The Crucible

*A Publication of the English Club*

LOCK HAVEN STATE COLLEGE  
LOCK HAVEN, PENNSYLVANIA

1965 - 1966

## STAFF

*Editor* ..... ED FRYE  
*Poetry Editor* ..... WILLIAM PRICE  
*Prose Editor* ..... LEE RANKIN  
*Business Manager* ..... DIANE WOLFE  
*Circulation Manager* ..... BETTY JO SCHAFFER  
*Faculty Advisor* ..... WILLIAM STARTT

## *Readers*

SUSAN ABEL  
SUZANNE WHITTAKER  
WANDA RADER  
MARY STIDD  
PAULETTE HOLMAN

## Table of Contents

RALLY SUNDAY, Daniel Eckley .....	3
THERE'S SOMETHING LIKE A TREE, William Price .....	8
LOVE and SONG OF BEGINNING, William Price .....	9-10
REWARD, Mary Hunter .....	10
THE BIG IRON BIRD, Lee Rankin .....	11
THE PARTY IN THE GAMEROOM, John Wehler .....	12
SNOW FLURRIES, Fred Brungard .....	13
THE RISE AND FALL OF MAN, Fred Brungard .....	13
DEATH, Jane Plummer .....	19
THE QUIET, Jane Plummer .....	19
THE PICKUP, William Price .....	20
THE UGLY VIRGIN, Franca Moody .....	25
THE SELF-DESTRUCTIVE PROCREATION, Suzanne Whittaker .....	28
POINT OBLIVION, Suzanne Whittaker .....	28
THE SCULPTOR, Gerald Scisly .....	30
A LOVE SCORNED, Gayle Hepler .....	30
THE UNFAITHFUL ONE, Ed Frye .....	31
EXPENDABLE, Ed Frye .....	33
HER SOCIAL ORDER DEMANDS IT, Patricia Buffington .....	34
IRONY, Anonymous .....	35
LOVE, Anonymous .....	35
THE BAR, Wanda Rader .....	36
THE AWAKENING, Wanda Rader .....	37
THE BASTARD, William Price .....	38
FATE UNKNOWN, Marcia Bower .....	44
APPREHENSION, Ricardo Reyes .....	44
EXISTENCE, Ricardo Reyes .....	44
HIS PROUD DEATH, Sandy Mauck .....	45
ART: WORDS AND NOTES, Dawn L. Swartz .....	45
THE THIRTY-FIRST OF APRIL, William Price .....	46
THE RING, Joseph Scott .....	48
THE ANSWER, Joseph Scott .....	50
THE RIVER, Sharon Isenberg .....	54
THE RAYON DRESS, Sharon Isenberg .....	51
A SONNET, Polly Young .....	50
I LOVED, L. Joseph Scott .....	52
THE APPARITION, L. Joseph Scott .....	52
TWO SOLDIERS, L. Joseph Scott .....	53
DATE NIGHT, Doris Jean Geringer .....	55
UNCLE SAMMY ( <i>A play in three Acts</i> ), William Price .....	56

## The Rally Sunday

by DANIEL ECKLEY

IT WAS A SULTRY summer morning, and the pews of the Pilgrim Holiness Church were packed with the pious. Flies buzzed naggingly among the members of the congregation, lit to torture and feed on sweat-produced salt on noses, foreheads, and hands, and when attacked would flit off to new salt-rich, sweaty hides. Fans swayed methodically, babies cried, and mothers "ch-ch-ched." In the back pews boys played paper-rock-scissors, and occasionally a loud slap would prompt a parent to cast a threatening glance towards the rear of the church. The early-but-late families bucked and weaved their ways to the far-from-the-aisle ends of over-crowded pews.

It was rally Sunday, the Sunday that was set aside for the sinful. The Sunday School children had been going from house to house, asking people to attend Sunday School. The young person who attracted the most new prospective tithers was to be awarded a Bible with his name on it. Each year rally Sunday became a game that was making the church rich, and each year a Bible was doomed to lie and collect dust. This year attendance was greater than any previous year; over two hundred people packed into hard pine pews. Even Sam Coble came.

Sam was the town outcast because he had epilepsy. Sam had frightened every child that grew to be a man in Coleville. Rumor had it that Sam had brain fever, and anybody who

got too close to him would go insane on the spot. Because Sam walked about at night, in the twenties he was a Communist, in the forties he was a German spy, and lately he was a fugitive from justice, a murderer of small children. Actually Sam was a lonely old man who walked into a dream saturated night, knowing that all he had to do was reach out, and there, waiting, was the companionship he so desperately needed.

It has been Kermit Spotts who invited Sam to Sunday School. Kermit needed only one more invitee to rip the responsibility of covering a Bible with dust from Gayle Bloom. Sam was the only sinner left and Gayle was afraid of him. Kermit feared no man, or so he said. So Kermit strutted unto Sam's front porch before an audience that stared on displaying nearly all its baby teeth. He turned towards his audience at the door, rubbed his left index finger from the knuckle to the nail, and made a hissing sound. Then he turned, swallowed, and knocked faintly.

"He ain't home," Kermit whispered loudly towards his fan club.

"Knock agin, sissy," Gayle Bloom whispered back.

Kermit's heart jumped into his mouth and blocked all further discourse, for the door opened, and Sam laid a hand on his shoulder.

"You kids bust my garage winda agin?"

Kermit stared up at the old man, his mouth and eyes opened wide.

Sam leaned over the porch bannister to check his garage windows. Finding them intact, he cleared his throat and spit. He hacked so loud Kermit forgot for a moment that he was a statue and jumped from fright. Sam zipped his fly.

"Whatcha want, kid?"

"I come ta as' ya ta church 'cause I wanna win a Bible an' all. Ya jus' havta come oncet an' stan' up when they call my name. I'm Kermit Spotts. Then ya kin leave, cause I'll git ma Bible an' all. Just oncet, Mr. Coble. I dint bust yer garage windas or nothin'. Honest. You kin leave early. Will ya do it? Gee, I hope ya will, accounta I wanna win that Bible."

"Whaddaya want with a Bible?"

"It's real perty with ma name on it an' stuff."

"I ain't goin'."

"But ya gotta come, or I won't win no Bible. Com'on willya?"

"Nah, ain't got the time. Git somebody else."

"There ain't nobody else."

Sam felt the strange feeling of being needed spread over him. He sat on the rusty glider that he found in the Coleville dump and smiled. He felt like laughing, but he had heard the insanity rumors about him. He was no longer a lonely, epileptic old man, he was Patton's and Pershing's right hand man in France. President Truman had given him a medal for valor and discretion. The people of Coleville welcomed him home from the wars with Jim Wion's band. Even Gladys Lee smiled at him. He was just about to ask Gladys to marry him out of the goodness of

his heart when Kermit interrupted his sleepless dreaming.

"Ya kin leave early. Nobody'll say nothin' to ya. Heck, ya kin set by me."

"I might come. I ain't promisin' ya nothin', but I might come."

Kermit retold his story to every one of his playmates in town. He was a hero. His grandeur-filled balloon was burst though when Gayle reminded him that he would certainly go insane.

Sam came to church dressed in a Woolrich shirt, bib overalls, and high-top work shoes. The flies were the only members of the congregation that welcomed him. All the pews were filled, and Sam stood in the aisle looking around. He nodded his head sheepishly at a few of the pious, but each person Sam saluted managed to look off somewhere without returning the salutation. Sam was uncomfortable because of the heat, the flies, and the way the saints seated about him were pointing and whispering. He was about to leave when Kermit brought him a chair. Kermit opened the chair and set it in the aisle.

"Ya kin leave easier from here, Mr. Coble. Don't ferget ta stan' up."

Reverend Detmer entered through a side door and walked to the pulpit. He smiled at Gladys Lee, who was sitting in her usual seat in the front pew. Gladys looked away. Detmer stopped smiling, cleared his throat, and began.

"It's good to see so many here. The little ones have worked hard, and this Bible will have a deserving owner."

Reverend Detmer felt and looked

uneasy. This sermon had to make Gladys happy, or he was out. Parishes were hard for a sixty-three-year old preacher to find. Gladys was the chairwoman of the church board, and she was upset because Detmer had not saved enough souls. She attributed this flourish of sin to Detmer's lack of spirit, and at the last board meeting she had threatened Detmer.

Gladys was a "Hell, Fire, and Brimstone" advocate. She loved to see people get the spirit and run lunatic. Her favorite was mommy Rote, a ninety-year-old who would run up and down the church aisle screaming, "Holy, Holy, Holy." Her record was sixty Holies. Gladys counted.

Detmer believed that he should instruct his flock from the Bible. He believed religion was the strength to face life. Mommy Rote frightened him, for each time she began running and screaming, he expected her to have a heart attack and die. But Gladys had his job in her hands, and today Reverend Detmer was going to make sure he kept it.

Instead of his usual beginning of reading from the scripture, Detmer began his sermon with a loud "Praise God." The reaction of the saints in the congregation was astounding. Gladys began the cheering with a hearty "Amen." Then it began. Bob Anderson, who was mentally retarded from birth, stood and screamed, "Glory to God in the highest, God and Heaven peace, goodwill, and men." Mommy Rote stated her prelude to her holiing, "Glory hallelujah." Art Roan stood and shouted, "Savior, Savior, Savior." Then the contest began. Everybody stood and

screamed his favorite saying. As always, Mommy Rote was being drowned out, for her feeble voice could not match Art Roan's or Bob Anderson's. She began to run and Holy. Bob would not be out done. He began to run and glory to God. Art was losing, so he began to jump about in the aisle and scream and sing "Onward Christian Soldiers." Everyone joined him in song and in screaming. The church was jumping with excitement.

After an hour of song and dance, the heat began to wilt the singers and dancers. Mommy had holied seventy-two times for a new record. Gladys counted. Bob was becoming so confused in his glory to Gods that he forgot the original statement, so he became angry and sat down. Art thought he was going to vomit and went outside to the toilet. As quickly as disorder and excitement had begun, sighing and tiredness began.

Reverend Detmer gave a fifteen minute testimony about the goodness of God and the wretchedness of man, and everyone stood and did the same after he was finished. Bob Anderson, who was fifty-eight, thanked God for the new bicycle that Reverend Detmer bought him for Christmas. Everybody said "Amen." Bob stood, gloried to God, smiled joyfully, and sat down. Gladys stood and offered a twenty minutes testimony about her children, her baking, her bad nerves, her bladder operation, and her 1949 Chevy. She thanked God for all of them, even for her bad nerves.

The shouting, jumping, running, and testifying were followed by a lull. Reverend Detmer decided he had better do something to save the serv-

ice and his job. He would save a sinner. The first sinner he saw was Sam Coble.

Sam was dumbfounded. He had never been to a Pilgrim Holiness church. He had been at one time a Catholic. The contrast in ceremony was a bit shocking. Sam thought the service was over and was more than ready to leave, but Reverend Detmer had Jim Wion's band play an altar call while Eloise Stover sang. The music was very slow and sad, and it opened the stopper in everyone's soul, permitting guilt and shame to commandeer the mind.

Reverend Detmer walked down the aisle towards Sam. His look of pity and the music made Sam feel uneasy. He stopped in front of Sam, put his white, soft hands on Sam's shoulders, and began to talk in a soft, soothing voice.

"Are you prepared to meet God, Sam? Have you had your sins washed white as snow with the blood of the lamb?"

Sam hung his head. Everyone was looking at him. He was frightened.

"Come into the fold, Sam. Let God show you the real, true way."

When Gladys saw Sam and Reverend Detmer talking, she walked back to join them. Persuasion was one of her perfected genres. She knew where Sam lived, and she decided to hit him there.

"Are you lonely, Sam? Let God be your friend. Come and pray."

Art Roan saw a chance to win a soul for God, so he joined Gladys and Detmer. Art was the forceful type.

"Brother Coble, the spirit of God is movin' in yer soul. Don't fight it

brother. You're under conviction. Be saved, brother, be saved."

Before long every saint in the church was around Sam. He could not escape. Slowly, the soothing voices became throbbing cries. Everyone talked at once and kept repeating the same thing: "Be Saved." Excitement grew in the voices and faces of everyone around Sam. Bob Anderson ran about the circle looking for a hole, so that he could shout his glories to God and have Sam hear him. Gladys prayed loud prayers into Sam's ears; Reverend Detmer, showing his get-them-saved prowess, was on his knees before Sam's bowed head, trying to pull Sam to the altar; Mommy Rote was shouting hallelujah and holies at Sam; and Art Roan was behind Sam, pushing and praying.

Sam was moved to the altar. When he knelt, the praying really began. Everyone around him trembled with excitement. Sam was at first dumbfounded by the behavior of these people, then frightened by their attention, and now he feared for his life. People crowded in on him, prayed loudly, and slapped him from his ankles to the neck. Finally Sam had taken all he could stand. He had an attack of epilepsy; he took a fit. He fell backwards into the mob that surrounded him. Art Roan and Reverend Detmer jumped aside and left him fall on the floor. Sam began to writhe about, tightening and relaxing every muscle in his body. His eyes rolled back into his head, and a white, pussy stream of saliva poured from his mouth. His tongue rolled into his throat and was strangling him.

"He's got the spirit. Praise God." screamed Gladys.

Art Roan began to sing "Everytime I feel the spirit moving in my heart, I pray," and everyone joined him. Everyone was unbelievably happy. Everyone but Sam was unbelievably happy.

Sam was dead.

When the joy subsided, Reverend Detmer tried to congratulate Sam. He called an ambulance instead. Everyone stayed after Sam was hauled away. They sat quietly in the pews. Kermit Spotts walked from his mother to Reverend Detmer, who sat staring at the floor.

"Brother Detmer, I won the Bible. I beat Gayle Bloom by one person. Kin I take the Bible?"

Detmer nodded.

"I betcha I win agin nex' year too. Thanks Reverend."

The children left to play their many Sunday games. Reverend Detmer rose and looked at Gladys Lee. She looked away. He then looked at the church that had been his for thirty years. He had noticed each new black mark that had shown on the walls over the past ten years; he had known all the people who had scratched their names on the backs of the pews over the past thirty years. He looked back to Gladys and said: "Let us pray, God, we thank you for showing us thy wonderful spirit at work. We have lost a sheep, but because of your salvation of his soul today, we at least know he is safe in your hands."

Gladys Lee said, "Amen."

## *There Is Something Like A Tree*

Streets of bright and shining leaves  
Whispering to themselves along the walks  
Of things said and remembered by those  
Who passed beneath some time before.

Rustling, shifting in the summer wind  
Beauty to look at and to touch  
Green, so green they hurt the eye  
In their numbers gaily blowing.

They are of the tree born and arised  
To capture light from far off sun  
And feed the mighty limbs and  
Make them grow long and strong.

They do not think, or so many says  
Seasons upon seasons they stand  
And wait for each new spring  
To bud a new and blossom forth.

But there has been a change in all  
This Winter passes they've finally  
Reached their new tole on this sphere,  
"Here comes a man . . . Let's get him!"

— WILLIAM PRICE

## *Song of Beginning*

I came to you when I was five and stood  
In the doorway, knocked lightly at the latch  
Frozen—in innocence, wondering what place  
This is—why I am here—for what reason  
And what you will be like

The door opened—the years streamed by  
One by one, and growth, color, touch and  
Smell revolved around and around—blended  
In a kaleidoscope of life in this, your home

Your hair, from grey to white, has turned  
Slowly—age has crept upon your form  
But, no change has really come about  
Between us—except that now  
I am old enough to understand

The years have come and they have gone  
Nineteen, all told, have passed us by  
And each season unfolds more of your  
Wisdom—to this wondering youth

The day draws near when you will leave—  
Your journey—long and narrow into a land  
Devoid of time and care—but  
I will stay behind

And wait for the hour when I may come  
Knock on the door—stand trembling  
Until you open it—look at me, and say  
"Come in my child."

— WILLIAM R. PRICE

## Love

Days drift by in unaccounted hours  
Weeks go swiftly one to one  
Months run into months run into months  
The years—they disappear in shrouded mists

The things that matter now won't matter then  
And memory recalls the good; ignores the bad  
One wonders why this life is such a hurried trip  
But answers flee the dreaming mind at dawn and dusk

Love's the only thing that lasts forever  
Suffering is overcome by grinding time  
Seasons have no consequence at final count  
But love—sustains the life within each one

All the torches burn till they're exhausted  
Light gives out for one and finds another  
Each one takes his turn in sprightly fashion  
If love gives its companionship

— WILLIAM R. PRICE

## Reward

If life is undone, why then should our souls?  
Although life may not fulfill our desires,  
Why should our complicated ways aspire  
To heights of oblivion to unfold  
Mercilessly before those that behold?  
Goals that have been ruthlessly set afire  
In search of our mercenary desires  
End in complete destruction of our souls.  
I can forget the irrational fears  
That accompany the search for success,  
But the hurt and the pain that sears the mind  
When life portrays its eternal weaknesses  
Can cripple, contort, and make an eye tear.  
And is this what life offers for my time?

— MARY HUNTER

## SONNET 1

or

### *The Big Iron Bird*

While sitting there in Germany's Kaufbeuren  
Within a Big Iron Bird that high would fly;  
The pilot started the engines roaring  
Then I knew I would have to do or die.

When the engines swiftly began to idle  
A cold, cold feeling hit me to the quick  
Because I knew that in a short, short while  
I'd have to lead that wild, lonely stick.

Looking to the night from the jaw-like door  
At the hell-like shadows rushing by below,  
Knowing that I was to be free no more  
Of the hold from which one could never go.

Then I jumped, the prop-blast into me bored  
And from the black sky like an eagle I soared.

— LEE RANKIN

## The Party in the Gameroom

by JOHN WEHLER

KEN WALKED DOWN the stone steps of the high school towards the knot of boys and girls talking and laughing near the edge of the lawn. He counted the group to see if everyone was there. However, someone was missing because his count revealed that there were only seven girls and five boys. Ken didn't see Tom English and he supposed that he was still inside. He remembered that Tom had told him that he had to see his guidance counselor about something or other after school.

"Hey gang, what's the joke," he asked as a quick gush of laughter burst from his friends.

"Eddie got threatened by Mrs. Conroy for the one-hundredth time today. He's been keeping score since September."

"Conroy's no sweat," laughed Ken. "She's always giving you that line about what she's going to do but she never does anything. By the way, anybody know if Tom is coming soon?"

Burt Packer quickly spoke up. "Funny you should say that, Kenny baby; here comes our missing member right now."

"Where you been, Tom?"

"I was just inside talking to Singleton for a couple of minutes. He was giving me some advice."

Burt Packer grinned and unclasped his hand from his girlfriend's.

"What kind of advice? I suppose he wants you to stay home every night and study like all good boy's should. He'd probably frown upon

our club if he knew about it. You didn't tell him about it, did you?"

"No, I didn't tell him anything. Singleton wanted to know why I wasn't trying harder in school."

"What did you tell him?"

Tom didn't particularly like that query and his irritation began to mount.

"What's with all the questions? I was only late a couple of minutes. Who appointed you prosecutor anyway, Packer?"

Ken didn't want the flareup to get any bigger and he, as president of the club, attempted to quiet the argument with the good news he had been saving for the right moment.

"Okay, you guys settle down a second. I've got a little announcement that should interest all of you. My folks left this afternoon for Philadelphia and they won't be back until Saturday night. They left the house, complete with booze, at my disposal, and I have decided that the club should hold its next meeting Saturday night in the gameroom of my house. Everybody willing to come?"

All members quickly agreed and Ken felt he'd better warn them before the club adjourned to Stan's for something to eat.

"Listen! You all know the rules—nobody gets in unless he's a member of the club, so none of you guys can bring any other girls; that goes the same for girls bringing guys. Sandy and I will get everything ready. Just

come in through the garage door, and don't come driving around the circle blasting your horns. If old lady Sanders thinks something's up, she'll call the fuzz. I'll see you about eight o'clock. Everybody's coming, aren't they? Tom, are you and Carol coming?"

Tom reddened for a moment because he alone from the group had been pointed and then he nodded in assent.

"All right, it's eight o'clock at my house and no horns, please."

The club members slowly began dispersing; some to their cars, others across the street to Stan's. They were all quite happy that the party would be at Ken Bowe's house. The house itself was nicely furnished, but the gameroom was the best feature. It had a fireplace and plenty of room to dance. The room even had a stereophonic tape system built into the wall. A small room off the garage was always filled with beer and there was usually plenty of food available in the kitchen. Ken's parents were very careful never to come back from their trips early, and, with the exception of Mrs. Sanders, none of the neighbors ever noticed the increased noise level during the parties. Mrs. Sanders had once called the police, but Ken had quickly quieted the noise and hidden the club members upstairs. Ken had been very humble to the police and said he was so sorry that he had his hi-fi turned too much. After that the club was very careful; at least, very careful during the early stages of their parties. The tape recorder played wild frantic music at first, but as the night wore on and voices became heavy

with alcohol and passion, the music became filled with violins, their lightness and sweetness doing little to disturb the quiet. It was generally agreed that parties at Ken's house were the best, and the club waited for Saturday evening with eagerness and anticipation.

Sandy Kellet put the bowl of potato chips on the formica cabinet top at the end of the game room. She went through a mental checklist to make sure she had put everything out, and, deciding that there was enough food, looked out the window to see if any cars were pulling up outside.

"Kenny, did you put any soft drinks on ice?"

Ken, who had been searching through the kitchen for a beer opener, came through the door holding the bottle opener in his hand.

"Yeah, I put some in the refrigerator but I don't think anybody will drink any of it."

"I might have some, beer makes me a little sick sometimes. Did you get glasses for the girls?"

"They're on the kitchen table. I think everything's ready now. I put the tapes for the stereo in the cabinet so you won't have any trouble finding them if you want to change it."

Ken walked over to a stuffed chair and sat down.

"I won't turn it on until the gang gets here so why don't you come here and keep me entertained."

Sandy started across the room, but somebody knocked at the garage door. She bent over for a moment to dust off the seam of her stretch



pants, pulled her pink sweater a little lower, and went to open the door.

"Hi, Chuck, Ellie! Come on in. You're the first ones here. Where's everybody else?"

"Well, I don't know where Tom and Carol are," replied Chuck, "but I saw Matt's Corvaire and Eddie's Ford coming around Faxon Circle. The rest of them stopped at Burt Packer's house for a minute."

In quick succession the other members of the club except for Tom and Carol came to the door and the party began. Tom and Carol were missed, but as the frenzy and fever grew and surged, their absences were scarcely noticed.

The throbbing music served as perfect accompaniment to the frantic dancers whose flailing arms and jerking bodies looked somehow horribly grotesque in the smoke-blue light of the game room. Some couples sat in chairs along the walls laughing and drinking beer. Occasionally another couple would jump suddenly to the middle of the dance floor and dance wildly to the pulsating music; always dancing apart but strangely together. The fast pace of the party would in time slow and the exhausted couples would settle comfortably into the chairs, but at the moment the festivities were at full blast.

No one heard the knock at the garage door above the roar of the party until Sandy heard the tapping as she went to the kitchen for a soft drink. She hurried to the door and was slightly surprised to see Tom standing there alone.

"Tom! Where have you been? Where's Carol? We thought you weren't going to come."

"I almost didn't."

"Gee, is Carol sick? What's wrong with you anyway? Did you have a fight?"

The party quieted down when Tom English's voice was heard in the garage. Everyone stared at him as he came in to the game room.

"Tom, what took you so long?", asked Ken. "Isn't Carol with you?"

"No, I came alone."

"Well, better late than never. Come on; join in. You can borrow one of the girls if you want."

"No thanks, I didn't come for the party. I . . . I came to quit the club."

Complete surprise registered on everyone's face and all chimed in with, "Quit! What do you want to quit for?"

"What's the matter Tommy, honey," growled Burt, "doesn't your mommy want you out late at night?"

"Okay, Burt knock it off," said Ken. "What's the gripe anyway, Tom? You're a member of the club. You can't quit us."

"I've got to quit the club, Ken."

"But what's wrong with it?"

All of the members drew closer to the door where Tom was standing. Their approach and Tom's own nervousness caused him to involuntarily take a step backwards.

"It's the whole setup—free booze; a big house to play around in; Ken's parents away and our own know where we are and what we're doing but don't even care. Nobody else can join this lousy club unless we all approve and if one of us wants to bring a date who's not a member, he can't do it. I just don't want to belong to a club like this anymore."

"You never minded the parties be-

fore, in fact you usually had the most fun. Come on, Tom. You don't really want to quit. Sit down for a while and I'll get you a beer. You can borrow Cathy. Matt's half drunk already and he won't care."

Everyone giggled because Matt, who was in a dazed condition, sank slowly into a vinyl covered chair quite unaware of what had been said.

"Look, Ken, I told you that I'm quitting. There's just something wrong about this whole club."

Burt Packer took a menacing step towards Tom. He had enough alcohol in him to make him feel mean and he lashed out with a few infuriating remarks.

"Oh no! Tommy boy's gone moral on us. What's so wrong with our club anyhow? There was nothing wrong a few weeks ago at my house."

"I didn't say that there was anything exactly wrong with it. I just . . ."

"You said there was something wrong with us. Why don't you hand in your membership and get lost, you big phoney? Who needs you?"

"Let's have the membership, Tom and then get out of my house. Remember, you quit and you can't join again."

Tom took the membership out of his wallet and strode quickly out through the garage.

The stunned club members slowly went to sit down or to dance, but somehow the atmosphere had become very strained. Everyone tried too hard to have fun. They couldn't understand why Tom quit. Gradually some began to forget about him and the tempo of the party picked

up again.

Chuck Sullivan was sitting alone on the ledge that jutted out from the fireplace. Ellie, his date, had gone off to the kitchen to find some cigarettes and Chuck was rolling a bottle of beer in his hands. He wasn't drinking any of the beer because it had suddenly acquired a tired flat taste. Chuck was very disturbed by what Tom had said. Tom's words had laid bare a sour feeling about the club that Chuck had had for some time, but Chuck had been afraid to quit. He opened his wallet and looked at his membership card. Quickly he pulled it out, threw it on the floor, and started out the door, but Jack Crossman's arm stopped him.

"Where you going, Chuck? Are you on your way to join that fink, Tom? Here's your card. It must have fallen on the floor."

"Thanks, but I don't want the card. I'm quitting too."

"What about Ellie? If you leave, she won't have a ride home."

"That pig! She'll get a ride home after the party. Maybe it won't be straight home, but she'll get a ride."

Jack let Chuck's arm loose and watched him as he walked through the garage. The dancing had stopped. Everyone stared dumbfounded at the door. Jack shrugged his shoulders and sat down next to Burt Packer who was alone at the moment.

"Well, there goes another one. Burt, what's with those two?"

"I don't know. What's the difference? We can find somebody to replace them."

"He said Ellie was a pig. He's

right too. Hey, Burt, you know all of these girls are pigs; they're pretty and they dress nicely, but they're all pigs."

"Yeah, they are, aren't they?" grinned Burt.

Then Burt laughed as his date came back in the room. Both of them jumped into the middle of the floor and began jerking frantically again.

Ellie came looking for Chuck and, finding out what had happened, began whimpering because she had no ride home. Her problem was soon solved. Jack Crossman's date became sick on the beer and the stale tobacco odor in the game room. She didn't want Jack to take her home so Sandy went upstairs and called a cab. Ellie, who was very sorry that Jack's date was sick said so, came over to Jack to ask him to dance. Ellie was soon sitting in Jack's lap, her worries about getting a ride home completely gone.

The pace of the party had slowed considerably. The stereo was playing a selection of soft dreamlike music, and partners glided languidly across the floor, their arms wrapped around each other in a full embrace. All of the club members were feeling the effects of the alcohol, but no one was affected by it in quite the same way as Eddie Miles. Tom's resignation from the club had hit him very hard and Chuck's subsequent withdrawal had worsened the blow. Eddie had been standing near Jack Crossman when Jack had had his conversation concerning the girls with Burt. After that, Eddie really began to drink hard. He was reclined on a sofa feeling very depressed and Mandy, his date, was trying to tease him.

"Come on Eddie, dance with me some more."

"I don't want to dance anymore, so let me alone."

"Aw come on, Eddie, just a little more, please."

She put her arms under his shoulders trying to lift him from the couch, but that served to irritate him.

"I said let me alone, Mandy."

"Well, if you don't want to dance, then move over."

"Get away from me you pig," he said pushing her away.

With that remark, Mandy slapped Eddie across the face and that made him furious.

"That's right, you're nothing but a pig. I can take you parking anytime; do anything to you and you don't even try to stop me." Then glancing around at all the girls, he cried, "You're all pigs like Jack said, all of you."

Ken hurried over to Eddie to shut him up before the boys jumped him.

"What's the matter, Eddie? Do you want to join those other two finks? You want to quit our club, too?"

Badly frightened by his outburst, Eddie quickly tried to apologize.

"Quit? No, I can't quit the club. I'm sorry Ken. Don't throw me out please. I'm sorry. Just let me stay."

"Come on with me, Eddie," said Ken as he helped him to his feet.

Ken started to help Eddie to the kitchen. He stopped for a minute to whisper to Sandy.

"Look, I'll take him upstairs and get some coffee in him. You change the tape to something fast and do it quick. This whole thing's coming apart."

While Sandy changed the tapes, the group sat looking at each dumbly. No one moved or tried to say anything. The night's events had quite visibly shaken them and some wondered if the club would be breaking up after the party. The questions running through their minds had no answers. So they sat looking at each other, waiting for someone to make the first move.

Sandy put a fresh tape on the stereo and it blasted forth with pounding drums, roaring guitars and thin voices that sany incoherent ly-

rics. Still they sat; no one moving. Finally Burt Packer yelled above the din.

"Let's go you guys, this party's just starting."

Grabbing his girl, he started wrestling on the floor with her. The remaining members began dancing frantically to the blaring music. In the mounting frenzy they hurriedly forgot their unanswered questions, and blotted Tom and Chuck completely from their minds. They had their club and their party and nothing else really mattered.

## *Snow Flurries*

Dancing, bouncing, popping, whirling,  
Alighting on my window pane,  
Creating a world of opaque whiteness,  
Flying high on Eurus's wing,  
Gregarious creatures on my sill,  
Ephemeral beings on my screen.

— FRED BRUNGARD

## *The Rise and Fall of Man*

One,  
Two,  
And then a few:  
Man,  
Woman,  
Child.  
They multiplied,  
Lived,  
and died.  
Stone,  
Steel,  
and gun.  
Battles fought,  
Wars won,  
Conquest—King.  
Mushroom —  
Boom!!!  
Then none  
except one  
and two,  
Then a few:  
Man,  
Woman,  
Child.  
Again and on  
until  
the end.

— FRED BRUNGARD

## *Death*

Death, tread not upon my path  
Though, at times,  
I fear the aged must leave me  
Walk not upon my thoughts  
Disturb me not.

Death, that takes away  
The young and the old,  
And wonders through my thoughts  
That should be gay, and, yet are sad  
Death, leave my thoughts  
Tread not upon my path.

— JANE PLUMMER

## *The Quiet*

I seek the quiet and find it not.  
The chaotic love has hidden it from me.  
I long to be alone—  
To understand.

Alone, yes, but dear God,  
Spare me loneliness.  
In loneliness my thoughts  
turn to an ugliness, too grave  
To even contemplate, and the beauty  
Of peace is destroyed.

Still I seek the stillness, the calm,  
The quiet.

— JANE PLUMMER

## The Pickup

by WILLIAM R. PRICE, JR.

HENRY WALTERS sat at the bar. It was Wednesday night. To be truthful, Henry sat at the bar every Wednesday night. And, from all indications, it was going to be another normal Wednesday evening; uneventful. The jukebox was playing some tune by Nancy Wilson; something about, "Who can I turn to, when nobody needs me?" The pictures on the wall stared down on Henry. All the pictures were of clowns. They were painted by a guy named Herman; one of the other Wednesday night customers. The guy had a real fixation for clowns. A bar is a great place for clowns anyway.

Henry shifted his weight, which was considerable, on the stool, and motioned for the bartender to give him a draught. His glass refilled, he swung around on his stool and looked at the other customers in the booths along the walls; same old faces. Same old people. Same old Wednesday type night. Barring accidents, Henry would probably spend the next twenty years worth of Wednesday nights in this place.

Suddenly, the front door opened, and in walked a girl, but no guy followed behind her. All the male heads swung around to appraise the new arrival, and all of them were richly rewarded — she was somethin' else. Yes sir, she was enough to break all the men out of their Wednesday night lethargy. She headed for an empty booth, removed her black raincoat, and then sat down in the

booth. The bartender walked over and asked her what she wanted.

"A seven and seven," she said, in a low voice that had a strange accent. Don, the bartender, went back to fill her order. More dance music was playing on the jukebox, and one of the young men sitting at the end of the bar opposite Henry got up and crossed over to the girl. He stopped in front of her and said, "Would you like to dance?"

"No, thank you," she replied.

The man walked away, and the girl crossed her legs. She wore a tight, black shift, and black, patent leather shoes. Henry thought her legs were beautiful. She sat there and nursed her drink. A half-hour went by. Many of the young men had gotten up and asked her to dance, but she just didn't want to leave her booth.

Henry Walters kept staring at the girl. His usually florid complexion was quite mottled. Henry was twenty-seven years old, and he was very over-weight. He weighed two hundred and forty pounds. When one is a teller in a bank, one does not have much incentive for exercise; especially when one is as fat as Henry. His favorite pastime was drinking beer. Since he had turned twenty-one he had spent nearly every evening sitting and sipping. This had accounted for the extra forty pounds on his frame. Henry watched, with avid interest, the clearing of the field of the thin, more athletic young men. Then he noticed that she was

looking at him. He swung back to the bar and stared at the mirror; he had to make sure that this was no passing thing. You see, girls didn't normally go for Henry because he was fat. She was still staring at him.

Henry swung around and slid off the stool with a grunt. He walked the ten feet separating the bar from the booths, and stopped in front of her. "May I sit down," he wheezed.

She looked at him for a moment. All the other men in the bar chuckled to themselves. One said, "I wonder what makes Fat Henry think she'll go for him?" Everybody laughed, but they all stopped rather suddenly; she invited him to sit with her. Then, everybody looked away as if it were the most natural thing to do. Henry sat down in the booth.

Henry looked at the woman across from him. Yes, she was a woman, not a girl. Up close, she was all woman. "Can I get you a drink?" he asked.

"By all means," she said.

"Don, let us have two more of the same," Henry called to the bartender. He turned back to the woman. "My name's Henry Walters," he said, "What's yours?"

"Just call me Eva," she said, and smiled. Her smile was strange; she only smiled with her lips. And, Henry noticed, when she talked she barely opened her mouth. "Maybe she has bad teeth," Henry thought to himself. Her accent was very strange.

"I noticed your accent; where are you from?" he asked.

"I am from Europe," she said, and let it drop. Henry didn't press the point.

They continued to talk, or rather, Henry talked and she listened. He

they were out in the cool, night air. "My car is over there," he said, and pointed to a big, white Bonneville convertible parked at the opposite side of the street. Henry certainly knew how to spend his money.

"Oh, what a beautiful car!" she exclaimed.

"Of course, if you would rather we take yours?" Henry offered.

"But I don't have a car."

"Then how did you get here?"

"I walked," she said.

"Oh my," Henry burst out. "A beautiful girl like you should have more sense than to walk the streets at night."

"But, Henry, I like to walk at night."

"Well, let's not stand here — it's told her about his job, and about his very uninteresting hobby of stamp collecting. Henry was all wound up. This was the first girl that he had been with in over a year, and the first good-looking girl that he had ever been with in his entire life. It got to be very late — it was nearly two a.m., closing time. Most of the other customers had gone home. It was nearly time to go, but Henry was still talking a blue streak, and the girl kept on smiling that strange little smile. Finally, Don called out, "It's closing time — everybody drink up."

"Well, I guess we had better go," Henry said. "May I drive you some place?" he asked.

"Yes, Henry, you may drive me any place," she said, and smiled.

As Henry was helping her on with her coat she brushed up against him. Henry's mind nearly exploded in a rage of erotic images. His hand shook as he opened the door for her. Then

too cold. They crossed to the car, and Henry helped her in. He closed the door and came around to his side. His hands were still trembling as he opened the door and wedged his way into the seat. He started the car, and then sat there behind the wheel. Finally, after a minute's hesitation, he turned to her. "Where would you like to go?"

"Any place," she said, and smiled her strange smile.

Henry put the car in gear. He drove down to the end of the block and stopped at the stop sign. Then he made a right onto River Street and drove for several blocks, until he got to the park. He pulled into the park, turned off his lights, and shut off the motor. Then he sat back and looked at her. "Nice night," he said, sort of weakly.

The girl slid over beside him and rested her head on his shoulder. Henry shook all over. He slid his arm around her and then sat there for a moment. They sat there and looked at the river flowing by. After another long minute, Henry bent down and kissed the girl for a long moment. Her breath began to come hard, and Henry felt like he was going to explode. He slid his left hand over and placed it on her thigh. Suddenly, she jerked away from him. He was so surprised that he didn't know what to do.

The girl looked at him, and then she said, "No, not here Henry. Is there any place else we can go?" Henry was stunned. He couldn't believe that she had said yes so suddenly.

"I — I — uh, Yes, we can go to my apartment," he gasped, and

smiled at her lecherously. He started the car and nearly ran into a tree when he was backing out of the park. He pulled out onto the street, turned right, and laid rubber for fifty feet before the girl slowed him down.

"Now, now, Henry, take it slow and easy — it's better that way."

"Yes, yes," he gasped, "It certainly is." Henry drove in silence to his apartment, which was above the bank building on Main Street. He whipped into a parking place and banged his knee a hell of a crack as he hurried to get out of the car. Henry groaned, but he was game, so he hobbled around the car and opened her door.

"You should take your time, Henry," she said and smiled her funny little smile.

Henry led her to the door, and they started up the steps. Henry's apartment was three flights up. By the time they got to the top of the third flight of stairs Henry sounded like a steam jenny. "I, gasp, I, gasp. I guess I had better lose some weight," he choked.

"Oh, no Henry," she said, "I like you just the way you are." Henry smiled at her, rather weakly, and led her to the door of his apartment. He opened the door and led her inside. It was a nice apartment — three rooms and a bath. The furniture was quite modern. Maybe Henry wasn't exactly James Bond, but he liked to live in style. He helped her off with her coat, and then led her to the sofa.

"Would you care for a drink?" he asked.

"Certainly," she answered.

Henry went to the liquor cabinet

and mixed her a drink. While he stirred her drink, which was very strong, he thought about how lucky he was to have such an opportunity. He stared at her legs. He got hotter and hotter inside. A fine film of perspiration covered his forehead. He came back to the couch and sat down beside her. After he handed the drink to her, he loosened his collar. "Kind of warm in here tonight."

"No, I think it is just right," she said, and kicked off her shoes. She spied the record player and burst out, "Oh, can we play some records?"

"Why sure," Henry exclaimed, "What would you like to hear?"

"Something wild and erotic," she said.

Henry nearly broke his knee on the coffee table as he jumped up and rushed to the record player. He went through his records and found one called "African Rhythms;" he pulled it out of the envelope and put it on the machine. He crossed back to the couch. The record started. It was wild and erotic all right.

Suddenly, the girl jumped up and announced, "I'm going to dance for you, Henry." She began to dance around the room in rhythm to the music, and she began to take her clothes off. Her dress came off first, followed sixteen bars later by the removal of her stockings. All that were left were her panties and bra, and Henry was right out of his ever-lovin' mind. He whistled, he stomped his feet, and he quivered like a mad dog in heat. Suddenly, the girl darted for the bedroom, and Henry was right behind her. He stopped to turn down the record player, but the girl ap-

peared in the door way and said, "Leave it up. In fact, you had better turn it up louder so that we can hear it in the bedroom. Henry, my dance isn't over yet."

Henry turned the record player up as loud as possible, but not so loud that any neighbors would come pounding on the door. He followed the girl into the bedroom.

"Take off your clothes," the girl said.

"Yes, Ma'am," Henry exclaimed. "Anything to make you happy!" Henry disrobed as rapidly as possible, and then stood there. He felt ashamed for being so fat; so very, very fat. "I hope you don't mind the fact that I'm so fat," he muttered self-consciously.

"Oh, Henry," she crooned, "Not at all. You're beautiful — so big, and so very full of life!"

"Well," said Henry, "I'm glad you like me." He crossed to the bed and lay down, looking, for all the world, like Santa Claus without his suit. The girl began to dance again, and Henry just lay there and watched her — getting more and more excited. The music beat faster and faster, and she whirled faster, and Henry breathed harder and harder. Finally, the record beat to a climax, and the girl threw the last two garments to the floor and leaped into the bed beside Henry.

Henry pulled her to him and kissed her over and over again. Then, he stopped to get his breath for a moment. He looked at her, and then he said, "Eva, you never did tell me what part of Europe you're from."

She looked at him for a long, slow moment, and then she said, "Tran-

sylvania." Then she smiled — really smiled — for the first time. Her teeth were very long and very pointed; especially the two-inch long fangs on both sides of her tongue. Then she

was at his throat. Henry tried to scream, but he couldn't, and the last thing he heard was, "Oh, Henry, you're so full of life!"

## The Ugly Virgin

by FRANCA MOODY

THE LIGHTS in the apartment were turned low, and beer bottles were lying in the midst of the group. Georgia Beaymont was celebrating the fact that she had held down a steady job for one month to the day. Her close friends had been invited; friends like Charlotte, Lisa and Joyce. Charlotte was a husky girl, and she had a deep voice to match her build, deep, almost like a man's. Lisa was petite. To look at her one would think that nothing but lyric could issue from her round lips, but when she spoke, the words she used were harsh and vulgar. The kind of language teenage boys like to experiment with. Sitting beside Lisa was a man with sunken cheeks framed in greasy hair, and his eyes were blue. Joyce could be a beautiful girl if she did not wear so much make-up. Her face was caked with white powder which made her look like a risen corpse. Charlotte had brought along one of her friends, Barb Dolen. Barb smoked too much, and her mouth was too wide. Other than that she was quite striking, especially with that head of carrot-colored hair falling to her shoulders.

"When 'ya gonna bring the food?" demanded Lisa's immobile friend.

A voice from the kitchen bellowed, "It's comin'. Keep your pants on!" Georgia came out with a tray laden with a different assortment of needles, and each needle was accompanied by a small bottle.

"It sure took Georgia one helluva

time to get this damn stuff," said Lisa in a demure voice almost panting. "God! What a feeling. It's been so damn long since I've had a fix." Then her voice trailed off.

"You better believe it took me a heck of a time to get this. Now I hope you appreciate it." She held the needle in position. "Well, here's to my new job." Her mouth puckered and then she was silent.

Joyce sat near the record player thinking about home and listening to a Johnny Mathis album. Suddenly she jumped up and shouted, "why? Why does this lousy world have to be so lousy?" The others looked at her, and she stared back for a moment. Then she bolted out of the apartment.

Charlotte and Barb were in the bedroom, and Charlotte was pleading with Barb, "Look, why don't you come out. We all have our first times, and really, it's not so bad. Just come out."

"I thought this was supposed to be a booze party, not some kind of fix job."

"What are 'ya some kind of innocent babe or something? Come on, 'cause I know you better than that."

"I don't have to take that talk from you!"

Georgia stumbled in, "Charlotte, bring your friend out. I wanna get to know your friend. Your friend looks nice."

Barb came out with Georgia leaning against her to keep from falling.

"Boy, this stuff sure is great."

"I don't care for any."

"O.K., O.K., nobody forces nobody. Sit down and talk to us."

Sleep soon overcome them all, and nothing could be heard save for the humming of the record player that forgot to reject.

Georgia was the first to wake, and it seemed like hours since she had seen light. She squinted her eyes to look around. "What a mess. Who's the red-head? Oh, I forgot; that's Charlotte's friend. Nice girl." She picked herself up and walked into the bathroom. "Boy, I sure do look a sight, but I don't care; After all, I don't have anyone to look nice for."

"Even if I just had a real good friend, like Barb maybe. Then I'd have somebody to look nice for. Those people in there don't like me for what I am. They only come to my parties for the goods I give them." She was having a hard time focusing her eyes on the mirror, then she saw Barb standing in back of her.

"Did you have a nice time, Barb?"

"Yeah, it was all right."

"You're not like the rest, Barb. You didn't come here for a fix. You're a real nice girl, Barb."

"You're a lot of fun, too, Georgia."

And so the conversation went until the others woke up. Then everyone got ready to leave, making excuses as they put on their coats, because nobody wanted to help straighten up the room.

Weeks went by and Georgia still thought of Barb. One night she was in a melancholy mood, aching for a fix, but not having enough money. "If only Barb was here," she thought. "I wouldn't need a fix if I had some-

one to keep me company." Then she remembered that Charlotte said Barb spent a lot of time in Greni's coffee shop.

Within a matter of minutes Georgia was standing in the doorway of the coffee shop. She stood there watching the people walk in and hoping for the sight of her red-headed friend. Her huge frame swayed to the soft music and stopped as a young boy of about nineteen asked her to dance.

"Wanna dance, Babe?"

"Sure, I guess so."

When they stepped out onto the dance floor, her arms enveloped him, and soon he seemed to be suffocating in her clutch.

"Say, babe, I just remembered I have an appointment with my eye doctor in ten minutes. See 'ya 'round."

Georgia clumsily shifted back to her station and watched the dancing couples. Suddenly her face twitched in surprise, and she strained her eyes to see between the dancing couples. She quickly crossed the dance floor, bumping carelessly into a dancer. It was the boy.

"Look out where 'a goin'!"

She glared at him, "That was a quick trip to the eye doctor!" Then glancing at his partner she added, "You better make it a specialist next time."

As she reached the other side of the room a smile twisted on her lips revealing decayed teeth. Then her stubby arms reached out to the red-head who sat sipping a Bloody Mary while cigarette smoke billowed from her wide lips.

"Barb! I've been looking all over for you."

"Sit down, Georgia. How have you been?"

"Miserable. I thought a lot about you since the party. I thought it would be nice if we could just talk."

Then she leaned over to Barb and

whispered something, something that caused the red-head to put down her drink, pick up her jacket and slink out of the dimly lit room. Georgia followed, and as she passes the boy, he laughed and added with a sneer, "Now that's more your type!"

## *The Self-Destructive Procreation*

Does the shade of love run thus  
That all who venture in it must  
Be punished by the Soothing Light  
Yet gentled by the Ceaseless Night?

Does the needle so require  
The Serum to cure the Real Desire?  
Does the shade of love run thus  
That day is night and love is dust?

Does the lady ever care  
When a purpose lacks a fare?  
Does a man decide his fate  
When he knows it's too late?

Does the prisoner descend  
Lust the limit for his end?  
Yet to make a sacrifice  
If the limit loves his life!

Does the shade of Love run thus  
That all who venture in it must  
Destroy the veil of Soothing Light  
But Procreate the Ceaseless Night?

— SUZANNE WHITTAKER

## *Point Oblivion*

Are you sick to death of living?  
Do you feel you've done your giving?  
Would you let your soul pass on  
To all the shades that lie  
Their passage to the Point Oblivion?

Hear your whispers in the darkness?  
Walk you calmly in the shark's nest?  
Would you give the truth to liars?  
Their pleasures to inspire  
Toward the Point Oblivion?

And would you thrust fire into fire?  
And have you gained what all desire?  
Is your throat bound by a wire  
That steals your mind from want  
And scurries toward the Point Oblivion?

Turn then creatures of the Red Blade  
And whine and scream from shade to shade  
For that which keeps you from all  
Dead wants to much to  
Taste emptiness in Point Oblivion.

Cast your bleakness to the Whait Pit  
From whence you will discover it  
Can never know the dead which  
Keep their secret shadowed  
In dimension as Point Oblivion.

And ask you what my murder was?  
Such error of the moment does  
What time demands delay of.  
Back to the Black of Sun.  
Back to the Black of Point Oblivion.  
Back to death.  
May death live on  
And on  
And on . . .

So curse the world —  
I curse the world!  
All life be done!  
May even dawn  
Bring on  
The kiss of death  
And kill each breath  
As death lives on  
And on . . .  
To Point Oblivion.

— SUZANNE WHITTAKER



## The Sculptor

The sculptor takes his tools and molds a form  
From clay. He cuts and nicks and smooths his bit  
Until the clay is shaped within a warm  
Emotion, producing what his hands will permit  
God is a sculptor forming all Mankind;  
He takes the seed of birth to make a soul,  
He blows the breath of life and forms a mind,  
And gives the hope for man to reach his goal.  
Though I am man and He Almighty God,  
He guides my hands along the mold of clay  
To paths my soul alone has never trod,  
An everlasting life if I obey.  
And when my soul will take its rest at last,  
He still will mold within His golden cast.

— GERALD SCISLY

## A Love Scorned

How many men this tarnished love have scorned,  
And wrung from it all its youth and luster?  
And left rather only bitter languor.  
Better would be, that I never were born?

They breathe their empty words and yet so sweet;  
Words that win and deceive a young maid's heart,  
And persuade all good virtue to depart.  
How many failures before the defeat?

Their false love is hers, until she is won,  
But she enters a path of no return,  
Knowing joy — mingled only with cruel tears.

Either I must wander alone — undone,  
Or allow the false flame of love to burn.  
Will Death erase those dark and empty years?

— GAYLE HEPLER

## The Unfaithful One

by ED FRYE

HE HAD THOUGHT ABOUT IT for a week. He had decided three days ago that it was the only thing to be done. Unfaithfulness was a sin that would only be reconciled by the supreme penalty.

He was surprised at himself for being so completely objective about the whole matter. But he was particularly surprised that he had the internal strength to accept the ultimate solution. After this had been done, the planning was not difficult to work on. Of course he had to be careful. He had to make it clean and quick. Even though she had been unfaithful, she, in his mind, did not deserve a painful end.

This fact made drowning the desirable vehicle of his action. He had thought of carbon monoxide but in his case it was impractical, even impossible, as he did not own an automobile. Yes, drowning was the best. So painless, so quick and so easy to explain. The old toll bridge three blocks away would be the perfect place. It would even be easy to get her out there.

They often took walks late at night — the east side of the city was relatively safe and quiet late at night. Since they had known each other, they enjoyed walking together late at night, even in the rain.

And as luck would have it, it rained that Tuesday night — the night he had planned to do away with "the unfaithful one." The phrase had come to him at work and

he rarely looked at her any more without it going through his mind. In fact, a few times he had almost called her that. This mental appellation of her seemed to make his whole plan easier to accept. Yes, it made it quite bearable.

He was apprehensive about asking her if she would like to go for a walk that Tuesday — to start out in the rain they rarely did. But when he finally ask her, she got a questioning look on her face but put up no argument.

They walked in silence. They always did. Tonight, he was glad he didn't have to make conversation. He felt strange though when she brushed against him or when they passed under a street light which illuminated her sharp features and made her presence inescapable.

They stopped when they go to the middle of the bridge. They always did and looked out over the bay. Again he was glad his plan fit their habits so well. To have to ask her to stop would seem a shaky, ominous beginning.

The bay was murky-looking because of the heavy crowd cover but regularly-spaced streetlights along the bay drive lit its left side, sending strange slivers of light across the width of the bay.

Suddenly the realization that the moment had arrived struck him. He tugged nervously at the buttons and collar of his trenchcoat and won-

dered if she noticed his apprehension. She didn't seem to.

He picked her up and set her on the ledge. Suddenly he remembered that she could swim. But then he remembered the fifty-foot drop from the bridge to the water and thought that if he caught her squarely on the jaw with a good punch she might even be knocked out before she hit the water. No, there was no chance of her making it. He looked cautiously around him to see if there was anyone about. He tried to do it casually so she wouldn't notice. He saw no one.

She twisted to face him fully and he knew it was now or never. He looked her squarely in the eyes and said, "Goodbye, Emily." Then with all the force of his thin body, he

clubbed her solidly on the jaw. She emitted a strange cry and disappeared into the darkness below. He heard the splash into the water — it had a sound of finality — the sound of a dead weight sinking, not of a squirming, live body.

He glanced around again to see if there were any observers. Again he saw no one. The act was committed without a flaw. He turned and strode rapidly from the bridge. His mind was blank of all thought of his murder. His mind was resigned to the justice of the act. He could not tolerate unfaithfulness. No cat could make a fool out of him. He now began to think of a way to get rid of Emily's partner, the big tomcat that nightly visited the neighborhood.

## *Expendable*

We're babies come from war  
And now to the war we go.  
Asia is running sore  
It must be stopped you know.

Freedom's price is not so high,  
It's weighed in war babies' souls.  
So war babies give a sigh  
And dig the new line of holes.

Our generation is no good, so  
We're an easy price to pay.  
We're only war babies — we can go;  
Yes, let the retired soldiers stay.

The old soldiers did their part  
In many battles long since past.  
All we need of them is their art;  
Sure, we'll rally around the mast.

We are scarcely ever real;  
Our lives don't mean a damn thing.  
Why, for freedom, it's a steal  
And think of the pride we'll bring.

We're expendable you know;  
There's not a thing to lose.  
That's what the congress says, so  
Give each child a warring muse.

Send us, full of tact and spirit;  
Put us in the very first row.  
Make us shout so Russia hears it;  
We're expendable you know.

— ED FRYE

### *Her Social Order Demands It*

Why must she ask so much of us today,  
When yesterday we were so green and fresh,  
Like spring grass struggling to live free and wild,  
Only to be discouraged, rolled by its master.  
Demands so much but sometimes gives little  
In return. It is not fair. It is not fair  
To rob us from our freedom and our pleasures,  
To raise her social order beyond compare.  
Still endless nights by desk we toil and strain,  
Perhaps in vain when at the end a "F."  
Repeat repeat more money more work,  
More wasted hours for what? A small paper?  
Now it's done. We bless each day that we  
Adorn her face and raise her standards high.

— PATRICIA BUFFINGTON

### *Irony*

Irony,  
Strange  
That the prism of  
A tear  
Reflects  
All the happy colors  
Of life.

— ANONYMOUS

### *Love*

You would have  
Me say  
I love you.  
Think you  
That the words  
Might bind me?  
Then you are  
Foolish indeed;  
And I, too,  
Were I to assume  
This hackneyed phrase.  
Love . . .  
I know not  
What it is  
But do believe me:  
I care.

— ANONYMOUS

## The Bar

The smoke drifted up in small wisps  
And disappeared into the air,  
Like a smile disappears into the past.  
The lights, a cold sad blue,  
Dimly lit the room.  
The band was small — a failure.  
The drummer played loudly,  
So that no one could hear the battered sax,  
Who couldn't play at all.  
But they had a beat.  
It was rough, hammered out,  
Like something in a jungle,  
And if you drank enough beer,  
The band began to move your blood  
The beer was wet.  
It smelled of mold and tasted sour,  
But it was good after five glasses.  
I sat across the small, silly, insufficient table  
From him and watched.  
The table was so small that my knees kept brushing his,  
and its tiled top kept creasing my elbows.  
The smoke from my cigarette  
Didn't disappear any more.  
It floated around the blue lights  
On the walls, and made me cough.  
The other couples at the other tables  
Laughed, touched each other,  
And earnestly made conversation.  
They were all nonchalantly drunk.  
I looked at him.  
His blue sweater and blue eyes matched the lights.  
His smile was for me; its origin, beer.  
"Nice band," he said.  
"Yes, they've got a beat," I said  
And reached for my glass.  
I was drunk.

— WANDA RADER

## The Awakening

The grasses bent to the North  
Their green freshness introduced me to spring  
And life began.  
I crawled out of my winter indolence,  
My cocoon of ice and fur,  
To try my wings.  
The great experiment.  
Will they work?  
Will the joints, connections, hooks and sockets  
Hold me?  
Let me fly and soar?  
Dip to earth, brush the waxy flower petal?  
Will all the groanings and crackings of growth  
That I endured in the coldness,  
That wracked my greyness,  
That tore the strength from me,  
Be for nothing?  
Or will this spring see me changed?  
No longer a slow crawling thing  
With common thoughts  
And a tired heart and soul,  
With sorrow in my eyes  
And a hopelessness in every part of me.  
Will the wings work?  
Will the golden, lacy wings, love-wings,  
Lift me above the places I used to see  
Through eyes a fraction higher than a sand pebble?  
Will I look down upon instead of at the bladed grass?  
I am afraid of this new thing I am.  
I am afraid to try.  
How can they try?  
These thinner-than-sunbeam things?  
Motion, the secret is motion.  
Painful, the works are so new,  
Unused.  
I fly, I fly  
The air is so soft to float upon  
The softest moss-bed I ever found  
To rest my ugly body on.  
Was never as magic soft as these clouds.  
My love-wings carry me.  
They work.  
My winter's darkness is rewarded.  
Spring is born,  
And I with it.  
Because of you I am a butterfly.

— WANDA RADER

# The Bastard

by WILLIAM R. PRICE, JR.

TOM SAT AT THE COUNTER in the Ritz Grill. He was sipping a coke. It was Friday night, and the place was filled with the usual Friday night crowd of boys and girls waiting for the dance to start. He looked at the clock at the rear of the room; 7:15—the dance didn't start till 8:30. He stared at his reflection in the mirror behind the counter. Then, he straightened his collar. All the guys in his group at the high school were careful dressers; Tom Simpson was no exception to the rule of conforming good taste.

The front door opened and Walt Rogers strolled into the Grill. He spied Tom and walked over and took a stool on Tom's right. He ordered a vanilla coke, and then he turned to Tom. "I hear that Big Sam is drunk again tonight. He's going around picking fights with everybody; so far he's beat up three guys. His cousin is with him."

"So—who cares?" Tom muttered. But inside, Tom was scared. Big Sam had promised him that he was going to get it the next time Big Sam saw him down town. There was no reason for it. Sam just decided that he didn't like somebody, and then he proceeded to beat the hell out of that someone. He'd been put in jail several times for fighting, but he'd also managed to put several fellows in the hospital; somehow, he managed to keep from being sent to Whitehill reformatory—no one knew exactly how. Perhaps he was paying off the Judge.

The door swung open again and Bill Edwards came in and walked over to Walt and Tom.

"Guess who's coming down the street!" he said, rather gloomily.

"Who?" asked Walt.

"Big Sam, the Bully-Man!"

"Is that crazy Larry with him?" asked Tom.

"Yeah," Bill said, "And they're having a ball bothering the girls in front of the theater."

"Well, if the girls didn't insist on standing in the street they wouldn't have any trouble," Walt added.

A silence settled down on the threesome. Then, avoiding looking in his direction, Bill asked, "Are you going to go outside, Tom?"

"I'm going to the dance as usual." Tom answered, rather curtly.

"The reason I asked you is because Sam is outside."

"So what?"

"He just told a bunch of kids that he was going to get you." Bill said.

"Look, Bill, I'm not afraid of that Big Bully. All you have to do is reason with him." Tom said.

"Oh sure," Walt interjected, "it's just like trying to reason with the Grim Reaper."

"Tom," Bill said, "If you want me to back you up I will. I mean, I think I can handle Larry if Sam starts anything. I don't think I would want him standing behind me if I got in a disagreement with Sam. He's a dirty bastard! I've seen Sam and him work over drunks down on Third

Street. It's a wonder that they haven't killed somebody yet."

"Thanks, Bill," Tom said, "but I don't think that there will be any trouble. I'm not going to get into a fight. It isn't worth the effort. Now remember, no matter what happens outside, don't start giving him a rough time. I still say that you can reason with him."

"Well, if you're going outside, then I'm coming with you too," Walt said.

"All right, let's go," Tom said, and then he stood up. Inside, his stomach felt queasy, and his knees shook slightly as he started for the door. He pushed the door open, and then he was on the sidewalk with Bill and Walt coming behind him. There was a whole crowd of kids standing in front of the Grill and the adjoining theater. It was mid-July, and it was very hot. All the kids were in shirt-sleeves. Several of the girls did great things to the bermuda shorts they were wearing, but Tom was too nervous to pay very much attention to anything, even to Sally Reynolds, whom he had been becoming very much interested in of late.

Big Sam was standing in the middle of the crowd. He had some girl's sweater, and he was teasing her with it. The girl, Jean Black, looked like she was about to burst into tears, but none of the fellows standing around made a move to help her regain her sweater. Sam's cousin, Larry was sitting on the bicycle rack, which he had cleared of bicycles, and laughing in an inebriated guffaw.

Big Sam Watson was just that—Big. He stood 6 foot 2 inches, and he weighed about two hundred and twenty-five pounds. His hair was

red, and his complexion be-freckled. He had a tendency toward pugginess, but he also had the half-developed muscles of a man his size. If he had not been afraid of work, and had developed himself a little bit, he could have been a much meaner individual than he already was. However, everybody was afraid of him. He was a junior in high school, but he looked much older. For this reason, he was able to pass for twenty-one and, consequently, able to buy all the booze that he could afford. And, right now, he looked as if he had been drinking for sometime.

As the three stood there, Sam's cousin Larry happened to look up and see them. "Hey Sam, look who's here," he drawled sarcastically, and pointed at Tom, "It's the Real Big Man About Town."

Sam looked up, and then threw the girl's sweater on the pavement where the girl hastily retrieved it and left the scene rather in a hurry, to say the least. Sam elbowed his way through the crowd and came face to face with Tom. His breath was foul from the smell of whiskey, and his eyes were red and burning with a curious kind of animalistic hate. He stared at Tom for a long moment, then he grinned evilly, "Whatsa matter—yew scared o'me, Simpson?"

Tom was scared all right, but he wasn't going to give the other boy the benefit of the doubt. "Why should I be scared of you, Sam?" he asked. His eyes nearly betrayed their fear to the Bully.

"Because, I don't like you Simpson, you and that whole crew you run around with. Just because you

guys are 'athletes' doesn't mean that you're better than anybody else. I'm gonna wipe you out Simpson, and when I'm done punchin' you I'm gonna kick you in the nuts." Tom's face got red because of that last statement, and several girls giggled.

"Look, Sam, what the hell did I ever do to you anyway?"

"You think that you're better than I am!"

"I never said that I was."

"Come on, Sam, let's teach this goody-goody a lesson," Larry called out, and started advancing towards Tom.

"You stay out of this Robinson," Bill Edwards said, and stepped towards Sam's cousin.

"Yeah," added Walt, "We're gonna see that things are kept equal for a change."

"Hey, Sam, you hear that? Two big tough boys are gonna give me a rough time. You take care of that one, and then I'll work on these two," Larry said, and swayed drunkenly.

"Now, look—Sam, I—" Tom started to say, but a large fist shot out and the world reeled crazily. Slowly, Tom became aware that he was lying on his back on the sidewalk. He tasted blood, and he knew it was his own. His front teeth felt loose. Then, he was aware that someone was helping him to his feet; it was Walt.

"Not much fight to you, Simpson!" Sam said, and laughed.

"Give him a chance to defend himself!" Walt blared out.

"You're next, Rogers!" Sam said, and laughed again.

The fog finally lifted and the lights stopped blinking in Tom's

head. He shook his head like a dog shakes his tail after it comes out of the water. Then, he pulled loose of Walt's supporting hands and steadied himself. In comparison to Sam, Tom Simpson was small. He stood six feet tall, and he weighed 170 lbs. He played basketball and baseball, but he wasn't a star; just a good, dependable man to have on a team. He went into a fighter's stance and threw a left jab at the bigger boy. The blow caught the other high on the cheek and sent the Bully reeling back on his heels.

"You sonofabitch," Sam screamed, and lunged forward and swung wildly at Tom. Tom ducked and hit Sam in the gut solidly. With a loud "Whoosh" the bigger boy grabbed his stomach and fell to his knees. He stayed in that position for a full minute, trying to get his breath back, and Tom stepped back to give him a chance. Finally, Sam struggled to his feet and stood there. He swayed a bit from the effects of the blow, and from the alcohol raging in his system. Then, he suddenly grabbed for Tom and got a bear-hug around him, but Tom was strong enough to break the hold. But, as he pulled away from the Bully, a knee came up and then the world went black. Tom lay on the pavement sick. He couldn't move. He felt like he was going to die. Vaguely, he heard noises somewhere above him. He thought he heard Larry's voice yell, "That's the way Sam, teach him how to fight!" but the voice sounded like it was a long way off. He didn't know that Big Sam was trying to get at him, but Bill and Walt, along with several other boys from the

crowd, were holding him back. Then, he was aware that someone was helping him up again; it was Bill this time. He heard Bill say, "We're taking you home." With great effort, he pushed Bill away and said "No, no you're not."

"But, Tom, he hurt you bad. You'd better quit now, and go home."

Tom let his head clear, and then he looked at Sam. "Sam, the cops are going to be coming soon, so we had better get out of here. I'll meet you in the park in half an hour. I'm not done fighting yet."

"You've had it sonny," Sam sneered, "Now, why don't you go home to your Mommy!"

Tom looked at Sam for a long, hard moment. Then, he said in a voice that chilled the listeners, "Sam, you're a goddam chicken-hearted bastard. I'm gonna break your neck." The crowd of boys and girls hushed at these words. No one had ever dared to talk like this to Big Sam. It was common knowledge that Sam Watson was illegitimate. It was also common knowledge that Big Sam had almost killed another boy for saying the same thing in another fight a couple of months before. Only the arrival of the police had saved that boy from getting his brains kicked out in an alley.

Big Sam looked at Simpson. His voice shook as he screamed, "I'll kill you—you—!" and tried again to break from the restraining arms of Tom's defenders.

"You just be in the park in half an hour and you'll get your chance you slob!" Tom said viciously, and then he wheeled and walked into the Grill. He sat down hard on a stool

and ordered a large coke and a glass of water. Walt and Bill entered a moment later and sat on either side of him.

"Why the hell don't you use your brain and go home?" Bill demanded.

"Yeah, are you crazy—that guy'll kill you for talking that way to him. You know he doesn't have any father—he hates to be called that!" Walt said.

"Look, you guys let me fight my own fight—O.K.?"

"Dammit, you are not going to go down to that park! One of those guys may carry a knife. Besides, that park is near their end of town. They'll probably bring some of their friends."

"Look, Bill, I don't give a damn if they bring all of Third Street with them, I'm going to finish this fight once and for all."

"Well, I'm going to go get some more guys—I'll meet you at the park." Walt said, and he jumped up and went out the door.

"Listen, Tom, I'll back you up all the way, but I don't think that you are in any condition to continue to fight with that big animal!" Bill said.

"I have a plan," Tom said, and his eyes gleamed, "and I think it will work."

They sat there and the minutes went by quickly. Then, with five minutes to go, they got up and headed for the park. The park was only three blocks away. They got there with a couple minutes to spare. In the center of the park there was a raised area, around which a low depression ran. The center area was covered with grass, and it was illuminated by a street light hanging above. In the winter, when condi-

tions were right, the low circular depression was filled with water and served as a skating rink.

As Tom and Bill drew near the park, they saw Sam and Larry waiting in the raised area under the light. With them were five of their friends from Third Street. Just as they got to the edge of the park, Walt came out of the shadows at the other end, near the river, with half of the high school football team. Seven fellows, including Walt, stalked forward and stopped at the opposite side of the rink. When Bill and Tom got up next to them they all advanced forward and stopped just ten feet from the other group.

"Well, I see you brought your friends, Chicken!" Sam said sarcastically.

"No, Sam, I didn't bring my friends—they came on their own accord. I don't have to recruit friends like you do. Anyway, this fight is just between you and me. The other fellows are here just to make sure that things stay nice and even. They won't bother your bunch, as long as your bunch doesn't bother them."

"All right, let's go chicken!" Sam said confidently.

The two boys stepped into the center between the two groups and squared off. They moved around each other warily. Tom knew that he had to stay away from the bigger boy; otherwise he would get more of the same that he got in front of the grill. They continued to move around and around and threw a couple of jabs at each other. Then Tom spoke, "Hey, Sam."

"What, Chicken?"

"I hear you're a bastard."

The big boy stopped. His face grew pale. He screamed, "I'm gonna kill you for that," and nearly leaped at Tom. Tom neatly dodged the other boy and hit him a back-hand across the mouth as he went by. The Bully wheeled around in a rage. He started for Tom again, and the smaller boy dodged again, slipped under the other's guard, and laced him a solid blow in the stomach. Then, Tom quickly pulled back and hit Sam three quick jabs in the face. The bigger boy reeled, stumbled and fell. He got up slowly. Tom continued to move around the perimeter. He said, through clenched teeth, "Come on Bastard—get up."

The Bully screamed again, and, with much effort, stood up and went for Tom. Tom dodged and danced around and around the big boy, singing in a singsong chant, "Bastard, bastard, bastard, bastard." The Bully, half out of his mind with hate, twisted and swung wildly, but he couldn't lay a hand on the lighter youth.

Suddenly, Tom saw an opening, and hit Sam with every ounce of strength he had. The blow caught the big boy square on the mouth. He staggered. Tom started sending lefts and rights into the other's face and midriff. Finally, Sam sank to his knees, and Tom hit as he was on his way down. Sam went over on his back and Tom went crazy. He leaped onto the boy's chest screaming, "Bastard, Bastard, Bastard," all the while pounding blow after blow after blow into the face of the Bully. The world went red. That's all he could see—red!

Then, arms were around him—

pulling him off of the object of his hate. He kept screaming and trying to reach the body on the ground. Then, someone hit him across the mouth, and someone was shaking him. A voice was saying, "That's enough Tom—Tom, snap out of it!" It was Bill's voice. The red fog of hate went away.

He looked down at the form on the ground. The Bully was crying; his whole body was racked with large, uncontrollable sobs. His face was a bloody pulp. It didn't look like a human face. Tom felt like he was going to be sick. He turned and started to walk away. Bill and Walt walked on either side of him; the others followed behind. Back at the center of the park, Larry looked down in disbelief at his blubbering hero. Sam's friends were walking away in disgust. As they went down the street, Tom felt good, but he was also sick; if it is possible to feel two such emotions at the same time.

"Bill and Walt, my two best buddies," Tom said, "I'm sure glad I have friends like you." He reached out his arms and put them around

the shoulders of his two friends. "Yes, sir, we're just like the three musketeers."

"Tom," Walt said, slowly, "how did you know that you could lick Big Sam?"

"Yeah, what was that plan you were talking about? Whatever it was, it obviously worked."

Tom suddenly sobered. He stopped and looked at his two friends. Then he said, "I used psychology on Sam. I knew that if I called him what I called him—that he would become so enraged that he wouldn't be able to fight. You see fellows, I understand Sam much better than you do. As a matter of fact, Sam and I are very much alike. The only difference between Sam and I is that he hasn't been able to overcome his problem, and I have—for the most part. You see fellows—I'm a bastard too!!

The two boys looked at Tom in stunned disbelief.

"Now, whattaya say we go to the dance—O.K.?" Tom turned and headed for the dance hall. The other two followed behind. The night, fortunately, was young yet.

## Fate Unknown

She waits amid the shadows of the birch,  
Her searching, hopeful eyes glance toward the field,  
The wood's sanctuary protects like a church,  
And her buck stands tall and knows he must yield,  
Then comes the crack, red blindness, and the dark.  
Somewhere man lies in the muck of the trench,  
His mind longs for the unheard song of larks,  
Tears roam the sky, stare through jungle branch  
It comes quickly, like a bright, lightning streak,  
As he falls, lifeless arms enfold the ground.  
She waits fearfully, the world remains bleak,  
The message arrives, his body is found.  
The living feel the sting of hastened deaths,  
Knowing they must find strength to draw other breaths.

— MARCIA BOWER

## Apprehension

Six times I tried to live:  
Six times I was defeated.  
Now  
I am not certain of the future  
For I was told  
That I would live.

## Existence

It has been said  
That  
Under the cover of night  
The foulest deeds of man are committed:  
Man against man,  
Man with man,  
Man with woman.  
Thus,  
Life is continued.

— RICARDO REYES

## His Proud Death

Softer are his steps upon the rough ground.  
He tires more easily, when he walks.  
And finds he's reminiscing, when he talks.  
Life clings like a fighter in his last round.  
Age has graced his brow with a proud, sad crown,  
But upon his life's door our Maker knocks.  
The truth within his heart with pride he blocks.  
Life will accept its fate without a sound.

Lingering through the week, the time grows near.  
Loved ones wait helpless against fleeting time,  
While empty hope and pride relieves his fear.

Soon hope, pride meet defeat as death grows clear.  
His weak, low plea (with trembling hand in mind)  
Claims his last breath as life sounds its last cheer.

— SANDY MAUCK

## Art: Words and Notes

Raleigh and Spencer and Sidney — these three  
Convey a message through their many lines  
About people, place — types and designs —  
About concepts, ideas that tend to be  
A bit confusing to others and me.  
Words, here — there, give hints to the reader,  
signs  
Which indicate, to some extent, the rhyme  
Meaning in multitude of lines we see.  
The use of keys that many men do write —  
Beethoven, Bach, and Tchaikovsky — men of notes,  
Who wrote descriptive works for human ear,  
Which can be envisioned the darkest nights  
By two lovers, quietly, in their boat.  
The notes become soft, gentle, soothing, clear.

— DAWN L. SWARTZ



## The Thirty-First of April

### FIRST PSALM

The Brazen Bronze Chariot roll  
Across the plains in numbers unaccounted  
Love  
Lies bleeding in a ditch  
Convulsed  
Screaming at the sky  
Sobbing  
Why? Why? Why?  
And Gilead has received  
Its bomb  
Death  
Rides a laughing horse —  
Giddy —  
Robed in Gore  
The sun —  
Hidden in a cloud of gas —  
Is gone  
FOREVER!

### SECOND STANZA

They run and run and run to find  
The kicks  
Amoral—Lacking nothing  
But direction  
Golden,  
Smiling, splendid — and empty.  
And they hide their talents  
From the Master  
And they talk in whispers  
In the night  
Clothed in fashion's foppery,  
And choking on the Scripture  
UNDEFINED!

### THIRD VERSE

Belly distended  
The Poor  
Lie in their millions  
At the doorstep of the Prince  
Crying

Their pain

BEYOND Bearing, and  
Job is loudest in his plea for reason —  
Saying, "Tell me, tell me, tell me."  
But nothing breaks the endless  
endless endless endless

Never ending

SILENCE!

### FOURTH LINE

Their faces lined with care,  
The Baskers in Benevolence  
Smile down  
Hands extended, arm outstretched, repeating  
"Comfort, comfort, comfort, comfort."  
Politicians, Priests, Philanthropists  
and Pimps  
Offering the stolen moment from the ashes of existence,  
Thinking they are  
GOD!

### FIFTH PART

In innocence, the Children laugh  
At Ugliness  
and Fear and  
Kiss the Flowers of the Dawn  
Protesting love —  
The only ones aware of who HE  
IS!

### SIXTH THOUGHT

Holy, Holy, Holy, Holy,  
Hypocrites — Ignorant idolatry,  
Intermingled, intertwined  
Is—Sumptuous sweetness,  
Somnolence, suggesting

Softly

HE was  
JUSTIFIED!

— WILLIAM R. PRICE, JR.

## The Ring

by JOSEPH SCOTT

**T**HIS TALE takes place during World War II.

On a small ship, after a while you get to know just about everything about everybody. I guess that there is nothing that can take the place of a confidence shared under fire or in a stinking hole, when the silence and the loneliness tears at you like no mere scrape of metal could ever do. This story is about one man I'll just call him Karl, who had the courage not only to fight a war, but also fight his own private battle in his mind—against the agony of loneliness.

For six months, Karl and I had shared the same quarters; in a small cubical directly over the main hold of the ship. In the cubical there were two bunks; I slept in the lower, he took the upper. For all that he confided in me, I knew very little about Karl. He was shy, but not withdrawn, was well liked by every member of the ship's company. Karl's prized possession was a ring—a gold signet ring with a large "S." The ring was given to him by his wife as an anniversary present the night before she died, and that was all that Karl would tell me about it. But several times I had seen him give the ring secretive glances; as though he was looking at someone he dearly loved. Karl wore the ring on his left hand, in place of a wedding band, and got extremely angry if anyone spilled something on it. He treated that ring as if it were a living person.

One particular night, as we were nearing the equator, the little cubical

became unbearably hot. We were just returning from convoy duty and had seen a lot of action. Since I was the only pharmacist's mate left on the ship, I was kept busy all day caring for the sick and wounded. When I finally crawled into my bunk, I was dead tired. I had just fallen asleep when I was aware of someone shaking me gently. It was Karl. He said that the captain had told him to switch watches with me so that I could get another four hours sleep. By now I was wide awake, and I told him I was going on deck for a cigarette and would be down in a few minutes. He didn't say a word but just flopped down on my bunk and went straight to sleep. Being the chief navigator, I guess he hadn't had more than six hours sleep in the last thirty-six.

Topside, the air was a little cooler, and I could get away from the sound of the empty oil drums rolling around in the hold. That hold was what only could be described as a classic Hell. No one ventured down there any more, even though the officers complained bitterly about the smell of decayed vegetable matter.

On deck, the view was really beautiful. The moon lit the night like a candle lights a Jack-o-lantern. I was thinking that this did not belong—that this magnificent scene did not fit in with death and agony; war and loneliness. This was a sight to be seen by young lovers; by people who have their lives ahead of them. War

should not be influenced by such a brilliant display of God's creation.

Then I felt a shock beneath my feet, and at the same time heard the rasping crunch of metal biting into metal. Then a sailor running by told me that we had taken a dummy torpedo on the waterline, right above the main hold. I caught my breath in my throat; that was where our bunks were! Immediately rushing through the passageway to where our bunks were, I heard G.Q. being sounded and was dimly aware that I didn't have my helmet or lifejacket on, but that was of no importance now. My first concern was for Karl. When I got there, half the crew was standing around in varying degrees of nakedness, all in helmets and bulky lifejackets. Then the impact of the sight hit me. The dummy torpedo had smashed through the hull exactly where Karl was sleeping. It had carried the bunk clear across the room and crushed it into the bulkhead. The men were staying away

from it as if it were bewitched, and only a few were attending the leak, as the torpedo had plugged up its own hole. Then it occurred to me that I did not see Karl anywhere. The reason was simple and appalling; when the torpedo hit, it tore the bunk off so that it hit top first. Karl, who was sleeping on the bottom bunk, was sandwiched between the top and bottom bunks. We couldn't find a sign of him anywhere, except for his left arm, which stuck out grotesquely from the side of the bunks. I stared at the arm, and focused my gaze in the ring. I slowly pulled it from his finger. Then, going into the ship's office, I got some writing paper and steadily typed a ten page letter to his parents. When I had finished, I stopped and stared at the ring sitting on the table. Through a blur of tears, I thought I saw a woman's face smiling at me. I smiled back because now I knew that Karl would never be lonely again.

## The Answer

I knew an old woman, and we would talk  
Of things, and love, and God.  
One day, we talked of things and  
As we talked, she said to me,  
"Believe in the things around you,  
for they are the only things that can make you happy."  
And I went home and thought this out.

One day we talked of love and  
As we talked she said to me,  
"Believe in love, for love is the only thing that can  
make you believe in the things around you."  
And I went home and decided she was right.

One day we talked of God and  
As we talked she said to me,  
"Believe in God, for He is the only one that can  
make you believe in things and love."  
And I went home, and I did,  
And now I am happy.

— JOSEPH SCOTT

## A Sonnet

The road of life is narrow, long and steep.  
A lonesome path resists my weary steps;  
I cannot run my over-slowing feet.  
Upon this race I will not chance to bet.  
Am I, so young, grown old within my youth?  
What is it that I hasten to but death?  
Is this, my soul, the answer now in truth;  
My door bears soon the cold and blackened wreath?  
Envision then, mine eyes, the ans-ring sight—  
The ground with grass of blue is gently grown,  
And leaves of red drift through the coming night;  
Here, too, I see a darkened marble stone.  
Upon this stone you find my name inscribed,  
Please stand, my friend, and weep where I do lie.

— POLLY YOUNG

## The Rayon Dress

She was so small—so frail.  
Her blond hair clung, straight and  
thin to her white cheeks.  
Big blue eyes stared at the world.  
Her dress was of a sea-blue rayon.  
Perhaps, years past, it had been some  
child's party dress.  
Now, though . . . now, it was old,  
And it hung limply on the child.  
She was perhaps two years old.  
Those two years—always the poverty.  
Always on the outside, looking in.  
In at well-dressed, pink-cheeked  
children.  
In at well-fed adults.  
And she hears this other world, talking.  
"I'm really mad. No money this year for  
a vacation."  
"Mommy, buy me a toy. I didn't get one  
last time."  
And she doesn't understand.  
So now she stands in the dime store,  
waiting for her mother.  
Her hands are pressed to the window.  
And she stares out at that other world.  
As I stare back at her, I remember that  
there must be rich, that there must  
be poor.  
I realize this. I understand and I  
accept.  
But I must not see the children,  
with their huge, empty eyes, and their  
skinny bodies.  
If I am to remain complacent,  
I must not see the children.

— SHARON ISENBERG

## I Loved

I loved, and  
I wanted to give my heart, but she wouldn't let me.  
She refused my heart and I mourned  
Because I loved.

She was my life, and my heart was not mine;  
It was her's.  
She did not want it and I wept  
Because I loved.

She was my love and my love was my life and  
I died,  
Because I loved.

— L. JOSEPH SCOTT

## The Apparition

I looked around and I climbed the mountain.  
At the top, I looked down into the city and the  
valley below and saw her.  
She was standing in front of me, not smiling.  
She did not look at me.  
I saw her but I did not feel her presence.

I looked away and she was gone.  
And I looked again to the city and I saw the tall  
buildings and the churches with their spires and her.  
She was farther away and now she saw me, looking back.  
I reached for her, because now I could feel her presence.  
But, it was too late, and I fell.  
She cried, because she loved me,  
But now I was dead, and it was too late.

She looked at the city and the river and the mountain  
And me.  
I know she loved me; I loved her  
Too late.

— LAURENCE JOSEPH SCOTT

## Two Soldiers

A great battle had taken place, and the field lay  
strewn with the dead.  
The old lay mingled with the young in the midst of  
death's stupor.  
And God looked over the field and saw the brave,  
and the meek, all of them dead.  
And God chose two; an old soldier with many years of  
service, and a young buck, a green recruit.

God asked the old man, "What do you fear?"  
And he replied, "Sir, I fear death."  
God asked the young boy, "What is your fear?"  
And he answered, "I fear nothing."

And God laughed, and called the two together.  
God said, "You two soldiers have both been in battle.  
Tell me, old man, how many men have you sent to  
eternity?"

"Forty-one," was the reply.

"And you," said God to the young recruit, "how many men  
have you killed?"

"None, sir," said the boy, "my first battle was today.  
Ah, but I tried, sir, but if it wasn't for that. . ."

"Hah!" laughed God, "So you tried."  
God said to the old man, "Do not be afraid. You do not  
really fear death, you merely fear judgement.  
You fear for your soul because you have killed.  
And you killed to prevent yourself from being killed.  
You will get all that you deserve.

"But you, young man; you say you do not fear death.  
Do you fear judgement?  
You lay on that field with your life's blood pouring  
from every orifice in your body,  
And you prayed for death.

I granted that wish, and now you say that you do not  
fear for your soul?

. . . But, no . . . I am bad tempered today.

You are young yet, and age has not tempered your thoughts  
or wizened your actions.

You are the brave, reckless, and stormy youth —  
you will get all that you deserve.

And now, comes the judgement; it is just, because My  
decisions are undisputable.  
Old man, you have spent your days serving your nation, and  
I guess you have served well.  
And young man, you have also served the short span of  
your life dedicated to the killing of men.  
While you were on Earth, you fought as equals, died as equals,  
and killed as equals.

And so for the rest of the glorious eternity,  
You will exist as equals —  
In the pits of Hell.”

— L. J. SCOTT

### The River

It lies, quiet now.  
Blue—a hidden, dark secret color.  
It moves silently, dutifully.  
Suddenly—Turmoil! Disruption!  
It has encountered a force equal  
unto itself.  
An island—a green, determined  
island.  
And it must fight.  
It must not let the island  
interfere with its life, its duty.  
The river lies very still,  
Thinking.  
Then . . . a problem met, an  
answer found . . .  
And the river again flows,  
dutifully, peacefully.  
It flows around the island,  
Observing it, acknowledging its  
presence.  
Yet . . . learning to cope with this  
invader, this intruder.  
Learning to accept.  
To respect . . . but not to yield.  
Just to accept.

— SHARON ISENBERG

## Date Night

by DORIS JEAN GERINGER

I DRESSED LEISURELY—floating on a  
cloud. Psst went the perfume bottle:  
a sweet aroma filled the room. One  
last glance in the mirror reassured  
me—a slender girl with light brown  
hair, eyes glowing blue in the hot  
light—I looked my best.

The clock ticked seconds. He'll  
soon be here. The photograph smiled  
at me: black hair, eyes as dark as  
night—Peter.

I ran lightly downstairs when the  
car pulled up.

“Hello.”

“Hi, ready to go?”, asked the deep  
voice.

The air outside whispered to us.  
The moon smiled down. The world  
was perfect.

We danced the jazz beat. The  
hamburgs tasted good. The gang  
chattered noisily and waved.

“Having fun?”

“Of course, it's a grand night,  
Peter.”

“How about the second show at  
the theater?” His dark eyes crinkled  
into a smile.

I nodded and curls were disar-  
ranged. But I didn't care—Peter  
wouldn't mind.

We entered the deep silence. Then  
brilliant color flashed before us. The  
show began.

“Oh, Pete, what fun!”, I bubbled  
with pleasure.

Then “The End” exploded on the  
screen. Lights interrupted the dark-  
ness. People hunched into their coats.

“Like it? I thought it was good.”  
Peter said.

“Sharp,” I agreed.

“Let's go to the party at Anne's;  
It's not late.”

“Fine.” The stars sped by as I  
looked. I wondered why they hurried.

Pizza, loud records, kids—we were  
at the party.

“Hi y'all, come on in”, drawled  
the hostess.

My skirt whirled around my knees.  
I laughed in happy excitement. Peter  
spun me around to the rhythm.

“What a dancer you are!” He  
shouted above the roar.

“Thanks awfully.”

The time was late—we had to go.  
Peter drove the car slowly. The  
radio blared a pop tune.

“I had a wonderful time, Peter.  
Thanks so much.”

“Oh, sure. See you again.”

I counted the steps going to my  
room. “Fourteen, fifteen, there!” I  
skipped sixteen—it was the squeaky  
one.

“Night, Mums. Oh yes, just a  
marvelous time.”

I slipped out of the green dress. I  
whispered goodnight to the smiling  
picture on the table.

“Jo—Jo! Are you deaf, girl? Jo,  
are you there?”

I started. “Oh, yes, Mums.”

“Jo, it's time for your medicine.”

“Yes, I'm coming.”

I sighed as I felt my fingers touch  
the cold steel. Slowly, I wheeled the  
chair toward the kitchen.

# Uncle Sammy

*A Play in Three Acts*

By

WILLIAM PRICE

## THE CAST

(In the order of Speaking Appearance)

UNCLE SAMMY  
MATILDA SIMPSON ..... his secretary  
BATES ..... his assistant  
JOHNSON & JOHNSON ..... Negro janitor  
TOUR GUIDE  
1st. TOURIST  
2nd. TOURIST  
RALPH ZIMMERMAN ..... Uncle Sam's great-grandson  
ILYA ..... Representative from Russia  
FRANCOIS ..... Representative from France  
HEATHER WILLCOX ..... A reporter from the "Times"  
MARTHA ..... Sam's maid  
SPEAKER ..... announces guests at the White House Ball  
BUTLER ..... at the Ball

(*Non-speaking cast*)

Crowd of tourists  
Bagel the Beagle ..... Sam's dog  
Crowd of ladies and gentlemen at the Ball

January 1, 1966

ACT I. Curtain Rises.

SCENE 1. (Uncle Sammy's office)

(Sam seated at desk, stage right, talking on telephone)

SAM: Now listen Hubert, who the Hell is running this show anyway?

(Pause) Look, I know DeGaulle is a stubborn old fool, but you've got to try to reason with him. (Pause) Look, I haven't been holding this job for nearly two hundred years and not learned something about the way his kind think. Take my advice, tell the old boy we'll give him a present, like . . . uh . . . like Algeria or something. (Pause) Well, do the best you can. (Hangs up the phone and clicks on intercom) Matilda, could you come in here a minute.

(Matilda enters left, slinks across stage, stops in front of desk, sits down, crosses her legs, and speaks in a low, throaty voice. )

MATILDA: Yes, Sam?

SAM: Why the Hell don't you wear your dresses shorter?

MATILDA: Why Sam . . . does it bother you?

SAM: You know it bothers me! I'm still young enough to appreciate fine female anatomy, so from now on, please shorten your hemlines . . . otherwise, this old world is going to go straight to Hell some afternoon.

MATILDA: Yes, Sam.

SAM: Now, where was I?

MATILDA: You were outlining our foreign policy towards Red China.

SAM: Oh, yes . . . what was my last line?

MATILDA: (Reads from pad) And; in matters of grave concern, we feel that Red China should be consulted whenever their compliance is felt to be necessary.

SAM: Well, that's good enough. Just sign my name and send copies to the Senate and House . . . oh, you had better have it mimeographed and taken up to the U.N. too.

(Bates comes in. He's in a rush)

BATES: (Gasping for breath) Chief, (Gasp) Chief . . . we just lost Africa!

SAM: We what??

BATES: We . . . we lost Africa.

SAM: Oh, this is terrible! How did we manage to lose it?

BATES: Eh, well, we lost it in the files—the IBM went nuts and threw cards all over Hell. We gathered them up, but I couldn't find Africa.

SAM: (Visibly relieved) Well . . . for a minute there you really had me going. We have duplicate cards don't we?

BATES: UH, I don't know.

SAM: Well, it's your business to know. Matilda, will tell you where they are.

MATILDA: They're in my office.

BATES: (Relieved) Well, excuse me. Sorry to bother you, Chief . . . excuse me . . . (Rushes out).

SAM: That fellow will be the death of me yet.

MATILDA: Ah, I thought I was going to get that privilege.

SAM: You may girl, you may. What time is it?

MATILDA: It's nearly five, time to go home. . . I'll see you later boss. (She gets up and wiggles out, Sam watches her.)

(Enter Johnson and Johnson).

JJ: Hello, Mistuh Sam.

SAM: J.J. . . why the Hell don't you drop that hokey accent, this isn't 1860.

JJ: Yes, Sir . . . just like to keep the head folks happy.

SAM: There's something that has been bothering me, J.J. What is a guy with your education doing in a job like this?

JJ: I haven't been freed yet.

SAM: Oh, come on. . . I freed you only last week.

JJ: Yes suh, but my Ph.D. isn't any good.

SAM: Where did you get it?

JJ: Harvard.

SAM: Oh, that explains everything.

(re-enter Matilda)

MATILDA: Sam, there are a couple of things I have to take care of yet, so I'll be around for awhile in case you need me.

SAM: All right. (She exits)

JJ: Boss, look sharp, here come some tourists.

(Sam freezes behind desk)

(Enter a group of tourists, led by a guide)

GUIDE: This is the UNCLE SAM exhibit. This character was chosen some years ago to represent the American nation. This likeness is found in political cartoons, magazines, newspapers and other publications; as well as television and motion pictures.

(Group starts to leave, two tourists remain behind)

1st. TOUR: I swear I saw him move.

2nd. TOUR: Ah, go on . . . He ain't moving.

1st. TOUR: (Pointing at Sam) I tell you, he moved!

2nd. TOUR: He's just a wax figure, or a mannikin or somethin'.

1st. TOUR: Maybe he's animated with gears inside or something?

2nd. TOUR: Let's get out of here before we get in trouble.

1st. TOUR: Oh, all right, but I still say he moved! (They leave).

SAM: (Relaxing) God, those people are enough to drive me nuts. For two hundred years I've had to be in the public eye and pretend to be a dummy. It is starting to get on my nerves.

JJ: Why do you have to hide from them?

SAM: If the people knew I existed, and that I run this whole show, they would really be upset. Remember, J.J., I'm not elected to this job. I just sit here day after day and tell the President, the Congress and everybody else what's to be done.

JJ: It is too bad that people aren't allowed to know you exist.

SAM: I prefer to be like Santa Claus . . . heard, but not seen. I have little enough privacy as it is.

(enter Matilda)

MATILDA: There's been a phone call for you . . . from a reporter.

SAM: What? What reporter? Reporters aren't supposed to know about me. Where'd he get the phone number?

MATILDA: First of all, it's a she—not a HE. The name is Heather Willcox. She's from the "TIMES."

SAM: Hell, Matilda . . . you know I can't see a reporter. Why, the whole world would know in five minutes that there really is an "Uncle Sam."

MATILDA: I can't get her off the phone, Sam. I've tried every way I know how, but she won't budge. She picked up a slip at the White House press office and decided to do some research on the matter. That's how she came up with our phone number. What should I do?

SAM: Do? Tell her that she has the wrong number!

MATILDA: Chief, she says if she doesn't get in touch with you she is going to "Quote" raise one Hell of a fuss on the editorial page, "Unquote."

SAM: All right, all right! Dammit! Why can't the White House people keep their mouths shut! Tell her I'll see her at 8:00 tomorrow night at my place for dinner!

MATILDA: (Very mad) Yes, Sir Mr. Sam. Anything else, Mr. Sam?

SAM: Oh, now Matilda . . . don't get upset. Everything will be above board. I've just an idea that I can get her to shut up much easier in more pleasant surroundings.

MATILDA: All right, I'll tell her!

SAM: I'd like to get out of here now and go home!

MATILDA: Oh yes, I almost forgot—there's a gentleman outside to see you (very attractive too!)

SAM: Who is he?

MATILDA: He says he's your nephew!

SAM: Matilda, everybody is my nephew. He is probably some nut who wants to get in here and plant a bomb in the "exhibit."

MATILDA: Sam, your descendents are named Zimmerman aren't they?

SAM: Yes, but . . .

MATILDA: And your name was Zimmer wasn't it?

SAM: Yes, but . . .

MATILDA: Well, his name is Zimmerman, and he says to mention the name "Gertrude." Does that mean anything to you?

SAM: Gertrude? Gertrude—Gertrude Zimmerman . . . Good Heavens, yes—he is my nephew—send him in.

MATILDA: Yes, boss, I'll send him in. (She starts to leave).

SAM: All right. You can go J.J., this place is clean enough.

JJ: O.K. — goodnight Sam. (He follows Matilda out) (Ralph Zimmerman enters, rather hesitantly)

RALPH: Uncle . . . Uncle Samuel?

SAM: Yes, my boy! (Sam rises and comes from behind desk)

RALPH: (Extends hand) I'm Ralph Zimmerman, Gertrude's son.

SAM: Oh my God! You're Ralph — The last time I saw Gertrude you weren't even born yet.

RALPH: Yes, well she said she hadn't seen you in thirty years.

SAM: Has it been that long?

RALPH: Afraid so — you look kinda strange in that costume.

SAM: Costume? Oh yes, well I have to wear it during working hours. Necessary evil and all that sort of thing — Sit down, sit down er-Ralph — is that your name?

RALPH: Yes Sir.

SAM: Well, what are you doing here?

RALPH: I live in Washington, Sir.

SAM: What do you do?

RALPH: I work for the State Department. I'm an investigator.

SAM: Well, that's nice. Oh, pardon me—but why are you staring

RALPH: I'm sorry, but I just can't believe you're really Uncle Sam—right here in the flesh.

SAM: Well, it affects most people that way the first time.

RALPH: Uh, Uncle . . . may I call you Uncle . . . ?

SAM: By all means—from you I don't mind it.

RALPH: Uncle, how old are you?

SAM: If I told you you wouldn't believe me.

RALPH: Well, try me.

SAM: I'm two-hundred and fifty one years old.

RALPH: But . . . but that's impossible.

SAM: Yes it is, but I am.

RALPH: But, but how?

SAM: My Boy, I'm a biological freak. I've aged very little—especially in appearance since I was thirty-five. Oh, I look much older than that in this get up—but that's make-up. I've had doctors examine me, and they don't know what it is that keeps me from aging. There seems to be some substance almost completely absent in my cells that is found in other human beings. When it was discovered back in 1770 that I wasn't aging, it made quite a news story, then, just as it would now. In 1776, George and I—(I mean George Washington of course,) worked up a little scheme where I would become the representation of young virile America, and I've been around ever since. Oh, I didn't become "Uncle Sam" until years later, but I was around doing my bit for the Nation.

RALPH: Well, I guess that explains it. But, tell me . . . you must have a great deal of money?

SAM: Oh yes, I've got billions, but I let other people worry about it.

RALPH: Have you ever been married?

SAM: Son, I guess your mother didn't tell you, but if I hadn't been married you wouldn't be here. Yes, I've been married ten or twelve times, but it never worked out. You see, when my wives discovered that they were aging but I wasn't . . . well, it was very upsetting to them. So, whenever that happened, I just managed to stake a little accident someplace and get killed then, I would just disappear.

RALPH: You must lead a very interesting life.

SAM: Yes, I'm buried in ten or twelve states.

RALPH: Say, that's good! (laugh) (They both laugh).

SAM: I must say, being eternally young has its advantages. I've never been able to keep in touch with any of my wives, but I have with some of my children, most of them indirectly, of course. Your mother is the daughter of my last wife.

RALPH: I didn't know that.

SAM: That's because most of my children keep quiet about it. How is Gertrude?

RALPH: Oh, getting along pretty good. They live in Long Island now.

SAM: Nice place . . . I haven't been there for at least fifty years, but I still remember it as quite beautiful. Now . . . what can I do for you.

RALPH: (Embarrassed) Well, actually nothing . . . I just wanted to come and see you.

SAM: To see if I really existed?

RALPH: Yes, yes, I guess that's it.

SAM: There must be something I can do for you. After all, you're really my grandson.

RALPH: Well, there is one thing . . .

SAM: AT HA . . . I thought so . . . well, what is it? Speak up.

RALPH: Well . . . uh . . . you could introduce me to your very attractive secretary . . . that is, if she's not married.

SAM: Matilda . . . no, she's not married . . . not even a little bit. I'm not even sure if she's house-broken. Sure . . . you might even be doing me a favor. I'm beginning to feel the need of a new secretary; women have a way of getting in your hair after awhile . . . then they start trying to run your life. Uh . . . is there anything else?

RALPH: Well . . . there is one other thing I've been wondering about, if you don't mind telling me, you're Jewish aren't you?

SAM: Yes, my boy.

RALPH: Then, how is it that the American public, being mostly white Christians, have a Jewish uncle?

SAM: They are not aware that I'm Jewish.

RALPH: But . . . don't you think they would be rather upset if they did know?

SAM: But Ralph . . . everybody knows we Jews really run the world . . . (He laughs, Ralph laughs . . . they go off laughing together).

CURTAIN: Act 1 Scene 1

CURTAIN: Act 1 Scene 2

TIME: Next day.

SET: Sam's office . . . Sam again at desk, Matilda sitting in chair.

SAM: Well, did you have a good time last night?

MATILDA: Yes, Sir.

SAM: What's the matter?

MATILDA: Ralph told me about that crack you made.

SAM: What crack?

MATILDA: About me not being "house-broken."

SAM: Oh really . . . well, are you?

MATILDA: I don't leave puddles on the rug like that idiot dog of yours!

SAM: Now, now, now Matilda, I wasn't referring to your domesticity. I had in mind the fact that you're not married yet. And, you're nearly twenty-eight.

MATILDA: So what? Maybe I haven't met the right man yet.

SAM: Ralph seems like a right sort of man.

MATILDA: Are you trying to pressure me?

SAM: No . . . No, I just said that he seems nice.

MATILDA: Just in case you're interested, we have another date tonight.

SAM: Well, since you two seem to like each other I guess I can do you a favor.



MATILDA: Gee, thanks.

SAM: Now wait a minute. I was going to get you two an invitation to the White House ball.

MATILDA: Oh, Sam! That would be wonderful! I'm sorry I acted the way I did. Will you forgive me?

SAM: Only on one condition . . . that you two go to the Ball!

MATILDA: and . . . oh my!

SAM: Now what's wrong?

MATILDA: I'll have to get a new dress! And . . . Oh, Sam, I have some sick leave left, may I have the afternoon off? Please? ?

SAM: What is on the schedule for this afternoon?

MATILDA: Just your meeting with those two representatives.

SAM: From France and Russia?

MATILDA: Yes. Oh please, Sam, can I have off? Bates could watch the outer office for you.

SAM: Well . . . all right.

MATILDA: Oh, thank you, Sam! You're a dear!

SAM: No, I'm a bunny rabbit.

MATILDA: Anyway, you're sweet.

SAM: Yeah, just like sucaryl.

MATILDA: I'll be back in a minute. (She leaves.)

SAM: (Picks up phone, dials, waits) Hello . . . hello, Lyndon. What the Hell is going on over there? (Pause) No, no, I mean in your press office? Somebody let it leak out that there really is an Uncle Sam, and now some broad from the "Times" is hounding me down. (Pause) Yes, her name is Willcox. (Pause) I've made arrangements to see her tonight at my place. I'm going to try to get her to keep her mouth shut. (Pause) Well, I think some better security measures should be installed over there. Tell Lucy that the "hotline" is no place to have intimate conversations . . . It is just what it sounds like . . . a hotline, for use in crisis only. Has she had any lately? (Pause) Well, I'll see you later. Say hello to Lady Bird for me. Goodbye. (He hangs up phone) (Matilda enters)

MATILDA: Boss, the representatives are here.

SAM: Give me a moment, then send them in.

MATILDA: Yes, Sam. One more thing before I leave . . . Miss Willcox called. I gave her your address.

SAM: Good. She had better be there at 8:00 sharp, or she'll never see me.

MATILDA: Bye sam . . . I'm going shopping.

SAM: All right. Have a nice time.

(She leaves. Sam arranges his desk, then, sits back. The two representatives enter)

ILYA: Good afternoon, Mr. Sam.

FRANCOIS: *Bonjour, Monsieur Sam.*

SAM: (Sam rises) Hello Ilya . . . sit down . . . care for a drink?

ILYA: No thank you.

FRANCOIS: Yes, please.

SAM: (Goes to liquor cabinet) Champagne all right?

FRANCOIS: *Qui, tres bien.*

SAM: It is the only kind of booze that I can tolerate. (Fixes drinks, gives one to Francois, then returns to his seat.) Now, what may I do for you gentlemen?

ILYA: We are here because of Red China again.

SAM: About their admittance to the U.N. . . right?

FRANCOIS: Yes, we feel that it is imperative that . . .

SAM: Excuse me gentlemen, but you are wasting your time.

ILYA: But, with your great influence, you could . . .

SAM: I'm sorry, but you already know how I feel about Red China. When they learn how to live with the rest of the world, then, and only then will I consider their case.

FRANCOIS: But they would bring great power and wealth to the United Nations.

SAM: You might as well give up.

ILYA: Is this your final answer?

SAM: Of course!

ILYA: Then, we will continue to work for their acceptance without your support.

SAM: Well, good luck to you. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have more important things to attend to. Good day gentlemen.

(They stomp out.) (Sam clicks on intercom) Bates, please come in here.

BATES: Yes, Chief?

SAM: Did the Bobbsey Twins go quietly?

BATES: They didn't say a word to me, Chief.

SAM: Bates, would you do me a favor?

BATES: Sure, Chief. What is it?

SAM: Stop calling me Chief. I'm not an Indian.

BATES: Yes, Chief . . . whoops, I mean Sam.

SAM: Now, would you bring Bagel in?

BATES: Yes, Sir. (He starts to leave)

SAM: And Bates, take over for today. I'm going to take Bagel for a walk down Pennsylvania Avenue and cause a few traffic accidents.

BATES: Yes, Sir.

SAM: I have a dinner date tonight, so I'm going home early. I'll see you tomorrow.

BATES: Yes, Sir. (He leaves and returns with Bagel the Beagle)

(Sam takes chain in hand)

SAM: One more thing . . . if anybody calls, tell them I've gone off to pose for a cartoon or something. (Sam leaves, Bates goes to office)

CURTAIN FOR ACT ONE.

ACT TWO, Scene 1

TIME: That evening.

SET: Sam's penthouse apartment.

(He is a changed man. Dressed in evening clothes, his greying black hair neatly combed. His false beard has been removed. He lounges on the couch with drink in hand. The doorbell rings. He stands, puts drink on table and crosses to door).

SAM: (Opens door) Come in.

HEATHER: (She enters) Hello, I'm Heather Willcox. Is this Uncle Sam's?

SAM: Uncle What, ma'am?

HEATHER: Sam—Uncle Sam.

SAM: No one with that name lives here.

HEATHER: Oh, I'm sorry. I must have the wrong apartment. I'll try to find the right one. (She starts to leave)

SAM: (Struck by her beauty) No, wait — don't go.

HEATHER: Why not?

SAM: Well, I would like to explain something.

HEATHER: What is it?

SAM: I've been playing a little joke on you.

HEATHER: You have?

SAM: Yes . . . you see, I'm Uncle Sam.

HEATHER: You're what . . . Oh, come on. Now I know you're kidding me. Please, I must be going.

SAM: No, please . . . let me explain. You see, there is no Uncle Sam. He is just a fictional character. However, I am Uncle Sam, or rather, I should say, I'm an actor who portrays Uncle Sam. My job is to appear at different State functions in costume and to pose for photographs. Please, won't you come in and let me explain further . . . ?

HEATHER: Well . . . all right, but I must say, I'm not feeling very happy about this. I'm afraid that someone has taken rather unfair advantage of me. After all, it is a reporter's nature to be inquisitive.

SAM: You're the best looking reporter that I've ever seen.

HEATHER: Flattery will get you nothing.

SAM: But, Miss Willcox, you owe me as much of an explanation as I owe you.

HEATHER: Since you put it that way, I guess I do.

SAM: Care for a drink?

HEATHER: Yes, thank you. Scotch please.

SAM: Well . . . you certainly like them strong.

HEATHER: And that's the way I prefer my men—strong and silent.

SAM: Water or soda?

HEATHER: Straight.

SAM: Now that's what I call hitting the nail on the head.

HEATHER: Yes, I usually find that just one will last the whole night.

SAM: Let me take your wrap. Have a seat.

HEATHER: Thank you. From the looks of that table you certainly know how to eat.

SAM: It's one of my weaknesses. I do all my own cooking. Something I learned in France during the last century.

HEATHER: What did you say?

SAM: Er . . . uh . . . during the last war in France when I was stationed there in the occupation. (Finishes getting her drink, returns, sits on chair opposite her.) Now Miss Willcox, what brings you here?

HEATHER: I came here looking for Uncle Sam . . . instead I found you. I was at the White House the other day and I heard someone say something like, "yes, there really is an Uncle Sam." That's like saying there really is an Easter Bunny, but being a child at heart, I decided to check it out. I came up with a telephone number, and you know the rest of the story. I thought it would make a very interesting article for my paper.

SAM: My secretary says you're very persuasive over the phone.

HEATHER: It's one of my more endearing qualities. By the way, what is your name?

SAM: My name is Samuel Zimmer, but you can call me Sam.

HEATHER: Isn't that unusual—having the name Sam, and playing the part of Uncle Sam?

SAM: No, just a silly little coincidence.

HEATHER: How did you get involved in his thing?

SAM: Miss Willcox, I have a perfectly delicious dinner spread on the table for us. And I didn't have any lunch today. So, if you don't mind, let's eat first and talk later. All right?

HEATHER: All right Mr. Zimmer.

SAM: Call me Sam.

HEATHER: All right, Sam.

(They go to the table, he seats her, they begin to eat.)

HEATHER: Ummmm, this is very good.

SAM: Thank you Miss Willcox . . . it is Miss, isn't it?

HEATHER: Yes . . . it's Miss . . . it's Miss . . . but I would rather you call me Heather.

SAM: Heather . . . that's a beautiful name. Were your parents Irish?

HEATHER: No, Jewish. (Sam chokes on his food) Oh . . . oh my . . . are you all right? (She starts to pound him on the back.) I'll get you some water.

SAM: No . . . no . . . not water . . . whisky . . . in . . . in cabinet.

HEATHER: (She goes and gets him a glass of whiskey) Here, drink this.

SAM: (Drinks) tha . . . Thank you!

HEATHER: What happened?

SAM: I must have swallowed something the wrong way. Sort of like trying to eat a bagel while standing on your hands.

HEATHER: Bagel? Are you Jewish too.

SAM: With my name and nose as prominent as they are . . . is there any question?

HEATHER: Well I . . .

SAM: Look, let's sit down and relax for awhile. I have some wonderful champagne here.

HEATHER: Oh, I don't think I . . .

SAM: Now, I'm going to tell you my full story.

HEATHER: Well, O.K.

SAM: (Goes to get drinks and brings them to couch) To begin with, I started all this business about three years ago. I . . .

HEATHER: Excuse me, but I should get my notepad (Starts to rise)

SAM: Please . . . don't bother. My story is so brief that you should be able to remember it.

HEATHER: Well, all right.

SAM: First of all, about three years ago some nut got the idea of having someone actually portray Uncle Sam. These people in the government are kinda weird at times. Anyway, they auditioned several actors, me among them, and I got the job.

HEATHER: It's funny that I didn't hear about it.

SAM: It was never written up for news release. It was kept hush-hush. As a matter of fact, you may still have trouble getting clearance to write the story. I don't know why it was kept so quiet. Anyway, my job is to pose for magazines, books, ads and so forth. I also have to pose at a special exhibit at the State Department. I'm there Monday through Saturday from 9:00 to 5:00. That's just about it. Here, let me get you another drink.

HEATHER: Oh, I shouldn't really.

SAM: Come on . . . one more won't hurt you. (He takes her glass and refills it).

HEATHER: How much does you job pay?

SAM: Let's see . . . oh, roughly . . . about ten thousand a year.

HEATHER: That's not much when you consider the role you're playing. Why, this apartment alone looks like it would cost you that much a month.

SAM: I didn't take the job for the money. I took it just for the sake of playing the role; after all, not everybody gets to be UNCLE SAM. (He laughs). To be truthful, which always hurts, I was a poor little rich boy, so I don't really need the money. Heather . . . I've been meaning to ask you . . . how did your parents happen to give you an Irish sounding name?

HEATHER: My parents were refugees from Hitler. They lived in Ireland for about three months during the war before they managed to get over here. My Dad was a little kooky about the place, hence, my name is Heather.

SAM: Have another drink.

HEATHER: (Starting to be affected by the booze) Oh, I don't think I should have another . . .

SAM: Just one more, please . . . I hate to drink alone.

HEATHER: O.K.

SAM: Good girl (refills her glass) Listen, Heather . . . I know a great place to go dancing . . . would you like to go?

HEATHER: Well, really Slam . . . I mean Sam . . . we hardly know each other. I mean we . . .

SAM: Come on Heather . . . please! I really like you and I'd like a chance to know you better.

HEATHER: O.K. But we can't stay too late 'cause I should get home at a fairly decent hour. I have to go to work in the morning and type this story up.

SAM: Great! (Gets her wrap, they start for the door . . . nearly to it when) Heather, you go out and punch up the elevator . . . there's something I forgot. (She goes through the door. He comes back and picks up the phone, dials, waits a moment.) Hello, Bates. Find out everything you can about a girl named Heather Willcox who works for the "Times" and have a report here at my apartment by no later than seven tomorrow morning. All right. See you then. (Hangs up the phone, crosses and out door.)

CURTAIN for ACT TWO, Scene 1.

ACT TWO, Scene 2.

TIME: Later the same night.

SET: Sam's apartment.

(Door to Sam's apartment bursts open. Sam carries Heather across the threshold, staggers to the center of the room and starts dancing around and singing.)

SAM: Hava naglia, Hava naglia . . . la, la, la,

HEATHER: (Laughing) Oh, Sam . . . stop! stop!

SAM: (Keeps singing, finally stops, carries her to couch and sits down with her on his lap.)

HEATHER: Sam, you're mad . . . completely mad!

SAM: Yes my love. Would you care for some chicken soup? I make very good chicken soup.

HEATHER: (Laughing) Sam, you're nuts!

SAM: The Chicken Soup, it is good for everything . . . for the broken legs, busted heads and for hangnails. It is the balm of the ages. (Nuzzles her)

HEATHER: Ohhhh! Please stop it! What a nut you are!

SAM: (Gets up, dumps her very gently on couch) Fix you a drink my little chickadee? Oh, Madame . . . I hav zee verry best en Champagne. C'est terrible. Alcoholics, vous comprenez, n'est ce pas?

HEATHER: I don't know if I ken drink anymore, Sammy.

SAM: Oh, but yes, Mademoiselle. You hav to. It iz to zellabrate the meeting of two people we know very well . . . us!

HEATHER: Sammy . . . I'm so tired . . . I think I'm falling asleep. I better go home.

SAM: But, Heather, you must have one for the road, as Frankie says.

HEATHER: Frankie who?

SAM: Frankie Swartz.

HEATHER: (Laughing) You know the more I drink, the funnier you get.

SAM: Yeah . . . you oughta see me after two fifths . . . I make Laurel and Hardy look like Martin and Lewis.

HEATHER: I'm so sleepy.

SAM: Well, then a night-cap is in order (gets her another drink) Here, this is to us. (Raises his glass in toast fashion) and to all the Jews in high places . . . the Empire State building, Washington Monument and twelve martinis up on a bar stool. Down the hatch.

HEATHER: I'll just closes my eyes for just a minit, then I'll go home. (She closes her eyes, drops her glass, and passes completely out.)

SAM: (He looks at her a moment) Well, Miss Willcox, I must say that you fought a good fight . . . but you have lost. The last person to out-drink me was Aaron Burr . . . and it didn't do him much good either. (Goes to her, picks her up in his arms and carries her into the bedroom, returns and presses intercom) Martha . . . could you come in here a minute?

MARTHA: (Enters) Yes, Sam?

SAM: There is a body in there . . . undress it and cover it for the night. I'm sleeping out here.

MARTHA: Yes sir. Oh, Mr. Bates called and said that he would have that report you wanted by 6:30 tomorrow morning.

SAM: Thank you, Martha . . . as soon as you attend to her I'll be bedding down. Would you please call me at 7:00. I want to be up and around before she wakes up.

MARTHA: Yes, Sir. (She goes into the bedroom, Sam turns on the radio and sits on the couch, toys with the drink while humming with the music)

(Martha returns) That certainly is a beautiful lady you have in there.

SAM: Unfortunately, I haven't had the opportunity of viewing her as well as you have.

MARTHA: Well, I'm going to bed. Will there be anything else?

SAM: No, not tonight. I'd like a big breakfast for two about 10:30 tomorrow morning. I doubt if she'll be up and around before that. Oh, you had better call her office about eight and tell them she won't be in . . . say she is sick or something.

MARTHA: But, Sam, she's not sick. I don't like to lie . . . not even for you.

SAM: Martha, after what she had to drink tonight, I guarantee that she'll be sick in the morning. One more thing before you go . . . you had better have my stand-in report in the morning. I'm not going to be able to make it either.

MARTHA: Do I detect a note of romance in your eye?

SAM: You know you're the only girl I'll ever love.

MARTHA: Oh, go on, Sam. I'm old enough to be your Grandmother.

SAM: You wouldn't want to bet on that would you?

MARTHA: Huh?

SAM: Never mind. Now, go to bed before I pass out. I've got to get some sleep . . . I'm not as young as I used to be.

MARTHA: Yes, Sam. Goodnight. (She leaves)

SAM: (Goes to the couch, sits, picks up drink, holds it up in front of him) A toast to Heather Willcox . . . soon to be Heather Zimmer . . . hmmm . . . sounds very good. Well, goodnight America . . . wherever you are.

CURTAN for ACT TWO, Scene 2.

### ACT THREE, Scene 1.

TIME: The next morning.

SET: Sam's apartment.

(Sam dressed in robe and slippers, lounging in chair reading report)  
(Heather enters with blanket wrapped around her)

HEATHER: Where are my clothes?

SAM: Oh, good morning Darling!

HEATHER: Where are my clothes?

SAM: Oh, scattered around somewhere.

HEATHER: What do you mean, "scattered around." What happened last night? You didn't . . . ? We didn't . . . ?

SAM: Yes, Darling . . . we did . . . and you were wonderful.

HEATHER: (Sits slowly in chair—bewildered) Oh my. Oh my! What am I going to do . . . my reputation . . . everything . . . If I had known this was going to happen I would never have come here. You . . . you must think I'm easy.

SAM: On the contrary, I think you are splendid. Of course, the only thing we can do now is get married.

HEATHER: But we hardly know each other . . . I mean . . . I guess we do now . . . but . . . oh, I don't know what I mean.

SAM: Now, now . . . there is nothing to get upset about . . . it happens in the best of circles—even in Congress.

HEATHER: But, how can you even think of marrying a girl like me . . . after what has happened?

SAM: (Sam gets up and crosses over to her)

Because, Heather . . . I'm in love with you . . . so much in love that I'll never be able to get you out of my system.

HEATHER: But, Sam...we can't get married. There's my job...my position. I can't give up all that I've worked for—at the drop of a hat.

SAM: You don't have to give up everything. You can keep on working if you want to. Everything will be just as before...rather, uh...before last night...except that you'll be my wife.

HEATHER: But...what if I don't want to marry you?

SAM: I thought you were in love with me?

HEATHER: Did I say that?

SAM: Yes...you did...last night.

HEATHER: But...but, we hardly know each other.

SAM: Maybe...but we can find out about each other after we're married.

HEATHER: You...you must think I'm so easy.

SAM: No, I don't think that. Things just got out of hand last night, that's all. Booze does the same thing to me. Besides, what's wrong with mutual attraction? We are two adults who know what we want. Let's face facts...life is made up with many great moments...last night was a moment I considered to be wonderful...one I'll remember for a long, long time. Let's not run down such a wonderful thing.

HEATHER: Nothing like this has ever happened to me before...not even when I was in college. I suppose that sounds strange doesn't it?

SAM: No...not at all. When I was in college they hadn't thought of it yet. Heather...are you lonely?

HEATHER: No...Well, yes...I guess I'm as lonely as the next person, I mean...I live alone and I often get to thinking about how nice it would be to have a man around...but every single girl thinks about that...

SAM: I'm a very lonely person too. And here I have a perfect apartment too...for two people, that is. For a long time now, much longer than you'll ever realize, I've been looking for someone to be with. And now I'm sure I've found the right person...you fill the bill perfectly.

HEATHER: But...how do you know I do?

SAM: I'm a very practical man; in my job I have to be. If you'll forgive me something else...I've had your background checked, your interests, hobbies, friends and so forth.

HEATHER: (Very mad) Well, Mr. Zimmer, that's very nice. You've made me feel like an animal in a cage. Did I pass my physical last night?

SAM: Wait a minute...if I tell you something else, will you believe me?

HEATHER: No!

SAM: You'll just have to listen to me. I tried to trick you.

HEATHER: Yes, you certainly did!

SAM: No...No, I mean I lied to you about last night.

HEATHER: What do you mean?

SAM: Nothing happened last night.

HEATHER: I don't understand.

SAM: You passed out last night...I took you to the bedroom and I had my maid put you to bed. I slept out here last night.

HEATHER: But why did you tell me...

SAM: Because I was afraid that you would leave and I would never see you again...so I did the first thing that I could think of to keep you from walking out.

HEATHER: You're a very nasty man Sam Zimmer...that was a dirty trick.

SAM: (Sighs) I know. I couldn't go through with it. I must be getting soft in my old age.

HEATHER: You're not that old.

SAM: How old do you think I am?

HEATHER: Oh...about thirty-five.

SAM: There you go again, perfect!

HEATHER: (Happy with his response) Well, I do have a fairly good eye.

SAM: They are beautiful...and so are you.

HEATHER: Stop trying to get around me. Flattery isn't going to do you a bit of good. I don't trust you.

SAM: Now, you listen to me, and you listen good! I'm in love with you...so much in love that I'll never be able to get you out of my system. I haven't fallen so hard for someone since I was bright-eyed and bushy-tailed...and that's a helluva long time ago. Young lady...I'm asking you to marry me. Believe me...I'll do everything in my power to make you the happiest girl in the world!

HEATHER: First of all...I'm not a young lady...I'm twenty-eight. Secondly...I find you very attractive, but very nasty. Thirdly, I'm not going to marry you until I'm good and ready...and, that won't be until I've been courted properly!

SAM: Good Heavens! How long are you going to make me wait?

HEATHER: Well...you'll have to wait at least two weeks.

SAM: Great! Heather...I love you! (Starts towards her with open arms)

HEATHER: (Backs away) Now, wait a minute...I'm still not dressed...Sam! Stay away!

SAM: (Stops) Well, all right, but you can't blame a guy for wanting to hold the girl he loves. You had better get dressed, then we can have breakfast?

HEATHER: You promise you'll leave me alone?

SAM: On my honor.

HEATHER: Well...I'm still not too sure if I can trust you, but I guess I'll have to. By the way...why aren't you at work?

SAM: I have a stand-in who takes my place when I'm sick.

HEATHER: But, you're not sick.

SAM: I am now.

HEATHER: I'm going to get dressed now.  
SAM: Before you go . . . what size dress do you wear?  
HEATHER: Uh, ten . . . why?  
SAM: Because, I'm ordering you the most beautiful ball gown you ever saw . . . for the White House Ball tonight.  
HEATHER: Oh my . . . I just remembered that I had a date for tonight.  
SAM. Consider it broken.  
HEATHER: (Smiling wickedly) But what if I don't want to break it?  
SAM: Then, I'll break it!  
HEATHER: Now you stay away from me . . . Sam . . . Sam!  
SAM: (Starts for her, grabs her, pulls her to him and kisses her long, but very tenderly.) Well, is it broken?  
HEATHER: (Whoozy) Yes . . . yes Sam.  
SAM: Now, Beautiful . . . hurry and get dressed so we can have breakfast.  
HEATHER: Yes, Sam. (she turns and goes to bedroom)  
SAM: (Turns and rubs his hands) Sam, you old rascal, you've done it again!  
HEATHER: (Sticks her head out the door) What did you say, Sam?  
SAM: Nothing, Darling. Absolutely nothing.

CURTAIN FOR ACT THREE, Scene 1

ACT THREE, Scene 2.

TIME: That evening  
SET: The White House Ballroom.  
SPEAKER: Miss Matilda Simpson escorted by Mr. Ralph Zimmerman.  
(They enter)  
SPEAKER: Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Duval.  
(They enter)  
SPEAKER: Miss Heather Willcox escorted by Mr. Samuel Zimmer.  
(They enter and cross to Matilda and Ralph)  
SAM: Hello, Matilda . . . Ralph. Allow me to introduce you to the future Mrs. Zimmer. Heather, this is my secretary, Matilda Simpson and my nephew, Ralph Zimmerman . . . Heather Willcox.  
RALPH: Sam! Congratulations! Wow . . . you don't fool around do you? Why didn't you tell me you were getting married?  
SAM: Because, I didn't know it myself until this morning.  
MATILDA: (Slightly upset) Well, I must say, you sure are a fast worker, Mr. Zimmer!  
HEATHER: Sam and I sort of fell into this thing, but we're glad we did.  
MATILDA: Well, good luck to you both!  
RALPH: Boy, Sam . . . It's too bad Congress can't work this fast.  
SAM: If they did, they'd all have strokes.  
HEATHER: Sam will you excuse me a moment . . .  
MATILDA: Wait . . . I'll come with you.

SPEAKER: And now, our guest of honor, Uncle Sam. (Stand-in dressed as Uncle Sam enters to applause and laughter nods to Sam as he passes by.)  
RALPH: Sam, I . . . I thought that . . .  
SAM: That's my stand-in Bob Williams. I call him out whenever I feel like going to one of these things as myself.  
RALPH: But . . . I didn't think that you would like anybody playing your role.  
SAM: You forget my boy . . . once in a while it's good to be just a nobody.  
RALPH: I wonder why women always go to the bathroom together?  
SAM: It is probably a very painful experience, and they need someone to comfort them during the ordeal.  
RALPH: It never has made much sense to me.  
SAM: My boy . . . if you ever figure out the opposite sex, be sure to get in touch with me . . . I'll personally see that you're the next President of this outfit.  
RALPH: Thanks, I'll remember that.  
BUTLER: Telephone call for you Mr. Zimmer.  
SAM: Where can I take it?  
BUTLER: Right over there, Sir.  
SAM: Thank you . . . excuse me, Ralph.  
RALPH: Certainly, Sam. (Sam crosses to phone)  
SAM: (Sam goes to phone, talks, looks at himself, keeps talking, keeps looking at himself, finishes conversation, hangs up phone and studies his reflection in the mirror . . . slowly, a change seems to come about in him . . . his head falls . . . his shoulders seem to sag . . . he turns and crosses the stage to Ralph.)  
RALPH: What's the matter Sam . . . bad news . . . Sam?  
SAM: (Slowly) No . . . no . . . nothing important . . . where can we sit down?  
RALPH: There are some chairs over there. Do you feel all right?  
SAM: Yes . . . yes I feel all right. (They cross to chairs and sit)  
RALPH: What's wrong, Sam?  
SAM: Nothing, my boy . . . nothing . . .  
RALPH: Yes, there is . . . come ON . . . you can tell me, after all . . . you're my grandfather.  
SAM: Yes . . . Yes, I am that . . . I'm a grandfather so many, many times. Ralph . . . I've got to tell someone this . . . I've never told anybody about it before.  
RALPH: Yes . . . yes, go ahead.  
SAM: Do you remember when I told you about my . . . my physical condition?  
RALPH: Yes, of course.  
SAM: Well . . . I didn't tell you everything, Ralph. You see, there was something I didn't mention. Ralph . . . my doctors also told me that I couldn't

last forever . . . that someday I would start to degenerate like everybody else.

RALPH: But . . . I thought . . .

SAM: It . . . it is something I never thought about before . . . the prospect of actually dying. But now . . . I'm afraid it's happening . . . I'm going to die.

RALPH: Is that what the phone call was about?

SAM: No . . . It was about a new change in the political situation.

RALPH: What was it?

SAM: They ignored my pleas and admitted Red China to the U.N.

RALPH: Oh my god!

SAM: Funny . . . it all seems rather unimportant at this moment.

RALPH: Sam . . . if you've known about this possibility all this time, why haven't you had time to prepare for it?

SAM: You're forgetting, my boy, that I'm just like every other human being . . . I try to put unpleasant things out of my mind. After all, I've lived so long that death seems somehow . . . unbelievable.

RALPH: Now you know what the rest of us are up against. Life is so short that there hardly seems time to do all the things that a man wants to do.

SAM: Yes . . . I guess I've got to face it . . . Uncle Sam is finally going to die.

RALPH: But . . . but . . . I didn't think about it that way . . . I mean . . . it can't happen . . . it must not happen! If . . . if Uncle Sam dies . . . more than the man dies . . . a nation . . . a people dies.

SAM: No, my boy, no . . . a nation could die, any nation can, but not just because one man does. America may die, but only of neglect and softening of the brain, which becomes more and more apparent every day. We Americans have lost sight of the things that really matter. All that Matters now is living the "good life." Nobody has any virtues or values any more.

RALPH: Well . . . if and when we do fall . . . we'll make a bigger splash than Rome ever did.

SAM: But . . . there is one hope . . . just one hope for me . . . and for the nation . . .

RALPH: What is this hope, grandfather?

SAM: Grandfather . . . Grandfather . . . that sounds so funny . . . no one has ever called me that before . . . I've always been Uncle, and Uncles never age . . . or so it seemed before.

RALPH: What is our hope?

SAM: When Heather and I marry we may have children.

RALPH: And then?

SAM: You see . . . there has always been the possibility that one of my children may inherit my . . . my longevity.

RALPH: Haven't some of them already?

SAM: No. None of my children have been that fortunate . . . maybe I should say unfortunate . . . but, there has always been the chance that my next boy child would gain a long, long life. Maybe . . . maybe I have to lose it in order that he may receive it. It seems funny now . . . but, that's the only way I can live on . . . through my son. Then . . . Uncle Sam has a chance to continue.

RALPH: Yes, Grandfather.

SAM: And, Ralph . . .

RALPH: Yes, Grandfather?

SAM: Please don't call me that anymore . . . just call me Sam . . . Uncle Sam.

RALPH: All right, Sam.

SAM: Now . . . let's rejoin humanity, and start to do something I've never had to do before.

RALPH: What's that, Sam?

SAM: Live with an end in mind . . . life seems to be sweeter that way . . . maybe, now . . . it will be for me too? !

(They rise . . . walk to center and meet the girls, catch them up and begin to waltz as the curtains slowly falls.)

STEVENSON LIBRARY LOCK HAVEN UNIV.



3 3301 00507 3393