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# The Wisconsin Literary Magazine

Publication of the Students of the University of Wisconsin

Volume XXI

Madison, January, 1922

Number 4

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own motto long enough to adjust affairs to suit the taste of the faculty and the Board of Regents. No doubt they believe the whole affair to be a matter of life and death for their organization. And any ranting at the faculty and the Regents would be equally futile, for it is a well-known and justly celebrated fact that these two bodies must look to the State Legislature for appropriations and that it is a matter of bread and butter to keep the University from becoming what is commonly known as a "hotbed of disloyalty." The ranting should be directed at state control of thought in institutions of learning or at our national conception of patriotism.

For the International Club we have nothing but laughter. It is a pretty motto they have: "Above all nations is humanity," but on close examination just a bit too radical.

**TROUBLES OF THE COSMOPOLITES.** The row in the International Club, in which an attempt is being made to oust all Socialist members, has not been settled at the present writing. One hears reports after almost every meeting of the club which verge on the ridiculous and the unbelievable and which are highly amusing in their colorful details.

But to those who have not been at the University long enough to have lost their power of serious and independent meditation or those who have had the strength of character to retain this admirable faculty in spite of the years spent here, the affair has its serious side.

One could rant for hours at the "narrow-mindedness" of the club and be perfectly justified in the ranting. But the causes of the affair lie deeper than that. No doubt the officers of the club believe that they are reading a hand-writing on the wall concerning all organizations here at our institution of free thought which are even tinged with radicalism, and forget their

## EDITORS

PAUL GANGELIN	MARGARET EMMERLING
EARL HANSON	LLOYD GEORGE
HORACE GREGORY	PENELL CROSBY

## LA NUIT

GASTON D'ARLEQUIN.

Silently above the whispering cedars  
Drifts the moon across the sapphire heavens,  
And a quiet veil of mist lies dreaming  
Where the trembling waters kiss the shore.

Sighing breezes murmur in the darkness,  
Scented with the honey of the flowers,  
And my mouth still seeks the soft caresses  
Of the streaming of your raven hair.

# Ramifications of the Wisconsin Mind

BY ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

When Mr. H. L. Mencken and Mr. George Jean Nathan between them concocted the "American Credo," they gave, quite naturally, only the background of the average untutored American mind; they did not follow up the development of general ideas and beliefs of those who have the benefit of our higher institutions of learning. This is a deficiency that should be supplied. After several months of research we are prepared to make public what we have found to be the material with which the undergraduate mind in general busies itself.

There are, of course, certain issues like religion and love and prohibition which are the eternal stuff of undergraduate discussion; these we shall pass over. This compendium consists of the things that make up the substrata of the student's mind, those topics of conversation and those beliefs which are conceived and discussed when one is eating breakfast or shaving or reading the Daily Cardinal or walking down the Hill. We do not, in presenting the matter that follows this preface, pretend to give a criticism either of the student nor of the forces which shape his destinies. If there are any judgments, they are inherent; we add nothing—we merely articulate and select.

We do not expect, certainly, that everyone in the University will subscribe to each of these paragraphs, but everyone talks or thinks about some of them, and some of us talk or think about all of them. We may be making a contribution to the scientific investigation of the manners and thought of the student—we hope that we are benefiting both science and literature—but if we fail in that, we feel that we and the University at large will be compensated by the pleasure of seeing in print the friendly, reassuring forms of the thoughts that are our daily companions.

Probably it is necessary to state in clear and unequivocal words for the information of up-state editorial writers and serious-minded people *in universitate* that we are not setting down facts or expressing opinions.

At the University of Wisconsin one believes or says, or has believed or has said:

1.

That everyone who is expelled from school develops into a great man and comes back after ten years to tell undergraduates how Wisconsin has degenerated.

2.

That every man who works his way through school gets higher grades than one who lives on his father's money.

3.

That nobody reads anything in the *Cardinal* but the Skyrockets.

4.

That all coeds come here to find a husband.

5.

That Wisconsin would be a better school if it were not coeducational.

6.

That William Ellery Leonard has a poetic temperament.

7.

That the Dean of Men has a trained army of snoopers who report to him the peccadilloes of everyone in school and who find out everything eventually.

8.

That there is more drinking now than there was before Prohibition.

9.

That all young instructors spend their afternoons drinking tea, and that their minds are rendered useless by too much communing with abstract thought.

10.

That all coeds smoke but won't admit it.

11.

That all the tax-payers in the state are farmers.

12.

That they constantly write to President Birge telling him how the University should be conducted.

13.

That all Phi Betes are doddering idiots who wear horn-rimmed glasses and ill-fitting clothes.

14.

That all student elections are crooked.

15.

That all engineers wear flannel shirts and can't speak correct English.

16.

That all Madison policemen are waiting for opportunities to shoot University students.

17.

That the Social Science Club is in direct communication with Lenin and Trotzky.

18. That honorary societies are mutual admiration societies.
19. That if a popular girl goes to a mixer her reputation is ruined.
20. That Kehl's is a rough dance hall.
21. That Professor Kiekhofer is a great orator.
22. That no professor knows anything aside from his own subject.
23. That there is something unusual about a girl who is chosen Prom Queen.
24. That the Dean of Women forbids girls to say "soup."
25. That Professor Carl Russell Fish would be a success in vaudeville.
26. (Female) That men who go to Eastern schools are rich and handsome.
27. (Male) That men who go to Eastern schools cannot play football.
28. That more dates are made in the library than anywhere else.
29. That the Dean of Men will climb up your fire-escape if you have an unauthorized party.
30. That the Co-op charges twice the value of everything it sells.
31. That the man who doesn't know what his profession is to be by the time he is a sophomore is doomed to failure.
32. That Walter Eckersall is unfair to Wisconsin athletes.
33. That co-eds stay out after hours and climb in windows to evade the law.
34. That writing communications to the *Cardinal* helps improve the world.
35. That every other man in school belongs to a certain fraternity.
36. That all members of another fraternity comb their hair the same way.
37. That all members of a third fraternity are millionaires.
38. That Bosco is the chief rushing asset of a fourth fraternity.
39. That the Athletic Department hates to sell a student a good seat for a football game.
40. That all Freshmen wear green caps.
41. That it is good for them to wear green caps.
42. That the Student Senate is null and void and kowtows to the faculty.
43. That going into Dean Sellery's office is like walking into a lion's den.
44. That English Survey gives one culture.
45. That all landladies talk your arm off.
46. That it is impossible to have anything printed in the Lit unless you are a member of the editorial staff.
47. That engineers and lawyers hate each other.
48. That the ski jump is used for fussing.
49. That professors shoot craps in the University Club.
50. That Dean Nardin really means well.
51. That the editor of the "Nuisance" made enough money from it to compensate him for losing his job.
52. That the purpose of a college education is to teach one to "meet people."

# One-Tenth Cat

ELIZABETH KATZ.

A wise priest once said, "Women are nine-tenths angel and one-tenth cat." After much experience with various Women's Guilds and Ladies' Auxiliaries, he concluded that this tenth part was reserved for their dealing with one another. He was a very wise priest.

Now the way in which girls in a college boarding house love one another is very beautiful. They are affectionate, they kiss each other repeatedly—at night and before and after a three-day vacation. In fact, they will continue to love each other in just this manner forever and ever,—that is, until something happens.

Something had happened at Mrs. Garth's boarding house, which you will understand was run under the supervision and with the approval of many deans and deanlets of the university. Everything was as proper as possible. Mrs. Garth made a most conscientious "house mother" and Ethel was born to be a "house chairman" which means that she had entered and remained in this world for the sole purpose of seeing that the door is locked at ten o'clock, that the quiet hours ordained by the deanlets are kept, and that no one should be indiscreet enough to bathe after eleven.

So much and no more was Ethel to do, but she had appropriated other duties, and was loved accordingly. In fact, these additional acts of kindness were the occasion of a meeting in Doris' room. Anne had been insulted. It was Doris' duty as Anne's room mate to point out to her that she had been insulted, and she did so with great fluency and point, to the joy of the girls across the hall.

The girls were distributed artistically,—quite with an eye to effect. Mary, the neighbor, was perched on the dresser polishing her nails. Her pajamas were lavender, her room mate's were pongee with gold satin trimming. Anne and Doris affected pink. It looked well with their black and tan room.

"Well, if I'm insulted, I'll wait till I can get even sweetly and completely," Anne waved a pink foot gracefully to indicate the very completeness of the retribution.

The insult had been very great,—worth deferring the punishment until it could be done properly. So they waited with caressing lips and murderous hearts. And presently Ethel handed herself over to them.

They were gathered in Anne's room again, rejoicing over the latest gossip and surrounded by many ex-

cellent books, doubtless by way of setting, for they never looked at them. Then Ethel entered. "Made her entrance" would perhaps express it better, for Ethel was inclined to be dramatic. She was considered by her mother very handsome, and she herself admitted she was graceful and that her hair was beautiful. For the good of that hair, Ethel would never wear it puffed. This won her the scorn of all the girls and the unqualified approval of several deanlets and even of one dean. As for her grace, it must have centered in her arms, for her hips were almost imposing, and, as Doris was wont to say, "My dear, she simply *hasn't* any ankles!"

The conversation turned on a girl who had been found on the drive, encircled by a man's arm. Ethel stayed to hear. She was sentimental as well as dramatic, by nature, and it was suspected that she was engaged to a man about whose career as a "fusser" Doris had much evidence. At any rate Doris suspected any man with thick, red lips, and had nicknamed him "Squeeze-me."

"I don't think it was anyone's business if his arm was around her," said Ethel. "At least, if it had happened to me, I should say that it concerned only me and the man!"

Then Anne, without thought and with no purpose beyond japing with Ethel, quoted one of her brother's favorite phrases. "Yes, Ethel, only you and the man and the 'cows that feed in the meadow.'"

Ethel was startled. "What do you mean? The cows that feed in the meadow!"

Anne looked at Doris. This was interesting. It would bear following up. "Why, Ethel, don't you remember those sympathetic, gentle-eyed cows?"

Ethel was plainly troubled. Slowly and clearly and looking first at one and then the other she asked, "Who told you about those cows?"

This must not be allowed to drop. Anne argued quite logically that where there were cows there would be a tree, and she fairly purred, "Ethel! That tree! Don't you remember that tree?"

Ethel was registering agony with the back of a hand on her forehead and with several elbows at dangerous angles. "You know that too?" she gasped. "Do you know about the army blanket?" she asked as one who wanted to hear all.

The girls were properly grateful for the lift, and

Doris gloated, "Why of course we know all about the army blanket. We're knowin' youngsters. You'd be surprised at all we know."

From the bed, Anne said dreamily, "Did you know Doris had a dance with Squeeze-me at the officers' formal last week?"

This apparently irrelevant remark explained everything to Ethel. It took her two hands to hold her head as she moaned, "Oh!" and turned from the door. There was riot in the black and tan room.

"This is the most beautiful thing we have ever done," gasped Anne as she pounded Doris to make her stop laughing. "Let's get out of this before she comes back. We can't give it away now."

Doris sat up and wiped her eyes. "All right, let's go get a hamburger. Oh, I'm so sick. I thought I'd have to laugh. Holy cats, those cows! those cows!"

They stumbled down the stairs and returned at ten o'clock after consuming vast quantities of hamburgers, shredded wheat, and malted milk. The faddists favored nutrition that year, and it was a common thing to see dress suits and evening gowns on the stools before the counters of the dairy lunches eating shredded wheat at two A. M. The style has changed since, but no matter.

As they passed her room, Mary called Anne and asked, "What have you done to Ethel? She's been in here bawling quarts and says that you've told her at least ten incidents of the night when Squeeze-me proposed. She's quite het up. Thinks he must have told Doris. She made me promise not to tell you."

"Ten? Oh dear, I thought I'd stopped laughing. What was there besides the cows and the trees and the army blanket?"

"Oh, the little boy that they gave their lunch to and lots of others. She said you told her about them all. What's the dope?"

Then Anne explained how they had fallen on the scent accidentally and Ethel's dramatic acceptance of it. "It was holy, very, very holy," said Anne thoughtfully. She had not forgotten the insult.

"I promised to tell you to go to Ethel's room when you got in. You'll have to go. How I love those interviews. Come in and see me when you finish and don't let on you know about the engagement. I promised, and Brutus is an honorable man. 'Bye.'"

Anne undressed slowly. College girls do all their heavy work in pajamas and this might be distinctly "heavy." With a wash-cloth in one hand and a soap dish in the other to give the call a casual air, Anne left the room with Doris' blessing after promising not to forget a word that passed.

Ethel was propped up in bed with the eternal hand

at her brow. The hair which Mrs. Garth's young ladies had separately and collectively sworn to set afire or cut off before the end of the term, lay in a neat braid half way down the white cover. With a preliminary sigh, she plunged into the subject.

"I don't know whether you know it, and I want you to promise not to tell Doris, but the night which you described was the night on which Hal and I became engaged."

Then she leaned forward and extended her arm with conscious grace. "Anne dear, tell me one thing. Did Hal tell Doris or did someone see us? I must know."

Ann was sorry and she was sympathetic, but she had promised Doris that she would never tell. To be truthful, she could not forgive herself for having told as much as she had. She was very sad and very subdued, and she clutched the wash cloth to keep from laughing.

Ethel sighed again. "I dont want you to break your word and I don't blame you for the joke, but I must know. I must!"

Anne shook her head, sighed, and at last said, apropos of nothing at all, "Sometimes I *hate* men."

Ethel clasped her hands convulsively. "Thank you. Thank you. You have told me everything!"

"Gosh!" said Anne desperately. She knew she would laugh soon. "Perhaps I'd better go before I tell some more. Goodnight."

She lay on her cot panting, and scarcely had she given the choicest bits to Doris, when a knock was heard and Ethel's voice asking to see Doris for a few minutes in her room. "O Min! don't give it away now," sobbed Anne, as Doris pranced out.

That was a long interview. Ethel wept, and having wept a great deal, was shaken by dry sobs. It was very affecting and covered several of Doris' giggles. Otherwise it was useless, for it seemed very soon that Doris, too, was under promise not to tell anything. Doris was sorry, quite as sorry as Anne had been, and she blamed only herself. She did not want Ethel to blame Anne. Anne could not resist a joke.

"I do not blame her," said Ethel sadly. "If that is what the campus is talking about, it is only chance that made me hear it through Anne." Then for the third time that evening she leaned forward and repeated, "I don't want you to tell Anne, but the night she described was the night on which I became engaged!" Doris was looking at the lamp very steadily and with her eyes very wide open. She was quite incapable of looking at Ethel. Ethel sighed and lay back among the pillows.

"Doris, was it really as bad as Anne said? Did Hal tell you everything?"

"I wouldn't feel so bad about it," she said soothingly, but implying that it was much, much worse than Ethel could possibly imagine. Ethel sobbed and Doris looked at the lamp and recalled the insult. She needed strength to be cruel and also to keep from laughing.

Then Ethel rose up and spoke in a voice which was the pride of the public speaking department, "Now I can never marry Hal!"

The insult must have given Doris strength, for she was almost girlish and loving as she took Ethel into her arms and whispered, "You were never made for each other anyway."

Ethel registered surprise. "What makes you think that?" she asked.

"Oh, just to see you together, one can see that you are symbolic of the noble and *he* of the base."

Ethel pondered a while and then admitted the truth of this. She always endeavored to be truthful. After a little decent silence, Doris smoothed out the blankets and said, "You ought to try to sleep, dear. It's been a hard day." And then in a most motherly way Doris turned out the light, opened the window, and kissed Ethel good night. Did I not say that they *always* kiss each other,—these loving college girls?

Mary entertained callers that evening and heard

the whole affair. Doris was stuttering and it is to be feared that she had an extreme case of hiccups. At least her speech was incoherent as she stammered, "She she, she told me that you described the night on which she became engaged. I, I thought I'd die."

"And she admitted she was noble. Hit me, somebody, please," begged Anne. "I never did love Squeeze-me, but I never would have thought of telling her that."

The party broke up at one o'clock and they got at their studying for the next day. Those lessons may have been a little erratic, but they were finished before the girls lay down for a three-hour nap.

There must have been an interview between Hal and Ethel the next day, though the girls knew nothing beyond the fact that Ethel combed her hair after the style and assumed the expression of a martyr. This glimpse was very unsatisfactory, but all was well when Doris came dashing in a week later.

"It's really off!" she cried. "Ethel cut Squeeze-me on the street. He got red and she tried to look lofty, but she looked around and watched him turn the corner. When he'd disappeared, she said to me that no matter what happened, one man had loved her though he had proved unworthy, and then she sighed one of those awful heaves."

"Beautiful," said Anne. "In fact, it might be called holy. I guess we'll call the little insult avenged, *n'est-ce pas?*"

## Sonnet

WALTER K. SCHWINN.

The rain outside, and here within, a fire,  
 Casting its ruddy glow across the room,  
 Makes shadows like light fingers on a lyre,  
 Or growing patterns on a figured loom.  
 We sit in silence, save the back-log's boom,  
 Conversing with few words—for they are pale—  
 And many pauses wherein thoughts can bloom  
 Adown the dim-lit ways of fancy's trail.

If ever, in my later days, I seem  
 Deep lost in life and murky, restless street,  
 My vision gone, dear aspirations—dust,  
 Old friend, come to me then, and wake the dream  
 Of other days, when life called, fresh and sweet,  
 Give me again your comradeship and trust.

## Aftermath

CHERYL MOHR.

Idly we met, beneath an idle moon,  
As idly played,  
Until we found the summer fled too soon,  
And stood dismayed.

Parting, the hearts we did not know we had  
Awoke in pain  
Which we, who thought our love but moon-mist clad,  
Could not explain.

Through years—these rankling, unrelenting years—  
Each of us knows  
Preying remembrance lives, untranquillized by tears,  
And living, grows.

## Don Juan?

EARL HANSON

They are walking on the road that has the great trees at its side.

She is looking at him out of the corners of her laughing eyes. She is swinging her foot, she is swinging her shoulders. And she is close to him,—closer than she has ever been before.

Why does his heart beat like that? Why does his breath become shorter? Why, indeed?

Everything in the whole world vanishes for him but the one woman with the swaying shoulders and the laughing eyes. He himself vanishes. The shy, correct scholar disappears in the swinging of a foot and the beating of a heart. All the past years of his life vanish at the touch of a shoulder.

He is a gypsy, dancing the *Cachucha*. See how she swings her hands? They are made for castanets, those hands, for the gay abandon of laughter and song and love. See her lithe body? It is made to be lifted triumphantly into the air, in the mad climax of a dance under the fig-trees.

He is a Don Jose and she is his Carmen.

She looks at him out of the corners of her laughing eyes, and she swings her foot and her body, and her shoulder is rubbing against his.

Why does his heart beat like that?

She is made to be lifted triumphantly into the air.

Suddenly he picks her up in his arms and carries her along the road that has the great dark trees at its side. Her hands are folded about his neck, and a mysterious, Madonna-like smile plays on her mouth.

Why does his breath come shorter? Why, indeed?

Because the road is rough and she is not as light as she seemed.

The road leads up a hill. He *will* reach the top of the hill, he will if it kills him.

Why does she close her eyes? And why does her smile become more pronounced? Does she notice how he is laboring?

He will reach the top of the hill. His knees are beginning to weaken. His heart begins to beat like a trip-hammer. His breath comes in short gasps. His arms are giving way. Slowly he lets her down to the ground. They are only half-way up the hill. He is not a gypsy at all, and neither is he dancing the *Cachucha*. He is a shy, correct scholar, greatly embarrassed.



# The Man in the Moon

## A FARCE IN ONE ACT

LLOYD GEORGE.

### Characters.

Proprietor ----- With a sense of humor  
 Young Woman ----- With a desire to write plays  
 Young Man ----- With a desire to write stories  
 Newsboy ----- With a shrill voice  
 Policeman ----- With a thick sole

*Place.*—The Moon, a shabby restaurant in the notorious District of New Orleans.

*Time.*—An evening in summer.

*Setting.*—The double-doored entrance is at the back of the stage. Along the right of the stage is a counter holding at one end, a large coffee boiler, at the other, a small show-case containing cigarettes and cigars. The left wall is hung with a few cheap lithographs. A door leading to the kitchen is at the right, just below the front-stage-end of the counter. Three oil-cloth covered tables are set in the open space.

Curtain rises on the Young Woman, who is piling china-ware, in an awkward fashion, on a tray. The proprietor, watching from the counter, is interested and perplexed by her awkwardness.

Proprietor

Say, where did you learn to juggle crocks?

Young Woman

Why—why, I dont recall just now.

Proprietor

Recall? Recall! Say, don't try to pull that stuff down here. That's one of them words we all know and dont use unless we're runnin' for office or drunk—any man's liable t'be careful when he's drunk—Say, do you drink?

Young Woman

Why—ah—h, I dont know. That is—I mean—Is it necessary?

Proprietor

Huh? Necessary? Well I'm—Are you tryin' t' kid me?

Young Woman

Oh, no! I should say not. I just meant that—that—I thought maybe I had to in order to continue working here.

Proprietor

Say, what d' you *think* this is? I want t' tell you that I run a respectable joint.

Young Woman

Oh, I didn't mean to insinuate anything! I merely wanted to know.

Proprietor

I guess you aint worked such an awful lot—Kinda funny you don't remember where y'slung your first hash—Aint it?

Young Woman

Oh, I suppose it is rather unusual, but really I have a terribly poor memory; I used to have the hardest time with math—(Stops, blushing and confused.)

Proprietor

Huh? What?

Young Woman

Oh, nothing, nothing at all. (She picks up the tray, balancing it awkwardly. Proprietor frowns, starts to talk, changes his mind and turns to work the coffee boiler. As the young woman passes him, his elbow jogs the tray, threatening to spill the dishes onto the floor.)

Young Woman

Good gracious! I didn't—

Proprietor

There y' go again. Such language! Y' can't tell me *you* ever worked in a hash-joint before. That language of yours don't belong in the District, and the way you handle them crocks!

Young Woman

Now I don't care! The girls at school always said I—(Stops, blushing, realizing she has said something she didn't want to.)

Proprietor

Oh—Ho-o! Now I got *you*. You went to one of them girl's boardin' schools—Ho—Ho-o-o.

Young Woman

I did not; I went to a university.

Proprietor

Yea—Yea—What's the difference? (Seems to have had an idea.) Say, I bet you run away, now, didn't you? Oh, I know; I read all about them things, lots of times, in the papers. I bet your old man is lookin' all over for you, right now! Say, you'll get me in bad—

Young Woman

No—No—*No!* Honestly; don't be so romantically foolish. I'm just working here to—to—

Proprietor

Yea—Yea—Make it a good one, you got lots of time.

Young Woman

(Fiercely) Will you listen to me? I don't care if I do get fired; I'm not going to let any man accuse me of doing such a childish, romantic thing. Life isn't at all like that.

Proprietor

Well, let's hear about you; and quit tellin' me about life!

Young Woman

I want to write plays; plays, shows. Can you get that through your stupid brain?

Proprietor

First time I knew I was thick headed, (laughing) but go ahead.

Young Woman

Well, I've written some things already, but the managers told me to see some real life before I wrote anymore. That's what I'm here for.

Proprietor

Sounds all right. But, why didn't you spill it in the first place?

Young Woman

Why, I thought you wouldn't understand. I didn't think you would let me stay if you knew I was watching the customers.

Proprietor

Some of 'em need it. The way you sized me up, I'll say you don't know real life. How'd you happen to pick the Moon to do your scoutin' around in?

Young Woman

I read all about it in the Sunday supplement. What an unusual collection of customers it had and what a queer proprietor—

Proprietor

Heh! Hold on! What d' you mean, queer. If I get ahold of the guy that said I was—

Young Woman

Why, that's a compliment.

Proprietor

Yea? Well, maybe—

Young Woman

Yes, and you know the article said that you were always working practical jokes on your customers. And then, when I learned that the Moon was in the District—why, I thought it was an excellent place to learn about characters and real life.

Proprietor

What d'ya mean characters?

Young Woman

Oh, anybody with funny clothes and an unusual

way of speaking. You must know lots of them around the District, so you'll be able to help me. You're pretty well known in the District, aren't you?

Proprietor

Yea—Yea—Oh, I know all the famous guys and women. There's a pile of them, I want t'tell you.

Young Woman

You will let me stay here then, and perhaps help me get material?

Proprietor

Oh, sure, you can stick around. You're pretty and that makes up for what y'don't know about slingin' hash. But I don't believe I can help y'much.

Young Woman

Don't be silly. All you have to do is to point out the notorious men and women when they come in. Are they in here very often?

Proprietor

Pretty reg'lar.

Young Woman

Does that Gentleman Louie, who is always in the newspaper headlines come here when he's not in jail?

Proprietor

In jail! What t'hell!

Young Woman

Oh, don't be afraid; I would never inform the police. Please tell me when he comes in?

Proprietor

What're you sputin' about? Gentleman Louie? Gentleman Louie? (Proprietor frowns thoughtfully) In the papers is he?

Young Woman

Yes, for breaking into banks and for shooting policemen. He's such a terrible fellow that I want to see him. Do you know him very well?

Proprietor

Huh! Wel-ll—I—I guess he comes in here now and then.

Young Woman

Then I'm sure that you know everything about him, don't you?

Proprietor

Know about him! Why, if you knew how much I know about that guy—ah-a-a. (Finishes weakly.)

Young Woman

How queerly you speak of him. You're sure you're not trying to deceive me?

Proprietor

Deceive you! Say, when I kid you, you'll know it, maybe.

Young Woman

I guess you *are* being honest, at least I'll believe you.

(Continued on page 101)

# Concerning Humanized Intellectuals

EARL HANSON.

If a young lady should walk along a stray road in Spring and keep her thoughts to herself and let the sunshine and the wind and the trees take care of themselves, and let the beauties of nature act on her soul in their own unmolested little way, she might well be a very nice young lady, but she would be obviously plain and intellectually lacking. Should she, on the other hand, take special care to notice the birdies and the greenness of things, and exclaim to herself in iambic pentameter on the grandeur of Gods creations, or even tell herself in Latin that Spring has come, then would there indeed be hopes for her. She would show the rudiments of an artistic conception of things, combined with an unbounded love for pure culture and classical learning.

And should she go farther than that and tell the whole world after she got home how grand it felt to hear the trees rustle, and remember to the dot just what she had quoted to herself in Latin, and instill into her listeners a burning desire to bask in the glories of springtime, and an irresistible hankering after culture, coupled with an incidental admiration of her own achievements, then would she indeed be doing a great work in the world, and then would she indeed be an intellectual.

Should a young man enter the house of a professor and feel perfectly at ease because the professor is jovial and human, and because the furnishings of the house are tasteful, without shrieking to the observer that they are artistic, and should the young man talk with the professor on anything that came into his head, from the obscenities in Horace to the latest bill at the Orph, without slipping in a veiled hint of admiration here and there for the professor's accomplishments and perfectly beautiful personality, or without even commenting on the furnishings of the house, then indeed would there be something woefully lacking in that young man. And should he even go so far as to leave out of his conversation any references whatever to the great men of the world, from Pericles to Freud, or to leave out all mention of books, from Chaucer to the modern Norwegians, or to refrain from even hinting at the thrills he derived from the presentation of *Mrs. Warren's Profession* at the Little Theater in the Village, or from commenting on the artistic and educational value of the little-theater

movement, then would his deficiencies be lamentable enough to arouse the utter and just contempt of the whole select body of the learned and to call forth bombastic editorials in the leading medium of expression on the beauties of pure culture and the damnable ignorance of the uneducated.

A truism that is only too often lost sight of in the pitiful and frenzied striving of most of the members of the younger generation after purely material gain, but that shrieks aloud to all the elect who know that Keats is no plural noun is that either a man is educated or he is not.

Should a young man have a real and sincere love for learning and culture, and should he take a genuine delight in books, then would he indeed be an excellent and desirable young man. But should he, because of any foolish and false idea of modesty and good taste, or because of any absurd realization of his own insufficiency, refrain from inflicting his shining pearls of wisdom on his fellow-men, or even refrain from telling them that he has a pearl or two of wisdom inside him, then would there be something woefully wrong with him. And should he even go so far as to refrain from joining anything, from joining mutual admiration societies or editorial staffs or discussional groups, or from reading the *Atlantic* or the *Nation* in public, then indeed would we sadly shake our heads and insist that, for the good of society, such a man must not only never be mentioned, but must even be supposed not to exist at all.

Such a young man, by virtue of the fact that he cannot or will not talk, or by virtue of the fact that he does not presume to write, is an absolute intellectual nonentity as far as the rest of the world is concerned. Sometimes he does not even expose himself to cultural courses in the college of Letters and Science, but chooses to spend his time learning to feed pigs in the agricultural school, or to keep accounts in the school of commerce, or to play football. Then we have sufficient reason for heaping him with abuse because he has never announced to the world that he knows perfectly well that Shelley was no oyster, but a whale of a poet, and because he does not consider his favorite professor a dear, kind, delightful, boyish old gentleman, but rather a hell of a good fellow who knows his subject, treats you like a man, and can tell a shady story without scruples or qualms of remorse.

Such a monstrosity as an intellectual who keeps his mouth shut and doesn't care if nobody else in the world knows he's an intellectual, such a monstrosity, I repeat, as a man who takes a delight in culture and classical learning for their own sake, and not for the sake of prestige and a smoother flow of large and luscious words, such a beast is, thank heaven, not to be

found at this dear correct old university of ours. Or if, by any chance, he should exist, the combined efforts of all the societies for the promotion of higher learning (as if higher learning, by the way, were sick and needed the support of endless societies) are sufficient to keep him effectually hidden from the eyes of the outside world.

## Design With Motive in Black

PENNELL CROSBY

My colors, gray and violet,  
 Dear red, so warm (oh, wooden world!)  
 Flame orange—red and yellow met  
 And kissing, 'gainst each other curled;

Pale green, like tender leaves in Spring;  
 Blue—your eyes glancing, clean and bold;  
 Purple—wild asters opening  
 Fringed petals purple above the gold.

Fall sunlight slanting through the glade;  
 Poplars with fluttering round leaves, chrome  
 Yellow to ochre, drift and fade  
 Into the brown road that leads home.

Love, had I known what love could mean,  
 When you loved me; and what a drouth  
 The want of you,—would I have seen  
 The black scorn that now curves your mouth?

## Psycho-Analysis

BY GWENDOLYN JONES

I know my roommate perfectly—yes, perfectly. All her little prejudices, her foibles, her irritations, her achievements, her virtues—I know them. I have observed, I have remembered, I have deduced. I have made a psychological study of her, and I can state conclusively that she is an individualist, and a bolshevistic Pharisee. Oh, there is no doubt but what I understand her!

On the other hand, she does not know me at all. Many of my actions, almost all of my thoughts, are unknown to her. I hide them from her, because I am me, and she would not understand me, and I would not wish her to do so. A few of the little external details of my life she knows—of when I sleep, and how I comb my hair—but me, the real me—I hide from her in an unexplorable darkness—I peer at her through a crack—I mock her from around the next

corner before I run away quickly where she cannot follow.

For, as says someone, ancient and wise, whose name I have forgotten, each man is a world. Within the hulk of animated flesh lie depths upon depths of spirit. Within their hidden darknesses there are, what strange unknown colors, drifting and folding voluptuously; strains of what fine, rare music; what inscrutable processions, travelling with flaming torches to what high places? Man hardly knows his own soul; he cannot enter the mazes of another's.

But I have analyzed my roommate psychologically. I feel that I understand her. On the other hand, I am sometimes disposed to believe that she thinks she understands me. Well—somehow—perhaps—she knows just as much as I do.

## Apud Inferos

GASTON D'ARLEQUIN.

The skies are copper that were azure then,  
 And for the sirens singing on the wave  
 Billows of lava, tempest tortured, lave  
 Curled, hideous things that are the souls of men,  
 And ghastly Charon rows his ghastly freight  
 Across the stream to Hade's dread domain,—  
 'Blaspheme, accursed ones, for hope is vain,  
 And grovel at the feet of grinning Fate.'

They answer, O what dire reply is this—  
 One clasps another in a fiendish glee,  
 Her words of love are hateful with their hiss,  
 Her naked body filthy with his kiss:  
 This once was love that now is infamy,  
 This love's sweet passion changed to ribaldry.

## My Landlady

AILEEN CASEY.

I wonder about being old. I wonder about the inevitableness of youth's intolerance for old age; so often its only protection against the lack of understanding which age has for youth.

Our landlady is old. I think she must have been pretty once; she might even be pretty now if she'd try. But her hair is grey and wispy, her eyes are dull, and she never laughs. She giggles at the baby now and then, she smiles far away and sad smiles, but she doesn't laugh. I wonder about people who never laugh.

She sits in the middle of a dirty room,—she isn't a good housekeeper,—in dark horrid dresses, and hums dreary songs. Her husband treats her like a child, pets her, humors her; and manages her to a certain extent. He doesn't love her. He couldn't. I'm sorry for him. He's such a nice clean man, and he wants a cheerful home. He tries to make up to us what she lacks.

She doesn't like us. She hates us when she calls us to the telephone, she shudders when we creak up the stairs, and she thinks we take too many baths. She seems to resent our youth, our joy in living, our good spirits. She seems to shut herself up when we

come near her as if she didn't want us to see her torn, ragged life—we who still expect so much of life.

The other night our room was cold, and I went down to ask about the furnace. It was never her fault—always the furnace. There she sat, the same huddled-up being, and I stood speechless before her. I suddenly became conscious of my youth, my strength, my power over this fragile torn little thing, and I turned away. I could go out and run on the hills and get warm; she couldn't do that. Her life was over, she was just an empty bottle waiting to be put away on a pantry shelf.

Sometimes I think life must have been very hard with her. Put her up and laughed at her; stamped on her dreams; and left her, just the physical part of her with the inside all dead, to go on with life. Sometimes I think she must have had a big tragedy; but something big couldn't have left her so empty.

Maybe it's just because she has to have university students for roomers. When you're old it can't be enjoyable to share your house with someone you don't like.

Maybe queer analytical young people aren't nice to live with anyway.

# Semiramis

S. G. WEINBAUM

I cast him money where he sate  
Without the gates of Babylon,  
And stood me by, myself to wait  
Their opening at the rise of sun  
For trade, and to the other one,  
Whose sightless eyes and ragged guise  
Had moved me, "Come," said I, "Anon  
A tale—No lies!

\* \* \* \* \*

Now Onnes was the only son  
By Assur, of his foreign Queen,  
Or, some say, by the Myrmidon  
Who kept her door at night. (I ween  
That either one the fair Hellene  
Had taken in, nor deemed it sin  
To praise thus much the Lampsacene.)  
But, to begin

My story: Onnes when a youth,  
As an envoy was sent away  
(Because his hands were white, forsooth!  
And he was loved in Nineveh.)  
To the Barbarians, to play  
With honeyed words against their swords,  
And treat with them, perchance to pay  
In gold or herds.

And there he met her (So 'tis told)  
In Ascalon. His caravan  
Bore gifts of purple and of gold,  
For the pale hordes of grim Iran  
Were yet unseen. Here for a span  
Onnes delayed, and ever swayed  
By passions that do mould a man,  
Sought out a maid.

But she, barbaric prophetess,  
Held to her high, wild, mountain cave;  
She would not curse, she would not bless,  
She worshipped not, nor did engrave  
Her name upon the architrave  
Or lofty wall of some high hall,  
But silent sat, while her black slave  
Spoke not at all,

But brought her jewels from the ocean,  
Heart of sharks, and lizard's teeth,  
And while she mixed her magic potion,  
Watched the kettle boil and seethe,  
Or fed the ravenous lamp beneath,  
And more and more sweet oil did pour,  
And nightly did his sword unsheath  
To guard her door.

Onnes knew not her mysteries;  
He was content to serve her there,  
To bring her snakes, to trail and seize  
The lean, lithe leopard from his lair,  
For she was most surpassing fair.  
And never he in ecstasy  
Swayed to the monody of prayer  
Or litany.

For naught to him were stars that roll  
Across the harpy-haunted heights,  
The flame of her divining bowl,  
Wherein she gazed those magic nights;  
Never for him inspired flights  
In thought-winged cars up to the stars:  
He never knew the satellites  
Of ruddy Mars.

He found her name, Semiramis,  
Sweeter than singing summer seas  
That fondle Heliopolis,  
And twist the vessels at the quays,  
And softer than the melodies  
Of priests; and so he wooed her, though  
She frowned, for his own rhapsodies  
Made his love grow.

"Your voice is like a rush-bird's note,  
Half-heard at dawn, and very far  
Over the Nile, and on your throat  
I would hang pearls where daisies are:  
For your wild rose a nenuphar.  
Since I am Onnes, Phrygian moneys  
Are my flowers; my lupanar  
Is sweet with honeys.

"Your breasts are soft, your words are sweet,  
Your eyes are like fantastic lights  
That flicker down a city street,  
And I would lie with you of nights."  
But she her holy mystic writes  
Ceased not, nor spoke nor moved. With smoke  
From urns carven of chrysolites  
She did invoke.

Thus Onnes urged, and his hot wooing  
Pressed on the maiden, who, I swear,  
Loved him withal. His own undoing  
Lurked in her greenish eyes: no care  
Fretted the lover, and if there  
Had chanced to show him all the woe  
That should be his, Istar the Fair,  
He had done so.

His galley of an hundred oars  
Lay moored within a land-locked bay.  
The maiden won, they left the shores  
Of dalliance; to Nineveh  
He led Semiramis away,  
Where the Great King was reveling  
Through the long night and half the day,  
In praise of Spring.

He holds a single jewel-set bone  
As scepter. Aromatic gums  
Make sweet his giant ivory throne;  
He couches on chrysanthemums.  
His rising sounds a thousand drums,  
His wine is honey; antimony  
Stains his eyes; the path he comes  
Is chalcedony.

In his high hall they gazed upon  
The heritor of Assur's crown,  
But his envoy from Ascalon  
He scorned since great Iran was down.  
Onnes he eyed with sullen frown,  
But she was fair beyond compare;  
He offered her his wide renown  
And throne to share.

She knelt to kiss his garment's hem,  
Nor had she eyes for Onnes now.  
The scintillating diadem  
That ringed the monarch's swarthy brow  
With jeweled fire that did bestow  
Its flaming guise on the king's eyes—  
Ah, that burned out her love—her vow,  
And they were lies!

Onnes, aghast, an angry word  
Shrieked forth, then frightened sought to pray  
Forgiveness, but the King had heard,  
And swiftly fled his smiles away:  
"Lady, what penance shall he pay?"  
The new Queen frowned, and had him bound  
And lodged amid most foul decay.  
Deep underground.

She cursed him, and they burned him blind;  
He could not see his dungeon room.  
"I love thy cruelty; be kind!"  
He murmured to her through the gloom,  
Like echoes from an empty tomb.  
She did but play him and dismay,  
Calling adown her catacomb,  
"Pray, lover, pray!"

But he in gods had lost his faith,  
Their power was naught, and vain their rod,  
From Marduk to that curious wraith,  
The strange, wind-tenuous, desert God  
To whom they pray in grave synod,  
In Israel, for fear of Hell.  
(But other creatures great and odd  
Have praised as well:

For once they deified the fire  
On altars hung with purple cloth  
And wet with wine, and once in Tyre  
They made a god of Behemoth,  
And prayed to him, lest he be wroth,  
And send them forms of dread, or storms.  
In Egypt, men kneel down to Thoth,  
'Gainst plagues of worms.)

Sightless, Onnes felt the bars  
Above his head, and thought a curse  
Was on him. He knew naught of stars  
That hurtle through the universe,  
Their pale mad moons, nor death, nor worse—  
With desperate hands, he burst his bands,  
And held his blind erratic course  
On desert sands.

There followed many fabulous  
Far wanderings, and it is said  
That oft some King's sarcophagus  
Was all the shelter to his head,  
And oft he couched among the dead,  
Or crept and hid in pyramid  
With world-old mummies, and his bed  
A coffin-lid.

But she—Your father's sire could tell  
The story of her deeds. She sinned  
And sinned again; no god could quell  
Her passions. Like the desert wind,  
Her arms swept eastward unto Ind.  
Full many a town she battered down;  
Half Nineveh she javelined  
Without a frown.

A hundred thousand men did dwell  
In Nineveh, but one black day,  
Rebelling 'gainst the queen, it fell,  
And its vast walls were reft away.  
And now, red throated lizards play  
Among the stones that were the thrones,  
While the thin desert grasses sway  
Above men's bones.

The mighty marble cenotaph  
Is broken down and fallen prone  
Upon the sand. Odd satyrs laugh  
Within the palace. Jackals moan  
And battle round the corner-stone;  
Wild lions roar across the moor  
Where one weak date palm, all alone,  
Marks Istar's door.

Ten thousand Nubian black slaves  
Built Babylon at her command.  
She drove them till their shallow graves  
Covered a mighty plain of sand.  
The Hanging Gardens that she planned  
Rose spire on spire, and ever higher,  
But rivaled not the mountain land  
Of her desire.

Yet are gods vengeful, and her might  
Excelled all mortals; her own son  
They sent to her one dusty night  
With murder in his mind. 'Twas done  
Under the brazen desert moon

That saw his birth, and with grim mirth  
He buried her who Babylon  
Made lord of earth.

Her rough, unpictured crypt no eye  
Now sees, and in between her lips  
The dead sand shakes eternally,  
And through her flesh the fig root slips,  
When cold December rainfall drips  
From the blank skies—And on her eyes,  
About her breasts and shrunken hips,  
A serpent lies.

She was the greatest queen! Before  
Her throne a thousand princes bent  
To do her grace, and many more,  
With fearful mien, or reverent,  
Bore gifts of purple cloth, or sent  
Great lords to bow, that she might know  
Their love of her, and give consent  
To peace—And now—

And now her very line is dead,  
Dead the last children of her son;  
Her friends and courtly nobles fled  
Or buried far from Babylon.  
The memory of her name is gone,  
Save only where with musk and myrrh,  
By a lone shrine in Ascalon,  
Men worship her.

And Onnes, stripped of the delights  
That made court ladies call him fair,  
Must sleep by city walls of nights,  
In daylight wander here and there,  
And live by alms, and pay by prayer  
And benison for gifts—

\* \* \* \* \*

Anon

The gates are wide, and I must fare  
To Babylon.

## April

MARGARET EMMERLING

From twilight to dawning you airily drift,  
A lost glint of starlight, a questioning child,  
Now looking for laughter, or wandering wild  
Like feathery seeds which the crying winds lift.

Come, clothe your white soul in the colors of noon,  
In the flame of the sun and the silver of rain.  
Oh, dance to my singing, and never again  
Go playing alone with a thin, dying moon.



# Impressions of H. L. Mencken

BY ALFRED GALPIN, JR.

Before Mr. Mencken has died and become history, some one should obtain from him an authentic account of his early reading and friendships. For to know the influences that have touched him is to know most that is valuable in him. It is easy to find among them those modern writers who have been notable for similar eccentricities. Nietzsche in the front rank, but more closely the group of Americans of whom George Jean Nathan and Frank Harris are still alive. Others whom he frequently mentions are Pollard, Huneker, and Mark Twain, all apparently idols of his youth.

Nietzsche, being incomparably the genius of the group, has affected him most profoundly. Somewhere in the "*Repetition Generale*" may be found a very droll and astounding criticism of Mr. Mencken's on that subject, in which he says that Nietzsche, in distinction from other philosophers, always came out with what he had to say, and never beat about the bush. This, to me, is peculiarly significant, since both the German philosopher and his American disciple have the same habit of snorting all about a subject, something in the manner of a cat who, lost in playing with a mouse, doubtless is often led to believe that he is really devouring it. In Nietzsche this indicated a form of exuberance which probably grew out of his unsought and self-centered isolation. With Mr. Mencken, it merely smells of bad manners, and is useful in concealing his frequent lack of genuine scholarship or logical thought. For instance, when Mr. Mencken is about to launch one of his thunderbolts, inculcating the principles of aesthetics in his barbarous listeners, he always refers to Schnitzler, Y. M. C. A. secretaries, the American Legion, and the Congressional record, thus gradually drifting into a lyric on the American Old Maid. All he really meant to say in the first place was the platitude that only a Sherman or a Babbitt could miss, to the effect that individuality and beauty are the chief facts of art. Bombast, in brief, is his means of emphasis.

Then there is his egotism. For myself, I find it one of his redeeming features; he certainly carries it off better than Mr. Harris, for which latter it is very nearly the ruination of a much finer talent. Mr. Mencken is so extremely confiding, and his faults protrude so obviously from every corner of the page, that I find a certain completeness of revelation in it, akin to autobiography. It is almost charming to find, after he has committed himself with Nietzschean complete-

ness to some view, that he knows as well as the next man how wrong he may possibly be. But he may have borrowed that from Anatole France \* \* \* Certainly much of his buffoonery can be traced, whether correctly or not, to George Bernard Shaw, especially to that inimitable preface in which he proclaims "The cart and the trumpet for me." Considering this, and the natural kinship between the two men as popular "philosophers" and spreaders of heretical ideas to a boobery they profess to despise—in the light of this it is disconcerting to find that all of Mr. Mencken's essay on Shaw may be found in much better form in Huneker's "Iconoclasts."

His scholarship he probably learned to spread thin from the manner of his colleague Mr. Nathan, who really possesses an astounding knowledge of his own field, the theater. But is not Mr. Mencken's erudition that of a dilettante purely? From that grows much of his value—for I should be the last person to want him silent—as a contemporary critic. Whatever be his shortcomings, they have not had an opportunity to hide under the cloak of having read Homer and Dante in the original. He is strictly a contemporary, and still more strictly an American, and in this relation he is intensely well-read; but I hesitate to accept the opinion of a man whose interests in English literature have apparently never gone back further than Carlyle.

But after all, who would consider him seriously as a literary critic? Like Shaw, he is interesting because he is neither artist, nor thinker, nor technician, nor scholar, but brazenly himself. American from his style to his third-rate "Smart Set" snobbery, he has been of vital importance to his native heath. I suppose we should agree with Mr. Mencken, and welcome an American if he has as much ability as a fifth-rate Englishman—for the time being at least, in view of the terrible muck of aesthetic ideas out of which he himself has done so much to drag us. Adopting his own valuation of the national product in art, he stands somewhere near Mark Twain. His resemblances to the latter are genuinely temperamental, not imitated, as we can guess from his devotion to "Huckleberry Finn" and "The Mysterious Stranger." Both of them are in a certain way geniuses at humor—humor as we Americans have been used to seeing it—and they possess that rough sort of pessimism that we associate with buffoons. For instance, the following pas-

sage from the first series of "Prejudices," a veritable epitome of his message;

"A mongrel and inferior people, incapable of any spiritual aspiration above that of second-rate English colonials, we seek refuge inevitably in the one sort of superiority that the lower castes of men can authentically boast of, to wit, superiority in docility, in credulity, in resignation, in morals. We are the most moral race in the world; there is not another that we do not look down upon in that department; our confessed aim and destiny as a nation is to inoculate them all with our incomparable rectitude \* \* \* The desire to create and linger over beauty, the sign and

touch-stone of man's rise above the brute, is held down by doubts and hesitations; when it breaks through it must do so by orgy and explosion, half ludicrous, and half pathetic. Our function, we choose to believe, is to teach and inspire the world. We are wrong. Our function is to amuse the world. We are the Bryan, the Henry Ford, the Billy Sunday among the nations \* \* \*

And, we might add, the H. L. Mencken \* \* \* But this passage shows the satirist in his element; for such dithyrambs and as an authentic voice of revolt from our decaying Victorianism, he will surely be remembered.

## Gamin

MILDRED S. HILL

Blue nights are in the hills  
Gold nights at the pole  
White nights curse the desert  
When the hunger moon  
Outshines the stars

I love the garish ghoulish nights  
Mad nights  
Bad nights  
Nights full of damning music.  
And light  
And love  
And lips  
And you.

## The Man in the Moon

(Continued from page 93)

Proprietor

What an awful shame!

Young Woman

What? That I believe you?

Proprietor

No—No—That—about this here Gentleman  
Louie being such a bad guy.

Young Woman

Not at all. I think that's nice—I—I mean—

Proprietor

You mean y'think he's part of this real life you're  
lookin' for—one of these here characters?

Young Woman

Yes, that's right—

Proprietor

Well, you'd better beat it with them dishes int' the  
kitchen; we can't get too highbrow all at once; my  
constitution won't stand for it. Besides the kitchen's  
a good place t'see a little real life; it kinda finishes off

your education. (Young woman goes out with tray.  
Young man enters. Proprietor goes to wait on him.)  
Proprietor

What'll you have?

Young Man

Have you any Neutral cigarettes?

Proprietor

Huh? Neutrals? Don't have much of a call  
for 'em. (He begins to search the tobacco case.)  
Only sell 'em to some slummin' party or maybe some  
snicky guy.

Young Man

Oh, don't trouble yourself. I—I beg your pardon  
for bothering you.

Proprietor

You beg my pardon! Say, aint you got a right to  
buy what y'want? Now just keep quiet and I'll find  
them cigarettes.

Young Man

Yes, certainly.

Proprietor

(From somewhere down behind the counter) That's a pretty classy outfit you got on; must be nice and cool. We don't see many of them down here in the District. (Proprietor refers to the linen suit of Young Man.)

Young Man

Why—er—Don't you think I live around here?

Proprietor

(Laughing) Say, what's the big secret? Who're y'tryin' t'kid?

Young Man

(Stammering) Nothing—Nobody—But I didn't think anyone would notice that I don't belong here.

Proprietor

What's the difference if they do? You aint tryin' to hide are you?

Young Man

Of course not, but if people notice me they'll not act naturally.

Proprietor

They won't? Anyway what d'you want 'em natural for?

Young Man

I wish to study them, watch them, undertsand, as characters in real life.

Proprietor

Say, for the love of—You don't write plays do you?

Young Man

No, I write stories, but how did you guess that I was interested in the arts?

Proprietor

If you mean this here writin' game, why, I kinda thought so when you told me what you was lookin' for; the only place I ever heard of characters and real life was in books and shows.

Young Man

Well, I can't agree with you, but maybe you can help me. I've written a number of stories, but the editors all refuse to buy them bcause I lack knowledge of life as it actually is.

Proprietor

If I was you I'd stay out of the game; it seems to me it's kind of over-crowded, what with everybody tryin' to get a corner on the characters.

Young Man

I don't quite understand you.

Proprietor

That's all right, I don't blame you. (Begins to grin.) Say, do you want t' see a real character, a holy terror?

Young Man

(Startled) Why—yes, certainly.

Proprietor

Well, listen; I always like to do the right thing for young folks, an' so I'm goin' t'tell you somethin' that'll help you out. (He turns and looks over his shoulder at the kitchen door.) There's a woman works for me here, and she's the hardest vamp in the District; why, they say she has made more'n one guy commit suicide, and they say she killed the only fella she ever loved, but I want t'tell you she don't look it, no sir, a more innocent lookin' girl never lived. (Proprietor beams knowingly at the Young Man, who has turned considerably whiter.)

Young Man

She—she must be terrible. Is she here now?

Proprietor

Uh, huh! Right out in the kitchen. You ought t'see her if you're lookin' for a real character.

Young Man

Well, that is so. I mustn't have any fear, for I am in the service of art.

Proprietor

Sure—sure.—Now you just sit down there and I'll call her in to take your order. (Starts for the kitchen) But, I wouldn't ask her too many questions; she might get nasty. (Calls and goes back to the rear of the counter. (Young woman enters and takes order. She turns to go to the kitchen.)

Young Man

(Clearing his throat, nervously.) Pardon me, but with how many young men did you go out *last week*?

Young Woman

Wha—at? Why, that's none of your business! (Rushes away to kitchen.)

Young Man

(Surprised by the effect of his question) She certainly is a terror,—but she *does* look very innocent. An exceedingly interesting character; I wish I had my notebook here, I'd like to take notes about her. Have you got any paper? I'll need some ink, too, for my pen is dry.

Proprietor

The only ink I got is red and I guess you'll have to go next door to the knick-knack store for the paper. (Young man fills pen with red ink) Do you writin' people takes notes a lot?

Young Man

Oh, yes; it's very necessary. The paper place is next door, you say? (Proprietor nods and young man goes out. Proprietor starts to laugh, but is halted by the entrance of the young woman with the prepared order of the young man. She looks around, puzzled by the latter's absence.)

Young Woman

Is that insulting man gone?

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Proprietor

Aw, no! he's coming right back, (smiles mysteriously)—just some of the gang called him out.

Young Woman

(Startled) Gang?

Proprietor

Sure—that's the character you're lookin' for—that's Gentleman Louie.

Young Woman

(Retreating toward the kitchen) That awful man?

Proprietor

Here, here! You aint s'posed to be scared; you're in the service of Art! You ought t'stick here and study that guy. Why, I'm damned if I don't think y'ought t'take notes about him.

Young Woman

Yes, yes, that's very good advice, I should; but where did you learn about art?

Proprietor

Aw, I just picked it up.

Young Woman

Well, you don't look as though you knew a thing about it.

Proprietor

Maybe I don't; you never can tell what's goin' on in my dome, but maybe you'll be able to when you've been around here a little while longer.

Young Woman

What a queer— (Young man rushes in, stops short at sight of young woman. They eye each other speculatively, then look to the proprietor, as if for reassurance. The latter is red with the effort to suppress his laughter.)

Proprietor

Will you tend counter while I fix things in the kitchen? (Young woman takes his place behind the counter; he goes out. Young man walks slowly to his table, seats himself, and tries to eat. Young woman and young man both are a bit hesitant about talking. Finally young man straightens up and scowls as though he were getting up his courage; he takes out his pen and notebook.)

Young Man

In what kind of home do you live?

Young Woman

(A bit frightened by his scowl, but determined to keep up her courage.) Why—why—what does that matter to you? You'll never get in there if I can help it.

Young Man

Well, if I can help it, I shan't go there either. Now will you kindly tell me whether or not you use cosmetics?

Young Woman

What an insulting question! Why do you wish to know? Don't you believe it right for a girl—

Young Man

Stop! I'm not here to be vamped. I would like some intelligent answers to my questions.

Young Woman

Vamped! Why, I never did such a thing!

Young Man

That's right, deny it! It's perfectly natural that you would.

Young Woman

Deny it! Perfectly natural! Why, I—. Listen here; I'm through answering questions, and I want to ask you a few.

Young Man

Ah—er—well—

Young Woman

Where did you learn to break into banks?

Young Man

Break into banks! (Horried) That's robbery!

Young Woman

Certainly. And now, pray tell me where you learned the art of assassinating policemen?

Young Man

What? That's murder!

Young Woman

Of course. What did you think it was, your duty?

Young Man

Don't be foolish. I never did any of those things.

Young Woman

Your denial is perfectly natural.

Young Man

We won't discuss that any more. I seemed to have angered you by my questions, for which I wish to apologize; they were really asked with the best of intentions.

Young Woman

For a criminal, you have delightful manners. I can't see how you do all those terrible things. Why, you're quite good looking! I really don't see how—

Young Man

What do you refer to when you say "all those things?" I tell you I never—

Young Woman

That's right, brazen it out. Oh, but you *are* a hardened criminal, so timid in appearance, yet so terrible at heart! What is your object in denying that you are a famous criminal? I suppose you'll continue to maintain your innocence after I tell you your name.

Young Man

You know my name?

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Young Woman

Certainly, Gentleman Louie.

Young Man

Gentleman Louie?

Young Woman

There you are, trying to appear as though you had never heard the name before. You ought to have been an actor instead of a murdered and a crook.

Young Man

Are you insane?

Young Woman

Don't speak to me! Such persistence leads me to believe you've been in the business a long time.

Young Man

See here, young woman, I want to talk to you. I am not a criminal, but from all that I can gather, I have been talking with a very clever feminine member of that species for the last few minutes, and—

Young Woman

Just *what* do you mean?

Young Man

As yet I do not understand your method of attack, but I can see that you are a terrible woman—a vampire. To think of the poor fellows who have killed themselves for your sake, to think—

Young Woman

There! That shows what a cruel criminal you are: you pick on a woman, slandering her to divert attention from yourself, why such cold, calculating— Oh! Gentleman Louie is not the name you ought to have, it ought to be—

(From just outside the open door, a newsboy's voice is heard) Wuxtra! Wuxtra! Gentleman Louie's latest. Read how he busts bank and escapes to the District. Wuxtra! (Newsboy enters.)

Newsboy

Paper, sir? Read all about Gentleman Louie. He busted a bank about 'n hour ago. Paper?

Young Woman

Bring me one! Hurry! (Newsboy gives her paper and stands waiting for his pay. Young man begins to see something of his position when young woman looks from paper to him.)

Young Woman

(In a very throaty voice) Oh, why did you do this, why?

Young Man

You really believe that I'm—

Young Woman

You still deny it! There is no hope of reforming you. (To newsboy.) Boy, call the nearest policeman; this man is Gentleman Louie. I'll hold him here till you come back. (She seizes a stick from the counter.)

Newsboy

(Moving slowly backward to the door.) You hold *him*? Holy Moses! (Runs out.)

Young Woman

(Shaking stick at young man.) Don't you dare to run away. This is for your own good.

(Young man startled by the threatening attitude of the young woman takes a step backward. She thinks he means to escape and strikes him on the chest, the blow falling on the pocket containing the fountain pen filled with red ink. The ink spreads rapidly and is quickly noticed against the background of the light colored coat.)

Young Woman

Oh, oh! I've wounded you!

Young Man

(Having rubbed the spot where he has been hit, sees his red-stained hand) Why—a—a—I guess so. Really you shouldn't have done that, because I'm honestly not Gentleman Louie.

Young Woman

(Coming from behind the counter) Oh, I'm so sorry—I mean because I hit you, not that you're not Gentleman Louie, for I believe you are. (She rubs the stained coat with her apron) Does it hurt much?

Young Man

(Grinning foolishly) No—o. That is, not much.

Young Woman

You know, I don't think you are so very bad. I think I could like you a great deal if you weren't a criminal.

Young Woman

And I could care very much for you, if you weren't such a vampire.

Young Woman

Oh, how can you accuse me of that; you must be terribly wicked after all; it must be due to your environment. I think jail will do a whole lot for you.

Young Man

Jail?

Young Woman

Yes, you'll have to go to jail; I don't think they would hang you. Anyway, I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll visit you in jail; they must have visiting days.

Young Man

See here, if anyone is going to jail, it ought to be you.

Young Woman

Me?

Young Man

You certainly ought to be sent there for murdering your lovers, and for making them—

(Policeman rushes in followed by Newsboy.)

Policeman

Where's Gentleman Louie? (Sees young man is

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the only possibility, seizes him, and raises his club.

Young woman grabs his arm.)

Young Woman

Please don't hit him too hard.

Policeman

Just hard enough to make him behave.

(Enter Proprietor)

Proprietor

Is the place pinched?

Young Woman

No. The officer has arrested Gentleman Louie; he robbed a bank just before he came in here.

Proprietor

Came in here? Oh! I get you. You busted in another one, eh? Well, I've always said you'd get caught.

Young Man

But I don't understand.

Young Woman

Isn't it queer how he persists in not understanding.

Policeman

Where's the phone, I want to call the station. (Proprietor points to phone. Policeman goes to phone and calls station.)

Young Woman

I'm almost sorry I called that policeman.

Young Man

I'm more than sorry.

Proprietor

That's all right, I'll bail you out. You ought to go for the experience; and you'll find some real life in the police station. And if—

Policeman

(At phone) Sergeant? I've just copped Gentleman Louie down in the Moon—Huh? You got him there, but—(Turning to group) who the hell is this guy? (To the phone) Of course not, sir. Yes, sir! All right, sir! (Hangs up receiver) Where'd you get the idea that this guy was Gentleman Louie?

Newsboy

She said so.

Policeman

Well?

Young Woman

(Pointing to Proprietor) He told me that this young man was Gentleman Louie.

Policeman

And what put the brilliant idea into your nut?

Proprietor

I guess this here can't go no farther. Y'see it's like this: This young woman comes here to work, expectin' to find characters and real life that she could write about in her plays; and then this young man comes wanderin' in here lookin' for the same thing to put in stories; so just for the fun of it, I played 'em

against one another. I told him she was a notorious woman who had killed her lovers and made some other guys commit suicide—

Young Woman

You're horrid. (To young man) That's why you were accusing me of being a vampire.

Proprietor

Keep still 'till I'm through—and then I told her that this fellow was Gentleman Louie that she read about in the papers, that's all.

Policeman

That's too damn much. If you pull any more of your jokes and get me mixed in 'em, I'll haul you in.

(Policeman and newsboy exit.)

Young Woman

(Daubing with her apron the red spot on the young man's coat.) To think that I hurt an innocent person!

Proprietor

(Looking at coat) Hurt him? Hurt, my eye! That's nothing but red ink. You're a bright pair of boobs!

Young Woman

Oh! You are horrid! Anyway (To young man) I'm glad you're not a criminal, aren't you?

Young Man

Particularly as I remember you said you might like me if I weren't a criminal.

Young Woman

Did I? It seems to me you said that you could care a whole lot for me if I weren't a vampire.

Young Man

(Coming to her) I believe I could anyway.

Proprietor

Heh! Cut it out! Lay off that stuff! You ain't known each other more'n an hour.

Young Woman

What difference is that to you? I'm leaving this minute! I hate this real life!

Young Man

At least this kind of real life!

Proprietor

Go ahead, quit! But where you goin'? What kind of real life do you prefer?

(Young man and young woman stare at each other vacantly. Proprietor grins at them.)

Young Man

I know! I know a good correspondence school for writers. We could take a course.

Young Woman

That's it! Let's take it together.

Young Man

All right. Get your things, and we'll go to some decent place and talk it over.

CURTAIN