Folio

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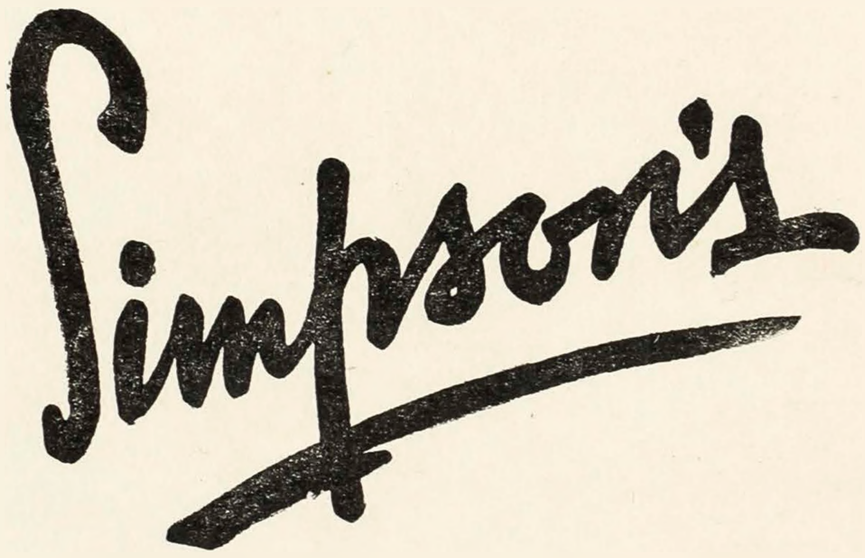

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Go litill tretise, nakit of eloquence,
Causing simplèss and povertee to wit,
And pray the reder to have pacience
Of thy defaute, and to supporten it . . .
—ANON.

Prose

MICHAEL CALLAGHAN
ALICE LAIDLAW
NORM IBSEN
BOB TOYE
D. C. SLOTE

If Thine Eye Offend Thee

MICHAEL CALLAGHAN

HE was a young man and he used to come around the semi-professional Play Society to do bit parts and be a stagehand. He was interested in the stage. He never talked much to people; he was silent and always inside himself. He felt out of touch with them as if he were looking through a window at them. He wanted to do big things in the theatre and he liked beautiful girls. As the plays took shape and the hustle became more intense, he would feel excited, but all he could get was bit parts. He wanted to be in everything and see how everything worked. He watched the electricians and the set designers and the director; he would help with this and that and never speak much, but his haunted little eyes were full of the excitement that glowed inside him.

He was an ordinary, medium-sized man, and he didn't talk much to anyone. His eyes gleamed and he had a funny little head.

There were many pretty girls in the theatre group. It was the biggest group in the big city, and through this group people gained recognition and got on the serious radio dramas, and became successes.

The Play Society had its own workshop. People would rush in and work busily. When these people worked, there was a mystery and a freedom.

The Play Society did a play every two weeks and always there was the new play and the new people. And the actors would cease to be ordinary people and rise above themselves. After they would be tired but excited, and full of a warm big feeling.

He would come around and do little bit parts, hoping the director would give him a lead part, and watch everything that went on, and be anxious to help, but people really didn't need much help.

On the nights of the dress rehearsal and the performance there would be the silent darkness of the theatre, the white unreal light of the stage and the nervous hurry of the men behind the sets, and the actors. Everyone would be preoccupied and doing their own work, and speaking only of their work.

There was one girl who was very beautiful and full of a young

warmth and vivacity. She had played smaller parts too. She had played the lead in a new play and had won the hearts of everyone. He had known her before she was a star and had known that she would succeed. She had been his own secret and he had felt very close to her as if he were helping her up and knew her well.

After her success there had been a coffee party. He had got her coffee and managed always to stay near her, and his little eyes were excited and dreamy looking. He had even spoken to her to tell her that he thought she was magnificent and had carried the play.

He was an ordinary-sized man and he had a funny little head, and you could sense the excitement in him when he came around. Somehow he looked older than he was. He looked like an old man. And he felt warmth for this young girl who was beautiful and a star and who went to university.

It was December. A foot of snow had fallen in the big city and it was a little cold outside. People would hustle into the workshop and stamp their feet and get warm and laugh and make clever jokes.

The next show was to be three one-act plays. The casting was being done and everyone was excited and trying out their new parts and memorizing their lines. The director paced up and down and showed that he was worried. He couldn't find anyone in his troupe who fitted into the role of the Maker of Dreams. The man with the funny little head realized that the director was staring at him intently. Then the director smiled. The director came to him as he stood by himself watching the group and feeling alive and apart from them like a stranger being noticed for the first time. "Why not you," he said. "You're just right for the part of the Maker of Dreams." And his throat got a lump and his stomach felt too light and he said he would. He got his script and began to read at once and to study his part. It came very easily to him.

The beautiful girl was to be the lead in the play and she was dressed in a beautiful white airy dress. She was to be very much in love with the male lead who was called Pierrot. He was to have given Pierrot the dream, the beautiful girl, and the two were to be in love; he was to have given them their dream, and he had a funny little head and was to be a timeless little old man who made the dreams for the world. He looked good in it. He was right for the part.

The excitement of the first night came and the play was a success and he was a success as the funny little Maker of Dreams. He was happy to be with the beautiful girl. The play was a fantasy and his little eyes lit up with warmth. He made a dream for himself, and his

little eyes showed a rapture and excitement that made him more than just an ordinary man.

And after the play was over a new play started and this was to be the last production. He watched the hustle of the actors and stagehands and was a stranger and no one noticed him. He did little things here and there but he didn't get into the play. There was no part for a man with a funny little head.

Finally it was all over and the girl was asked to join a big group and barnstorm across Canada. He went out into the streets with the spring breaking and walked through the parks and downtown to watch the hustle of the crowd and feel a sense of freedom. He walked at night and liked even better to walk through the thin rain and go through the lighted streets and watch, and he felt lonely and yearned to be free. But he didn't really feel free. Then he would go home to his little room with the wallpaper turned brown and the poor lighting, and read a book. Sometimes he would suddenly get up and move towards the mirror, but he would always turn away. He couldn't bear to look in the mirror.

The spring came and left and the summer began to get hot and he wandered and was lonely. He stood apart like a stranger watching the crowd and remembering the girl and the stage and his play, and there was nothing to do.

One night he felt excited again in his stomach and rushed home. He rushed to the mirror and stared at his head. It really was a funny little head, and he took a razor and slashed his throat and tried to cut his funny little head off.

The Widower

ALICE LAIDLAW

MR. McMANUS' wife was dead. She died in January, when the dirty snow was piled up along the streets, and the days were all alike, bitter and soiled and cloudy. One night she was working in the grocery store, and the next night she was dead, lying downtown in the funeral parlours. She had had a heart attack at breakfast time.

There had been a notice in the newspaper saying that Ella Marie Gilbank, wife of John McManus, had passed away suddenly in her sixty-fourth year. She left only her husband and one brother, in Saskatchewan, to mourn her loss; there were no children. The newspaper said also that the funeral would take place from the Pemberton funeral parlours, with interment in the city cemetery.

Mr. McManus was rather awed by the funeral parlours. The soft light seemed to come right out of the pink walls, the thick carpet hushed every footstep, and there was music playing all the time, behind curtain or beyond a hidden door. Mr. McManus felt clumsy and nervous, and he could hardly convince himself that the funeral was real. He did not understand the soft-footed, soft-voiced man in the black coat, who slid about arranging chairs, smiling a polite mournful smile; he did not like the rich, oily tones of the young preacher. People tiptoed in and spoke to him of how very sorry they were and it was nice of them, although, of course, they were not very sorry. There were wreaths of flowers with a sick, sweet, heavy smell; these were sent by ladies' clubs and by customers of long standing.

Then the coffin (a good one, lined with pink satin) was put into the ground, and the earth and snow shovelled over it. The wreaths of pretty flowers were heaped on top of the mound, left to wither and freeze there; that was a pity.

Mr. McManus went home by himself. The green blinds were pulled down in the store windows, showing up the signs, the bright stickers advertising Salada Tea, and Coca-Cola, and the neat small *Groceries — J. McManus*. The store looked as if it were Sunday today; the pyramids of tin cans, the bins of oranges and apples, all shrouded by green blinds.

The upstairs, where they lived, had a feeling of Sunday, too; it was close and quiet and dark in the late afternoon. Mr. McManus went into the front room, which was Ella's room, with her geraniums and African

violets, her lace doilies on the chesterfield, her painted silk screen trying to hide a little black stove in the corner. Mr. McManus had never liked the screen. Now it occurred to him that he could move it away, and so he did. He could throw the geraniums in the garbage, too — he had always said they made a room stuffy — and he could put away the hard shiny-satin cushions that were a gift from Ella's cousin. Now he began to understand that Ella was dead.

He made himself some bologna sandwiches and a cup of tea. He sat at the kitchen table and for a little while he was lonesome for Ella's good warm supper and her comfortable bickering talk. He thought how Ella would be quite bewildered to be alone, away from all the things she knew about, like piecing quilts and making orange muffins. Yet he had not time to be lonesome or sorry for Ella; he was curiously excited. It seemed to him that some kind of change had come, a free, lonely, happy life was about to begin for him. Not, he thought hastily, that he and Ella had not been as happy as most people, but she had clung to him and twisted around him, and filled up his life for him. A woman was like that when she didn't have any children.

He remembered the secret guilty happiness of the rare evenings when Ella had gone out to Mission Circle. He could sit in the front room by the window, with the room quiet and empty; he could look out at the pavement and the lamp-posts and the faded houses of brick and wood. Maybe it would be a wet night, the pavement shining with rain, the pale light of street-lamps over dark-washed wall. He would have a cup of tea, or, as a treat, a little glass of wine, and play for a while on his violin. He would much rather sit playing the violin than go over his books in the evening; he was not much of a businessman, as Ella had often said, only a puttering small-store grocer.

Now he wandered about the small rooms, so crowded, so faintly, mustily scented with Ella, and he thought that they were his rooms and he was alone in them. Every evening he would sit by the window and play his violin. Sometimes he would have a few old friends up to sit and talk, but mostly he would be alone.

He took up two pots of geraniums and carried them to the kitchen, but the window looked bare and different without them, so he brought them back. He put the screen back around the stove, too; he was used to it there.

The women came into the store and were very kind to Mr. McManus. They brought him pies or a pot of home-made soup, and when they spoke comfortingly and urged these gifts on him he thought that they were gloating a little to themselves. *How lost he is, poor man, he's just lost*

without his wife. They would nod sadly, with a faint, instinctive satisfaction, and then go to bake him a pie.

The store was not doing so well now, and that was because Ella was not there. Ella could talk back to the man who sold them bad potatoes; she knew when to bring a price down a cent or two to beat the store on the next block, and the clerk never loafed when Ella was there. Mr. McManus tried to be sharp and stern and business-like, but no one was fooled, and someone was always fooling him. He kept muddling about the store, constantly worried and constantly a little guilty, because he know that, without Ella to prod him, he did not much care.

He was puzzled, also, because nothing was working out as he expected. Ella was gone; he had soon got used to that, but there was not much change in his life. He had decided, in the end, to leave the rooms as they were, because he could not part with any of the things he did not like. He went on living much as he had always done, except that his meals were not so good, and he had to bother about his own laundry and sewing on his own buttons. These small discomforts he learned to accept, but the bigger one, the feeling of something missed, perhaps lost — this bewildered him. His evenings alone with the violin began to be disappointing; often he put the violin away and sat doing nothing, feeling stale and morose. Then he puzzled on what was the matter.

When spring came, Mr. McManus felt confusedly that there would be a difference. There had never been a difference before, but then Ella had been there, shutting off spring and summer and the bigger world, insulating him in humdrum intimacy. Only the store, the rooms upstairs, the proper walking to the church. . . .

On a Sunday afternoon, a fine afternoon in April, Mr. McManus took his hat and his stick and went out for a walk. He set off in the direction of the park, which was nearer the outskirts of the city. He walked along gently swinging his cane, tapping it now and then on the sidewalk; he would be glad to see the openness, the early greenness of the park. He noticed that there were a few birds singing in backyard apple trees, and that the patches of front lawns were coming green through muddy dead grass. Many people were out walking, like Mr. McManus, and they all seemed to be aware of the cool wind and the passing sunlight. Now and then someone might even look up at the sky, which was blue as in summertime, bluer against so many heaped white clouds. There were children going to Sunday School, little girls in new bright-coloured coats and neat pigtails, with white gloved hands to carry a Bible. Mr. McManus was a little afraid of children, but this afternoon they looked scrubbed and tidy and good.

It was eight blocks to the park and he was tired. He sat down on a bench just inside the park gate. He could see right across the park, the

gravel walks laid out in a pattern, the flower beds still squares and triangles of muddy earth. Some little leaves had come out on the hedges, but the high, slender limbs of the elms were still bare, their twigs reddening, full-budded up against the sky.

The old man remembered being here before on a day very like this one. It must have been a long time ago; Ella had not much liked to go for walks, nor to sit home alone while he went. Then he remembered. It had been the first year after he was married. Ella had been at home. She couldn't go out, she was going to have a baby. Then, after all, the baby had died before it was born. Well, but he had gone by himself for a walk when the store was closed on a Sunday afternoon. He had come along these same sidewalks and walked all around the park, walking quickly but quietly, a polite hurrying young man who did not look up. Yet he had known very well what a fresh spring day it was with an edge of cold on the wind, and clouds now and then across the sun, the ground springy underfoot, with the frost coming out of it.

Quite clearly, Mr. McManus remembered the afternoon, and the mood of the afternoon stirred in him, curiously alive — the longing, the tightened, helpless anger of the young man circling the park — thirty, forty years ago.

The young man was away from the store now, and away from the wife who was petty and miserable with the baby coming. Now he could look at the trees and the streets, come close to the spring day. No one talked to him, calling him back to the grocery orders and the waiting supper, the money put away for the hospital bill. No one pulled him this way and that, hid from him all the other things in the world. His old instinct of contact with his surroundings came gradually back to him. He could look at the clouds over the grimy city roofs, the crazy jumbled lines of chimneys and alley-fences, the grass in the park. . . He was alone again, an outside person floating in the world.

When he was a boy he had lived on a farm, and he had felt like this when he went over the hill for the cows, early in the morning. Then he would be alone in the long fields as far as he could see; he would be free and somehow splendid, with great dreams to be made true in his life. Today the fine childish dreams excited him again; he would go away, he would wander about and see the old tall cities, the countries across the sea; he would learn to play the violin as he wanted to play; he would buy a farm like the farm he remembered, low hills and rich acres in the hollow; he would work hard again with his body, in the fields, in the hot sun. . . .

Yet, all the time, he knew there was the store. He wondered how he had come to be a grocer in a white apron, all because he had wanted to marry Ella, and Ella's father had the store. He had wanted to marry her

so much; she was pretty and ladylike, she wore white crisp blouses, she sang in a small very sweet voice and played the piano. He had thought she was worth throwing out all the boy's dreaming in the early morning, worth the grocery store and the stuffy rooms upstairs, church every Sunday, and dinner with her parents. Only a nice girl, maybe not so nice as others. . . .

The young man walked around and around in the park, knowing that he had to be home for supper at five, had to talk to Ella and go to Service with her in the evening, knowing that Ella would always be there, all the time. Then in a wild, baffled, angry moment, he thought that he would give anything, half the years of his life, to be free.

Mr. McManus was getting cold, although he wore a winter overcoat. He was too old to go walking in the park now. He was actually looking forward to the hot little living-room, the stuffed chair, tea and some tarts. He would sit there with his feet upon a stool, drowse a little, listen to the radio. He was sorry, in a way, that Ella would not be there to get him his supper, talk to him and keep him company.

He started to walk back. Now he understood that nothing was going to change in his life; it was much too late for that. Ella might as well not be dead; it would be better, more comfortable.

The sun was out now. The trees made the long shadows of late afternoon and it was cold in the shadows, only a little less cold in the sun. Mr. McManus was still thinking about the young man and the afternoon of the young man in the park. He walked along wondering about it, absently tapping his cane on the sidewalk.

Once, near home, he saw the stealthy movement of a neighbour woman's curtains.

He's going home, she would say to her husband. *He just sits at home all by himself, he's that lost without his wife.*

Search

NORM IBSEN

NIGHT comes to the city. Quietly, as usual without fanfare. Just settles down over the heartless city of brick and steel.

And with it this time come silent, formless wisps of fog which nuzzle against buildings, hang from branches of trees and dim the yellow glow from street-lights to tiny pinpoints of colour.

But night, too, has a beginning and an end, also a part that is neither beginning nor end. It is during this part that the city most blends itself into a single being. A huge, spawning, shapeless, silent being.

An automobile horn echoes through the empty streets, reverberates from wall to wall of deserted buildings.

Two cats, shadowy outlines in the fog, leap noiselessly across a street, into an alleyway. And run on and on.

A drunk, hours overdue at home, shuffles along the sidewalk, mumbling, grabs a lamppost and stares up at the dim light, then into the fog. He sighs, then continues his journey.

A policeman watches the drunk, keeps a few paces behind him. Curses the weather and his job. Thinks of arresting the drunk, thinks of going home to bed, thinks of anything at all, then leaves the drunk and turns up a sidestreet with only three hours of his shift left.

Lights shimmer faintly from windows of all-night factories, lunch counters and railway stations. But as the fog thickens all the man-made light is gradually blotted out. Activity and noise are throttled by the fog.

Nothing but the magic darkness of the city at night.

* * * * *

Asher lay on his back on the bed, watched the light flicker, struggle for life. He noticed a moistness on the window caused by the thickening fog and heard a distant automobile horn, sounding hollow in the mist-laden air.

Every few minutes he coughed violently and painfully, his emaciated

body shaking convulsively. He would cover his mouth with a cloth, then, when the coughing seizure had ended, he would take the cloth away and stare dispassionately at the bloodstains which it clearly showed.

He rolled on his side, let the light shine on a sallow tubercular cheek. He ran a finger gingerly up one nostril then withdrew it and rubbed his nose vigorously and let his eyes — rheumy, colourless eyes — roam from wall to wall about the room.

What a filthy hole Asher thought, disgustedly, a rotten, filthy hole. Then the coughing began again. When he had recovered from the seizure Asher closed his eyes, momentarily hid the sordidness of the room from sight. Then he opened them and wondered suddenly: What the hell am I doing here? No answer.

* * * * *

Looking backwards . . . .

"Asher!"

"Yes, momma."

"Where are you, Asher?"

Why couldn't they let him alone. They always worried about him. It was bothersome. "I'm reading, momma. In my room."

"You're always reading, Asher. You read too much. You should be outside playing. Where are all your friends?"

Friends? A skinny, unathletic boy with thick glasses didn't make friends very quickly. He was unable to put his thoughts in those words. But that was what went on in his mind. Of course, he had a funny name, too. Asher Kopin.

"Did you hear me, Asher? Why don't you answer?"

"I'm reading, momma. I can't go and play now." Pleading.

"But you had better go outside and play just for a while, Asher. Just till supper's ready. A growing boy like you should be playing with friends.

A sigh. Why couldn't they leave him alone? All his friends made fun of him and he was tired of being laughed at. For what? But he relented, as usual.

"All right, momma." He rose from the bed where he had been lying on his stomach reading. (The book put carefully aside, with the page marked.) He shuffled downstairs into the kitchen, past his mother,

who had stopped her work to watch him. He didn't speak and avoided her eyes.

"Asher!"

"Yes, momma." He never said it as a question.

"Are you still reading that politics and history?"

The eyes looked down. "I like it, momma."

"How many of your friends read those kind of books, Asher? You're only twelve." Did his friends read books? He started out the door.

"And Asher . . . "

"Yes, momma."

"If you're going to read all the time you'll have to get stronger glasses. And watch you don't break the ones you have."

He rushed away, anxious to get out of the house.

Asher Kopin. Twelve years old. Just a young, lost Jewish kid.

* * * * *

Asher lit another cigarette, rolled over on his stomach and buried his head in his arms. The thin haze of cigarette smoke made it seem as if the fog had sifted through the window and curtains and was now starting to spread through the room.

Asher didn't even think of sleep.

* * * * *

The high school graduation dance.

"Aren't you going tonight, Asher?"

Without looking up from his book, "No, momma."

"Isn't there a girl you could take? No girl at all?

"I don't know."

"But didn't you ask a girl? After all, it is your graduation dance, Asher. You may not see any of your friends much more."

"No, momma." Mumbled.

"I don't think you've ever taken a girl out. You sort of expect an eighteen-year-old boy to take a girl out sometimes. It's not good for you to be reading and studying all the time. What about Julie?"

"I like reading." Would they never leave him alone? A tall, anemic eighteen-year-old boy with thick glasses and already rounded shoulders.

With ugly red pimples of adolescence under his chin. Him ask girls out? He remembered.

(Would you like to go to a movie tonight, Julie?)

(Oh, I'd love to, Asher, but I just can't. I'm busy . . .)

Again and again. (I'd love to, Asher, but . . .)

"Did you hear what I said, Asher? Why don't you ask Julie? I'm sure she would love to go."

God damn them all. They don't understand . . .

"What's wrong with Julie, Asher?"

Quietly. "I told you I don't want to go, momma. I want to finish this book."

"But, Asher . . ." And on and on.

He turned restlessly on his side, butted his cigarette quickly when he felt a burning sensation in his fingers. Then he spent several seconds clearing a nodule of phlegm from his throat. Finally he spat into a handkerchief. The sight of filthy, mucus-filled handkerchiefs disgusted Asher. When he opened his eyes the light seemed extremely bright, so he shut them tightly and placed his arm across his face.

* * * * *

After commencement exercises.

"What are you going to do now, Asher?"

"I don't know, momma." Ironically, "I might join the army."

"But you must have some plans, Asher. And I thought maybe you would be thinking of getting married by the time you graduated. There are a lot of nice girls around, Asher. You should look."

It all sounded ridiculous. But not laughable.

"I'm not interested in that, momma." He hated her when she talked like that. He couldn't take it much longer.

Then, "What are your friends going to be doing?" That same matter-of-factness again. His friends. A polyglot collection of pseudo-intellectuals and young insecure Jewish boys. Asher understood them but clung to them for man loves the company of fellow men. He hates to be alone.

Insistently, "Don't you know what your friends will be doing?"

"For . . ." Asher began angrily, the first anger he had ever shown. Then he stopped, pressed his hand against his forehead. "No, momma," he said quietly.

Twenty-two now. And still a confused, sensitive Jewish youth.

* * * * *

Then the inevitable struggle with religion. Seeking answers and a solution to all the questions and doubts that had pervaded his whole life. An unsure denial of any religious beliefs. Denial of God.

Even when job-hunting, religion troubled Asher. There was always the question: Religion? And always the same answer: Jewish. He couldn't bring himself to deny religion. And always no job.

But with the climax of the inevitable struggle with religion came an inevitable question: What does Asher Kopin believe?

And Asher found he couldn't deny his faith. Without that he would have nothing to grasp, would lose his last oasis.

Asher was finally left alone.

* * * * *

The continued, endless, aimless searching and . . . nothing. Then sickness, in spirit and body. Asher's faith was shaken. And thinking he had divorced himself from all worthwhile life, Asher Kopin quit.

Another uncontrollable spasm of coughing overcame Asher, dragging the strength from his body. Then, still coughing, Asher turned over on his side and tried to sleep . . .

The night of his death was a damp, foggy night.

* * * * *

Daylight comes to the city. And with the approach of daylight, the fog noiselessly departs. Furtively.

Traffic and working people fill the streets. The city comes alive, mockingly greets its friends, the people. But even with daylight a light continues to burn in one tiny, dingy room.

Lake of Glass

D. C. SLOTE

TOVINA waited in the wings. The gaudiness of the décor for "Swan Lake" dazzled her as she saw most of the ballet troupe assembled for the brilliant "Dance of the Swans". Tonight the mirrored "lake" was more beautiful than ever as the perfectly trained body of dancers whirled with opening night precision and grace. She could see, by peering past the great balustrade on her left, the figure of the conductor as he guided the orchestra through Tchaikowsky's score, and wondered if he was as nervous as she. Since she was the new ballerina of the troupe, Tovina felt that Kurt certainly must have some apprehension about her first night and the effect she would produce.

For almost an entire month now she had been filled with her own inner happiness. As the days passed by, she was more and more certain that this happiness was too great to keep bottled within her. She was certain that it must have shown in her face, in her movements, and when she looked at Kurt.

She had managed to be near him constantly. Not that she had ever told him of her feelings, nor had Tovina ever received any indication of Kurt's true emotions; she was one of those beautifully lucid souls who conjure up elaborate dream stuffs from such nebulous ingredients as a smile, a wink, a few words. She would dance for him as she had never before danced; through the abstraction of her art, she could appeal to him so very strongly. . . .

Her cue. Majestically, as Queen of the Swans, Tovina glided swiftly to the middle of the mirrored stage. She looked slowly up at Kurt. He was staring intently at her, as if seeing her for the first time. And Tovina was quite sure it was the first time he had ever really seen her. Oddly enough, Tovina realized that she herself had not known the real Tovina. There had been other Kurts, other conductors like him, other ballet dancers, other men. Each time Tovina was sure she had found the Thing, the Purpose, that she had been seeking all her life. But always she faltered and realized at last that she had conjured up, like Keats, a world of Fancy and Pretty Falsities. Tovina always rallied; always found another Kurt, and she thought it would always be thus.

Here, though, on the elaborate set of "Swan Lake," doing the role with the mechanical motions she had memorized so often, her former

values began to dissipate. She wasn't dancing a certain pattern circumscribed by imaginary chalk lines; she *was* the Queen,; she *was* under the enchanted spell; she waited only for the Prince's arrow.

Tovina glanced at Kurt; he was smiling. As through a mist, that Tovina gradually recognized as her own tears, she could see his tenuous outline bending and gesticulating to the rhythm of the music.

She slowly realized that the Prince had arrived; the crashing, masculine brasses heralded his approach and Tovina turned to meet him. He was clad completely in black; tight, muscle-fitting black satin that curved over his body. The two moved as a unit, breath-taking, existing as an entity, a complete thing. Tovina dimly heard his voice close to her ear:

"Tovina . . . good Lord. Good Lord, Tovina, what are you doing?"

She smiled a wan smile and his already darkened brow became almost a scowl.

Tovina whirled, hands over head, her feet executing a difficult *pas de bourré*, as the Prince followed her. He was dancing as she was, his every motion filled with a strange intensity, an almost desperate air of determination. As they danced their duet, Tovina sensed Kurt's eyes on them, and as she turned quickly she looked full into his face. She saw his great eyes, and the strange, indefinable look in them; it was as if he was puzzled by the pair, by their beautiful motions, and the unprecedented way they were dancing this night.

She was aware that the Prince was lifting her, and she realized dully (as if the realization was not really important) that his hands and his touch did not affect her in the slightest; Kurt was before her eyes, smiling, as he watched the two. She watched the Prince as he leaped away in a magnificent curve, and for a brief instant was disturbed by how well the satin betrayed his body. Then he was lost among the shadows.

The Finale. The infinitely tender theme swept her along as she, toute seule, danced her last dance. The hush over the theatre, over the rest of the ballet dancers, was accentuated thrice over by the oboe solo. Then the full orchestra, and a great mass of sound was about her. It encircled her, refreshing her, acting as a powerful drug that made her forget her flying feet, her gracefully curved arms; a drug that allowed the enormous face of Kurt to fill her cosmos, to overflow and almost to suffocate her in a great tide of emotion.

The place was still as the orchestra thundered out the last mighty chord. The echoes began to seek out the farthest corners of the theatre when they were suddenly fortified by the powerful, conquering applause

that caused Tovina to sink in a little heap on the middle of the stage.

Then Kurt was standing beside her; his eyes shining hugely as Tovina tried to breathe. The rest of the dancers clustered about, shrieking "bravos" and exclaiming wildly. Tovina stared at Kurt and suddenly, with an enormously hollow feeling, knew that she had failed. Her great inner store of secret joy was emptied in an instant, as she read amazement, wonder, praise, even awe in his eyes, but not what she wanted to see. . . .

Most of the troupe had finally left; she was still dazed, bewildered; she could not reconcile the way Kurt had looked at her during her duet and the way he seemed now that the performance was over.

Suddenly the Prince was beside her, still clad in his black costume; he looked blurred and vague to her tired eyes, but she returned his gaze. A look of haughter, of great beauty, was about his whole being; he looked at Tovina with a glance of absolute pity.

"Coming Kurt?" he said.

Tovina, clad in her tight, stiff, classic skirt that seemed suddenly crushed and broken, stood silently as Kurt looked at him for several minutes.

"Coming."

Fear and the Night

BOB TOYE

ON the last night of Brian's holiday there was to be a party for him because he was going home. After two weeks of good times he wanted nothing more than to board the six o'clock train and head east. But they coaxed him to stay, even phoned the station to find if there was a later train. There was, at midnight, so he agreed.

The party turned out well, the best yet. He loved the bright music and laughter, was caught up in other people's joy and found his hundred little fears washed away. His friends knew Brian as a clever, serious youth who was very kind. He would give dimes and quarters to street children, and felt keenly for any person of his acquaintance who was in trouble.

When he reached the station he found he had a short wait so he stood outside and leaned against the stationhouse wall in the dark. He thought of home and was glad to be going back home, where he could walk through warmly lighted rooms, feeling the walls around him closing out the night. Standing in the dark, he thought of the people clustered at the edge of the platform peering down the tracks for the train. He wondered where they could be going, what brought them out into the night. Night shadows and diluted light from the station window made them look unreal — a part of the darkness, as if they lived their lives at night, and would disappear in the good light of daytime.

With hiss and rush and scream the train pounded into the station and he waited for the others to get on before climbing aboard. He went up the narrow steel steps, through the accordian-like passage with the smell of sulphur, and into the brightness of the coach. The train ground the tracks and started away.

At the first empty seat he took off his coat and slung his club bag onto the rack above. Behind him was a young, plain girl and behind her a woman. All the other inhabitants of that half of the coach were men, sprawled in curious attitudes of sleep. Sitting there, tired but too wide awake to sleep, he decided he would take a rest from parties and having a good time. He just wanted to get home to the orderly college life, his books and the study and talks with his friends.

The coach was silent, one of the plum and blue coloured new ones, where all the sounds of a mighty train were suppressed. He often thought

of it, how the inside of the coach was a vacuum where sounds were numbed in an unreal way.

Before twenty minutes had passed Brian felt a tap on his arm, felt a hand reach through the space between his seat and the window and tap him. Quickly he turned around, and saw the girl he had hardly noticed. She had a childlike expression and she said, "Have you got a match?"

"Yes," he said and dug in his pocket. He lit one.

"I haven't got a cigarette," she said. She gazed at him like a child and he was aware of a strange tension within him when he looked at her eyes. She must have been nineteen.

Brian figured this could be a pass, but her look was so naive. He moved into the aisle to offer her a cigarette.

"Aren't you Leo?" Her voice was loud and accusing. It broke the numb silence of the coach.

"You're not Leo?" she said, and Brian wondered what was coming off. He was embarrassed and said "No," more loudly than he wanted to. He saw no choice but to sit down beside her and thrust cigarettes under her nose to silence her. Half the coach heard them.

"You'll think I'm awful," she said.

"Oh, not at all." And in truth, Brian did not know what to think.

Brian noticed her eyes again, haunted eyes . . . eyes you meet in dreams. They were brown, large, and tipped up slightly at the edges. There was a depth in them which belied her childlike face and he felt the urge to turn away. He felt the whole incident had been uneasy, and wanted to see the end of it. But she kept talking.

"Leo," she said, "was a fellow I met on another midnight train. He was a private investigator and I was so thrilled to at last meet a real private investigator that I talked to him all the way to London." He was a swell guy and when I saw you I was sure you were him. Why, when I saw you walk into the train I . . ." She turned her head to the window and laughed.

Brian thought he would never get back to the pleasant privacy of his own seat ahead. She told him about herself and of the silly little things she sometimes did, like leaving her purse in a taxi in the excitement of saying goodbye — forgot all about it till she was about to get on the train. The boy-friend had bought her another ticket — with all the money he had in his pocket, and had promised to trace the cab. She talked on.

Suddenly Brian realized the girl had no cabfare home and the train got in at 3.30 a.m.

"How far do you live from the station?" he asked.

"A long way," she said vaguely. He tried to picture her as part of a home, a family, and wondered if she really had a home. Of course she has, he thought, and considered the five-dollar bill he still had — far too much to give her for cabfare. No chance of getting it changed. His instinct was to take her home in a cab, right up to the door, then pay the driver after so as not to embarrass her — just as he would with any girl he knew who was "on the spot". But she wasn't like just any girl he knew. What was it about her . . .?

As she talked of her own affairs in a very general way, he closed his eyes, hoping she would think he was dropping off to sleep. Then he could think the thing through. He pressed the button to let the seat slide far back and wiggled out of his shoes. His back felt relaxed for the first time and his thoughts were fuzzed with sleepiness. Just once, he heard a rustle of movement and knew he must be practically in the lap of the person behind. He turned slightly, opened his eyes and saw the women behind staring at him intensely. He shut his eyes quickly, let the seat slide up a little, and soon he was asleep.

He slept soundly for awhile, then, half-waking, he felt coarse, shaking hands resting on his cheeks, heavy breath on his face. A voice rasped very close, "Don't be afraid, darling," and lips touched his forehead in a kiss.

He determined not to be caught off his guard. Opening his eyes, he pulled forward out of the grasp and jerked around to see the women for the first time. He was faced with a fortyish scrag of a woman leering at him, and he was afraid.

She laughed a whiskey laugh, and as he looked into her piercing, red-rimmed eyes her laughter cut short. She simply stared at him, this woman of the night, and around her mouth was an evil smile. He turned his eyes to the girl. She, too, was gazing at him deeply, knowingly. She, too, wore the same secretive smile. As he looked at her, the whiskey voice said, "I won't forget this in a thousand years."

It was only one silent moment.

Brian sat still, looking straight ahead. The girl beside him watched him and he dared not look.

"I like you," she said. "You're just like Leo." Her voice was childlike, just as before. And thoughts of Leo rushed into his mind for

no reason. Could he be a real person; was he dead or alive; sane or otherwise. To shut out such thoughts he talked about little or nothing and longed to be off the train. Soon the conductor called out "London, next station stop," and he looked out into the darkness for a sign of city lights. He would soon he home.

The girl also made a move to gather her things together and get off. He decided now he would have to give her the five dollars or she would follow him through the station, up into the darkness. But something kept him from reaching into his pocket for the bill. Not that it was too much. That didn't matter now. If he paid her she would go her own way. And yet that evil smile . . .

She followed him off the train. She walked beside him. Brian saw she had no suitcase. They walked through the station and out into the night, only dimly lit by passing cars. When they got to the street he stopped and said,

"What will you do?"

She looked at him for a long time with a deep stare, with her evil smile, then in a simple gesture stuck out her hand. Blood rushed to Brian's head and he felt defeated as he put the five dollars into her palm. He turned and without actually running, walked quickly away.

He asked himself if he had bought off the evil he had come close to. Or had he become a part of it?

In the dark streets, his hundred little fears welled up in him again.

* * * * *

Down the street the other way two women walked side by side, talking. One was only a girl.

"That was an easy touch," said the older.

The girl said, "Yes, but you sometimes feel sorry for a kid like that."

"No, my dear," the woman said. "You'll learn to never give a sucker an even break." The two forms disappeared into the night.

"Pleasant it is to wink and sniff the fumes
The little dainty poet blows for us . . . . .

—WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

Poetry

DIANE McLAREN
CLIFF WEBB
PAT MOORE
CLIFFORD BALLON
DOUG. SIFTON
DOUG. SPETTIGUE

Reveille Fantasia

DIANE McLAREN

Drifting slowly in my dream,
Sleepy walking, dreamy sleeping,
Worlds of half fantastic joys,
Slowly drowsing, half awaking.
Angelus bells ring out the sunset,
Happy birds chorus faintly,
Cooing clangor, tolling play,
Sounds the prayer that ends the day.
Semi-light, and warm as breath,
Drifting on a cloud of fancy,
Do not wake me, for I wander
Gath'ring bliss, embalmed in clover.

Yet harsher than this holy pulse,
Vague and distant, music rising,
Linking me to worlds of sorrow
Subtly calling me to wake.
Tenuous silence now forbidden,
Reverie quits my opening eyes.

Kiss of sunlight meets my gaze:
Dawning reason shocked to joy:
The quilt a shield, as in her womb
I nestled once in fetal peace.
Through the window some last beaming
Of the constant sun that sank,
Caught and held in spectrum splendour.
The prismic pattern love had wrought,
Nature's hues preserved in cotton,
This counterpane become the symbol
Of useful toil for many evenings
When youth was strong and hearts
were full.

Dedication of the sunset
Wakes anew my musing bliss
And, it seems, again I traverse
The clovered meadows of my dreams.
Through the Ivory gate of sorrow,
Deceitful shades send mocking sleep.

To A Lady

CLIFF WEBB

Come and sit a little while with me
As you did those other times,
The snows stretch, O! blanket
On the stippled brown field.
And so I look for you.
Your flesh is mystic, you mingle
And buckle in the thin air,
Thin as a wedge of the boundless.
Earth, flesh, air here all flush
And fuse in the fire of my love.
You come and sit down in my place,
And your form encloses mine; I wear you,
All way ever your body is,
Like the skin of a rich grape.
Out of my eyes I feel your limpid gaze
And in my flesh somewhere, I come to life.

The Fall

I am hidden deeply
The pure black night swaths me,
As the surface of a watering pond,
Hidden among the iron woods
And the sickly poplars,
Melts my shadow as I walk in the moonlight.
Being hidden, my spirit struggles
Against the adhesive love,
The sweet, soft, delicate, flushing flesh
Of her love.
A pebble falls;
And I recede to the ends of the earth
From whence my spirit returns,
Quenched and rested,
While the stone sifts slowly to the bottom.

Pallida Mors

PAT MOORE

The land is huge, the sky is vast,
The many pin-points of lighted windows
Prick out the darkened hills.
Each man has followed his accustomed way
Home
To his appointed bed,
Each man taking up his particular portion
Of his allotted space in his allotted orbit.
So many men and women
Finding their particular corners in garrets and rooms
There to pass the time
Till morning breaks.

Men spring from common origin,
Move onward with the mass
Until they must relinquish themselves
To the common goal.
Between the beginning and the end
There is only the small working of the intellect,
Emotion, and circumstances,
Propelled onward by the fact of existence.

The water flows quickly to the falls,
Slides flashing to the lower rocks,
Sparkling, leaping, individual,
Rejoining at last the onward movement of the boiling water.
During the moment of falling,
Only then is there conscious joy in hurtling down
Propelled by a force its own
Yet not its own.

The waters rush, the land heaves in vast undulations,
Pushing up mountains, ripping chasms.
And still the planet whirls
In its own particular orbit
Around its own particular sun,
An inch, a minute in the plan of Space and Time.

The clock ticks,
The years roll off the never-ending wheel.
The gear clicks off the future
To become the past,
The present existing only in the click of the gear.

And still Time looms above, beyond,
Unmeasurable,
And Space, the endless symbol of the infinite,
Incomprehensible,
And mute.

Echoes

CLIFFORD BALLON

I'll thirst in this chalice of night
Where no one hears my calls,
For it's filled to the brim with darkness
And only echoes resound on the walls.

I'll feast in this tavern of orgies
Where no one hears my calls,
For it's filled with the spew of the drunken
And only echoes resound on the walls.

I'll die in this tomb of the dead
Where no one hears my calls,
For it's filled with the rotting of flesh
And only echoes resound on the walls.

The world is the chalice, the tavern, and the tomb,
And the echoes are men encased in her womb.

The Moth

DOUG. SIFTON

Wandering Venus, vagrant of night,
Whose fluttering wings in undulant light
Send darting shadows 'round my feet,
Inviting my spirit to follow.

Fiery hues and dusky pastels
Startle the yellow incendiary forks
Burning the fingers of night.

This glimmering aura of flame
Has channelled your path
Through a moonless maze
To fitfully dip in the amber glow
Delighting my heart with your wayward flight.

Now darkness, loitering deep in the shadows,
Creeps from its lair—with a rush
Repairs the cancerous crater,
Smothers the wavering foe.

Dead is the last faint ember,
Vanished your lustrous tints
And you become another
Frail phantom of shadows,
A wandering vagrant of night.

Prelude

DOUG. SIFTON

Soldier, why are you idle beside your gun?
The enemy awaits its fiery belch,
The lightning bolts which mash and tear
Warm flesh and bring from heaven
The hot red rain of blood.

Sailor, your helm unguided steers a vagrant course.
Beyond that thin grey line
Dividing sea and sky
A fleet of floating targets lies,
A battle-weary foe with empty turrets trained.
Consign their entrails to the brine.
And leave despair
To cloud and sear
The anxious eyes of widowed mates.

Airman, away!
The motors give a nervous cough,
Propellors bite the air,
Impatiently attend a cockpit demon
To urge the craft,
Hurl it along the runway.
And let their cradled infants see
The hand of Death
Reach from the clouds.

You loiter still?
Would you neglect the bid of destiny
When 'tis our glorious duty?
Today we are the generation favoured
To unchain the forces of the universe
And bind the hands of beckoning Hope.

The Convert

DOUG. SPETTIGUE

It was a distant time I lived in:
Too far from dawn-struck Ida to have heard
The thunder groans that presaged Jove's birth;
From Rome, to have learned the Vestal comforts,
Home-deities, or gateway gods who'd postulate
Marble virtue for my leave or my return;
A score of centuries and a mind removed
From Golgotha, and the curtain rent,
To have raised my "Barabas" or shaken dice
For the robe; Half a score to have paid
An indulgence, or joined the goodly company
En route to pilgrim-picking Canterbury;
Too far from Milton to envisage Paradise;
From Merry Mount to stain a pagan pole;
From my grandsire to be sure I'd meet
My pilot face to face.

It was a distant time I lived in,
A desert era reason-swept
Of oases.
But then She blazed in a green bush,
Blinded me on a persecuted road,
And I knelt and adored Her.

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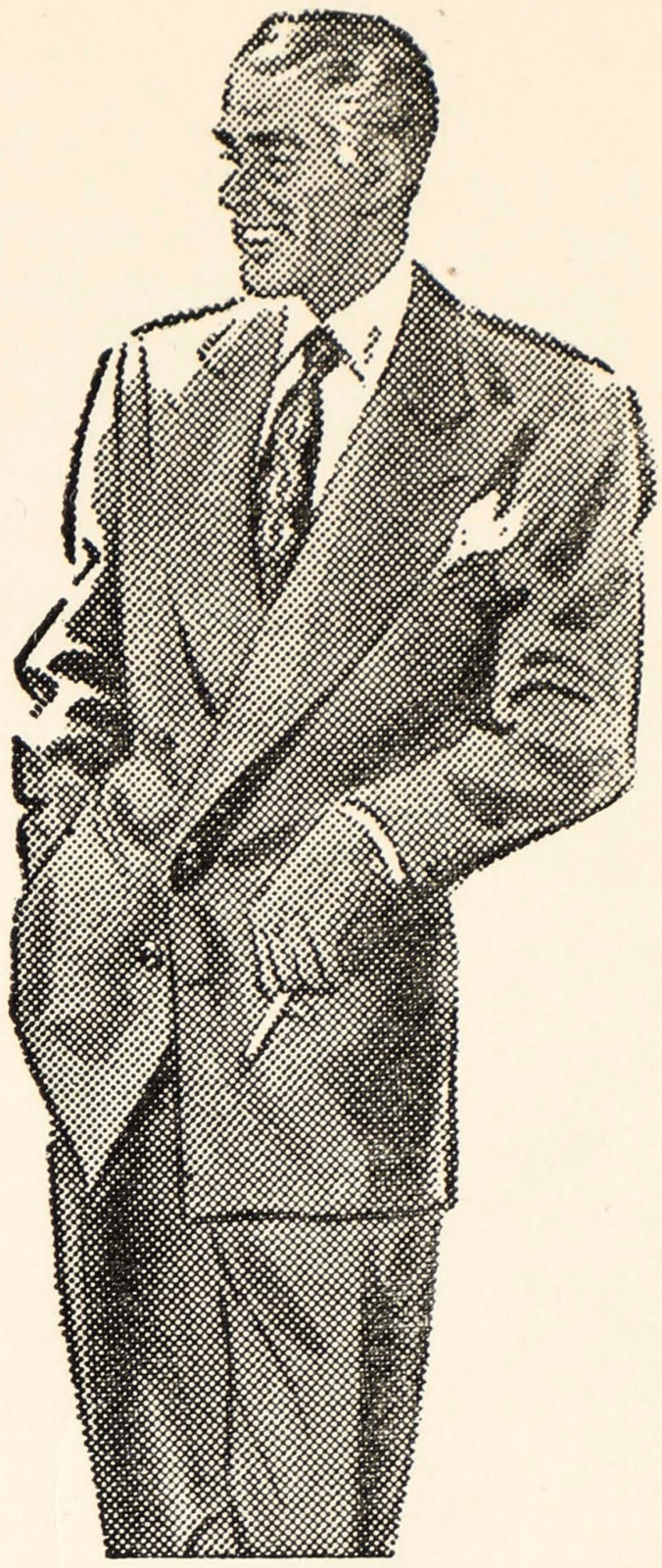

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