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The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

Volume XXI Number 8

Black Sheep

--Horace Gregory

Madonna With the Green Cushion

--Margaret Emmerling

A Blind Date

--Hickman Powell

May, 1922 Twenty-five Cents

PUBLICATION OF THE STUDENTS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

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The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

Publication of the Students of the University of Wisconsin

Volume XXI — Madison, May, 1922 — Number 8

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THE GILDED PEACOCK. Those who have feared that the plaintive cry of the Gilded Peacock might receive no response may now breathe easily, and settle back in their chairs with renewed faith in the law of compensation. For retribution is at hand; condign punishment shall be meted out, and the wounds of *amour-propre* be salved by retaliation. We have it on the best authority that there will be a Rebuttal by the University Men.

They will compositely indicate, for the benefit of whom it may concern, the five greatest faults of the average co-ed, together with the motives which underly her matrimonial ventures; they will point out, in passing, what qualities their future wives must possess; and if, by any chance, the average co-ed still survives, they will reluctantly but firmly state outright their opinion of her. This will they do, and the pride of the peacock shall be humbled.

It is not surprising that a reciprocal fault-finding bee so cleverly arranged should be eminently successful. The transparent plea that the requested statements are of public interest is plausible enough for those who are willing and anxious to point out the mote in their neighbor's eye, providing it can be done with decorum,—and anonymously. We may confidently expect that this class will continue to respond generously, if not nobly.

Besides, is there not now the additional motive of retaliation? The small boys, who are no longer boys, though still small, can justify themselves with the familiar cry: "She done it to me first!" And if, here and there, one or two questionnaires are consigned to the waste-basket, that fact will have nothing to do with the Rebuttal by the University Men.

After the Gilded Peacock, let us hear from the Golden Ass.

F. D. C.

PITY THE POOR SENIOR. The journalistic assault on graduating classes will soon begin. The senior will be frightened into putting up a brave front before going to slay the worldly dragon. He will be told that the best years of his life are behind him. The inadequacy of his preparation will be impressed upon him. In short, every effort will be made to turn the graduate into a fit subject for examination by the state's alienist.

This is all very fine. Playing with the generalization, one might say that it is just and proper to spill the wind out of every senior's sails, in order that he may be saved from running, under full rig, straight into destruction and damnation. However, keeping the figure, given no wind how does the ship progress?

Without endangering our reputation for veracity, it may be said that the average senior, having divested himself of his cap and gown and stowed away his sheep-skin, has no need of being scared into meekness. He goes through his four years learning to shun Phi Betes and hearing that only men who have been ex-

pelled from college have made successes. So when he walks off the campus for the last time, in possession of a degree, he begins to wonder whether or not there is something wrong with him. He feels far from cock-sure. He has the feeling of a man crossing the dance floor alone; he is sure that everyone is watching him with the hope that his next stride will land him with his feet in the air.

But here we are, doing what we set out to advise against,—preaching to seniors. There is nothing more to say, except to express a wish that the senior be left to seek his own salvation, in which event he is sure to come home, like one of Bo-Peep's sheep, happily and successfully wagging his tail behind him.

L. G.

EDITORS

Paul Gangelin — Lloyd George
Earl Hanson — Pennell Crosby
Horace Gregory — Katherine Rockwell
Margaret Emmerling — Stanley Weinbaum
Frank D. Crane

Fragments

Gaston d'Arlequin

Silently, silently
The charmed earth slept;
I knew not you awaited me
When from the world that sated me
With restless heart I crept . . .

And where the moonlight slanted
Between the softly sighing trees
The woodland lay enchanted
And the fragrant summer breeze
Breathed the love-song
Of an old Hellenic god . . .

And there I saw the flowers you had trod,
And where the starlight dreamed upon the pool
I saw your naked body
Beautiful, and beautiful,
Bending o'er the silvered water
Like Amphitrite's loveliest daughter . . .

I dreamed, and I dreamed,
And an ancient memory
Awoke within my heart
And the night's mystery, and the night
Fell dimly on my failing sight . . .

Softly I heard you murmuring my name:
Your kiss lay on my mouth
Like a flower, like a flame,
And your breast caressed
The pallor of my cheek,
Softly I heard you
Murmuring my name . . .

Margot

MARGARET EMMERLING

Strings of water entangled the house and the piece of street and the two trees outside the window. They were long and thin and insistent. They had been falling endlessly for a day and a night, and now lay about dissolved in profuse wetness, drowning the bit of yard between the houses and flooding the streets. The unfriendly aspect of trees too wet to touch and of a dull and dumb sky brought a growing uneasiness to the old lady who sat by her window, sewing carpet rags.

"Mischievous weather," she said, anxiously.

The bright, stiff flowers which had been ranged along the borders of the path which led to Margot's cottage had been broken by the fierce rain and lay scattered and forlorn. The old lady looked at them dejectedly. A girl in a fur coat hurried blindly by, and Margot shuddered at the sight of the drenched hairiness of that coat. When it had passed, she sat and regarded the watery streams pouring down, and then it seemed that the world had never been vivid or sparkling, except perhaps in some old dream; she was quite sure that things were naturally cold and thick, as they had been these—oh, how long had it been?

"Ah, well, I suppose it has been only these twenty-four hours or so. It began after I had my lunch dishes put away yesterday, and the kitchen swept. It seems longer than that. I suppose it rains in hell."

Margot turned her chair away from the window and picked up her carpet rags. But she dropped them again, shivering nervously.

"Must be because I'm so thin," she muttered, rubbing her gray, weak arms. "David never used to shake like this when it was damp out. He didn't mind. He never even put on his muffler in the snow unless I scolded him for leaving it off." She looked up at the clouds. "I wonder how many spools of this stringy rain the Father has in Heaven . . ."

There was no one to answer her question, and for the first time since those years just after David had gone, she heard her voice, talking, and was painfully surprised. It was as though she stood in another corner of the room; it was ghostly. Margot was afraid of her voice.

An old man was tottering feebly down the street. He seemed to Margot like a man who had lost something.

"Something he's never had, nor will ever find," she thought, sadly. Perhaps that was because of the peering look in his little red eyes and the unnaturally inquisitive sidewise tilt of his head. His body was lumpy and crooked; he leaned with blistered hands upon a thick stick which slipped a little on the wet sidewalks. Margot watched him apprehensively. She did not know whether he was real or not. She was a little afraid to trust those dreaming eyes of hers; they had occasionally given her strange fancies.

She stared, fascinated, out of the window, watching the halting progress of that crippled apparition. After a few more steps, he paused, and, standing under the heavy rain, gazed uneasily about him. Then he shook his head forlornly and turned to go back over the wet stretch he had once passed. He was coming back; Margot caught her breath. But he had not taken five steps before he stopped again and looked about him in abject helplessness.

There was a white-knitted shawl on the back of Margot's rocker. In an instant she had pulled it across her little shoulders and was feverishly struggling with the stubborn bolt of the front door. It was open, at last, and wind and water swept up and overwhelmed her. She put up her hand, weakly.

"You—you, there—" She tried to make the old man hear her. She was stunned by the impact of heavy rain upon her cheeks and her ankles. She thought she had stood there a long time. The man was still there, absurdly wondering what to do next, and she was doing nothing whatever about it.

She ventured one shaking foot upon the swimming sidewalk. It was not bad, or, at least, one did not feel the wet immediately. She put down the other foot. The man was still there, but his knees were shaking now; was he beginning to cry? Something must be done at once. He was Margot's; the good God had sent him to her to take care of. The white-knitted shawl on Margot's thin straight back, was clinging to her, drenched; it was too close to her; she felt unclean.

She pattered across the grass to the side of the old man. His face seemed not so pathetic now, but more unnatural; his bloodshot eyes gleamed; his chin was roughly pimpled. Margot pulled her shawl more tightly around her, forgetting that it was wet. Her timid hands clutched it at her breast. She was wretched. The man's eyes regarded Margot without curiosity. She spoke.

"I think you have probably lost something?" ventured the old lady in a weakly polite tone. "But you will never find it. I know that."

The hard little eyes were fixed upon her, but the man said nothing. The rain continued to fall on them. Their feet stood in water, and Margot could feel her wet stockings clinging about her legs. But the poor man!

"I mean, you had better stop looking for anything," she went on, earnestly, "because it is not the sort of thing you could find on the street anyway, you know. And we are both getting wet. It is raining."

"Don't know what to do," muttered the old man.

"You must give up looking for anything."

A tear slipped down his puffy face and the hand that held his cane shook violently. Margot wondered if she could ever make him understand. She tugged at his sleeve, gently. More than anything, she was sorry for him.

"Come in, that is the thing to do. Come in and be comfortable. Warm."

The old lady smiled under the profusion of rain which enveloped them both, and when she led, he followed, soberly, as though that were indeed the thing to do. When she saw that he was really coming, Margot felt a sudden, painful joy. He was hers. The good God had sent him to her care. She would —she would— At the door, she paused.

"I will give you a cup of coffee," she said.

"Cup of coffee. Cup of coffee. Perhaps that was what I was out there looking for. It was wet enough."

They tracked water over Margot's clean little hall carpet, and water and mud up her little staircase, and into the guest chamber, but Margot did not notice it. She decided to lend the man some of David's clothes. She bent over the huge chest of drawers that had been hers and David's together, and lovingly pulled out the stuffy old things that had not been touched except at spring and fall cleaning times, for many, many years. For one thoughtful moment, she hesitated, and finally brought forth the plum-colored vest which David had been wont to wear when they walked together on Sunday afternoons (they had deemed it too gay for church) and the skull cap he had worn when he sat by her in the evening, reading the Good Book.

The old man received the clothes with a blank face and unintelligible sounds. But Margot was greatly excited by her responsibility. When she had hastily put on some dry clothes she pattered downstairs and began fussing busily in the kitchen. Her face was gray and thin, and her eyes were very pale, but if you had looked at her you would have seen only her delight.

She could hear the old man coming very slowly down the stairs, and then he stood in the kitchen door. He seemd to her rather weak and uncertain, as though he were not sure that he had applied all of David's clothing in the right places. They did not fit him exactly; the waistcoat was too tight. He walked over to the stove, and carefully sat himself down by it, and leaned over his cane. His red little eyes looked up at Margot.

"Eh!" said he, "It's nice and warm here, by the fire. Perhaps it was the stove I was looking for, out there, eh? I was cold enough. He-he-he-he-he!"

"It was me you were looking for; and my fire, and my coffee. Me." She emphasized these remarks by handing him a cup of coffee, which he received with marked eagerness. She gazed at him with anxiety. He did not look like David, though he wore Davids' clothes. He wore them differently.

"That vest doesn't need to be buttoned," she said, gently. "You see, it is a little too tight for you, and it must be very uncomfortable. Besides, some of the buttons might pop off,

She bent over to open it for him, and when she had finished a smile of relief spread over his misshapen features. He breathed a great sigh. He must have been very uncomfortable. Margot smiled, and continued her adjustments.

"You must wear the cap farther forward," she remarked, critically, then. "You have it tipped on the side of your head. That is not right." He looked a little disappointed as she righted the cap, patting it into place; possibly he had thought it looked jaunty, tipped as he had it. They sat silent for a little while, one on each side of the stove, looking at each other soberly. Then the old man spoke again.

"Martha used to have little cakes, sometimes, with the coffee. Some days there was icing on them." His tone was slightly plaintive.

Margot jumped up, nervously. To think that she could have omitted anything . . . that he should have to ask her for little cakes. She must get them at once. There must be some in the blue stone jar

that she had always kept filled for David. With icing on them. She went to the cupboard. As she passed the window, she looked out for an instant, and shuddered.

"Oh," she cried, "it is still raining. Long, long strings of water. Did you remember that it was raining?"

"No," he muttered. "No, I thought we had left that behind."

Margot gently lifted the cover of the blue stone jar where she had been accustomed to put David's little cakes. She had got a plate ready for them. She reached down into the jar; but it was empty. There were no cakes in it. There were not even any crumbs; it was quite clean.

Of course. She washed it quite often. And she had not used it for many years, because there had been no one for whom she could bake little cakes. No one. But she had kept the blue stone jar on the pantry shelf nevertheless, and washed it now and then, to remind her. But it was quite empty now. There were no little cakes at all. That was clear.

She racked her brains. Something must be done. Something clever. She came back to the kitchen with a struggling smile on her face.

"The little cakes are not very fresh. It is some time—some little time—since they were baked. I will make you some new ones. I will bake them for you."

The old cripple shook his head and smiled. He looked more like David now, Margot thought. She watched him spellbound, as he waved his hand, deprecatingly, in David's own gesture.

"No. No. You can't bake them for me."

She did not pretend to understand.

"Well, but I will bake them." And she set to work, anxiously. The old man watched her, as he swayed back and forth, with his hands resting on the stick between his outspread knees.

"He-he-he-he-he—!"

Margot was startled by his cackle. She straightened her back, abruptly, and looked at him, with her rolling-pin raised.

"You are not baking them for me! You are baking them for some other person you are thinking of."

Margot was hurt. She put down her rolling pin and came to his side, to look at him earnestly. He was ugly—ugly. But still, there was something else. She did not know what it was, and she did not puzzle over it seriously, for the ways of the Lord were mysterious, and he had sent her this helpless main in the storm. Sent him to her care; she was caring for him now.

"Oh, yes, it is for you that I am baking them. I never eat them. That is, I used to nibble at one, to keep David company. But I am not fond of sweets."

"Very well, very well," said the old man, as though he could not hope to show her what he meant.

Margot went back to her work, and they were silent again for a little while. Margot popped the pan of cakes back into the oven, and smiled with satisfaction, as she brushed the flour from her hands; the flour made white lines on her palms where it stuck in the wrinkles. The old man watched her.

"Martha's hands did that too," he observed. Then it was that he began to cough. It was a horrible, deep cough, that shook all of his misshapen body. He bent his head over his cane, and his face became redder than ever. For an instant Margot stood in silent, fixed horror. Then she laid her floury hand on his shoulder and bent her face down.

"Oh, oh! Please don't cough like that! David died of the cough. Please don't."

She stood helpless, watching him.

Then, suddenly, she turned and went upstairs. She came back with a poultice to wrap around his neck, and a brown bottle of something for him to swallow. He had stopped coughing, but he was still leaning over, weakly, as though he expected to begin again at any moment. Her eyes were all tenderness as she waited.

He lifted his head, and his face was very puffy indeed. His eyes were running over. He was quite helpless. With exquisite gentleness, she wrapped the poultice around his neck; he was as patient as an exhausted child. Then she filled the large spoon with brown liquid from the bottle; her hand shook violently, and she spilled some of it. But she was seeing him only; she did not notice that.

"Here, Davy. Here's your medicine, dear. You'll be all right in a minute." Her voice got high and quavery.

They were both very tired after that, and sat without speaking. Margot still absently held the bottle and the large spoon, and there was a safety-pin in the upper part of her apron, a pin that she had not needed for the poultice. The old man sat leaning over his cane, with his plum-colored waistcoat gaping, and his skull-cap slipping off the back of his lumpy, unnaturally tilted head, which was now tipped over more than ever because of the many layers of flannel which Margot had wrapped tenderly about his neck. He sat and stared. Now and then he would cough a nervous little cough, at which Margot would start, frightened.

But it never became a real cough; so she lapsed again into her fixed silence.

Suddenly she raised her head. Something was burning; she could smell it. The old man looked up too.

"My little cakes!" cried the old lady. "Oh! oh!" She flew to the oven door and pulled out the pan. Rows of black, smoking forms were there. "Oh, my sweet little cakes," she mourned. "Look at them." She held them out to the old man, in a shaking hand.

"They're ruined," he grunted. "Nobody could eat those.

"I'm so sorry."

"Martha," observed the old man, "my wife Martha never burned anything."

"I'm so sorry."

Margot looked at him, and then at the cakes.

"Martha was a careful housekeeper," he continued.

Horror at this ingratitude froze the old lady. Her voice rose to a high key.

"Why! Why! It was because you *coughed!* They burned because you coughed! Don't you understand that? The idea of accusing me of not being a good housekeeper, you—you—"

She had risen, trembling with weak fury, and grasped her old guest's ear.

"You awful man! David! To think that you should ever say such things to me. Listen to me, David, have I ever, as long as you have known me—*Listen* to me, Davy!"

The old man seemed to be slipping from her grasp. She stamped her foot in impotent rage.

She was rather shaken by the act of stamping her foot, and surprised. She started. It was clear that something had happened—something extraordinary. She could not understand . . .

She was sitting there by the window, with her carpet rags in her lap, and no one else was about. Outside, the rain was still swooping down.

She was frightened.

Black Sheep

HORACE GREGORY

"Black Sheep, Black Sheep, tell me where you've been."
Down beyond the farthest hill where daisies touch the sky
And little ewes are plentiful and life is soft and green.
"But your hoofs are scarred and broken and you haven't told me why."

"Black Sheep, Black Sheep, tell me where you've been."
Off beyond the meadows where a brook comes winding by
And little ewes go bathing there to keep their bodies clean.
"But your flanks are torn and bloody and you haven't told me why."

"Black Sheep, Black Sheep, tell me where you've been."
Out beyond the sunset where the stars grow small and shy
And little ewes come down at night to wander ways unseen.
"But your eyes are blind with terror and you haven't told me why."

Joseph Hergsheimer

Horace Gregory

Joseph Hergesheimer's recently published novel, *Cytherea*, is one of the "best sellers" in the bookshops. *Tol'able David*, a motion picture version of his short story of the same name in *The Saturday Evening Post*, is one of the most successful performances of its kind that have been shown within the last six months. H. L. Mencken, in the book review section of *Smart Set*, has hailed him as a shining light in the darkened field of American letters. Like many promising novelists of the "younger set," John Dos Passos, Stephen Benet, Sherwood Anderson, Floyd Dell, Sinclair Lewis, and F. Scott Fitzgerald,—Joseph Hergesheimer has been duly praised and overpraised. He has not only met with the approbation of the younger critics, but he has found a greater popularity with the public than the majority of his less fortunate contemporaries.

Much has been said and written about Hergesheimer's prose style, which he himself admits to be the product of long years of studied effort. It has become a legitimate, recognized topic in any "literary" foregathering. It is welcomed as the center of a discussion at any afternoon tea. One may speak of its "nervous intensity," its "poignant color," and its "faultless tone." Passages from *Java Head* are cited; and one may point out the delicate Oriental fragrance which surrounds his descriptive analysis of a Mongolian princess,—how his style actually interprets the mood of an eastern civilization. His words and phrases are weighed and recounted by all who pretend to have an intellectual understanding of contemporary literature in America. The distinctive surface qualities of his style have offered a tempting subject for every critic, amateur or professional, who has come into contact with it. His vagaries are treated as subtleties, his circumlocutions are taken as latter-day examples of applied psychology. If he is direct and colloquial, as is often the case in *Cytherea*, he has exposed the inner life of the American business man; if he is obtuse and abstract, as in *The Three Black Pennies*, he is extracting the very essence of American aristocracy as it existed before the opening of the present century. His fits of verbal elephantiasis, which frequently mar the composition of his shorter pieces, are diagnosed as the immediate results of his anual contract with the Curits Publishing Company.

In this day it has become the fashion to talk about style. One may wag one's head sagaciously and smile: "Ah, but Hergesheimer's *style*"— and go on talking for two or three hours at a stretch. Confusion, in such circumstances, is permissible. Taste and judgment are involved; the discussion grows warm and the issue is lost in a conflict between two schools of criticism, the Romantic and the Classical. The champions of the former recognize Hergesheimer as "one of them." H. L. Mencken holds to this belief, and, in his own defence, valiantly serves as a flying buttress to Joseph Hergesheimer's citadel of fame. The interpretation of Lee Randon, the hero of *Cytherea*, a middle-aged manufacturer, who becomes hopelessly involved in an illicit love affair, meets with H. L. Mencken's unqualified approval. He would doubtlessly select a passage where Randon is about to step away from the conventional standards of married life.

"Lee Randon wanted to find the justification, preserve the integrity, of his personality, and not lose it. Yes, if nature, as it seemed fully reasonable, had intended the other, something incalculable had upset its plans; for what now stirred Lee had nothing to do with breeding. Long-continued thought, instead of making his questioning clearer, endlessly complicated it. There was always a possibility, which he was willing to consider, that he was lacking in sheer normality; and that, therefore, his doubts, no more than neurasthenic, were without any value.

"He was ready to face this, but unable, finally, to accept it, to dismiss himself so cheaply. Whatever it was, troubling his imagination, was too perceptible at the hearts of other men. It wasn't new, singular, in him; nor had he borrowed it from any book or philosophy: it had so happened that he had never read a paragraph, satisfactory to him in the slightest, about the emotional sum of a man and a woman. When he read he couldn't believe; it was a paste of moralic lies. Either that or the writer had no greater power of explication than he. But, while he might deny a fundamental irregularity, the majority of men, secretly delivered to one thing, would preach virtuously at him the other. He recalled how universal were the traces of dissatisfaction he had noticed; an uneasiness of the masculine world that resembled a harborful of ships which, lying long and placidly at anchor, began in a rising wind to stir and pull at their hawser chains."

A critic may employ many words in defence of a favorite author's style, and yet say little. The ability to think and talk coherently in terms of style is rare indeed, and few men possess that ability beyond a negligible degree. That is why I cannot attempt to discuss Joseph Hergesheimer on an equal footing with the main body of his critics. Even my small contribution of theoretical misinformation would be of little value to the veritable mountain of truths, half-truths, and imaginative frivolities that have served as a study of Hergesheimer's style. The contribution would force me into competition with many who have expressed their opinions concerning the matter in a way that is far more convincing than any argument of mine.

It is Joseph Hergesheimer's treatment of human emotion that interests me. I believe that it is not unfair to call him an "emotional novelist," an interpreter of the "great passion," which, I am informed, comes once to every man. In this guise, he discloses his faith in the fact that the blood of these United States flows with all the warmth of Southern Europe,—that the heart of the medieval troubador beats eternally against the tweed waistcoat of the tired business man. The World of Young Men's Christian Associations and anti-tobacco leagues is forgotten.

Mountain Blood, one of his first novels, presents the amorous devotion of a mountaineer stage-driver to a voluptuous and serpentine school teacher. The theme in general runs parallel to Edith Wharon's *Ethan Frome*, but its treatment is limited to the range of purely sexual attraction. The emotional life of an American stage-coach driver is raised to the level of a Byronic Don Juan. Linda Condon, the heroine of a later novel which bears her name, is possessed of a mysterious, magnetic power, which, in spite of her active repulsion, excites men to a passion beyond physical endurance. She is a victim of the aesthetic ideal:

"In spite of her shrinking, of a half articulate appeal, he crushed her against his face. Whatever that had filled her with hope, she thought, was being torn from her. A sickening aversion over which she had no control made her stark in his arms. The memory of the painted coarse satiety—of women and the sly hard men for which they schemed, the loose discussion of calculated advances and sordid surrender, flooded her with a loathing for what she passionately needed to be beautiful."

She touches the summit of her emotional career a few seconds later:

"There was a broken mental fantasy of—of a leopard bearing a woman in shining hair. This was succeeded by a bright thrust of happiness and, all about her, a surging like the imagined beat of the Wings of Victory."

This point of view illustrates Hergesheimer's studies of American civilization. Life is pictured as a continuous series of irresistible impulses which lead to the gratification of one desire. The heroines, like the goddess Aphrodite, are inexhaustible; and the heroes, like the mighty Zeus, transacted humanity to meet their pleasures. Character, situation, and plot are sacrificed to make a Roman Holiday. The distinctive attributes of individual heroes and heroines are swept away by an ungovernable flood of vernal appetites—a Springtide that swells a harmless river to a wayward torrent of destruction.

From the underpaid country school teacher in *Mountain Blood* to the millionaire heroine of *Cytherea*, the American love affair is maintained at the same boiling point. Time, social classification, geographical position, show little variation when the supreme moment reaches its culmination. This point of view, through the medium of Joseph Hergesheimer, approaches that which is vigorously sustained by Marie Corelli and Hall Caine. Undue exaggeration of sex relationship in the theme of a novel often raises the question of how far the author may venture without danger of complete suppression by a board of censorship which is firmly established in New York City. When that question overshadows all others, the novel under consideration drops into the class of "emotional thrillers." I do not believe that Hergesheimer's novels may be fitted into the above classification, but they have come dangerously near, so near that an eager public has received them with open arms and eyes.

I think, however, that a large measure of Hergesheimer's fault is due to the literary taste of the present day. He is perhaps, one of the most "contemporary" of our living writers, but he has developed only one side of our contemporary life. He is maintaining a position which is the result of a natural reaction against stupid forms of Puritanical dogma in the United States. This does not imply that he is a "propagandist" in any sense of the term. He is merely selecting phases of life as he sees it,—there is nothing of the deliberate moralist in his work. The public has found pleasure in accepting him; and now, he, in turn, does all in his power to satisfy its demands.

It is impossible for me to deny Joseph Hergesheimer all the attributes that make the artist. His greatest fault lies in the subordination of character to emotional detail. If the American novel is to be a criticism of American life, Joseph Hergesheimer can give us nothing more than a promise for the future.

The Madonna With The Green Cushion

MARGARET EMMERLING

Marcia walked up the four long flights of ugly iron stairs, and sighed as she came to the top. It appeared that the elevator was not running. Mr. Tilton had lumbago again, perhaps, and would like someone to straighten his room and let in a good whiff of air. She paused, reflectively, and pictured him dismally crouching on his bed, all crumbs from his lunch, perhaps, and with wrinkled bed clothes, and no light for his pipe,—woefully in need of help. She was sorry for him.

She turned to go on. Two doors confronted her; one was her own; she looked up at the other dubiously, made a little step in its direction, and then withdrew again hastily. In her rooms, the shades were still down, because she had dressed by electric light and left hastily. It was depressing to have to come back to untidy quarters after a day down town.

There were bedroom slippers, and a half finished saucer of shredded wheat, a magazine flung on the hearth, yesterday's stockings—oh, it was intolerable. It seemed to emphasize her weariness and distress. It seemed to symbolize everything she had been doing in the past few weeks; it was just as irritating and disorderly as the whole world seemed.

She walked across the room and quickly let one shade fly up. That was better. She sank to a hassock and idly picked up the magazine that had been left there. But she flung it from her impatiently; there was the absurd love story she had read last night in the hopeless search for easy delight, in the futile effort to run away from her own clinging thoughts. A stupid story; and she, a woman of over thirty, a person of trained and individual literary taste, whose word of approval publishers would buy if they could, had been trying very hard to like it. She pushed it farther away, with her foot.

Walking across the room she let up the other shades, and then flung a window open, so that the fresh air swept the room. She leaned her head out of the window and let her hair be blown. It was sharp and agreeable.

Someone was coming up the street; Marcie saw him vividly. It was a youngish person with a swinging walk and head held rather high, but not proudly high; perhaps only because the air was fresh. He was whistling some jolly tune.

Marcia leaned forward eagerly, with a greeting ready, but he was not looking, so she drew in her head. Quickly she busied herself, getting the room straightened. It did not require much time. When it was hastily dusted and patted in various places, she darted into the kitchen to put up a kettle of water and fill the tea ball, and slice a lemon, and stick cloves into the slices. There were some little round cakes on the sandwich tray.

Soon it was all done, and Marcia went breathlessly back to her hassock. She was trying not to be excited, and finding it difficult. The kettle boiled, and she was still alone. She began to listen nervously. Had she heard his footsteps coming up to his room? She did not remember; she had been so busy. Of course, he had been a little early today; that was why she had not been ready for him, but still, he ought to have come right in, especially as he might know that she would be anxious about those seats for Monna Vanna tonight. She dropped the teaball into the pot and poured steaming water upon it; he would be there in a minute.

She waited.

At last she walked to the wall, under the Madonna with the Green Cushion, and knocked softly. No reply. She repeated, a little louder this time, holding her breath. No reply. How strange—her Benno! What could have happened? She had seen him coming home, she had heard him—he whistled so lustily—and he had been within a block of home.

She slipped quietly out of her door and stood before his. Could anything have happened to him? Could he be needing her—Benno? She felt an intense desire to have him near, to pat his arm, to keep him away from dangerous things. Her boy to take care of.

She opened the door gently, just a little crack, and peeped through. There was nothing to see—just a boy's room. She opened it wider. There was his beautiful new color box, of which he was justly proud—a glass of muddy water on the table, from yesterday's painting, some loose sheets of paper, a torn en-

velope; he was not there. But see, he must have been at home, because there, under that envelope, lay his gloves, and she had reminded him of them this morning before he left and had seen him start off with them. He had been at home. She walked softly into the little kitchen and dressing room; no one was there.

She came back to her room and found cooling tea. It was depressing. Then she remembered the janitor, who probably had lumbago; feeling sorry for him she began to make fresh tea. It would be nice to go down and mother him a bit, since Benno was gone.

She had to set the tray down on a broken chair to knock at Tilton's door.

"Eh?" Came a weak grunt from the other side, and, "Well, I reckon you might as well come in."

He looked very helpless and pathetic in bed.

"Are you feeling very badly?" she asked.

"Well, yes, pretty bad. Pretty bad. It's my back again."

"Perhaps the tea will make you feel better. Or shall I read to you? I brought the paper with me." She was nervously wondering what had happened to Benno as she spoke.

"That the paper you works for?"

"Yes, it is."

His eyes were exceedingly sharp, suddenly.

"Let me hear something you wrote."

"Why, it's not very interesting at all, Mr. Tilton, it's only about books. Whether I like them or not."

"Well, that's easy, isn't it." His face was wrinkled and dark. "Hold on a minute. That young fellow upstairs as lives next to you, don't he work for this here paper same as you?"

Marcia looked up suddenly. She had been thinking of him—that young fellow.

"Why yes—yes, he does. He works for it."

"Writes about books, too, I suppose."

"Yes, he writes things about them, and he makes little drawings to go with what he writes. Do you—would you like me to show you something he did?"

"Yes. After a bit, after a bit. Hm. Hm." He seemed to lapse into some impenetrable thought, and Marcia found to her disgust that she was afraid of him, as though she had been caught being naughty.

"I suppose you found the way for him to get this job, beside his other advertising work." His voice was startling, not like a sick man's voice, whom one could take care of.

"Well, yes, he's a friend of mine."

"He was a pretty excited young fellow here a few minutes ago. Come busting in my room. Thought it was the outside door. Said he must have come down one flight too many by mistake. Pretty rattled. Must have been something happened there, I says to myself. Had a letter open in his hand. I didn't ask what it was about. I never ask such things. But I reckon you probably know all about it, seeing you're such friends, eh, Miss Vincent?"

Horrible, insinuating person.

"Yes, I think there was something. And now, I think if you have had all the cakes that you wish for, I will go. Is there anything you would like me to bring you, or any message I could take?"

"I reckon not, I reckon there ain't anything."

Marcia closed his door behind her, and felt herself again. In there she had been some other, oppressed and tormented person, It was extraordinary, for a woman of thirty, to be intimidated by a person like that; but she was very much excited. She was foolishly sensitive about Benno, that "young fellow." Yes, he was adorably young, and perpetually in need of care and love and watching after. How he cried out to one, without being in the least aware of it. The boy who was going to be an artist!

She discovered that she was still standing, mutely gazing nowhere, outside the janitor's door, with the plundered tray in her hands. She looked up quickly. If something had happened. If he had had some bad news in that letter. That was the envelope she had seen on his desk. But it was not like him not to bring his difficulty to her at once, and let her help him out of it! He had come before to let her smooth things out, without in the least admitting what he was doing. It was sweet.

But now he had run out somewhere, distressed. And she had had tea waiting for him. It would have been so good for him! Where was he now? Certainly he would feel better at the opera tonight, with her.

She sat by the fire, going over some book to be reviewed, while she waited. It was a book in which she ought to have been interested, because the author was new and surprising, and there was a little group of intelligent readers who watched him and would be eager for her opinion. But she saw only words, or sentences, or paragraphs. Here and there something stood out vividly; some stupid word.

Suddenly she put the book down; a misgiving caught her. She felt very serious. Could it be that she was readable—that he knew—this boy! Had she been giving herself away—she, who was so wretchedly ashamed of herself? To Benno?"

She was seized by a queer, deep-shaking feeling. Could she have been so pitifully transparent? That last day—yesterday—when he was in here with her

. . . She hugged her arms close; she was upset. She tried very hard to think straight, but feelings kept slipping up and coloring the rest. She had to pull her thoughts lustily up out of the lazy mud.

Perhaps it would be better not to see him for a while. Oh! Not really avoid him, though, but perhaps not fuss over him so—but he was so irresistibly appealing! Or perhaps to try to grow interested in some one else and take Benno more casually. Some of the men—there were one or two. But they were just men, perfectly capable of taking care of themselves, and utterly lacking in Benno's ruddy boyishness.

Still, something must be done. If only she could be strong enough to push him—oh, no! Oh, no, no!

Someone whistled. It was Benno. It was hard to answer immediately, and then he was standing in the doorway.

"Oh! Benno! It was almost a cry.

"Oh, yourself." He seemed to fill the room as he strode across to stand before her, with his square back to the hearth.

"How was the day, Benno?" Silly way to talk—she could not help it, though. He probably noticed how unnatural it sounded; but no, he was not noticing anything; he was only smiling broadly.

"Oh, it was a good day, Marcia. I had an inspiration about outing flannel. Quite an idea. Double their sale, I bet, when it starts springing out on the back page of the Post."

Well, at least, there seemed to have been no very serious trouble. It had been foolish to worry.

"I suppose I ought to congratulate you for that, but I have to admit, it does not excite me greatly. Has there been anything else?"

"Yes, a letter from home. And I guess that was all." He began to walk around, picking up little things, and putting them down again. Suddenly he looked at the woman, whose soft eyes had been following him steadily. "Say, Marcia. Listen. I just thought of something. Today's Tuesday, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Well, there. Then it's tonight we're going out together, isn't it—the opera?"

"Why, yes, Benno. It must be tonight. Monna Vanna."

"Good stuff. Well, then I guess I'll run along and fry me an egg or two for dinner, and then it will be time to brush my hair and come for you like a gentleman."

"You might—yes, you might do that, Benno." Good. She had not invited him to dinner, although it was difficult. She just barely caught herself up. Silly business.

The wind was hard in their faces when they came out of the theater, that night. It smote the hot crowds as they emerged, and they were not prepared for it. They were still there, with Monna Vanna; the sweetness and the sorrow clung heavily about them. The magic of sound—of color and motion had caught them in its web, and it was too much to ask that they should remember, when it withdrew, that they were in Chicago, on the street, and that winter was coming. But the wind fell upon them, and they awoke.

Marcia clung to Benno's arm, and felt happy. She was one of those whom the wind had not wakened. She was still dreamily remembering how Monna Vanna had loved.

"Shall we go some place and get something to eat?" suggested Benno, solicitiously bending over her.

"No, dear," she replied softly. "Let's wait till we are at home. It will be more fun in my tiny kitchen, don't you think so?"

"All right, Marcia."

Number flashed on a great sign, and large cars drew slowly up, and slid away again, bearing shivering people to their homes. Marcia could see them drawing their robes about them. She wondered idly if they could be cold. She wanted to linger, and it seemed that Benno was striding along unnecessarily fast. She wanted to remain in her soft dream. Mary Garden! Monna Vanna! Benno! Oh, why go home at all?

Benno looked down at her, and pressed her arm gently.

"Great, wasn't it? I don't know when I heard a voice that got me so. Just got me. You too?"

"Oh, yes." It was difficult to talk.

Benno shivered.

"Cold night. Something must have happened up there while we were listening." He craned his neck to look at the clouds. They were foreboding. "Guess we'd better run along and get the car, Marcia. Be too bad if we missed it and had to wait."

She put her hand on his shoulder and looked up at him.

"Benno, Benno, dear, it's such a beautiful night. I feel so—so happy. Let's walk home."

"Oh, do you want to walk? Why surely, if you want to, Marcia, I'll walk. I'd just as soon. I just thought you'd be cold in this wind."

They walked. It was night, and she was alone with the man whom she unreasonably adored, and so the woman was absurdly happy. She did not especially wish to talk. She was dimly aware of the cold

now, but it rather added to her contentment, because she knew that she and Benno were together in the face of it; they were united against the heavy wind of winter. He must feel it too.

A few of the clouds blew away, and some stars appeared, emphasizing the edginess of the night. It was a boisterous time; branches swung gaily and little pieces of paper sped along the sidewalk.

"Oh, Benno, Benno dear, I am so happy tonight." She was surprised to find herself saying that aloud.

"It's a great night, after all, Marcia. I'm glad we're walking. Come on, let's whistle. We can walk better that way."

So they strode whistling homeward, and Benno's face, tipped backward, was a sight for the gods, because of his red-cheeked, young delight.

"Benno, this is lovely, isn't it?" said the woman, with suppressed excitement. "I'm enjoying this time with you, as I always do. You know I always do, don't you, dear?"

Her voice was warm and near.

He looked down at her face, at his shoulder, without quite understanding. She was charming, and always incomprehensibly kind to him; she had looked after him since the first day he knew her. But now he was a little uncomfortable; he was not used to the eager excitement in her eyes. He had never looked so closely before. She seemed younger, suddenly; almost incongruously younger.

"You know that, don't you, Benno. We do things—happily—together."

"You bet. You bet we do, Marcia. You'll never know how much it's meant to me, knowing you. That's what's making it so hard for me. I have to go back to California soon, you know. I just had a letter this afternoon. Father wants me to go into the advertising business, with the understanding—Marcia, Marcia—"

She caught his arm tightly.

"Yes! Go on!"

"With the understanding that I can work half the time on my own painting. See? That's the great part. That's what's got me all excited. I can finish some of those things—the things you and I talked about, Marcia."

He caught her hand, but she drew it away.

"Yes . . . " She was all alone. It was as though he had already turned down the street and left her standing by herself. She hardly saw him, though he was bending very close; she could feel only that some heavy calamity had descended upon her. Suddenly she knew that the wind was loud and keen, cutting through her clothes, and, listening, she heard it singing the cold name of November. She shivered. Suddenly she said, vaguely.

"I am past thirty."

"Oh, you aren't! You aren't, Marcia, dear!" urged the boy seriously.

She was aware of him again.

"Tell me about it," she said, in a dry voice. "Tell me what you will be doing. The letter came this afternoon, you said?"

"Yes, it was there when I came home, you know. I was rather excited about it, so I went out for a walk to think it over, as I always used to, when I was little. Of course I knew Dad would be doing it sometime, but not so soon. And then, I have been having such a jolly time with you here in Chicago; there was a lot to think about. I'm glad for the chance to paint, though, Marcia."

They were at home. They walked slowly up the cold iron stairs, four flights of them, in uncomfortable silence. Memory of Monna Vanna was gone, the sharp wind, too; they were only tired, unhappy young people, walking up an endless staircase, when there should have been an elevator.

Benno counted the steps. He was acutely uncomfortable. The railing was dusty; he wondered if they kept those lights at the landings going after twelve. But it must be after twelve now, because they had walked home. He looked at Marcia; she was very tired, and there were some queer lines in her face; hard lines, he thought. "Two twenty-two, two twenty-four, two twenty-four six."

"Past thirty. Oh, ages and ages past thirty." Slow thoughts weighed upon Marcia's tired brain. "Everything is wrong, quite wrong. I don't understand. Past thirty. Yes. My heart aches—my heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains my senses though—as though of—hemlock—I had drunk—or some dull opiate. Oh, Benno, Benno!"

They were standing between the two doors, his and hers. She looked very small as she held out her hand.

"Well, good-bye, Benno. Mine. My boy." She turned away and closed her door between them before he could say anything; and that was as well, because he could not think of anything to say.

She stood in the middle of her room and took off her gloves. There was a little stiffness about her as she stood there, quietly, only thinking, for a while. Her life was so long behind her—more than thirty years—and it would be so long before her, too, and always just the same. There were light moments, but they passed.

She looked up at the Madonna with the Green Cushion, and away again, swiftly. The room was intensely still. She put her gloves down on the table, and laughed.

Mary: A Reminiscence

MARTHA DREIBLATT

She was Polish, and very green when she first came to be our servant-girl—as we used to designate our maid-of-all-work at that inelegant stage of the family fortunes. She had straight light hair strained back from high Slavic cheekbones, shining white skin and a long, gaunt girl's frame—she was eighteen then—with all the joints indecently protruding. But how beautifully she unfolded during her stay with us! Her body miraculously knit itself together and blossomed out into grave, beautiful curves, as the clay does on a potter's wheel. She carried this shapely height with a sort of quiet grace, though she always wore shuffling shoes or high heeled pumps. Her neck became exactly like that in the description of the heroine in sentimental novels, round and firm with the white strength of a Greek column. Even the shape of her face changed, and subtle curves made her high cheekbones curiously pleasing.

It was really delightful to watch the change. My mother used to point out with an ill-concealed satisfaction how much stouter and better-looking Mary had become in her years with us, and then, sighingly, she used to wonder why we, her scrawny growing daughters, didn't thrive at all, though we had no work to do. For it wasn't because Mary didn't have to work hard that she developed so well. Though her mistress combined justice in the matter of decent food, rest, and room for her help with her strictness, she was the traditional good housewife, and ours a large house. Mary was a good worker, too, as mother used dispassionately to admit. But she flourished on work like the green bay tree. And she drew me to her by my pleasure in this blossoming out of hers, by my feeling of refreshment at contact with this brimming health.

Of course, I never got to know Mary really well, since I was moony, self-centered and the daughter of the house, while she was three years older, and seemed much older than that because she had real work to do, and she was a servant-girl. Besides, there was the trouble of language at first, too. But I liked Mary and I'm pretty sure she liked me. We used to spend such friendly, wordless afternoons in the kitchen together, with me penned in the corner near the range by her ironing board, bent over bubbling pots, stirring fearful messes in the fond faith that they would turn into candy. There would be a smell of lemon-juice or vanilla, chocolate, crisp ironed clothes and perhaps a tasty whiff of browning meat juices from the back of the stove. But in the spring, the smell of moist earth and the poignant odor of pear blossoms from the trees outside the kitchen window would overcome us. She was silently interested in the candy-making, and on rare occasions would proffer suggestions, which I always acted upon. And she always stopped ironing when I dropped a spoonful of the mixture into a glass to test it. After she had been with us a long while, she would tease me a little at my failures, and I could hear her laugh at them in the pantry with mother. But when hers was the only authority to be consulted, I had free access to anything I wanted, in pantry or icebox. In very hot weather, with book propped up before me, I would just languidly watch her pushing the iron back and forth, and wiping the perspiration from her face with the back of her hand, until I was sent to get some ice cream for her. This errand mother self-extenuatingly explained by saying, "She's a human being too."

There was one other time when we would be together like this. Saturday mornings, while I practised—if I had been scolded out of bed early enough—Mary would wipe up the smooth polished floors of the parlor and library with a mop smelling cleanly of balsamic oils. I think she rather enjoyed my banging, especially the quick smooth rythm of the complicated exercises I had to go through. Or perhaps it was just the company. We would grin at each other, I from my perch on the piano stool, she from her knees, scrupulously digging at a corner with a rag, the only two really young things in the house. For my part, I would bounce through my pieces with a great deal of energy, hoping to arouse some appreciation from her. There were some pieces called "Polish Dances" in a Collection of the World's Best Music that we had, and, romantically, I would play them to see whether touching memories of her native land would be called forth. "Do you recognize this?" I would ask hopefully. But she never did, and though I told her they were Polish, she never got at all enthusiastic about them.

She looked so nice when she went out on spring Sunday afternoons. She didn't dress at all like a servant-girl, mother would say. She wore a dark blue georgette dress with simple lines and a plain round neck that set off her white throat, a dark purple large sailor hat, and speckless white canvas shoes. A neat black velvet handbag swayed at her side as she walked down the steps into the sunshine with that

beautiful straight carriage of her body. She always left by the front door, and mother never said anything, though our neighbor would rather spitefully remark on the fact each Monday afternoon—"as though she was a daughter of the house, and she dresses so classy." I'm sure she looked much better than I did, at any rate, when I went out. Even mother used to admit this, when she complained how skinny I was, though I had the best food and nothing at all to do. But she did get cross when Mary would stop to change her shoes to high heeled pumps every time she had to run out to the grocery store.

Mary was fond of nice, refined clothes. She liked to see all our new things, and would examine them carefully to see just how they were put together. She brought scraps of lace and lengths of ribon that she had fished up from somewhere in the house and asked me if I thought they were needed. Then she bore them away with her to her room, exhibiting to me, a few days later, with a quiet triumph, the results of her labors on them. They were sometimes rather pathetic little attempts, but they always showed signs of real taste. Once in a great while, there might be a scrap that she particularly wanted and feared might not be granted to her. This she would use without saying anything about it, and without showing me the finished product. But mother used to detect it, and shrug her shoulders resignedly, as if to say, "They're all alike, these girls." Sometimes the bits were really needed, but still the pretence of ignorance and innocence was kept up successfully on both sides.

It used to make me feel queer at times to think that upstairs Mary was fussing in her room the way girls do, and trying her hair different ways, while I was doing the same thing in mine. And yet we were so far apart, in spite of our friendliness for each other and the common ground of our youth and sex. I had a sheepish suspicion that she kept her things much nicer than I did mine, too. She was really much more fastidious and what people call refined than I was. And she had a much stronger sense of propriety. I could see that one day when it was frightfully hot and mother said Mary could have the afternon off and go with me for a swim at our breach. We had a stiff, silent ride down, both feeling queer and strained in this new relationship of going out somewhere together. But we had lots of fun in the water and on the sand. When, however, spurred by the joyous knowledge that many astonished eyes that knew both of us were looking on, I grew too riotous, she refused to follow my lead and sat quietly down on the sand and watched the beach and what was going on. She disapproved highly of the girls who were flirting and "carrying on with the fellows," though they were daughters of houses. Her disapproval was far different from my fifteen-year-old dislike of them. She was surveying them, I can see now, from the heights of the standards of what is nice and refined. Which of course shows that, had she been of the same class, she would have been more likely to have been a friend to my sister than to me.

Mary herself never went out with fellows. I cannot remember her ever entertaining them in the house. Once I saw her coming home Sunday evening with a nice tall blond man—she had a key only to the back door and never thought of coming in at the front—and she stayed out a while on the steps and talked. She told me later, in one of her rare confidences, that he was a friend of her cousin, that was why she had let him take her home. I suppose she thought herself too good for the rather flashy, loudly-dressed, rough "Polacks" who were the only men she had a chance of meeting. Perhaps she never met them, even, for she made no friends among the servant-girls who worked for our neighbors. Scornfully, she pointed them out as they went to carry in the garbage pails, with their stringy hair and blowzy faces, their greasy, limp aprons tied around their shapeless middles.

Her only outlet of affection was her married sister at whose home she spent her Sundays. This sister, it seemed, was not a sister at all, but a distant cousin. "I call her my sister, Mary explained to me one evening as I was reading by the friendly light of candles. We were alone in the quiet, peaceful house. "See, she's the only one I have in this country. And we always like each other as girls and call each other sister. She ain't got no one here either but me. She has a pretty nice husband. They are going to have a baby."

You must not think that even the little information I had about Mary came to me all at first. It had seeped through the intangible yet solid wall of difference in age, station and interests during the three or four years she was with us. This volunteered explanation came in the latter part of these, when we had come to silently recognize our liking for each other, when Mary's slight awe and distrust of the missus' daughter had been rubbed away by our intimate daily contact, with its hourly small disillusionments. I think she had even softened to a tolerant familiar affection for me, through this intimate knowledge of my untidinesses and failures. Really, hearing each other scolded for our misdeeds could not fail to have such an effect. She always went around in a rage of sullenness on such occasions, and showed penitence by doing some extra piece of work particularly well.

As the time for the arrival of her sister's baby drew near, she found excuses to get afternoons off in the middle of the week as well as Sundays. Finally, one Sunday she called up to tell mother she would not be home till the next morning. A few evenings later, as my sister and I were doing homework on the pantry table, to the busy sounds of dishwashing and clearing up, Mary came in with a big box. It contained a beautiful white silk embroidered carriage coat, a carriage cover and the daintiest baby cap in the world. We gasped. It was prettier than any of the gifts our maried sister's friends had given when her baby had been born.

Mary beamed happily at our admiration, especially at the more discriminating praise of my sister, "It's a boy," she told us. "She had an awful time, The doctor was there all the time and a nurse, and she was sick the whole night. Her husband was like crazy. We made him go in the spare room, where there is a bed for me, and lie down. She fought and fought, and I got so tired. After the baby came I went in and told her husband, and we lay down and slept and slept."

My sister glanced at her in such a startled way at this that I perceived something queer in it too. Mary looked down and turned a little pink. Then she looked up again, straight at us. "That was all right. She's my sister and he's like a brother to me."

As I look back, there is such a strong sweetness about this scene, with the light glaring on the white oilcloth of the table and bringing out the shining folds of the silk which Mary's large, reddened fingers caressed, and the pleasing curves of her face as she spoke. There is a loveliness about it that touches the heart, and colors my whole feeling for her. But I saw nothing of this then and talked merrily on, accepting the explanation as a matter of course and slightly superfluous.

Suddenly, in the midst of what seemed endless, settled years of having Mary, with an equally endless vista before us, mother went about with her face tightened and red with irritation. "Mary is going to leave," she announced at supper, with the dining room door safely shut.

"How do you know?" We were all surprised. "Did she tell you?"

"No, but I know. I can see it. The way she goes around and doesn't open her mouth to me."

"Why don't you ask her if she's going?" I inquired.

Mother looked at me with scorn. And for the next few days she conversed much more than was her wont with Mary on all sorts of light, extraneous subjects.

Then she said, in angry satisfaction at the fulfillment of her prophecy, "She *is* going. She told me so today."

This was really a shock to us. We had laid the servant-problem ghost for so long. And it seemed so funny to have such a close relationship suddenly dissolved. We all wanted to know why.

"Her sister is moving to Jersey she says, and she won't be able to go to see her if she stays here. I told her I would give her off Saturday night till Monday morning."

But it seemed her sister had gotten her a job only a few blocks from the new home and they would be able to see each other every night. That really would be nice for Mary whose long evenings alone must have passed wearily enough. Even a raise in wages would not tempt her to stay. "I wonder if it could be that Mrs. Zimbler is trying to get her from us?" said my mother in an embittered moment.

Mary's last days with us were overcast by this tightened attitude of my mother, with its implications of Mary's ingratitude to leave us like this, after all the years she had been with us, all that had been done for her.

"When she came here she was skinny as a toothpick and she didn't have a dress to her back. Now look at her. But I don't care. Do you think I'll bother looking around for another girl? I'll do my own work. It'll be done better in less time. I was thinking of doing that anyway even before. She's been getting too much on her high horse, thinking that the whole house depends on her." So my mother covered up her dismay.

After all, why should Mary feel bound to us? We had fed her well, given her a clean room, not overworked her, and paid the prevailing wage. Why shouldn't she seize a chance to be as much as possible with the people she loved? Or even to have the pleasure of a change. Though I saw even less than mother how the house was to run without Mary, and faced in panicky dismay the prospect of having to pitch in and do my share of the work.

So her trunk was packed and out of the house at last. She came to the door with a neat valise—not the usual untidy bundle other servant girls carried when they went away. Mother softened and gave her much kindly advice. She kissed mother's hand silently, looked about a moment, turned to me and said good-bye, calling me by my family nickname. It did not occur to me till afterwards to kiss her. She walked down the front steps into the sunshine with her high-chested, beautiful carriage, the beauty of her firm white throat enhanced by the

plain neckline of her dark dress. I had a lump in my throat, and mother lingered before shutting the door silently.

We never heard of her again till some years later, when our neighbor came to see us soon after a new girl took up habitation in her kitchen. It seems she had gleaned from the latter, among many other things, that Mary had killed a man and had entered a convent. It seems so impossible. After all, there may have been more than one girl by her name, or the other girl might have been mistaken.

"But these girls know all about each other," said the neighbor. Perhaps. I never really knew Mary at all, anyway.

"Spring Has Come 'Round Again"

LLOYD GEORGE

Since all who jumble metre into feet
Must carol Spring,
My turn shall come to write in words discreet
Of this same thing;
And yet,—
All life itself in every way
Is more to me than I can say.

When Summer's sun has warmed the earth to growth
Of fullest bloom,
I long to praise the sun, yet I am loth
To keep my room;
For now,—
All life itself in every way
Is more to me than I can say.

And then comes changing Autumn, beckoning me
To be its bard,
And though I would, I find the task to be,
Ah, much too hard!
I vow,—
All life itself in every way
Is more to me than I can say.

When Winter's silent power commands my pen,
I long to write,
Yet that same power has left me cold, for then
It's always night;
Somehow,—
All life itself in every way
Is more to me than I can say.

Since all who jumble metre into feet
Must carol Spring,
My turn *has* come to write in words discreet
Of this same thing;
And yet,—
All life itself in every way
Is more to me than I can say.

A Lesson In Ennui

VIRGINIA SCHMUCK

"There's just this much about it, Louise," Alice was saying, " For all your sophistication and experience Roland will make you feel like a child—innocent, unsophisticated—inexperienced, and quite boring. Roland has a knack for making every girl feel just that way. His air is the perfection of ennui. I believe it's the biggest conceit about him."

"Just the same, he is tall and handsome, and has patent-leather hair. I guess I'd have a date with him, too, if he'd condescend to ask me!" remarked Dorothy. Dorothy had a failing for the sleek tea-hounds that populated the campus, and always defended them even in the face of unanimous opposition from the other girls in the house. "And," she added, waxing warmer, "I'll bet you'll fall for him, too, before the end of the evening."

"I? I fall for any conceited campus idol?" Louise was immediately on the defensive. Then she calmed herself.

"Well, for better or for worse, I'm going out with him tonight. But I'm no end grateful to you for the tip, Alice. And I promise you, Dorothy, I'll beat him at his own game."

Alice seized Louise in a boisterous embrace.

"Good for you, Looey. You're a girl after my own heart. Conquer the conquering hero, and I'll crown you with the laurels." Dorothy emitted a heavy sigh, and the two girls left the room.

Louise, left alone, began to reflect and to plot. So this young man, who had looked at her so dreamily from his fascinating violet eyes when he asked for the date following their introduction and first dance at the formal last week, was, in fact, one of the most conceited wretches in school. She remembered now that he had seemed anything but uneasy as to how she would answer him when he asked her for tonight. His confidence pricked her. And now that she thought about it he had seemed awfully blasé and sophisticated. Just as if he were so much her elder and superior! Her rebellion grew with reflection. She would, just for once, make this man recognize someone more sophisticated than he could ever hope to be.

Very deliberately, Louise began to dress. There was a certain twist she knew how to give her black hair that added years to her experience without adding a month to her age. Rouge gave a too common effect; so she omitted it, and concentrated upon her eyes. Lengthening the brows helped wonderfully, and touching up the lashes improved even more. She selected the highest-heeled black-satin pumps she possessed and some spider-web hose to go with them. Finally, she slipped into the most sophisticated of little black dresses, tipped off with monkey-fur, picked up her jade fan, and viewed herself in the mirror. Just one thing more. From her bureau drawer she brought forth a pair of circular jet ear-rings, and put them on. The effect was perfect, even the critical Louise admitted. She was ready to conquer any thing now!

All this had taken more time than the telling of it. Roland had been waiting twenty minutes when she felt complete enough to descend. As she entered the reception room, Louise saw Roland gasp ever so slightly, and took advantage of her observation.

"You look startled. Has something happened?"

Of course, Louise knew that he wouldn't admit for the world that any thing could startle him, and the idea of anything happening while just sitting in a reception room waiting for a girl to appear was ludicrous beyond doubt. She waited, wondering what he would find to reply.

"Why, n-no," Roland succeeded in saying, as he helped her into her wrap, "What could happen waiting in here?"

"Oh, strange things can happen in the most unexpected places and to the most unexpected people," Louise returned; and was sure that Roland agreed with her, though undoubtedly, as the experienced member of that party, he would have been much happier had he thought of that remark for himself.

Talking vaguely, saying things that carried always an undertone of experience and worldliness and a suggestion of boredom, Louise progressed leisurely at the side of her prey. She was thoroughly enjoying his discomfiture which he sought so desperately to conceal.

As she had planned, they arrived at the house late. According to the program, she had three dances with others before it was Roland's time again. By this time she had collected more data, and sown more seeds. Everybody was talking about her. The fellows were undoutedly impressed as Louise's carefully trained eye did not fail to note, and admiring glances and remarks flitted her and Rolands' way from time

to time. Finally, after dancing some minutes in sielnce with Roland, she drawled, "You're not the least like your frat brothers, are you?" She saw his hesitation. Undoubtedly he was pondering how to take her remark. He must have noticed that she seemed to be having a good time with her other dancing partners; so he could hardly consider the remark derogatory to them. Would he then take it as a direct disparagement to himself? She felt him draw back as he sensed her audacity. Probably it was the first time any girl had not made a hero of him—adored him, looked up to him, sighed over him. Louise blandly returned his gaze, innocently unconscious to all outward appearances of the revolution in feeling she was stirring up.

Then Roland seemed to come to life again and parried, "Is that complimentary or otherwise?" To which Louise replied, "Oh, it is so passé to be as definit as that!" and began humming the dance-air. Since men of his type never went in for passé things, she knew he would have to let it go at that without getting any satisfaction as to what she meant.

At the end of the dance he suggested that they go out on the terrace. Louise sensed a change of tactics; so she consented without any sign of a thrill. There was a wonderful moon aglow. Roland would expect this to melt her and bring out some unsophistication. She would have to be on her guard. Delicately he took her hand, and gazing into her eyes said softly, "You look positively ethereal in the moonlight." Louise laughed without any trembling in her voice, "Which proves the moonlight deceptive?" "Which proves nothing," Roland fired back. Then, evidently recalling himself, he made another charge, "Really, you are the stunningest girl I've met here." "Oh please," Louise raised her eye-brows with ever so evident boredom, "that line is so worn . . ." and then her voice trailed off as soft violet eyes met deep brown ones. For a moment Louise wavered, felt herself slipping unresistingly into the arms slowly but surely encircling her. How romantic he looked there in the moonlight! And just as unexpectedly Louise suddenly remembered that this was her compaign, not his, and drew back, as she heaved a casual, weary sigh. "How long did it take to cultivate that dreamy look in your eyes?" she questioned with a laugh.

Roland never revived after that. They had one more dance together during which Louise chattered on indifferently, oblivious of Roland's silence and sense of defeat. At the door of her house, she bid him good-night with the remark that she had had a delightful evening and that his frat brothers were 'awf'ly nice,' and tickled him under the chin with her fan in the most superior way. That infuriated Roland. She saw him react in the usual way, taking a sudden impulse to seize her, caveman-like, and kiss her; but Louise, quick to ward off the attack, hastened to murmur, "Good-night, pretty boy," and ran into the house. And a few seconds later slowly retreating footsteps told the story of a successful lesson in ennui.

HORACE, ODES I, 34

HELEN B. MORRISON

The gods above I worshipped now and then,
To folly's shrine of wisdom I bowed low,
Now backward turn my sails and steer again
On courses, tried, abandoned, long ago.

The power who flashes lightning far,
Through stormy clouds across the heavens rolled,
Can drive his thundering steeds and racing car
Through smiling skies of blue and bronze and gold.

And brute earth hears and shudders at the sound,
The wand'ring stream and dread Taenarian throne,
The muddy Styx and Atlas' rocky bound,
Tremble and shake to their foundation stone.

So standards high to unknown depths sink down,
When gods on high with mighty powers decree,
And winged Fortune laughs and lifts the crown
From kingly head to one of low degree.

A Blind Date

HICKMAN POWELL

It was one of those cosy Friday evenings of midwinter when everyone had gone out but Jim and me. We were sitting before the fire down in the den, blowing smoke rings and settling the problems of the university and the universe with a verbose air of finality. Of course the talk gravitated to dancing and co-eds.

"I came near not being here tonight," he said. "Harriet wanted me to take a blind date to the Mu Cow formal. Blind date to a sorority formal! Just let your imagination play on that a bit. I was awfully sorry, but I had a date which I couldn't break.

"Nope. My motto is: He who has eyes, let him see. I took a blind date to a formal once." He poured another half-can of tobacco into his bull-dog briar, and this is his story:

* * * * *

It all started on one of those days just before spring vacation, when bright neck-ties and shiny shoes were beginning to appear around Prep, the usual phenomena of early April psychology. Bob Painter and I had been out for a walk that afternoon, gazing with rather vibrant interest at the red and yellow regalia of the girls from Frances Lyon school around the corner. When we got back we dropped into Bill Sandler's room; and there he was, stepping around in front of the mirror with a dress suit on.

"What's the idea?" asked Bob.

"Frances Lyon formal."

"Where'd you get it?"

"Rented it. In at Becker's on Market street. Pretty good for three dollars a night; ain't it?" It really did look pretty good on Bill's football shoulders.

"Who you going with?" Bob was interested.

"Jumbo."

"Jumbo!"

"Yeah. Mrs. Gray asked me to take her. Lilybelle has promised to fix up a program for me—get a lot of good dancers and see that I don't have to keep more than two or three. I'll dance with Vera Voorhees and Jerry Jackson and—"

"Hm." I knew that Bob was thinking about that checkered skirt Vera had worn that afternoon. A dance with Vera was not to be snipped at, even with the mitigated joy of a last dance with Jumbo.

"Say, you fellows don't want to go, do you? Mrs. Gray asked me to get dates for two or three girls who haven't got them. Darn nice girls, but they don't know anyone around here."

Bill was always getting on the inside of things like that. He knew everyone in the town before he had been at school two months, alwaps fixed up half the dates for Prep dances. And the drag he had with Mrs. Gray down at Frances Lyon! He could get away with more!

But by this time I was beginning to get interested. I hadn't had a chance yet to wear the dinner coat that had been passed on to me the fall before. It all happened in a minute. Bill borrowed a nickel to use in the telephone and was back in no time with a date for each of us. The dance was the following evening, Saturday. It was all fixed up. I was to wear my Tuxedo and Bob was to go in town and rent a dress suit at Becker's. Bill was like that.

Time was short; I immediately got the Tuxedo from my trunk, donned the coat and vest, and smirked at the mirror in that way we all have when we are somewhat pleased with ourselves. Then the whirlwind struck. Whether it was a moth or a mouse that did it I don't know; but there in the pants, just above the knee, right where it would show the most, was a hole! The calamity hit me hard, and I sat down on the bed and thought. Then came the idea. Bill and Bob were renting dress suits. Why shouldn't I? I was old enough to wear a dress suit anyway.

So it was that Bob and I caught the ten o'clock train to Philadelphia the next morning. It was all planned out. We would get the dress suits, eat dinner, see a show, perhaps, and get back in time to dress for the dance at seven. For all girls' school parties start ridiculously early.

Becker's we found easily, quite a respectable-looking establishment with twenty-two dollar suits in the window; for this was some years ago. We sidled up rather self-consciously to the Janus of prosperous build who stood in the doorway, and Bob put the question.

"We can't bother with that sort of business on Saturday. Too much else to do."

"But mister, we've got to have dress suits. We've got dates to a formal tonight.

"Sorry. Can't break the rule."

"But what'll we do?"

"Might try Miller's, Thirteenth and Greenfield. They rent 'em."

The situation was desperate. We tried every Klassy Kut tailor shop on Market street without results. The clerks in Jacob Reed's, who usually were so genial, answered with an air of injured dignity. As a last resort, we started down Thirteenth to Greenfield, wherever that might be. The neighborhood grew dingier as we walked; children became more frequent and dirty. Then we came to South street, which is, I believe, the darkest section outside the Black belt. That's the Bloody Fifth ward, you know; you remember when they had Mayor Smith up for murder after the election fights down there. Well, Greenfield street is just one block past South, but it is not black. In that short block the population varies through all the shades of brown and yellow; from shiny Ethiopian it changes to grimy Semitic. And there on the corner was Miller's. No doubt about it, for there was the name in great letters of gold filigree, just above the great red sign announcing a clearance sale. The windows were riotous with little signs showing price cuts, and in the doorway was a little man with a large nose, rubbing his hands—probably Miller himself.

"Gosh," said I. "We can't wear anything from here."

"I'd hate to; but now that we have walked all the way down here, we might as well have a look. And man! It's one o'clock, and we haven't eaten, and we've got all sorts of things to buy. We've got to get those dress suits in a hurry."

He didn't need to remind me that we hadn't eaten; and as far as taking a look was concerned, I had always wondered what was behind that sort of a window of yellow shoes and price marks.

"Dress suit? Yah. Come wit' me," said the man with the nose.

So we picked our way through the narrow aisles between the high-piled counters, up a little, narrow stairway, past a low table where a bearded gnome sat cross-legged. In a little back room our guide took down a tail-coat and held it for Bob to try on.

"Doesn't fit so bad," said Bob, looking over his shoulder at the crinkly mirror. No, it didn't fit so bad, but still—

"How much?" I asked, rather dubiously.

"Fife dollar a night, ant—fifteen dollar deposit." The man with the nose eyed the Jacob Reed label in the coat Bob had taken off.

"Five dollars! Why they only charge three over on Market street."

"Ach, but this iss fine suit. See de velvet puttons and evryting."

Yes, they were quite remarkable buttons, but Bob didn't quite seem to realize it. He was looking over his shoulder again. Bob had a good-looking back.

"Bob," I said. "Come on. We can't waste any more time here. Its one thirty and we've got to eat.

"But Jim, we've *got* to have dress suits. At least I have. It's possible for you to wear that Tux, but—well, this isn't so bad." I was stumped, but I couldn't let him wear that suit.

"Come on," I said desperately. "I just thought of a place where I know we can get them."

"Well, all right."

"Four dollar," said Miller. Bob hesitated.

"Come on," I said. "If the boys from Strathaven Prep could see us now!"

"Vat? Strathaven? You go dere? I was dere once. Fine poys! You don't need to pay deposit."

"Come on, Bob!" And I dragged him down the stairs and through the door to the street car that was just starting from the corner.

"Ach! Come pack. Two dollar," I heard, as we climbed aboard.

"Now we can get something to eat," said I as we sat down.

"No, sir. We've got to get those dress suits. It's two o'clock, man. First thing you know we'll be missing the five-three and getting there late. Where is that place you spoke of?"

"But see here. I can't live all day on a shredded wheat biscuit. We can grab something to eat in half a minute."

"Nope. We've got to get those dress suits. Where's the place?"

What was I to tell him? I must think of some place. Then it came to me. Why hadn't I thought of it before?

"Why, Van Horn's, of course. They have suits of armor, and wigs and grass skirts and everything down there. Of course they'll have dress suits."

That sounded logical to Bob; so we went to Van Horn's. They didn't have them, but they directed us to a place on North Eighth street. I felt perfectly confident now, but Bob still refused nourishment. So we started up North Eighth. You've heard me tell about North Sixth street, haven't you? Burlesque shows and rescue missions, and the lady tattooist and the angular man with the Stetson hat and a store full of rattler skins, who sells snake oil and sage-brush bitters? Well, North Eighth is just about on the edge of that, cosmetic and costume stores. Really quite respectable. The little man with the brown derby and black cigar, in the store down there, impressed me

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with that fact, as we left with the treasured boxes under our arms.

"Lucky you didn't get them on Greenfield street. They rent 'em to niggers and everybody else down there and on Girard avenue. We confine our trade to white folks."

I thought we were all fixed up now and started after my nose into a restaurant, but Bob stopped me.

"Hold on," he said. "It's four o'clock and I've got to get a hard shirt and collar."

So we raced up Market, taking to the street to avoid the elbows of the multitude that was beginning to pour from the office buildings. Into Snellenburg's or Lit's or some such establishment, where we had to fight the Saturday crowd and where I had difficulty in keeping Bob from buying a yellow shirt that was on sale. Then on to the station. Of course we had to wait at every corner, and got pocketed and separated in the crowd, and all that sort of thing; but at lest we got to Broad Street station, with ten minutes to spare by my watch. To the lunch counter, at last! I had swallowed one bite of pie when Bob grabbed my arm.

"Jim! Your watch is slow! It's five o'clock! We've got to go!" As I was trying to manage a motuhful of scalding coffee, I couldn't resist. We went.

We had only an hour to dress; so we couldn't eat supper at Prep. I needn't describe that hour; you know what those virgin efforts of ours were. But at quarter to seven we were ready, the three of us, Bill and Bob, and I.

"Just like three chorus men from a Nora Bayes show," said Bill.

I wasn't quite so enthusiastic. Somehow, those tail-coats of Bob's and mine reminded me faintly of nineteenth century text-books on oratory. But who at Frances Lyon had studied oratory?

We stopped at Doc Dyer's drug store on the way. I wanted to go to the Pie shop, but Bob refused.

"Gosh, man," he said. "We can't afford to be late to a date like this." Bob was so confoundedly punctual. So I yielded and tried to content myself by carrying an ice cream cone with me.

Of course we were early and had to wait for an interminable time. Is there any more horrible suspense than waiting for a blind date with an empty stomach? Bob's girl came first, a fair little morsel with baby blue eyes; I found out later that her man had been taken sick the day before. After seeing her I felt a little more optimistic, though it did seem as if such luck couldn't last. It didn't.

My partner was really not so bad, a plump little girl from Bradford or Philippsburg, or some such place. She'd 'a' done all right on a desert island, but she couldn't compete with that crowd of metropolitan flappers. She was evidently kind-hearted, too; for the few dances she hadn't saved for herself she had given to the cellar gang, if they have that sort of thing at a girl's school. Or maybe they just happened to be her best friends.

"I just love to dance," she said as she led off into a kind of hopping two-step. "I wish we had more dances here."

Wonderful music they had that night, Paul En's orchestra. Fine for a slow, even step, I thought, as we whirled around. And the orchestra was generous. Encore after encore they gave, with scarce an intermission. That delighted the little girl who just loved to dance. It was a beautiful party, too, with flashing gowns and white shoulders in the soft, rosy light.

"Isn't it pretty?" said my partner. "I just love to see the men in their evening clothes, so tall and straight."

Several times during the evening we hopped past Bob, gliding slowly with the fair morsel nestled close. Once I caught sight of Bill, making for a dim corner with the dark-eyed Vera, but my attention was abruptly attracted to my toe.

"Oh, excuse me!" said the plump one.

"That's all right," I said. "It was entirely my fault."

At last intermission came, and we sat down to wait for supper. Closely I watched it as the waitresses carried it by, chicken salad, sandwiches, coffee. I could smell it, taste it. They began to serve our side of the room; slowly the food came nearer. The couple next us was served; and then our waitress went astray. We waited and waited. It seemed forever that we watched that near-by couple toy with their forks. But at last we were served. Blessed food! Sweet chicken! Creamy dressing! I got just two mouthfuls.

"Oh! There's the music!" cried the plump one. "Let's not stop to eat! Let's dance! I just love to dance!"

No, my boy. No more blind dates for me. I tell you what I'll do. The next time I'm asked to take some nice girl to a sorority dance, I'll pass the opportunity on to you.

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STANLEY WEINBAUM

In Ispahan, the travelers say,
There lives a negro singing-man
Who owns an instrument of clay
On which the winds of Allah play
The folk-songs of Arabistan.
Then white-robed merchants kneel to pray,
(The custom of the Musselman.)
A splendid, swaying, white array,
In Ispahan.

Salaam Aleikum, Ben Hassan!
O hajji, see with me some day
Mad Ali howling the Koran
Behind some out-bound caravan,
Adown the long Aleppo Way,
In Ispahan.

VALE

GASTON D'ARLEQUIN

There shall be flames of violet and red
That fail and flutter, and the sighing breeze,
Dreaming upon the bosom of the seas,
Shall kiss the odours of the rose that bled
Beneath thy feet; there shall be rhapsodies
Which were divine before her blood was shed,
And I shall kneel before thee, my bent head
On the marmoreal beauty of thy knees:
Lift up thy shutting lids,—is there no tear
To dim the dying beam of purple light?
And on thy lips is there no kiss to sear
Mine own e'er life with this sad hour depart?—
In thy sweet mouth no word to slay the fright
That mutters in the gulf that was my heart?

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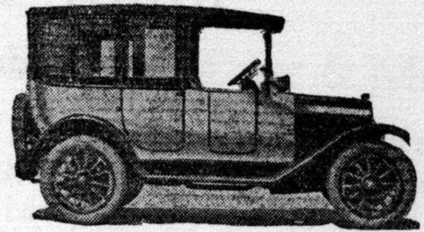

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Moth Under the Moon

MARGARET EMMERLING

The trees that circled Miranda's pool were thin and young, with dainty fingers. They did not look into the little water but thought of the black sky and reached out timorously to the spots of light that sprinkled it. There was a soft streak of silver from the moon, caressing Miranda's pool, which the young trees did not see.

Slow footfalls drew near the place, stopping and coming on again. It was a slim boy coming, whose head hung and whose fingers moved vaguely. There was a melancholy sound on his lips which the little trees did not hear; so absorbed were they in the stars over their heads. A green moth fluttered out of the darkness and swam in the air to lead him.

"I wonder what living is when two love," said the boy. "There is dust in my heart because I have given love—only given it."

The green moth blew softly between the trees and the boy followed to the place where moonlight drifted over Miranda's water. He stood there, dreaming a little.

"Pale waters, are you singing the song of love; I can hear your voice. The moth gives herself to the moon, and the little trees speak to the stars. This is the place for the mingling of them who love."

He dropped to the ground and lay yearning and moving his arms restlessly, and twisting his body. A cloud slid over the moon, leaving the water barren. Darkness fell closer, and icy small winds fingered the air. There was a swift vision in the heart of the youth.

"A flame! I will build me a flame that is scarlet and warm. I will have it here, quite close."

So out of the dead branches that had fallen from the trees the boy made a heap for his flame, dreaming as he gathered them, of the sharp, leaping thing. His face grew very warm, and his hands shook; it was wonderful to him.

Close by the side of Miranda's pool, under the thin trees, was born the crimson light, from another world. It was pure and new, it seemed a virgin thing, and very holy. Lying by its side, the boy loved it.

Its colors flowed into one another, crimson, vivid blue and scarlet, all translucent, playing, reaching. The licking point of fire burned into the heart of the boy, and he moved nearer, leaning close; for he was full of yearning. In the light, his face was beautiful.

"I love! Oh, how I love!" he murmured. "You—you heavenly beauty."

There was a soul in the flame. It seemed a human being, infinitely sweet. The joy of freedom was in its movement. The boy bent near. The glory of burning.

"I will kiss the flame," he sang, and he drew down, and pressed his mouth against the slim, lovely tip of light. There was white ecstasy in mingling with it.

Agony of death consumed his being as he moved away, and hid his face in the grass. Pain shook his body, and no sound was on his lips. His soul was black.

Starlight shone on the young trees that circled the pool, and the green moth fluttered dizzily over the dying flame. Miranda's water sang the song of love, under the moon.

OBLATION

GASTON D'ARLEQUIN

Others gem thy throat with opals
And present their fruits and honey,
And thy lovely arm is cinctured
With a band of silver

Pearls nor rubies can I offer,
But I come before thy beauty
With the song that I have fashioned
While thy love was sleeping.

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A GHAZEL

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I saw thine eyes untenanted of life, and mourned beside thy bed;
I wept, and wondered that the dead could sleep so quietly, Hélène.

I wondered if the soul that dies has perished, or as some surmise,
Thou hast the worlds before thine eyes as leaves upon a tree, Hélène.

There is a madman here who raves about a moonless land of caves,
Where still a shimmering semblance paves a pathway on the sea, Hélène.

Ah, let him seek in west and west some land more dismal than my breast,
That lightens with a wild unrest around thy memory, Hélène!

But when our pallid moon revives, and ghosts return to dusky lives,
When other men lie down with wives, and I with dreams of thee, Hélène,

I never see that livid moon but that I think how soon—how soon!—
Thy soul shall waken from its swoon—Perchance to visit me, Hélène?

AFTER THE NIGHT

GASTON D'ARLEQUIN

Eastward the sodden sky is grey
With the first ghastly streak of day,
And down the long and rutted street
The daylight creeps on iron feet,

And lifts away the veil of night
And shows to the relentless light
The little, filthy, huddled holes
That hide men's bodies and men's souls;

And this that comes,—is this a man,
That shivers in the morning air,
With quivering mouth, and face as wan

As a pale spectre's, and a stare
Bloodshot with sleep, with stinking breath,
Disgusting as a crawling Death?

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