

EL PORTAL



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YESTERDAYS



The lizards lie and sun their backs
Neath olives on the hill.
The peaceful fields are gold with grain
Where panthers made their kill.

All thru these gray old olive trees
The sighing wind still plays,
A ballad-maker with his trays,
The song of yesterdays.

The black-robed fathers softly tread
Forgotten paths again.
Each phantom drifts along the way
Like leaves in autumn rain.

Each is a shadow of the Past,
Forgotten — without name,
But each has stood before the Lord,
His Faith a steady flame.

Each gave his life, and even gave
A soul baptised with tears.
But only the olives on the hills
Remember the yesteryears.

JUNE GLENN

THE RETURN OF KOLOA



GAIL BALDWIN

Old Pua Kaa sat under the sprawling hau tree. His swift, brown fingers wove lauhala strands into a flaring brimmed hat, and he droned yarns in pidgin-English if anyone lingered by to listen. Dana often did on the long afternoons that seemed so endless. It was cool out there under the hau tree's thick shade, and old Pau's gutturals were pleasant to one's ears. Sometimes he swept his never-idle fingers across the strings of an ukulele and sang plaintive tunes, or voluptuous jingles in Hawaiian that Dana guessed were pornographic by the very naughty sound of them. Other times he told her legends, gesticulating, his squinting old eyes dreaming of a past when feather capes gleamed proudly under waving kahilis and bronzy gods spoke to men. Pau knew all the old sagas. He could remember Kamehameha, the Great, and even farther back than that. But the story he told oftenest was that of Koloa the man-god, perhaps because this very hau tree had, reputedly, sheltered Koloa, or perhaps because the old legend was Dana's favorite. To her it was the most interesting in all Pua's repertoire. Sometimes when she looked at the grove of clustering royal palms that reared their straight white trunks sheltering around the house, she thought of the time when it had been Koloa's favorite haunt, and how it had been here that he had worked his miracles to aid unhappy lovers. Dana sometimes fancied, when moonlight painted white magic, that she could see him standing, tall and imperious, copper body molded the way the ancients loved it, outlined against a white palm trunk, arm outstretched in benediction or command.

That was the picture Pua drew, and his old eyes always kindled with implicit native belief in Koloa's powers. To humor him, Dana listened smilingly, compromising by a "perhaps," because in these enchanted Islands anything might happen. . . .

Sometimes she prayed that something might happen—anything but this futile sameness of life with Louis's punctual drunkenness, and other things that were worse. Dana had married Louis on an emotional hightide of unknowing twenty, guessing nothing of the lonely, isolated

existence that was to be hers at Waimalu. She had known that Louis was half-white, but she had not suspected the degeneracy of the white side. She loved her new life—at first, in the beautiful out-of-the-way bit of tropic jungle sprawled at the sea's edge, with mountains and bad roads that kept it inviolate and unspoiled by white invasion.

Louis was away all day on the sugar plantation, but the time of those first weeks had passed quickly. Then, suddenly, there was that night when he did not come home until six in the morning, drunken, brutally describing where he had been. Sober or drunken since, there was never, and had never been a word of penitence or regret, or even an explanation. The blow had been staggering; then Dana became indifferent to the routine as Louis's mother had become accustomed to Louis's father. She came to know, too, that he spent his interludes in the cane workers' camps, where the camp women were polyglot breeds of the Crossroads, and where men's eyes were reddened with saki and okolehau.

Dana knew that old Pua understood and sympathized, striving to solace her with his simple faith in happy endings, and in his beloved superstitions of Koloa. . . "This place Koloa before like come. He plant there trees." He would add invariably: "Sometime he come back—". and his fingers would stray across the strings of his companionate ukulele, while Dana listened, stretched close by in the luxurious sunlight of the late afternoon that was turning the long breakers into rolls of molten gold.

Presently she left Pua and waded out into the water. It was oily smooth, and she looked down to see her own blue eyes and sunny hair mirrored there in the clear depths. . . .

She never remembered what made her look up at the moment the man stood outlined in naked bronze against the crashing surf, before he dived off the rocky point, but that brief, startled second had the sudden elements of a vision, like something she remembered, or had seen before, like Pua's everlasting Koloa.

She watched him as he swam toward her with long, effortless strokes, while behind her Pua cackled information that she could not hear. Then the stranger rose out of the water, shaking the drops of moisture out of his hair and grinning at her with friendly impudence.

"Hullo!" he said with an abruptness that she was to know was

characteristic. "How do you like my beach?"

"Your beach?"

"Well, not any more, but I used to own it, and I still sort of feel that it's mine. I hope you'll let me swim here. . . ." He paused to wave vigorously at the figure on the sand. . . . "Pua! Pehea oe, aikane?"

He turned back to Dana: "My name's Colton Galloway. I've a cave in the hills I come to—when I feel like getting away from everything and rotting for awhile."

Dana held out a wet hand. "I'm Mrs. MacIntyre." She laughed. "You sort of dropped out of the sky"

"On the contrary, I came by a very ghastly road. . . ."

He went on to explain about the ghastly road. His eyes were startlingly blue, his teeth vividly white when he laughed as he was laughing now, and saying with his boyish abrupt informality: "Race you to that pier—"

She took up his challenge. They lunged out. She matched him stroke for stroke, but he beat her by half a length.

"You've got longer arms," she accused, panting.

"You're not bad for a malihini."

Dana floated idly, staring at the sky.

"A penny for your thoughts," he bantered.

She smiled. "I'll beat you back."

She didn't. But that was the beginning of the happiest playtime Dana had ever known.

There was swimming with Colt in the early mornings that were fresh with flying spume from high breakers that lashed at the splayed roots of the old hau tree and sucked the sand down in long furrows. They swam, wrestling with the surging water, laughing at the exhilarating mad danger of it, while the sky overhead turned from lemon yellow to metal blue and mynah birds called stridently from the tufted tops of the royal palms.

If dark fears of Louis ever intruded they were shoved unceremoniously aside by the pell-mell personality that was Colt's. His was an incorrigible gaiety, how irresistible she was not to realize until after the weeks had passed and there were only days until he must return to Honolulu. Where had the time gone? Swiftly by on the fleet wings of happiness that had cast a patina over all the things they had done together.

There had been so many things to do: swimming, walking, horse-

back riding over the steamy jungle trails. And once, on impulse, they whipped over the mountains in Colt's greyhound roadster to a polo game, afterwards dining at the Kamaaina Club, where there had been a gathering of smartly dressed people at candle-lit tables. Colt's friends.

Dana thought of her last year's frock. As if he had read her thoughts, Colt laid a hand over both of hers for a long moment.

"You're so damn beautiful," he said. There was that in his eyes that made her sheathe hers under her gold lashes, for there was something in their blue depths that Dana had never seen there before in all the weeks that they had been bantering comrades.

Then her fingers were freed, and Colt was saying abruptly: "Some shot Nick made in the second chukka, wasn't it. . . And did you see the Chapps ride him off! Seven goal man, Chapps. I played against him at Del Monte last year—you'd like Del Monte, Dana. . ."

Waimalu lay under a wan moon when they got back, a pattern of black on silver. The odor of ginger blooms scented the moon-washed dark with the witchery of its sweetness. Dana and Colt had weathered more than one Hawaiian moon in the garden on the bluff above the sea, but tonight they did not tease and talk. Silently they watched the torches of fishermen glowing far out on the reef like a string of coals. Beside them on an old stone wall a night-blooming *Cereus* opened its great white goblets . . . On such a night Koloa had walked with mortals . . . here . . .

Dana lifted her face. "How pale the moon is tonight. . ."

Colt murmured at her side, "That's what comes of staying out so late."

The torches flared fitfully out at sea.

"Two days, three at the most," said Colt. He moved restlessly. Dana felt rather than saw the stern set of his mouth as he bit off the words, "Then Honolulu again," and her heart echoed dismally, "Then Waimulu again . . . alone . . ." The solitude that was waiting for her on the other side of those two days, three at the most, was in her face as she looked up at his smooth tannedness and dear, familiar roughed black hair . . .

"This is about the last night we have together," Colt said. He tilted her face up with a hand under her chin. "I know we've been pals, and brothers and sisters, and all that rot, but there's one thing, before I go, I——"

Whatever he meant to tell her was never uttered. Dana saw him bend toward her. She closed her eyes. She knew what was coming, perhaps because she had dreamed it. She felt his mouth, gently . . . Then, as her pulses raced, she was caught up in iron arms, and his lips

crushed down hard upon hers . . . The world reeled in scented blackness . . . Then he let her go.

"Goodnight, Colt," she breathed shakenly, and ran blindly toward the house.

Hours later Louis came home. He came to her room and switched on the light. Dana could tell by his distended pupils that he had been drinking saki. He was in one of his drunken rages; his fingers caressed a cloisonne vase that stood on a table under his hand. He glared at Dana as if she were to blame for his dark, secret troubles.

She sat up in bed and looked at him. "What do you want, Louis?"

He leaned in the doorway. His native blood showed itself only in the smouldering eyes that stared at the golden line of Dana's bare shoulders.

"What you been doing all day?" he said . . . "Whyn't you answer me?"

"Will you please turn out the light and let me sleep?"

"I know what you been doing, what you do everyday."

Dana paled. Could he know about Colt——!

"You been listening to that old Kapakahi Pua. Filling you up with a lot of damn stuff——"

"Oh, no," Dana said wearily. "He just talks, oh, about the old legends of Koloa——"

Louis snorted. "A lot of pelau. . . "

Afterward, remembering, Dana never knew what prompted her to say impulsively at that moment, "Pua says he saw Koloa in the palm grove last night."

Its effect was positive. Louis's face hung fixedly for a moment; then he began to curse violently, and Dana knew triumphantly that he was afraid! She smiled in his face. His fingers tightened about the neck of the vase, and he flung it at her. She twisted swiftly, but the sharp rim raked her shoulder. . .

Louis banged the door shut. She heard him go stumbling through the house . . .

The sun was well up, and she was alone in the house when she awoke. She felt tired as she pulled on her bathing suit.

She went out on the beach. Colt leaped up from where he had been stretched in the sun. Scarcely had he joined her when she felt his keen discovering gaze on the welt on her shoulder that the straps of her brief black suit did not hide.

"Does he beat you, Dana?"

"Please, Colt——"

"Don't put me aside, Dana. I've had an idea of this for quite

awhile." His arms were around her. The wretchedness of the months behind her and what his departure meant welled up against her control. Tears stood in her eyes.

"God—" Colt began.

"Try to forget it. I . . ."

"Listen, Dana, can't you get away—go somewhere—?"

She shook her head. "Nowhere to go." It was true. Nowhere.

Suddenly it was out in his own abrupt way. "Dana—go away with me. Divorce him! Darling, I mean it . . . You must have seen it coming all these weeks—marry me. . . ."

"It's sweet of you, Colt . . ."

"You know it isn't that, Dana. I want you—any way I can get you. I can't stand around and see you in hell like this. Don't you see? Or don't you want to?"

"But it's all so crazy? So absolutely mad! How could I go with you . . . Louis . . ."

"There isn't a court that wouldn't swear by you, child." He swept her into his arms. "God, I adore you. . . Dana . . ."

Her eyes lit as she raised her face. "Kiss me," she whispered . . .
"Again . . . again . . ."

Presently they made plans.

Colt said, "About sundown the car'll be in the palm grove. You rustle your things together, and I'll be waiting. Plenty of time to get out of Louis's way. . . ."

The day dragged through noon. Then slowly, slowly the shadows began to lengthen. Longer. Longer . . . At last the sun hung on the horizon, a last splotch of color before the swift Hawaiian dusk would dim Waimalu into mauve shadow.

Dana rose from the sand. She blew a kiss to Colt, then ran up the bank to the house.

She went to her room, slipped out of her suit and into clothes. Opening drawers here and there, she dropped the contents into an open bag on the bed. Her hands shook as she hurried. Almost through now. A last look around—she stiffened. What was that! Footsteps in the house! Louis! What was he doing home at this hour? Trembling, she threw a blanket over her bag. Then Louis was in the door, eyeing her. "What are you doing?" His face was quiet.

"Nothing."

She was calm now, waiting till he had gone on, then seizing her bag and running lightly through the house. It was nearly dark now, but the moon was already in the sky, shedding a faint light that appeared

down through the palm trees so that she could see where she was going.

"Dana!" It was Louis's voice. He was on the lanai, peering after her. Could he have had a premonition? She went slower now in the trees. Where was Colt—?

There was a dull sound behind her. Louis had leaped off the porch. She glimpsed him briefly. He was carrying something, a long, flint-headed ancient native spear that habitually hung in a bracket on the porch. He was running now. But he didn't see her. Suppose he met Colt—with that spear! Colt, whose only bodily protection, save his strength, was his swimming trunks—!

Louis was in the trees, now, several yards distant from herself and running in a different direction. She must get to Colt and warn him, before Louis found him!

Her dark clothes camouflaged her as she slipped through the trees. She saw Louis dodge into sight ahead of her, saw him come to a sudden halt, spear poised. Then she saw what Louis saw, a figure that blocked his path, the figure of a man, molded in copper the way the ancients loved it, starlight faintly gleaming on his bronzy skin. Tall and imperious he stood; the silence was eerie as Louis recoiled, his native blood blanching in a terror that the centuries of his pagan ancestry could not resist. Dana heard him gasp. . . "Auwe-e . . ." as he wavered and fell back; she caught a glimpse of his ashen face as, beyond him, she spied the snub nose of a gleaming radiator and tip-toed toward it, avoiding the scene before her. She gained the car, and at the same moment heard a distant sound as of a heavy door being slammed. . .

She was laughing softly and hysterically when Colt came up. "I can just see him bolting all the doors and windows. He'll believe more than ever in Koloa now. . ." she said.

The motor roared out into the stillness with the thunder of a hundred and fifty pounding horses. They were streaking up the mountain road.

Colt grinned. "He surprised me, and then the idea popped into my head; so I just stood still and the lighting effects pulled the trick. Of course, he'd never seen me before, either, which helped a lot. I wish you could have seen his face, Dana. He all but got down on his knees."

They laughed together. The car zoomed around ridges, carrying them ever upward. Far across the sea below them the lights of a distant island, their destination, winked like faint sparks.

THE ROAD TO CAIRO



RAYMOND H. RHODES

"You're too late," grunted the Cook's Travel representative as he strode up the accommodation ladder after we had dropped anchor in Port Said. "The last train to Cairo this evening has gone."

With mutterings of disgust we sagged against the ship's rail. For days we had thought of a glorious trip to Cairo, for hours we had walked the deck talking and consulting Egyptian railway schedules—and now our plans were frustrated by a matter of minutes.

Our informant halted and turned at the door of the passenger salon. "You could make the trip by automobile," he shouted.

His words reached other eager ears than ours, for we were immediately beset by a pack of Egyptian chauffeurs. There were six of us who had made arrangements to forsake our duties aboard ship for a day, and we all set out to obtain the "best price" possible. Upon discovering that our trip was to be a reality after all, we simmered down, for we had long ago learned the guile of persuading hawkers to lower their prices.

"You want too many pounds," we sighed to the tall natives. "I guess we'll go ashore for the evening instead." And turning nonchalantly away, we stepped into small skiffs to be rowed a few hundred yards to shore. To show our contempt for the outrageous "tourist prices" which the boatmen attempted to collect, we threw them a few small coins and strolled away to the business center of Port Said. Our actions did the trick! Prices for an automobile to take us to Cairo dropped five dollars right then as far as the chauffeurs were concerned. Still we weren't satisfied; so we dismissed our followers and meandered along the streets lined with shops and the tables of side-walk cafes. Before long we wandered into the shop of Mohammed Ossman, who gave us all "special prices" on his goods and ended up by offering us a new six-cylinder automobile for our trip at a price that was ten dollars lower than the first bids which we had received. Still feigning indecision, we purchased a few small articles of amber (made from amber dust pressed into molds), and continued to argue for a real bargain. At last we obtained what we wanted—a touring car with driver for the three hundred mile trip to Cairo and the pyramids of Gizeh for forty-five dollars. Although it is against the law in Egypt for more than six persons to ride in the type of automobile which we rented, we insisted on squeezing two in beside the driver, and four of us attempted to be comfortable in the back seat.

It was nearly ten o'clock in the evening before we left Port Said,

and another fifteen minutes was required to cross a two hundred-foot fresh water canal on an ancient hand-powered ferry boat.

This fresh water canal was the keynote to the successful construction of the Suez Canal which parallels it, since it provided drinking water for the thousands of workmen who labored on the great project. The Suez, which connects the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, appears much like a broad ditch since it crosses flat country. This latter fact makes it unnecessary to have locks such as are needed on canals crossing hills. The Suez Canal, which was officially opened November 17, 1869, was an old idea, for as early as 500 B. C. the construction of a connecting link by water was undertaken, but the idea was finally abandoned at that time after the death of 120,000 workmen. The importance of the Suez Canal cannot be overemphasized, since it reduces the distance from London to Bombay 44 per cent (7,028 miles) and the distance from Marseilles to Bombay 59 per cent. Continued work at deepening and broadening the channel has resulted in a present depth of more than 36 feet and a width varying from around 260 feet to 445 feet.

Although we had just sailed through that day, we all were awed into quietness when our car first swung onto the road which parallels the canal for some distance, for in the clear moonlight the water shone like a painting in silver and black with just an occasional palm tree to reflect on the mirror-like surface.

For miles we raced along at fifty and sixty miles per hour over the top of the hard dirt built between the narrow fresh water canal and the Suez. Occasionally the road turned aside to detour around a small village or the grounds of one of the Suez Canal Company's signalling stations which control the movements of the ships passing through the canal.

It was nearly midnight when we made a sharp turn to the right and plunged into the desert in the direction of Cairo. Through the warm air the barking of dogs came to us faintly from the shadowed streets of the flat village of Issmailia, but as we forged into the country into which the Nile has pushed life-giving fingers of fresh water, the only signs of humanity were groups of huts shadowed by majestic date palms. Disdaining to rouse any of the agrarians on their doorstep, our driver attempted to follow the road to Cairo by memory, and again and again we were forced to retrace our path on some lane which resembled the seldom used main artery. None of us, however, really cared, for the moonlight lent an enchantment to our surroundings.

"Look at that ship of the desert!" someone cried. Our surprise at not seeing a camel turned to wonderment when we saw instead a huge white sail gleaming in the moonlight above the flat country. Our

chauffeur hastened to explain. We were not gazing at a mirage. Somewhere beneath that sail was a fresh water canal with a barge sailing towards Cairo. On account of the fact that the banks of the canal are high enough to prevent unnecessary flooding of the fields during the rainy season, an immense sail fastened to a sixty or seventy foot mast is necessary to catch the breath of air blowing across the plain.

During the period of Stygian darkness which preceded dawn, we raced on towards Cairo through rolls of cold mist rising from the nearby Nile. The numb silence was broken continually by the blatant squawking of the French horn on the side of the car.

"Where do you wish to go first?" our driver asked suddenly. We sat upright. Were we really in Egypt's greatest city at last? Yes, there were rows of huge and grimy apartment dwellings on either side. "Breakfast," we all shouted. The car slid to a stop. Breakfast at 3:45 in the morning? Our driver looked amazed. Hot dog stands? All-night restaurants? He seemed dumbfounded. At last our problem was solved, however. In the lobby of Cairo's largest hotel we were served a truly Continental breakfast of hot rolls, and coffee made from warm goat's milk and a small amount of a potent coffee syrup.

It was still misty and dark when we were once more headed for the pyramids of Gizeh six miles west of the city. After we had crossed a huge stone bridge spanning the muddy waters of the greatest of all rivers, we followed a road shaded with Lebbek trees. Again our driver kept the horn shrieking, for we passed camel after camel loaded down with produce for the markets in the city. They looked very grotesque, coming as they did out of the darkness and the mists with loads which extended for three feet or more on either side of their bodies.

"Look!" we shouted at each other, for almost before our eyes was the outline of Cheops—greatest of all pyramids. We hastened to pay our entrance fee of ten piasters (the equivalent of fifty cents) to the government subsidized land on which the pyramids of Gizeh stand. Winking at the two sturdy soldiers who said we could not climb Cheops until the fog had lifted, we set out to show them we not only could but would. Our hopes were short-lived, however; climbing from one six-inch ledge to another ledge three to five feet above is not only hard work, but a dangerous undertaking as well, when the stones, worn smooth by the storms of 5,880 years, are damp with fog.

"We want to be on top to see the sun rise," we told an old Egyptian who came towards us as we came slipping back to the ground.

"You must have a guide," he muttered in an Irish brogue.

We had noticed immediately that he had a crippled leg, and we wondered if he could last the climb to the top. He snorted in indigna-

tion. He had climbed Cheops thousands of times, and only once— long ago when he was a wiry boy—he had slipped, and had broken a leg during the fall. With slips and broken legs still in mind, we carefully followed Mohammed (all Egyptians seem to be named Mohammed something or other) up the mightiest of human memorials. Up and up! Digging our finger nails into the stone, placing our feet in niches worn smooth by the feet of millions of climbers hundreds of years before the birth of Christ! Up and up, with Mohammed urging us on, laughing at our gasping for breath and crying out for rest periods. At last we were standing on the top, 481 feet above the desert with approximately 3,277,000 square yards of stone under our feet. Below us was only a sea of fog—and then the first rays of the sun came shooting up from behind the graceful domes and slender minarets of Cairo. We had won our race! We were seeing the sun rise with Cheops for a step-ladder, and fog for a magic carpet!



MOSS LANDING

MARY STUART DYKE

A wind, an overcast sky, a little settlement of ramshackle shanties, a vicious looking surf, and you have a picture of Moss Landing in mid-summer. Killdeer swoop down over the land, giving forth their perturbed cries. Their efforts at distracting attention from their young are a bit too obvious, however. Anyone can tell at a glance, by their guilty nervousness, that something is happening. Even the birds, though, are hardly enough to liven up this dilapidated stretch of sand. Dirty children peer out of dirtier windows. A washing flaps dismally on a line that seems to have as little backbone as the rest of the objects. It sags as badly as do the houses and cheap machines scattered over the beach. Men are unhurriedly taking lumber off a scow that is tied up at the wharf. It makes one ponder as to whether one wants to be lazy and lackadaisical, or to put life into the place suddenly by becoming alert and busy. As the argument goes on, a sudden change of atmosphere is felt, and one looks out to sea, only to discover a fog rolling in with great rapidity. It is clean, white fog, and as it comes in and envelops the depressing countryside one is glad to see a transformation take place. Such fragile stuff as fog will be gone by tomorrow noon, to be sure, but for a time the illusion prevails again; there seems to be a clean, white slate for a murky grey town to begin on.

TRUTH OR FICTION?



MARGARET STANFORD

The day of the unhappy ending is here—not the final day of wrath and judgment, but merely the tragic ending so much overworked by writers of fiction the world over. Seldom has an author the audacity to end his story happily, for if he does, his work is condemned as not true to life. As a matter of fact, things really turn out right in real life just as often as they turn out wrong. This is not a mere bit of Pollyanna philosophy. It is an actual fact. How many of your friends have ever had anything really tragic happen to them? Perhaps two or three out of a possible hundred. The happy ending is just as true to life as the unhappy ending. Even if those incurable pessimists were right, and nothing in real life ever turned out happily, then it would be well to inject a little joy into our fiction by way of contrast.

But pity the poor writer! If, on the other hand, he ends his tale in an orgy of blood and tears and disappointments, loud are the wails that arise from his inconsistent readers. There is a reason for this. The average reader, however loudly he may clamor for grim realities, unconsciously regards fiction as a welcome escape from the pain or boredom of his own existence. After all, it is much easier and pleasanter to work out a solution to the problem of some other person, real or imaginary, than it is to solve our own problems satisfactorily. If the story does not turn out as the reader thinks it should, he feels a vague sort of dissatisfaction, as if he himself were in some way involved. The author must make up for this sense of disappointment by the excellence of the story itself. Only a very skillful writer can do this successfully, but unfortunately, the tragic ending has been tried by nearly all writers, whether skillful or not.

I think that the oversupply of tragic endings in modern fiction is due to the ever-present demand for something new. Not that the unhappy ending was new—it had been used by Hawthorne and George Eliot and numerous other writers before this time—but it was the only thing which had not been worked to death. Good plots were at a premium. Think how many of the stories you have read recently have unusual plots. Most of them are merely variations of a theme as old as the ages. And so fiction writers hailed the idea of the tragic ending as joyfully as Crusoe did his man Friday. Instead of the villain being slain at the end of the story, the hero and heroine lie prostrate in pools of gore while the bandits chug off down the road in an asthmatic flivver.

Following the wild-and-wooly-west type of melodrama came an epidemic of war books. A couple of years ago I read *All Quiet on the Western Front* and several others. For one hot and hectic summer I waded through blood and filth and barbed-wire entanglements, until I was a rabid pacifist, ready to turn to *Alice in Wonderland* or *Aesop's Fables* as an escape from further scenes of rape and carnage.

Next in order followed the gangster stories. While war books might have some historical significance, gang murder stories have not, and my acquaintance with murderers and pickpockets has been too limited to warrant enjoyment of a detailed account of their activities. I suppose the sophisticated cynic would suggest that I widen the scope of my environment. Ho, hum!

Many modern writers make the plot of the story of secondary importance, relying on the psychological element to stimulate the reader's interest. Here the ending of the story is entirely beside the point. Who would not rather read a story that shows keen insight into life, no matter how it ends, than to read a tale that sails blissfully on to an absurdly felicitous climax without showing the least understanding of the motives which govern human behavior? If more writers studied psychology we should probably have less of this Pollyanna sentimentalism which oozes in sticky streams over the pages of our five-and ten-cent magazines.

No doubt I seem rather contradictory in my statements. After a vigorous defense of the happy ending, I admit that if the story is a good one, the way it ends is unimportant. Apparently I dislike grim reality; yet I declare that I abhor sentiment. I suppose I might as well make a frank and honest statement. Like one hundred and one per cent of the great American public, I do not know just what I really do want.



STORM AT ASILOMAR

JEAN DEVOSS

The pale, cold sun glistened on the white dunes and turned the tiny particles of mica to fairy spangles. I stood on a little point which jutted out into the blue and scanned the dazzling shore line and clean-washed, red-brown rocks around me. The beach was deserted. A sweet, warm odor of sand verbena and sea moss came to me like a whiff of forgotten summer, but the wind was strong and cold. I climbed out on the rocks and snuggled down into a hollow under the sheltering roof of a shaggy cypress. The icy gale struck me like a whip, but the old, old tree barely moved. It had been there so long

and suffered under so many winds that it had learned to bear the lashes without a shudder. The branches were twisted and massive, and the rugged trunk seemed to have lived long and learned much as it stood there on the hill by the sea. This mighty patriarch flung up his arms against the relentless wind in a gesture of eternal resistance. The wind had tortured and deformed him, but it could never conquer him. The writhing roots were gnarled and powerful. They clung to the sifting soil on the rocks like the thick-corded arms of Laocoon in his death struggle. The tree's agonies of rebellion and desperate efforts to save itself from surrender had given it a wild and terrible beauty. It was a symbol of unconquerable freedom.

Down among the clutching roots, the sand was carpeted with the magenta stars of the sand moss. The frosty green vines crept in and out among the rocks and clung to the most precarious points with a secure sense of protection by the stones and roots. They were sweet, contented little vines, and their open purple flowers were wide-eyed and friendly. They crept along near the ground where they could not feel the wind,—nor see the stars. They escaped the fury of the gale by bowing to its lows. It does not harm those things which crawl before it.

I sat among the flowers underneath the tree, and I looked from the fresh sweetness of the verbena up to the distorted musty branches of the tree, and I wondered—. The white dunes billowed away to the dark green of the pines behind me, and the white waves billowed up from the dark blue of the sea before me. The great breakers rose from the blue, arched in ice-green curves, and as they came rushing up the shore, the white spray flew back from their crests like the tossing plumes on a knight's helmet. As the sun's rays caught the spray, gorgeous rainbows flashed for a moment, hung on the air, and vanished before the oncoming crash of the next wave. All down the coast, the perfect line of frothy color flashed vivid green and pink—then pale yellow and violet. The knights wore their ladies' colored 'kerchiefs among their white plumes.

The sky shone pale gold and grey above me, but far off on that vague line where the mist met the sea, a vivid black cloud was slowly unrolling like the fateful scroll of the gods. It rolled on, gradually covering the sun, and as it spread over the sky, the black brightened to a deep blue. Somewhere a low rumble sounded. Thunder! I climbed down off my rocky point and ran to the top of the highest sand dune. Another bolt hurtled across the heavens, and the wind moaned softly. I stood quite still, my heart aching with the beauty of the color before me. The sky above the ocean was slowly changing to an unbelievable royal purple. The cypress stood out black and noble against the gorgeous violet night. The wind was stilled, and the

waves tossed restlessly—waiting. The thunder grew louder and more insistent, and the heavens seemed to press down close to the earth. The storm was about to break, but I stood transfixed, watching-watching. A brilliant prong of lightning tore through the purple velvet sky, and the following crash nearly deafened me. Great drops of rain came down, first slowly and a few at a time, then faster and thicker. I turned and ran down the sand dune and up through the pines. As I ran I listened to that whispering andantino of the forest, rain falling softly on thick pine needles. The trees began to swish above my head, for the wind was rising. I reached the top of the hill, and just before I entered the cabin, I turned to look at the cypress on the point.

I saw it outlined on the leaden sky, tragic and alone, and almost bent double with the sudden hurricane of wind. Then—a flashing, roaring crash like the cry of a dying hero resounded over all the cliff. The cypress was gone in a sheet of golden flame.

The flowers would still be on the point, weaving daintily in and out among the rocks. They would close their eyes to the storm and awaken smiling with fresh, washed faces. The submissive and humble would live. The rebellious and majestic had gone—gone in a blaze of glory and final victory of which the crawling moss could never, never know.



ON WITH THE DANCE

HALE VAGTS

Five hundred couples, tightly massed, sway to the beat of sax and drum, while around the edges of the floor and gathered about the huge fire-place perhaps five hundred more young people idle away the time. Drunken people and sober, male and female, blondes and brunettes and red-heads, in garb ranging from beach pajamas to formal dress; city rounder and country lout, rural gentleman and metropolitan members of the demi-monde are together under one roof for the single purpose of having a good time; of forgetting for a few short hours the cares of an exacting life—all gathered in a typical picture of a western summer resort dance palace, an institution of the Pacific Coast becoming ever increasingly popular.

Every type common to American life may be found here in a mere glance over the variegated assemblage. Here are the cynics, satiated with life and trying to divert themselves at the old game—but failing; here are the eager high school youths, just beginning to taste the first bubbles of the surface glaze. There stands the scion of one of California's richest families; that boy dancing in the corner was only last year

turned out of the orphan asylum where he had passed twelve years of his life. See the group of girls about the huge stone fireplace? They are the members of a high school sorority, spending Easter vacation in a happy flight from the restrictions of home.

Lean men and fat attend, but the women are mostly thin, and usually well rouged. Almost every age from fifteen to fifty is represented, but the great majority are youngsters of from eighteen to twenty-five years of age, who are swinging with pitiable vivacity into the dance.

The eighteenth amendment seems to be forgotten as flasks and bottles are tipped skyward in open defiance. There are hundreds of cars parked in the streets about the dance-hall, and nearly every car has its quart of gin under the back seat. Couples sit necking and drinking between dances in these cars. The constabulary of the town seems afflicted with a severe case of myopia, and one lone man walks up and down the streets, quieting those who seem inclined to become too noisy but otherwise refusing to molest any of the pleasure seekers. He has indeed become so familiar a sight to the consistent patrons of the resort that he is often invited to partake of the liquid refreshments, but seldom accepts, feeling, no doubt, that he would be untrue to his duty if he were to do so.

The town, as time goes on, becomes indifferent to what were once strictly observed as moral laws. Indeed, the tolerance of the inhabitants is broadened to such a degree by frequent contacts with the common sins of life that they view all minor human faults without any great demonstration of emotion.

But what are the reasons that cause the crowds to flock in such great numbers to these amusement centers, hunting for a place where they may dance, smoke, drink, and forget? Shop girls are looking for the thrills of romance, seeking a story-book hero in these tawdry surroundings, the nearest approach to a true romantic setting their stringently budgeted pocketbooks will permit them, and seem on the whole very well satisfied therewith. Silently supercilious college men are here, reflecting a sophisticated amusement at their environment, but nevertheless showing by their actions a very real interest. Young women, tired of staying at home while their salesman husbands are travelling, seek a forbidden amusement in this locale, while high school children are tasting their first thrill, imagining themselves the foundation of "flaming youth" and getting their satisfaction in finding themselves a part of this wild "night life."

Here we have them gathered, the youth of the country—some of them in their teens, some in the early twenties—ever seeking. . . just what, they do not know, an escape, perhaps, from the pressing and depressing realities of this American life, which some have called ma-

terialistic. They seek here the romance they have woven in their dreams and from the MacFadden literature that they have read.

And what do they find here? To the impartial observer it might seem that they find but the cheapest and most meretricious imitation of that which they seek. But to be fair, one must judge from the appearances presented to our eyes. These places are continuously well patronized, and every moonlit summer evening finds them packed with this milling mob of humanity, seeking to find "true romance." And to look at them, to see the verve with which they throw themselves into the dance, the far-away looks in their eyes and rapt expressions of their faces as they drift about the crowded floor, one must judge that they are satisfied, and have found their escape.



WINGS ON YOUR HEELS

CATHERINE A. LALLY

Love of motion is universal. We all know the sensation of contending against invisible forces in a blast of wind; we all like to brook the resistance until the sheer excitement shows in our flushed faces. We find the passion for speed expressed in its more sophisticated forms by high-powered motor cars, speed-boats and aeroplanes. We learn to know it from the day of our first ride in a baby buggy when we depend upon someone else for transportation. The early transition stages in the scale which leads toward the supremely satisfying, space-devouring aeroplane include the mastering of the kiddy-car, three-wheeled bicycles, scooters, and roller-skates. Let us pause here to consider in detail the joys of roller-skating. Few of us are venturesome enough to carry our love of motion to the aeroplane level, but who among us has not counted roller skates among his most treasured possessions?

My first pair of skates was all the more valuable to me because I earned them by patiently collecting green stamps. There was a most alluring pair with ball-bearings displayed in the company window, and the price was only one book. My mother admired the spirit in which I undertook the self-imposed task and generously donated all the stamps that came into her hands. My playmates were not so economical and they persuaded their mothers to purchase skates at once. One by one they fared forth and left me behind, still collecting hateful stamps. It seemed that the book would never be full. But all things come to an end. What a day that was when I hugged those skates to my heart and carried them triumphantly home!

True, I had to begin, a timid, hesitating novice, while my mates were already so far advanced that they dared to roll down steep hills and even to turn corners. But the victory over those mechanisms of steel and leather was well worth all the near disasters I suffered and all the bruises, skinned knees, and scraped elbows I sustained. But at last the day came when I could call myself skilled. Then I knew how a bird must feel when it tries its wings in a pleasure flight for the first time. Wind and air became part of me, and the skates and I sang a wild song in which the whirr of the wheels was strangely blended with the whistle of the autumn wind through the maple trees.

My home city is built on a series of hills and is a veritable treasure ground for roller-skating. Fate proved kind to my cronies and me that year. The city officials closed the schools because of the prevalence of scarlet fever among school children, and we had the whole glorious ruddy-gold month of October to spend out of doors. Fortunately, none of us contracted the disease; so we enjoyed our holiday to the utmost. Up and down the sidewalks we went, much to the annoyance of some staid pedestrians, who often had to step hastily to one side in order to avoid a collision. In the parks we had more freedom and a greater expanse of territory. But the steep hills in the residence district were far more exciting, and here we spent most of our days in spite of the many attempts made to discourage us. Free, untrammelled, light-hearted,—is it any wonder that I envy the child I used to be, and wish I could speed down those hills again?

I can, it is true, still go roller skating. But a skating rink cannot be compared to the sidewalks I used to know. And my old spirit of insouciance is gone. I no longer feel indifferent to the spectators and cannot help but see through their eyes my awkwardness and ungainliness. That is one of the penalties of growing up, this ability to see things as others see them. A child who falls has no great embarrassment. He is only a few feet from the ground anyway; so it makes very little difference. But an adult human does not relish giving the lookers-on a free spectacle of sprawls and slides unless he is extraordinarily pertinacious, and soon gives the game up all together. Those who do persist become as actors and give a very creditable performance. But it is not the same joyous poetry of movement that is known by a child. We can never recapture that. It is gone with childhood itself, and we can treasure it in our memories.

So, when I see a crowd of bright-eyed, merry-hearted boys and girls speeding down a smooth pavement, and reeling gleefully around dizzy corners, my heart in some mysterious way dons roller skates and joins the gay crew. And, strangely enough, I am the maddest and merriest of them all.

"TAMBOUH"



OWEN ULPH

The man lay in a huddled heap, staring fixedly into the swamp. To go forward was impossible, for the trail was blocked by acres of algaous mud, pregnant with disease and—flies. To go backward was impossible, for there were the drums, ever beating out their tattoo of hopeless doom. He grovelled even closer in the grass as their dull echoes floated through the jungle. Africa, the land of living shadows, stagnant rivers, and myriad campfires, like some huge python, had crushed out his soul and thrown the limp bestial remains to obscurity.

As the man rustled the cane-break, a long, lithe body glided through the grass and disappeared in the scum. He shuddered and pulled tighter the red handkerchief about his neck. Something gleamed white from the bank of the swamp. It was the pith-helmet of his late partner, Allan. Allan gone! The only man within sixty leagues capable of speaking the native tongues, whose mangled flesh was at this moment, strewn somewhere throughout the fetid morass. Travaix, wishing that he could speak some Hausa or Swahili, crawled slowly forward. He must get that hat out of the way, else some passing native might find it and immediately commence to search the brush and find him, Travaix, hiding there. His skinny fingers closed on the thing and he drew it back with him to the shelter of the overhanging foliage. Down again on his stomach in the grass.

For twenty-four hours the man had lain crouched in this position, scarcely able to move, no food, shelter, or water. Little specks of light danced before his eyes. Thirst, he was thinking to himself, thirst, how horrible! He began to think of the lines he had heard in his childhood. "Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink". He tried to think of the rest of the lines which diverted his suffering for but a moment, but when he could not remember them, his thirst returned doublefold. Hell, he must have a drink at any price! Dusk was falling. Light shadows began to variegate the swamp, and gradually shapes grew indistinct in the spreading dusk. An hour would pass before moonrise and he should be able to crawl to the swamp, fill his canteen, drink and escape, possibly without being seen. He might as well meet death in the open as under the bush. Once having his thirst cleared and his thoughts organized he might be able skillfully to make an escape along the banks of the lake. Yes, that is what he would do. Travaix crawled again from his alcove, as noiselessly as possible. He

had not gained open ground, however, when the dull thudding of the drums reached his ears. Drums, he thought, another horrible feast. "Oh God," he cried out, "curse the drums." Drum—m-drum—m. The reverberations seemed to close in on the man, and he withdrew to his hiding again. But the drums followed him, like a pack of barking dogs tracking down the fox. God, if he could not drink soon he would go mad! Able to endure the torture no longer, the miserable man crawled down the bank to the edge of the mud, and there, lying flat on his belly, sucked in a few mouthfuls of the warm green slime from the disease-infected swamp. Again he crawled back to his hiding, in constant fear of the drums and—Tambouh. Tambouh, leering hungrily, rose mistily from the swamp and came toward him. Was there no escape? No, the beast of the swamp had found him; he could feel it. As he lay gasping, the distant echoes of the drums continued to crash on his brain. Yes, now he knew, the natives were right. Tambouh is not a mere sickness, a fever gripping the system; but a devil, the spirit of the swamp, that enters the brain and slowly tears it to shreds. Why had he laughed at the Witch-Doctor, why had he sneered, for it was he who had summoned the devil from the swamp and commanded it to seek out the White trader. Over his confused brain and struggling thought, came sleep.

He awoke in England. Was it England? Yes, here were his bachelor's quarters in Jermain Street, and looking through the windows he could see the little green park basking in the sun of a warm spring day. Ah—how great it was to be back in London! He would dress and dine at the club. It would be a pleasure to meet his old friends. He wrestled with his collar-button, which seemed to be choking him. Then Allan opened the door.

"Oh, hello, Allan, just in time to help me with my collar button." It seemed strange to hear his own voice, to be calling Allan's name. Then he suddenly remembered, "But, Allan, I thought you were—

"You thought I was dead", laughed Allan as of old.

Travais did not answer, but instead stood gazing at the blank wall.

"Come with me," commanded Allan, "and I will show you around your life." How odd. Allan was walking toward a door that seemed to grow out of the wall. Travais followed mechanically. Where were they going? Oh yes, to the basement, of course. Travais recognized the stairs and dark corridors. As the two moved along, the walls seemed to grow green in color. People had painted palms, baobabs, and ferns all along the way. Then Travais recognized the surroundings. They were on the banks of the swamp in the untrod jungles of Tanganyika, on the boundary of the Congo. His head throbbed even more and even after these long years of absence, sounded the dull

throbbing of native drums.

He looked around and at last his eyes fell upon a large pile of elephant tusks. "Ah," he sighed to himself, "thousands of pounds worth of precious ivory." All that would be necessary would be to carry three weeks' journey, to Dar-es-Salaam on the coast, and then he would be rich. "A truly precious load," said Allan, who was standing next to him.

Travais had momentarily forgotten the presence of Allan, so concerned was he with his own thoughts. The presence of his partner was rather disconcerting. Travais begrudged Allan half the wealth that was rightfully his. "Render unto Caesar all that is Caesar's", he said to himself, and laughed.

Clouds passed Travais' eyes. There were the cries of a struggling man, and a thick splash as a heavy body fell into the swamp. He watched the desperate man struggling in the mud and could himself feel the suffocating sensation that the doomed one must be enduring. He saw also, the head of a huge crocodile, followed by several more, rise out of the water. There was a splashing as they rolled over and over, their white bellies flashing in the sun, and then—silence.

Travais turned back to camp. The pile of white ivory had melted into nothingness, and now he was surrounded only by that endless wall of green. Absolute silence gripped the jungle except for the occasional rustle of the grass as some huge serpent glided across the path. Then suddenly the silence ceased. There came the low throbbing of the drums. Native drums. Specks again danced before his eyes. He looked upward to the leprous sky. Shadows of the giant palms enveloped him, and darkness seemed to creep from the swamp and enshroud all. There still came the monotone of the drums, and a host of piercing shrieks rang out into the blackness of the night. Then like some mighty upheaval, as some great extinct volcano bursting to life, came a flash of blazing light. He was under a grass hut. Outside the native fires burned red and gold, and behind them rose the grotesque shadows of the jungle above which was the sky, dotted with glimmering stars like tiny white gravestones over blackish hills. The necropolis of night. Then came the hideously painted face of the Witch-Doctor, all hair and teeth. The black man shot a torch of fire into the white man's mouth. Travais screamed. He seemed to be completely afire. His lungs were burnt, his intestines seared. Sweat rolled as rivers of lava, down his scalded brow. The horrible shriek of native music rang on mercilessly in his ears. He recognized the preparation for the loathesome feast on the Seven Skulls. He saw his own servants, black men, being hoisted down over burning flame and blinding smoke; and could hear their ghastly cries of agony as their forms twisted and writhed over the coals; and could sense the odor of burning flesh. Horrible!

What few of his men had not been killed outright in the attack by the cannibals, had lived only to endure this. He could feel the natives coming to treat him in a like manner. His screams were even more violent than those of the sufferers at the stakes. But no, he was not caught yet. He had been suffering at the expense of his imagination. He was still in his hiding at the edge of the swamp. There was still a chance of his making an escape. The natives would soon go and probably leave scraps of food behind them, which having been eaten, would give him sufficient strength to trek for the coast. Oh God, if Allan were only alive! Allan who could speak every native tongue; then perhaps all of the outfit could have been saved. Again the drums, the high-pitched shrieking of barbaric music, the shadows groping through the jungle, the blazing light, the black faces grinning at him from behind rows of sharpened fangs.

The moon was now rising, full red and swollen through the vaporous atmosphere and stream from the dank morass. Travaix lay groaning on the ground. He gazed up at the moon. It was larger than he had ever seen it before and seemed to be dripping blood, crimson blood. Again he was seized with a fit of madness. The volcanic outbursts seemed to come frequently now. The intervals, the gasps between his sane and insane mind grew less. London was again before his eyes, and Paris, the deep blue of the Mediterranean, Alexandria, Cairo, the Soudan, Kenya, the snow-capped Kilimanjarou, Zanzibar and her white coast line, Darses-Salaam—and then—the jungle—black warriors, the Congo—and—the swamp.

He could bear it no longer. He must get out. He must get out and run. To move, only to escape from the shrieking and the blinding fires. He tried to get up, but could not. The drums drew nearer and within his skull, Tambouh danced to their tune. All seemed one now. The piercing cries died down, and the sound of the drums merged with the ghastly light of the fires. Light merging with sound. More and more the flitting of jungle shadows. Travaix coughed. He must have a drink. He thought of himself crawling toward the swamp, leaning down for the sickly scum to soothe his parched aching throat. Good God, he was slipping! He was slipping into the swamp. He could not get away. The mud oozed down his throat, slowly choking him. He gasped for breath, but only mud came. The mosquitoes buzzed. The drums still sounded, though rather faintly in the distance; the light of the camp fires died down, gradually enveloped by the creeping shadows. All was still.

The natives found it the next morning, the shrivelled stinking body of what had once been a man. Tambouh had taken him, they said to themselves as they picked it up and threw it to the crocodiles.

DAWN IN A MILITARY CAMP



EINAR CHRISTY

A cold, wet fog is rolling landward from Monterey Bay. In gray, ragged lines it creeps up the sides of the low sandy hills, pauses a moment at the rounding crests, then tumbles down the farther hollow in a silent, enshrouding avalanche.

A mile or two inland lies a gently-rising hillock, bare except for a few, wind-torn pines. Along its bare top a sentinel is pacing slowly back and forth, his bayonet clicking metallically as he walks, his rifle lying heavily upon his shoulder.

It is a dark night. The gray mist curtains the stars and covers the earth with its soft, ghostly mantle. There is no sound, only that deep, brooding stillness of the hours when the night is darkest.

The sentinel paces silently back and forth, back and forth, his iron-shod boots soundlessly crunching the sandy soil. Once he pauses awhile at the top of the slope and gazes over the dark drifting sea of fog. Nothing can be seen but the scraggly pines huddled uncertainly upon it.

Below the hill lies the great military camp. Mist-hidden, its nearest tents loom indistinctly in the dark murk. Far-flung, it breathes its unseen nearness in the hush of sleeping hundreds.

The guardsman senses its steely might as he breathes deeply of the cold sea air, and peering toward mist-hidden Monterey, thinks vaguely of the many others who have stood their guard upon these same low hills—dark Spaniards, darker Mexicans, and now—himself. Under different flags perhaps, but the same watch. For a moment he sees them, shadowed faces, flashing teeth, shining swords, gay, colorful and lazy. What has become of them—they whose dim images fade in the mist?

Shivering, he buttons his coat against the clammy night, and re-adjusting his heavy cartridge belt resumes the slow pacing of his beat. Back and forth through the drifting mist he walks, back and forth. He looks at his watch, its face gleaming dimly. Only four-thirty—will the time never pass? The minutes drag into the long hours of the seemingly endless night.

But now the sea-breeze, stopping its fitful puffing, freshens, and

stirs faintly in the misshapen pines as the thick murkiness of the night gradually begins to thin.

Meanwhile the low hills above the camp have been darkening against the slowly graying east. The fog, too, has stopped its silent march upon the land and is hovering uncertainly where before it lay secure. The dark trees are taking hold upon the earth, and the nearby tents of the encampment begin to emerge hesitatingly from the dimming mist, a vanguard of the hundreds yet to come.

Slowly the morning has been dawning, but now it becomes lighter rapidly. A faint red flush is spreading over the eastern sky, tinting the edges of the tents as they are surrendered and left behind by the retreating vapors.

The sentinel stops to watch the camp appear. Row upon row of tents, company upon company he sees, as the thinning mist withdraws in hasty disorder from the heights.

The faint glowing of the east is brightening quickly into a rosy hue. The world emerges in the soft light. Each knoll, every tree, the camp upon its long slope, lies clear in the cool hush of the dawn, each detail intensified. Wisps of mist are scurrying to where the fog is lingering in the hollows.

The east is now brilliant behind the barrier of the hills. The sentinel glances hurriedly at his watch. It is almost six. "Two minutes more," he mutters, and fumbles with his belt, straightens his coat, and taps his bayonet scabbard nervously. It is tensely still, a heavy silence with suspense and waiting.

Suddenly a trumpet blares out its shrill notes from the heart of the camp. The brilliant tones pour forth in a wild flood upon the stillness only to be drowned by the roaring crash of the morning gun; and as the first probing sunbeams rout the shadows from the misty hollows, the rumbling echoes of the great gun come growling back from the surrounding hills.

Instantly the camp is in an uproar. From the nearest company a burly first sergeant is ordering his company in no uncertain terms, to "roll out." The lanes between the rows of tents are filled with running, half-clad men, and from the tents come the sounds of iron heels hastily scraping the wooden floor, rattle of steel, curses, and the thump of gun-butt against iron cots.

In the sunshine the sentinel stands at attention and salutes as the relieving officer approaches with his men, while a top-sergeant imperiously roars, "Fall in on the double." His command is echoed from other companies down the line by "What the blank you think this is, a funeral?"

The day has begun.

TROPICAL NIGHTS



ALICIA VACA

It was on a cool evening just after we had left a small, though colorful, port in my country, Corinto. We had left the dining saloon to go on deck, when we came into a beautiful, mystical, tropical night. The great silver moon appeared. She seemed to hang from unseen threads in a distant, deep blue sky. She seemed to ask us to stop in our rush to nowhere and pause—pause to wonder about her beauty and her strength to arouse, and then to quiet our feelings and our passions. Her power changed us into dreamers.

And so we obeyed this urge, gazing at her radiance, longingly. Our voices were lost in the hushed night. Our hearts seemed to stop. As if we had transmitted our feelings to the ship, she, too, stopped. Slowly she came to a gentle stillness. She seemed to feel, to hear the call of that beautiful night!

Soon the other passengers remembered that they were human (Americans most of them) and that moons were made for poets, lovers and maybe for Spanish girls who had left their homes a few hours before. So they went to dance, commenting casually about the incomparable beauty of a tropical night.

But I remained quiet, occasionally sighing at the thought of my home left behind. The ship remained quiet also; and as the water murmuringly lapped her sides, it made a sound as though the ship sighed, too.

Time for sleep came, and the passengers stopped their dancing to retire. I, who had stayed on the deck for hours without realizing it, had to leave also, taking a last look at the landscape and admiring the moon's conquest of the deep night.

Morning came, bringing a change in color to every inch of the sea. The other passengers were noisy and happy. The ship did not move. It was as still as during the night before. Passengers, responding to an eternal longing for movement, wondered why it did not go forward. I seemed to be the only one who knew; the ship was waiting for the moon, as I, waiting for her, to break the spell that she had cast upon us.

A YEAR OF HOLIDAYS IN ONE



ANN HAINES

How would you like to have a holiday like Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year, Fourth of July, your birthday and a school vacation all wrapped in one? If you were one of the black-haired, slanting-eyed, yellow-skinned children living in China you would have it every year. What is it, you ask? Why, it is the ancient Chinese New Year festival which turns these hard-working people into a nation of joyous merry-makers for fifteen whole days at a time.

Chinese New Year does not come at the same time as your New Year. It is later in the winter. The Chinese way of telling time and making a calendar of the months and years is different from ours. The government of China has told its people to use our western calendar. They obey by using it when they are doing business with the foreigners; they still prefer to use their own way of telling time but they are too polite to say so.

Chinese New Year comes at the end of their twelfth month, or moon, called the "Pepper Moon." For days ahead of that time crowds of people have been scurrying and bustling in preparing as you do at Christmas or Thanksgiving; only they have far more to do. No Chinese would think of beginning the New Year with any unpaid debts remaining from the old one. Every man settles his business accounts so that he may start the race of the New Year with nothing to drag him back. His record must be clear. He must also settle all quarrels he has had with friends or neighbors so the New Year will start in peace. Do you agree that some of the Chinese ideas are good ones?

During the time that father has been preparing his business for the Beginning Moon, mother and the servants have been making ready the house, clothes, and food for the feasting. Everyone will go calling during the New Year holiday, and every home must be put in order and decorated as lavishly as the family can afford. Gay paper, good-luck gods are found on the walls of the poor people's homes; a stick of incense is in a jar below; perhaps there is a pot of flowers. The rich people bring out of hidden chests their most costly silk hangings,

porcelain jars and jade carvings; flowers and rare offerings are placed before the family altar and gods.

Children and grown people, rich and poor, masters and servants, all must have good suits of clothes. If possible, they must have new ones. How the needles have been flying the past few weeks! And how sorry anyone would be not to have a holiday suit. He would stay home throughout the entire celebration, ashamed to have anyone see him in his old clothes.

On New Year's Eve the evil spirits have a terrible time. The streets of every city and village roar with the crackle and snap of firecrackers. Bursts of fireworks flash over the heads of the thronging crowds in the narrow streets. Everywhere, the bad luck spirits put their fingers in their ears and their hands before their eyes. But, finally, they become desperate and sneak away in fear. That is just what everyone wants to happen. Now the happy Chinese people can begin the New Year with only good luck spirits to watch over them. So they shoot off a few more fireworks in pure joy.

Now, for about fifteen days, all shops close their doors. Amusement places close also. Every man goes home to his family for the celebration. Even the foreigners who live in China stop their work from four to seven days because they would have no Chinese to do business with during this holiday time. Schools are closed. The boys and girls enjoy their yearly vacation. When people meet on the street one says, "Kung-hi, I humbly wish you joy." Then the other replies, "Sui-hi, may joy be yours." Happiness shines on every face.

The first day of the beginning moon starts not with feasting but with fasting. Each spends the first day praying to his family gods for safety and prosperity in the New Year. However, the people make up for this fasting in the next few days.

On the second day the feasting and merriment burst forth. On this day each one calls on his parents and closest friends. At every house there are New Year gifts and goodies to eat. How the children's eyes open and how their stomachs stretch! On the third day there is calling on all the remaining relatives. If friends or relations are too far away to visit, red greeting cards containing good wishes are sent by messengers.

On the fourth day the shopkeepers have a special ceremony at their shops. They invite all the clerks to come to the stores to pay homage to the gods of wealth in order to bring good luck for the coming year. If any clerk is not invited to the ceremony, he knows his master does not want him to work at the store any longer.

This celebration time is also the birthday of every Chinese boy

and girl. These people do not see the sense of having a separate birthday for each person as we do. You know we sometimes forget birthdays, and people's feelings are hurt. I hope that never happens to you! The Chinese avoid any such trouble by having everyone become a year older when the New Year begins. In that way no one's birthday is ever forgotten. A good idea, isn't it? Think of everyone having birthday presents at once! It must be like Christmas.

So, for days, good cheer is everywhere. Laughter fills the ears of the little Chinese children. Their noses wrinkle with the delightful, spicy smells. Firecrackers startle them happily. Gifts from family and friends fulfill all their wishes. And how their little stomachs bulge under their new, padded silk suits! They may not have as many holidays as we do, but they have all the holidays of a year rolled up in one long one. No wonder they smile as they call to each other "Sui-hi-may joy be yours". Happy Chinese New Year.



"CARPY"

CHARLES B. BRADFORD

His real name is Ed Stocklyn. He is a German Swiss, and his boyhood home was on the edge of the Schwarzwald, the great Black Forest of Germany. He could stand before his father's house and throw a stone across the Upper Rhine River into Switzerland. I practically never speak English with him, because he speaks it with an atrocious accent. He seems to understand my Hochdeutsche perfectly, and I have little difficulty with his particular brand of Plattdeutsche; it seems to be one of the least atrocious mountain dialects.

If masculine beauty contests were to become the order of the day, poor old Ed would not have the ghost of a chance. Seldom has Nature designed a more perfectly homely man. His physiognomy, and indeed his entire physique, has the rectangle as its fundamental unit of architecture. To him the appellation "Squarehead" may be applied in literal truth. His forehead is a flat rectangular area, and his eyebrows form an almost continuous, straight rope of blond hair. Beneath them his blue eyes twinkle, bright and merry, from their nests of wrinkles.

His chin is square and seldom shaven, and his mouth is a straight line until he chooses to smile, at which time the ends of it rise just a trifle, starting wrinkles that spread all over his face, carrying the smile with them. His nose is long, straight-bridged, square-tipped, and very, very red. Whether the capillaries beneath its epidermis have burst from exposure to much cold weather, or whether the condition results from looking upon the wine when it is red, I am not certain.

His square head fits directly on his blocky shoulders, scorning the aid of a neck. His trunk is long in proportion to his legs, but his total height is a little less than five feet. His good left arm is long and strong and hairy, but his right is amputated at the shoulder. And his trade is that of a carpenter.

Believe it or not, as Mr. Ripley says, old man Stocklyn is a one-armed carpenter. Hence comes his nickname of "Carpy". Carpy can build a house, hanging the doors, setting the windows, toenailing the flooring, and performing similar operations without a bit of help. He can do the most amazing things with only the one arm. It is like watching a side-show performance to see him fill his pipe, or drive his buggy. Carpy did not take readily to the coming of the automobile. A car would be just a little too much for him to handle. A younger man might be able to drive a car with one arm; in fact a great many young men with two good arms often drive in that fashion; but Carpy has difficulty enough in managing the "one horsepower" vehicle. Six times that I know of, his ancient horse has taken fright and bolted, with the poor devil hanging to the reins as best he could with one hand until either the buggy smashed, or the horse recovered his senses.

Before old Ed lost his arm he was right-handed. One fine day he rode through an orchard with a shotgun in his hand. His mount shied, and he lost his grip on the gun. It fell, striking butt-first so hard that it discharged both barrels, tearing his right arm to ribbons, crushing and splintering the bones hopelessly. And Ed had to learn every simple act over again with his left hand. As nearly as I can gather, he was a fairly young man at the time of the accident. Since then he has accomplished more in the way of useful work than many another man with the full use of both arms. He is now over seventy and entitled to the California State Old Age Pension, but he is too proud to take it. Poor, honest, and hard-working, cheerful in spite of adversity, old Ed Stocklyn is a man for young chaps to think about whenever they feel like complaining over petty annoyances. Life gave this old fellow some real knocks, but he came up smiling.

"DANSE MACABRE"



DUNCAN ALLISON HOLBERT

Our curiosity was satisfied when we came upon a signpost with the following notice, "These are the ruins of the old City of Silver Mountain. In 1860 it had a population of 9000 permanent inhabitants."

The road down which we had come was evidently the old main street of the little Sierra mining city. The old, weatherbeaten, false-front buildings which had lined the dirt street were now flat on the ground, as though a mighty hand had pushed them all aside. Not a wall was standing. We got out of the car and walked among the ruins of this old ghost town. The utter desolation and silence gave us a peculiar feeling of awe. We talked in hushed voices, as we walked quietly about, feeling as though we were in the presence of the dead.

Almost simultaneously, each of us suggested that it would be a novel experience to camp here over night. We pitched our tent on some high ground at the foot of the peak which guarded the western side of the little valley. After a delicious supper, we arranged our camp stools in front of the tent, where we could overlook the sleeping town. The sinking sun rolled slowly over the western rim, painting the opposite mountains with a brilliant brush. The rocks and trees blazed a fiery orange, like a number of flaming beacons. Gradually the lengthening shadows enveloped the entire valley, with darkness following soon after. We sat there silently, our little fire popping and crackling occasionally. We were conscious that for some reason we were alert, with our ears and eyes straining for the slightest sound or movement in the night. An expectant hush fell over the landscape. Our fire died down to a bed of glowing coals.

And then it happened. The air became electrified. A faint, shadowless, luminous glow suffused the valley. The sleeping city stirred. The prostrate walls slowly raised themselves. The crumbled chimneys climbed the sides of the white-washed buildings. The old lanterns sputtered, glimmered and then shone forth like little stars in

the dark and shadowy street. In a ghostly silence we strained our eyes and saw people walking down the dusty street; old grizzled miners, gamblers with their flashy clothes, colorful Indians. Their lips moved, but we could not hear a syllable. Spirited horses bore their bronzed riders through the busy streets, with muffled hoofs. Doors opened and closed, momentarily showing tables crowded with gambling men. A couple of drunken cow-boys dashed past, their pistols stabbing the night with little orange daggers! The frontier town was living again.

A rocking light appeared, coming down the road into the town. It was the mail coach, the straining horses rushing on with flying hoofs and surging manes. The wheels of the careening coach spun wildly, the driver hanging on to his high perch as if by magic, and whipping his horses to a mad pace. They swept down the narrow street and came to a grinding stop in front of the hotel. The driver vaulted from his seat and disappeared. A man unharnessed the heaving horses, and led them away.

This ghostly pageant continued all night. We watched the dancing, gun fighting, the laughing cowboys and miners, all the old life of the frontier. Then as dawn delicately tinted the eastern sky, the buildings slowly crumbled, fell backward and decayed. The morning mists dissolved the ghostly inhabitants. A vagrant breeze blew out the lamps and raised a cloud of dust which swept by like a curtain. When it had passed, nothing remained but the greyed timbers and crumbled stone of the abandoned city. The air lost its spirit and became lifeless and still. The morning sun burst over the mountains, and the long shafts of light spread across the floor of the valley, but the searching beams found nothing but the ruins of Silver Mountain.



WAS CAPTAIN KIDD A PIRATE?

MARGARET MILL

"Fifteen Men on a dead man's chest,
Yo ho, ho, and a bottle of rum!"

Why is it that all of us, staid, law abiding citizens that we are, experience a faint thrill at the very mention of a pirate? Perhaps it is, as Howard Pyle has so aptly put it, because "there is a certain lurid glamour of the heroical enveloping him around about.

Of those tarry buccaneers, famous in history and legend, Captain Kidd's name has come down as one of the most notorious. We like to

picture him as a dashing figure, in high jack boots and handsome laced coat; a vivid scarlet sash tied carelessly around his waist, and a fine, feathered hat upon his long back hair; swaggering about the decks of his low rakish-looking schooner. He'd have a wicked dirk stuck in his sash and great gold rings in his ears. His long drooping mustache would curl down below his chin. And of course, there'd be a livid scar across one swarthy cheek, mute reminiscence of a cutlass swipe given in some forgotten fight upon a blood-stained deck.

"Captain Kidd!" What thrilling and terrifying visions are conjured by that name! Blue sky above and bluer water below, a Spanish galleon, laden with golden doubloons and moridores, sailing peacefully on her course. Then suddenly another ship, black flag with white skull and crossbones flying at the foremast, swoops upon her with rattle of musketry, shouting and hoarse yells! Later there would come the dreaded "walking of the plank"; a sullen splash, a sharp shriek, the blue waters close again, and the unlucky victim is no more!

Another scene, this time along a lonely stretch of sandy beach. By the fitful glimmer of a smoky lantern, or in the pallid light of a huge tropical moon, we discern dim figures bent nearly double under the weight of something which they are carrying—chests and sacks of ill-gotten loot, of course! They stop. There is the hollow sound of digging, of spades grating against loose sand. Then the figures turn oceanwards again and disappear. The muffled splash of oars gradually dies away until only the dull boom of distant surf is heard. The treasure is hidden, perhaps forever more.

Such, I repeat, are the romantic scenes in which Captain Kidd is so popularly imagined. But let's take a look at this gentleman in the cold light of historical fact. He seems to be remembered by two different first names; Howard Pyle, in his "Book of Pirates," refers to him as Captain Robert Kidd, while other biographers say that he was William Kidd. But whether they call him "Bob" or "Bill" each one makes the same astonishing statement. They say that this illustrious captain was not a true pirate at all, but was an honest privateersman who became the victim or scapegoat of political intrigue!

The exact date of Kidd's birth is not known, although most authorities place it about 1650. He was the son of a Scottish Nonconformist minister and was probably born at Greenock, Scotland. He early took up a seafaring life and was noted for his bravery. In time he became a successful privateersman, for record has it that one of his colonial friends, Colonel Robert Livingston of New York, recommended him to the English government "as a bold and honest man to suppress the pre-

vailing piracies in the American seas." Accordingly he received the king's permission to arrest all pirates, and a commission of reprisals against the French.

In August, 1691, it is said that Captain Kidd brought in a prize ship to New York and paid the King "his tenth share of the prize, and the Governor his fifteenth." In the same year he was given an award of 150 pounds from the colonial governor of New York for his services during the disturbances of the colony after the English revolution in 1688.

Colonel Livingston again assisted Kidd in 1695, for it was through his influence that the Captain secured commission of the English ship "Adventure." He departed in her to the East, where he cruised to Maderia, Madagascar and the Red Sea, apparently to capture pirate ships. It is known that he did take some foreign vessels, but a rumor that he had turned pirate himself and was seizing lawful trading ships, began to circulate. On the strength of such reports he was outlawed and a price put upon his head.

Some writers maintain that, in 1699, upon hearing this, Kidd came boldly back to Boston to learn the truth; and that he delivered much silver, gold and sugar to Lord Bellmont, the royal governor. But the governor, who once had welcomed his share of the privateers' prizes, now betrayed him, ordering him seized and sent to England to be tried as a pirate. He was allowed no counsel during the trial, and his own explanations were ignored; so, of course, he was found guilty. Accordingly, on May 23, 1701, Captain Kidd was hanged, as a private, at Execution Dock in London.

Nevertheless, true pirate or no, Captain Kidd's fame as one lives on. As Howard Pyle states, there is "hardly a creek or stream or point of land along our coast; hardly a convenient bit of good sandy beach, or hump of rock, or water-washed cave" but has been searched for some part of the fabulous treasure supposed to have been hidden by this bold buccaneer. About 14,000 pounds of his plunder by what means he had acquired it, we are not sure, were recovered; partly from his ship and partly from on Gardiner's Island, near Long Island, where he had concealed it. And of the rest—if there was more—who knows? But now, we have the historian's solemn word that Captain Kidd was nothing more than a respectable gentleman, it seems no use to dream of some day securing that magical bit of paper, frayed and dirty with a blurred Kid's head upon it, and a faded cross marking the spot where the treasure lies buried!

DEATH VALLEY



MABEL NOMA BAETA

Death Valley has ever had a mysterious, compelling lure, and so I shall always treasure the memory of it. It is a place of ever-changing lights and shadows, with shifting sand dunes, beautiful mirages of bubbling brooks and limpid lakes which vanish into nothingness, or else change to a muddy alkali spring poisoned with the bitter salts of the desert.

I saw it from the Chloride Cliffs, five thousand feet above sea level. Seen from this point the panorama of Death Valley is the most wondrous and awesome vale ever viewed by man. At first the desolation of the region is so pronounced that one involuntarily shudders in dismay at the fearsome sight. As the marvels of the view are unfolded one is gripped by a feeling of indescribable fascination.

Standing on this point, one may look down on the floor of the valley, the lowest spot in the United States, or cast his eyes upward to Mt. Whitney, a snow-capped peak of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the highest spot in the United States. To the south is Furnace Creek Ranch, the lowest and hottest spot in the world, where cultivated vegetation is produced. Across the valley may be seen various desert trails leading to different points of interest in the valley.

The floor of the valley looks like a vast motionless mass, marked rains. There is no noise—just silence like that of a death chamber. here and there by alkali patches and gullies cut by sudden, torrential rains. There is no sound even of a howling coyote, the twitter of a bird or chirp of the desert cricket—nothing, just silence until it seems oppressive.

Such, in brief, is Death Valley, that great scar in the breast of nature, as I saw it. The pitiless sun scorches like a red-hot iron. The biting sands sweep and swirl and blind, the desert madness may seize upon the strongest man once he has lost his bearings there—all these are the indelible marks of the relentless valley that has repeatedly flung at the grim pioneers its hoarse challenge, "Ye shall not pass."

